

## MRH ACRYLIC PAINTING GUIDE - Cheat Sheet

- For bottles of paint I've opened with ordinary screw top lids, sealing the bottle top with a 3" square of plastic wrap and a rubber band greatly extends the paint life.
- Storing model paint in convenient dropper bottles results in less waste and shelf-life is better. A 20ml bottle size is a great choice – it's ever-so-slightly larger than the 17ml stock Vallejo bottles.
- Adding a stainless steel nut to a model paint bottle helps the paint mix better when shaking. For dropper bottles, use a nut with a snug fit through the neck so it won't fall into the dropper tip and clog it. A nut is better than a ball bearing in dropper bottles because the hole in the nut allows paint through.
- For measuring paint by the drop, disposable plastic pipettes work well. and they're available for just a few dollars in quantities of 100. See: [amzn.com/BooJMX1KQY](https://amzn.com/BooJMX1KQY)
- To measure paint in slightly larger quantities than by the drop, a set of graduated beakers from Amazon works well. These beakers allow measuring from 1 milliliter all the way up to 60 milliliters with ease. See: [amzn.com/Boo8X5HRZU](https://amzn.com/Boo8X5HRZU)
- For pouring paint or thinners and making sure they go exactly where you want without spillage, use a stainless steel mini-funnel. You can find these in the cooking section of a better-stocked department store, or you can also get them online at Amazon. See: [amzn.com/Boo826O10E](https://amzn.com/Boo826O10E)
- By using a tiered storage rack for your paints, you can sort them by color and make finding the paint you need a fast and simple task. Avoid the rotating carousel racks because you can't see all your paints at once and may find yourself endlessly spinning the rack trying to locate the colors you need.
- *Do NOT thin your acrylic paint with just water (tap water or even distilled water). Water has a high surface tension beads up, especially on plastic or metal. Water is fine for cleanup but not by itself as a paint thinner. Use the vendor's own thinner, or use one of the less expensive thinner formulas in this chapter.*
- *Do NOT thin the acrylic paints in this booklet with blue Windex (contains ammonia) or isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol. Both of these contain chemicals known to attack the acrylic resin in these paints.*
- Keep some airbrush-cleaner soaked Q-tips handy to deal with airbrush tip-dry when spraying acrylic paints. If you see paint buildup on the tip guard, press the cleaner-soaked Q-tip into the tip guard and spin it a few times to remove this buildup.
- Savvy airbrushers have found removing the tip guard and spraying without the guard housing can greatly reduce or even eliminate tip-dry when spraying acrylics. Do check out your airbrush first, though, because some airbrushes don't work with the tip guard removed.
- Using Iwata's SuperLube (Teflon-based) can help keep paint from sticking to your airbrush needle and also make sure your airbrush parts work smoothly.
- As an extra precaution to prevent airflow moisture from ruining your otherwise great paint job, try using an in-line moisture trap where the air hose attaches to your airbrush.
- If you use a siphon feed airbrush, putting Badger's mesh screen filter in the paint bottle on the feed tube can catch any paint-pigment blobs so they don't ruin your paint finish.
- Cover your workspace with a sheet of inexpensive 24" x 36" (61.0cm x 91.4cm) flip chart paper from Amazon for just 16 cents a sheet (with shipping): [amzn.com/BoooJo7MUM](https://amzn.com/BoooJo7MUM). This paper does have light blue rule lines on one side, but just flip it over to get no lines. Discard when done.
- *Do NOT brush paint straight from bottle! Remove paint from the bottle onto a palette (old plastic bag) and work from there rather than painting from an open bottle and wiping the brush on the lip. A palette allows more control over how much paint you get on the brush, it avoids the paint in the open bottles from thickening prematurely, and it keeps dried paint off the bottle lip.*
- When brush painting use three small plastic Dixie cups about half full of Armor All Auto Glass cleaner. Use the first cup for the initial brush wash (the dirty cup), move the brush to the second cup to remove the rest of the paint (the cloudy cup). Lastly, move the brush to the third cup (clean cup) and give it a final quick rinse.
- Never load a totally dry brush with paint. Dampen the brush with thinner and wipe the excess on a paper towel. Now dip that damp brush into the paint on your palette. Load only the lower half of the brush with paint.
- Get an old frozen dish microwave tray and flood the bottom with some Armor All Auto Glass cleaner. Lay your working brushes in this tray with the bristles end in the Armor All. This keeps any paint residue in the working brush from drying out and keeps the tip pre-wetted before each use.
- Do the end-of-session brush cleaning at the sink with a cake of ordinary soap. Put the soap under running warm water and wipe the brush back and forth on the soap cake to build up a lather. Remove the soap from under the water and continue to work the brush back and forth in the soap lather until there is no more staining of the lather from any paint residue in the brush. Rinse the soap cake off and rinse out the brush in the running water.