



#ASK

Jackson's



Got an art question you need answered? Need help or advice on a specific product, technique or medium? We want to hear from you...

Acrylic paints and varnish

I have read that acrylic paint should not be diluted too much with water as it reduces the binding properties. Does a coat of varnish help to bind the paint to the surface or would there be long-term problems?

Pat

Dear Pat,

We recommend only using an acrylic medium as you're right that the film of acrylic paint becomes very weak if it's diluted too much. This is because the pigment is held to the surface with very little binder and will be prone to abrasion or even could be brushed off. Generally, you need to keep your water to acrylic paint mix ratio to at least 50% paint to 50% water. It's fine if you want a watercolour effect, or if you have no intention of selling it, but if you do intend to, you should really only use a medium.

While a varnish would bind even a weak layer of paint, or rather pigment, to the surface without trouble, using a brush-on varnish will disturb the earlier dried acrylic layer. So, if it's a very diluted wash, consider using a spray acrylic varnish, as it won't brush the pigment, but be aware that spray varnishes can be very difficult to apply evenly.

From Jackson's



Cold wax and chalk

I've bought some Gamblin cold wax medium from Jackson's, and am using it for scumbling with quality artists' oil paint, using both a knife and a sturdy brush. However, it is still a little on the wet side to get the textures that I'm after. Is it advisable to add chalk dust to this mix without any adverse long-term effects to the oil paint? Which product from your range do you recommend?

Alan Bickley

Dear Alan,

Something to consider is that Gamblin Cold Wax reacts to temperature so it will be wetter, or slightly more melted, in warmer temperatures. If your work space is quite warm you could try creating a colder environment and you'll find the wax will become stiffer when handling it.

You can add chalk dust to cold wax, however, we suggest using marble dust rather than chalk as it's less likely to affect the colour. If you do this, you would ideally be working on a rigid surface. Adding chalk or marble dust to cold wax can dry out the mixture and lead to it becoming brittle. Over time, this can then loosen the adhesion and give it a crumbly appearance that is unstable. If the amount of chalk or marble dust included is low, then this problem is unlikely to arise, but I would test your ratio out on your chosen substrate first.

From our range, you could use Derivan Matisse Dry Medium Ground Marble, as this is available in small amounts and is a transparent powder, meaning a mixture's colour will be unaffected by its addition. Another option is Cornelissen Marble Dust Fine Grain which is white and available in larger sizes.

From Jackson's

Go to Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter or Instagram, type in your question followed by the unique #AskJacksons then check out both *Leisure Painter* and *The Artist* to see which questions have been answered by the Jackson's experts. To see more go to www.painters-online.co.uk/techniques-and-tips/askjacksons.htm