



THREE STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL PAINTING PROJECT



There's nothing like the satisfaction of a well-done, completed art project! Not only have you created a tangible object of interest, but you've put a bit of "you" out into the world. In contemporary art circles, there is a saying: "It's about the process, not the product." While this may be true, in order to have a beautiful, successful product as your end result, it's helpful to be aware of the process and the procedures. For example, **Jo Sonja Artists' Painting System** was created to be a complete, versatile range allowing you to paint on almost any surface. Understanding the basic steps that are present in almost every project, and how to use the mediums most often associated with these steps, allows you to approach your project with confidence and creativity.

STEP 1 - PREP YOUR SURFACE

Once you've decided what design you'd like to paint, you need to decide on a surface. You can paint on almost anything - canvas, paper, wood, tin, glass, tile, fabric, cork, metal and more - as long as you have prepared the surface properly. Of course, you want to make sure that the surface is clean, and then you can choose the best medium to seal the surface and provide adhesion for the paint. If you choose to upcycle a previously painted surface, remember to wear a respirator or mask designed to capture dust when sanding any painted surface.



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- **Gesso:** Useful for wood, canvas, metal and paper. Provides a smooth, fine-grit finish for maximum tooth but can be sanded smooth for a finer painting ground. 2-4 coats are typically applied.
- **All Purpose Sealer:** Don't like the tooth of a gesso? Try All Purpose Sealer, an acrylic medium that seals and promotes paint adhesion on wood, canvas, metal and tin, glass, unglazed bisque, terra cotta, paper, soaps and candles. Can be sanded smooth.
- **Tannin Sealer:** Used on wood or masonite surfaces where tannin, oil or pitch may bleed through paint. Also used to adhere gold leaf.
- **Cork Sealer:** Used to seal most porous surfaces such as cork, burlap, canvas, paper and wood. Ideal for decoys as it reduces chipping and degradation of the cork.
- **Glass & Tile Primer:** Prepares glass, glazed ceramics and enamel, providing additional bonding for the paint. Used in conjunction with **Glass & Tile Medium**.



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STEP 2 - CHOOSE YOUR MEDIUM AND PAINT

Now that your surface is prepared, there are a variety of mediums designed to give you the best possible painting experience. Painting Mediums alter or enhance certain qualities of acrylic paints, like Jo Sonja Matte Flow Acrylic and Background Colours. If you are looking for a thinner paint, one that dries faster, one that has more body, one that is more transparent, etc., all you need is the proper medium. Some of the most popular Jo Sonja Mediums are:



- **Clear Glaze Medium:** A matte, transparent acrylic glazing medium. Can be used undiluted as a light sealer in between layers, as a glazing medium (3 parts Clear Glazing Medium: 1 part paint) or as a general painting medium where transparent colors are desired.
- **Fast Drying Glaze Medium:** Can be used in a similar fashion as the Clear Glaze Medium, but dries much faster, allowing for quick application of multiple layers of glazes or transparent color.
- **Flow Medium:** Used to thin Jo Sonja Matte Flow Acrylic and Background Colours as needed for paint application, fine detail brushwork and airbrushing.
- **Magic Mix:** A light sealer similar to Clear Glaze Medium but with an extended or increased “open” or blending time. Useful for techniques such as floating, side loading color, glazing and stipple blending.
- **Retarder/Gel Retarder:** These mediums are additives designed to extend the drying time for painting or techniques such as antiquing. The Gel Retarder is used for delaying the drying without reducing the viscosity of the paint. (Note: Do not apply Gel Retarder over Clear Glaze Medium or Magic Mix.)
- **Textile Medium:** Allows for permanent non-fading painting on natural and non-synthetic fabric. Fabric containing a minimum of 50% cotton is recommended; heat setting with an iron is required for permanence.



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STEP 3 - VARNISH AND FINISH

Varnishing is considered the final step in a painting project. Varnishes will even out the sheen for aesthetic purposes as well as provide a protective coating.



- **Polyurethane Water Based Varnishes:** Available in Gloss, Satin and Matte, these clear, non-yellowing varnishes are fast drying and suitable for indoor and outdoor decorative projects. Matte and Satin Varnishes should be shaken gently before use to disperse matting agents. Allow varnished item to cure a minimum of 2 weeks before use.
- **Decoupage Varnish:** A heavy-bodied version of Gloss Varnish, which results in a thick, lacquer-like coating. It has been specially formulated for collage and decoupage artists to hide the cut edges of paper. Applying 8-10 coats of Decoupage Varnish is the equivalent of 35-40 coats of other, thinner varnishes.

The above Jo Sonja mediums are just the most popular ones used in 3 fundamental steps of a decorative painting project: preparation, application and finishing. Spend some time and explore some of these mediums in your practice. (And always test when mixing products between brands and when first starting out!) The more you know about your materials, the more you can manipulate them in creative, transformative and personal ways.