



ARCHES® OIL

Arches® Oil paper (Arches Huile) is a high quality paper specifically designed for oil painting. It requires zero preparation; it is ready-to-use for work with oils.

Without protection, the oxidation of drying oils degrades the fibers of most paper or canvas. The protection generally comes from priming, added by the artist, before the painting can begin. Arches® Oil paper is formulated to protect the paper fibers without the need for any priming with gesso. Simply cut the sheet to size, clip it to a board, and go right to the artistic work of painting.

For most styles you can work on this paper without any changes in your methods. Drying times and the paint's gloss will be the same as on any semi-absorbent surface, with no chalking of dried color. You don't need to alter your media or painting tools. Further, it offers some qualities inherent to paper, and you can take advantage of those unique properties in your work. You will find your own techniques suited to your style of working; here are simply a few suggestions to get you started.

An idea for a painterly approach

Begin work quickly with thin washes of oils. Block in masses quickly in monochrome, with a couple of wide bristle brushes and thinned neutral color. Brush a thin, dark wash overall; then lift out lights with an absorbent rag. (The Arches® Oil paper surface is tough and durable, and holds up to heavy rubbing). For stronger lights, use a brush with a little diluent. Value contrast should increase gradually as the painting moves toward finish. To blend, wait just a minute for the wash to set up — avoid areas that are very wet, and feather out darks with a wide, dry blender brush. Restore the stronger darks as needed; slow drying oils leave you plenty of time to refine the modeling, and complete this monochromatic underpainting.

Having resolved the big compositional issues, you can allow the underpainting to dry completely before moving into a full range of color. You can add color in transparent glazes, or work more opaquely, with high chroma color in lights and mid-tones, and allowing underpainting to show in the shadow areas.

Incorporating drawing media into the work

Arches® Oil paper's surface is also ideal for a range of drawing media.

It has plenty of tooth, but still permits fine work in pencil. It is absorbent enough for preliminary work in ink wash or watercolor. If you like to work out an underdrawing before starting work in oil, it offers a real advantage here. You also have the option to add drawing media into the painting throughout the work.

For example, you can:

- work into wet oils with a soft pencil or a sharpened conte crayon— those darks can be easily diffused with your painting medium
- plan out modeling using charcoal over lightly painted areas
- add tinted highlights using pastels or pastel pencils



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Work done into the wet oil will be largely bound once it dries. Depending on your style, you can smoothly blend the drawn work into the paint, or choose to leave the drawn strokes evident. You can use drawing media to try out possibilities, working over dried paint — anything you don't like can be wiped off or erased. Drawn touches that you want to keep can be fixed to the painting with medium or retouch varnish. You can use drawing media on Arches® Oil just as preparatory tools, but there is also the option to create a different kind of work — a drawing supplemented with small additions in oil paint.

Additional Notes

Artists who work with water mixable oils have one limitation.

Arches® Oil's surface is not affected by oil media, but saturated with water, any paper will soften and heavy rubbing then may abrade the paper. This does not present any problems for initial work in ink wash or watercolor; soft brushes will not damage the surface.

Arches® Oil is fully ready for use with no prep work, but you can choose to customize the paper for particular techniques. For example:

- for a non-absorbent surface, apply just a single coat of thinned acrylic medium or thinned acrylic gesso
- for a dark ground (imprimatura) just apply a thin wash of a dark oil color, and allow it to dry. The imprimatura lets you work light-over-dark; useful for dramatic chiaroscuro effects.

Framing

A finished oil painting can be mounted to a backing board or stapled to stretcher bars and framed. If the artist wishes to display the finished piece as a work on paper then then it would be framed in one of two ways under glass: mounted to a backing board and covered with a mat board or float mounted so the edges of the paper are exposed.

As with any oil painting it is highly recommended that the painting be varnished.

These are just a few ideas about methods- you will find a variety of approaches that will work effectively on Arches® Oil paper.

The paper allows you freedom to try things that could not be done on canvas:

- to combine printmaking techniques with oil painting
- to present oil paintings in an artist's book format
- to easily cut out complex shaped supports for the painting
- to include oil painting into works in collage

When you do not have to spend your time in preparing a painting support, you are free to experiment more broadly in your art. The ideas here offer just a starting point.

Check out the Arches Oil® video on
www.youtube.com/cansonpaper or scan this QR code:

