

## PAINTING FAT OVER LEAN

Beyond just using better, purer art materials, the understanding of what you are using and why are crucial to understanding how to use them.

Central to this is Fat over Lean, a concept so fundamental to oil painting that its importance cannot be understated. Yet a basic practical understanding of it by painters is very rare nowadays. When Artists wonder why one layer of paint won't stick to another, or why a fresh layer of paint is ripping off the dried layer below: these are both Fat over Lean issues where artist were incorrectly painting Lean over Fat. The adhesion, drying time, glossiness and what mediums to use of oil painting as it is layered is all understood through the prism of Fat over Lean.

Lean is non-oily, matte, porous.

Fat is oily, sticky, shiny, non-porous.

So in keeping with the often discussed but rarely understood concept of Fat over Lean, our 2 mediums try to promote an understanding of the working principle.



Our Lean Medium is our [Purified Pale Cold-Pressed Linseed Oil](#) diluted with [Oil of Spike Lavender Solvent](#).

To make it leaner you could dilute it further with more Oil of Spike Lavender Solvent which would make it have less oil content and thus Leaner. Or one could make it Fatter by adding more oil to it, or adding some of our Lavender Damar Varnish (Damar Varnish made with Oil of Spike Lavender instead of Turpentine).

***Both ways will make it shinier and stickier and thus Fatter***



Our Fat Medium is our [Purified Pale Cold-Pressed Linseed Oil](#) mixed with our [Lavender Damar Varnish](#). To make it even fatter one could add more oil to give it more oil content; if it still does not stick well to the paint surface below, one can add more Lavender Damar Varnish to make it stickier.

The quality, absorbency and texture of the painting surface is probably the most important element in painting materials as far as drying time, adhesion, how archival, cracking; so it has a lot to do with how Fat over Lean will work, as the first layer of paint needs to be fatter than the ground in order to adhere properly.

An artist's understanding of the materials is another important element of the craft of painting. Having better materials is more archival, makes for more options and possibilities, a greater understanding overall of what they are doing.