

WHAT STYLE OF PAINTING IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

Ultimately the only person who can decide what style of painting is right for you, is YOU! However, there are a number of considerations that can help you if you are just starting out on your journey, or if you have been travelling for a while. Hopefully as you work through this exercise you will have an “ah ha ” moment that sends you forward with confidence in your current path or with courage to start a new direction!

Things to Consider when choosing a medium

Medium	Examples	Pros	Cons
Drawing	Pencil, coloured pencil, pen and ink, marker, pastel	Inexpensive, fast, can take it anywhere	Requires drawing skills, understanding of value, requires framing under glass
Oil Painting	Traditional oil painting, oil and cold wax. oil sticks	Easy to blend, long working time, water soluble oils, can rework mistakes or paint over	Expensive, long drying time, storage while drying may be a problem, toxic fumes
Acrylic Painting	From inks to heavy body, gels, additives, interference paint, acrylic markers	Quick drying time, limitless mixed-media options, less expensive than oils, GOLDEN OPEN acrylics add extended drying times, paint over mistakes	Quick drying time makes difficult to blend. Made of plastic different finish to oils. Colors tend to be very bright and artificial if not mixed.
Encaustic (Hot Wax)	Wax with pigment is heated to fuse	Lovely satin finish, embedding objects, translucent layers	Expensive, toxic fumes, requires ventilation. Difficult to store.
Watercolor	Traditional watercolor, watercolour pencils, watercolour crayons,	Beautiful transparent layers, blending, glow, not as expensive as acrylic. Easy to transport for plein air painting.	Requires practice to learn skills to produce that fresh feel. Requires framing under glass. More difficult to correct mistakes but not impossible

Things to Consider when choosing a style of painting

Style	Examples	Pros	Cons
Realism	Painting exactly what you see (like a photograph), photo realism- (painting as if using a magnifying glass)	If you have patience and don't mind spending a lot of time on one painting. Good for beginners as the steps and techniques are well defined.	Requires learned skills and much practice and patience!
Abstract	Range of abstracting what you see. Impressionism, Expressionism, Pop Art, Surrealism,	Also good for beginners. Freedom of expression, can be painted quickly with emotion and still represent seen form.	Requires learned technical skills combined with looseness and freedom of stroke.
Non-Objective (Also referred to as Abstract)	Painting using only line, form, color and texture to create. Color fields, color blocking, geometric forms, gestural paintings.	More room for creative freedom of expression. Spontaneous, quick (generally) Don't necessarily need to have technical skill.	Need a greater understanding of the principals of design such as balance, value, form and composition.

Repeat this mantra after me;

“It’s only “_____”

(paper, canvas, paint...etc., you fill-in the blank)

Take It From Me

Discover what you love and try it! If you don’t like the execution of it, try something different. Be playful. Experiment. Try lots of things. Paint lots of paintings. Paint it a 2nd time (I guarantee it will be better the 2nd time!) You can lose the joy of the process if you are overly concerned about the outcome. Don’t care so much!

Time is never wasted because each “try” has been a step that leads you to the next one that builds into your unique painting pathway.

I tell my students it’s always a win, win experience when painting. You’ve either learned something you want to keep doing or something not to do again, and as a bonus the finished painting can be hung on the wall (if you love it) or given as a “White Elephant Gift” at Christmas (if you don’t)- so you never lose!!!! Try this DISCOVERY SEARCH exercise to help you refine or define what the perfect painting style is for you.

YOUR DISCOVERY SEARCH

- 1. Go to PINTRESS, YouTube or do a GOOGLE search for paintings you admire. Make a note of the artists you like best. Choose at least 20 paintings and save them to a separate sheet. Do this quickly, find those paintings that give you an immediate “Oh , I Love that” feeling.**
- 2. Now objectively look at your collection and look for what is common between your choices. Look for;**
 - **Format shape - square, rectangle, elongated rectangle, unusual shape, portrait or landscape**
 - **Subject - landscapes, flowers, animals, still life, people**
 - **Medium - oil, watercolor, acrylic, pastel, coloured pencil, mixed-media etc.**
 - **Style- Realism, Abstract, Non-objective, etc.**
 - **Color - repetition of a certain color, bright or muted colors,**
 - **Mood - dramatic, soft (ie sunsets)**
 - **Contrast - High contrast or more subtle variations**
 - **Light - darker, richer, lighter, pastel**
 - **Texture**
 - **Brush strokes, pallet knife or flat**
 - **Size - small format, Medium or large format**
 - **Common themes: ie. water, rocks and trees, and more specifically if trees, birch bark trees, or evergreen trees?**
 - **Can you put your finger on exactly what it is about each painting that you really love?**
 - **Thick or thin applications of paint**
- 3. Record your “aha” moment!**

MY DISCOVERY SEARCH

When I first did this search I found some very interesting “aha” discoveries. Almost all my choices were in the square format, had orange in it and included a horizon line whether it was a realistic landscape or a non-objective painting. People were not in any of my choices and I was leaning more towards dramatic colors in a very loose, free style expression. This was not necessarily indicative of where I was painting at the time, but it was amazingly helpful in verifying the direction my heart wanted to go!!!

Even after 45 years of painting, showing in galleries all over the world, and teaching adults and children for over 11 years I still am learning and growing in my Painting Pathway Journey.

Now you may find that you *really* love “photo-realism” but don’t really have the desire to spend *that* much time attending to *that* much detail. So you might want to consider realism painting instead. Or you just love that glow you get with watercolor and you are willing to take time to learn the skills to achieve it. In any case you will save yourself a lot of time, expense and heartache by taking some great foundational lessons to get you off to the right start.





**PAINTING
PATHWAYS**

That's is why I've created PAINTING PATHWAYS: to create basic, foundational building blocks for beginner painters to take the frustration and grief out of going it on their own.

I want to give away all the *SECRETS* that I found through trial and error - all the TIPS and TRICKS I wish my teachers would have taught me at the beginning of my painting journey.

What took me over 30 years to learn I am including in my online courses.

PAINTING PATHWAYS in WATERCOLOR for BEGINNERS is the first of the flagship courses with Four Modules that give you everything you need for the best start in painting in watercolor. Each Module is equivalent to about a week-long intensive and can be done at your own pace.

The course includes step-by-step video instruction all along the way with a dedicated discussion group within the platform for students to encourage one another and showcase their progress. I offer feedback on your assignments which is invaluable for progressing in your painting journey.

Students will also have access to me to ask any questions during the duration of the course as well as live group calls.

There is virtually no risk in joining WATERCOLOR for BEGINNERS as there is a 7 Day Money Back Guarantee if it 's not a right fit for you.

ACRYLIC for BEGINNERS is in the works. Subscribe to our mailing list to be the first to know when it will be available.

I also offer mini-courses that can be completed within a couple of hours and are a great option for building your painting skills, or trying out a small project if you are still exploring what painting style is right for you.

Check out the FREE content at www.debbiereeve.com and start your Painting Pathway today.

SUBSCRIBE TO THE MAILING LIST

CHECK OUT THE COURSES

Happy Painting,

Debbie Reeve

