

# Paints for illumination

When you are at the art store, staring at all the colours in front of you, it can be a bit overwhelming!

When you are first starting out, there are many things to consider when it comes to buying paint. Budget is often a strong contributing factor to your final decision. These are the main options.

1. The cheapest option will be a set of paints in a box.

PRO - easily fits the budget and is convenient. It is a good way to have play around and see if you like doing it without spending too much

CON - you do not get to choose the colours you want and the quality will not be as good. The colours may be lumpy, gummy and may not reconstitute very well. They may not be very lightfast so may fade with time.

## 2. Student quality or cheaper individual colours

PRO - you get to pick the colours you want but the colour range may be limited. They will be reasonably priced.

CON - Depending on the brand, they may not be lightfast, and may not reconstitute well.

**3. Professional quality.** Winsor and Newton and Schminke are two well known brands, and depending on your location there will be other quality brands.

PRO - Large colour range, quality ingredients, more lightfast and will reconstitute well.

CON - They are more expensive initially, but you can start out with the basics then gradually add more colours.



Better quality paints will have information on the tube telling you how permanent it is. This paint is rated AA which the highest level of permanency.

You can also check out the suppliers website and download a colour chart which as even more information about how transparent and lightfast the colour is.

Because of the varying nature of the ingredients, each colour will be placed into a series of differing prices. Your art store or website should have a chart where you can check this.

## To reconstitute or not?

Some people wash out their palette each time they have finished using it. I personally find this wasteful as a lot of your expensive paint just goes down the drain.

Quality gouache paints will reconstitute well and there is no waste. It also has the added benefit of not trying to match colours if you are working on something over a long time period.

I found these tiny plastic boxes with lids to keep dust out and little drawers to keep them tidy.





## My Workspace



Having a good workspace is important. It does not have to be very large but having it well organized will make life easier. I live in a very tiny Nordic house and only have a small nook next to the kitchen where I work. I spend 6 - 8 hours a day painting but only need a small area. This little bench in the photo can be pushed under my desk in the evenings. Paint sits on the top and under it is shelves where I keep paper, sketchbooks and boxes of supplies, and tiny drawers of pens.

I make a lot of custom stuff for myself like the brush holder that you can see in the image on the previous page. This was just a packet of polymer clay that I moulded into the shape I wanted. I also made the little balsa wood tray to stop brushes falling onto the floor.

You can see my black glove which I wear on my painting hand. These are called artist gloves or anti fouling gloves and can be purchased online quite cheaply. This glove stops pencil work from smudging too much and stops sweat and oils from your skin seeping into the surface you are working on.

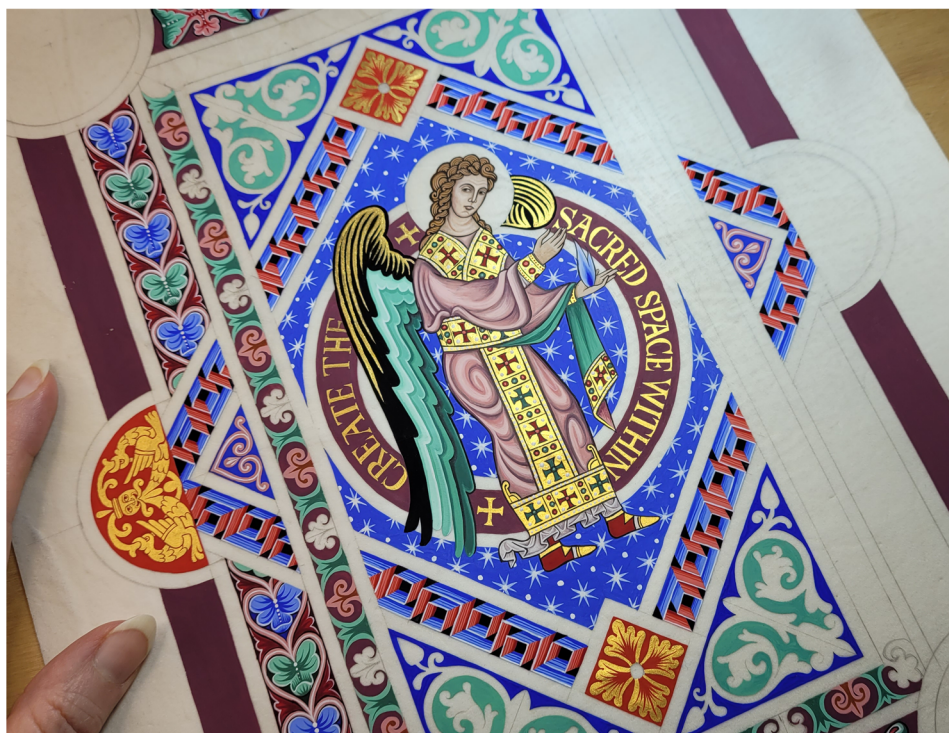
## Colours in action

Here you can see a piece that I am working on that has a very large range of colours. Let's look at the specific colours in more detail. These colours all come from the range on the following page.



Gold with added gold mica

Cadmium free red



Gothic pink

Permanent green light mixed with ultramarine blue & white



Ultramarine blue & white

Alizarin crimson

**Pro tips!**  
Dark colours dry a lighter colour. Light colours dry a darker colour. Test your colours before using on the good copy.

If a colour is too garish or artificial looking, add a touch of grey or brown to give it more natural tones. Experimenting with colours is fun and will give you confidence with mixing the colour you want.

burnt umber and white

Flesh & burnt umber



Deep purple madder made with alizarin crimson, burnt sienna, burnt umber, black white & brilliant violet





These are Winsor and Newton colours. Different brands will have different names and have different colours. This colour chart is simply a guide.

# COLOUR CHART

BASIC PALETTE	PURE COLOUR		SWATCH 1	SWATCH 2	SWATCH 3	
	Ultramarine blue					This was the most prized of all colours in the medieval palette. In these three swatches I have gradually added more white.
	Alizarin crimson					Swatch 1 has black added and swatch 2 & 3 have white added.
	Cadmium free red					Swatch 1 has black added and swatch 2 & 3 have white added.
	Burnt Umber					Swatch 1 has black added and swatch 2 & 3 have white added.
	Permanent yellow deep					Swatch 1 has black added. Swatch 2 has burnt umber added and swatch 3 has white added.
	Permanent green light					Swatch 1 has black added, swatch 2 has white added and swatch 3 has grey added.
	Burnt Sienna					Swatch 1 has black added and swatch 2 & 3 have white added.
	Lamp Black					Swatch 1 and 2 have white added and swatch 3 has a tiny touch of blue. I use this blue grey for painting armour in miniatures.
	White		White gouache is the colour that you will use the most of as it is used to create so many colours. I also like Titanium white watercolour for painting all the really fine lines.			
EXTRA COLOURS	Gold (metallic)					Swatch 1 has burnt umber added. This will reduce the amount of reflective quality but can be used for shadows. Swatch 3 has extra gold mica added to give it more "sparkle" and reflective quality
	Sap green					Swatch 1 has black added and swatch 2 & 3 have white added.
	Prussian blue					Swatch 1, 2 & 3 have white gradually added. Prussian blue was not around in medieval times, but it does make beautiful shades of green with blue tints.
	Cobalt blue					Swatch 1, 2 & 3 have white added.
	Flesh <small>renamed pale rose blush</small>					I find this flesh colour a bit too orange and add some burnt umber to it. (swatch 1) Swatch 2 has both burnt umber and white added to it. As there are so many different skin tones, you can experiment
	Brilliant Violet					As a pure colour, this is quite garish, but when mixed with alizarin crimson, burnt umber and burnt sienna it will give you some lovely rich madders and muted purples.
	Shades of green					Experiment with creating different shades of green by adding more blues, yellow or greys and browns. So many different greens can be made from just combining these.
	Gothic pink					This classic medieval colour that you see in so many manuscripts can be made using alizarin crimson, burnt sienna and white.