



**REEVES**   
S I N C E 1 7 6 6

# Instructions

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**T**he Reeves Acrylic Studio Set is the ideal first step for the beginner to discover the delights of this exciting medium, which has revolutionised the world of art. The tubes have been carefully selected to form a palette from which all the most frequently used colours can be mixed.

It is very important that the beginner should become experienced at colour mixing from a basic palette, and not be confused by the huge number of colours that can be available.

Every artist has an individual style, but there are certain rules of painting that the beginner should follow in order to achieve worthwhile results. If you are new to painting the following tips may be useful.

### **THE NATURE OF ACRYLIC COLOUR**

Acrylic colour was created to imitate the qualities of oil colour, but eliminate the problems of lengthy drying times and the need for specialist mediums and brush cleaners. It is a water-based medium which can be used as an oil colour substitute or, by diluting the colour thinly it is possible to create translucent glazes in the manner of watercolour. Unlike watercolour, however, acrylic dries quickly to a tough finish that is no longer water-soluble, so great care must be taken that brushes are cleaned promptly.

Acrylic colour can be used opaquely – in other words, a light colour is capable of covering over a darker colour, which is useful for rectifying mistakes. Like oil colour, it can be applied very thickly to create textured paintings, and it is this versatility and practicality that has been so attractive to many modern artists, such as David Hockney, who now often uses acrylic colour in preference to oil colour.

### **PREPARATION**

Acrylic colour is hard to remove when dry, so wear old clothing and use a disposable tablecloth. You will also need an old rag or a kitchen roll, and a large jar of water for cleaning brushes.

If you are indoors, make sure you have enough natural light to the front or side of you.

Acrylic colour dries quite quickly, so only squeeze out small quantities of colour at a time. Unlike watercolour, the colour cannot be re-activated once it has become hard.

## COLOUR MIXING

Knowing how to mix colours and how much paint to use can only come with experience and experimentation. Red, Yellow, and Blue are called the Primary Colours. This means they cannot be mixed from other colours. Your set of colours can be mixed to form a comprehensive range, but remember that sometimes it may be necessary to mix 3 or even 4 colours to achieve a result.

As a very basic guide remember that;

● red	+	● green	= brown	●
● red	+	● yellow	= orange	●
● red	+	● blue	= purple	●
● blue	+	● yellow	= green	●
● blue	+	● green	= turquoise	●

Once you have achieved the correct colour, you must then achieve the correct tone (or shade) i.e. the strength of the colour. Remember that black is not the only way of darkening a colour. It can make colours look dirty. Try experimenting with browns and blues. They darken colours in very different ways to black. Conversely, try lightening colours with yellow or white, or a combination of the two. It is advisable to make notes to remind you how to achieve various colour mixes.

Experiment on a piece of scrap board by trying to accurately mix the colours of objects around you. Always mix the colours thoroughly. Try both supplied brushes. They will make very different types of mark on the board.

Add water to the mix to thin the colour. Remember that Acrylic is capable of being used thinly like watercolour or opaquely like oil colour.

Finally there are no shortcuts to learning about colour mixing. It is inevitable that you will make mistakes, but some of them may be happy ones!

## COMPOSITION

Choosing subject matter is a very personal thing. If you are inexperienced, avoid complex compositions, you will become frustrated and abandon the picture! It is better to tackle a simple scene and do it well.

Before committing yourself to paper, consider the scene from different angles and distances until you settle on the best viewpoint. Work out which section of the scene you are going to paint and then lightly, with a soft pencil sketch out the basic lines of the composition. Do not concern yourself with too much detail at this stage. Correct any mistakes with a soft putty eraser to avoid tearing the paper surface, and never use an eraser on wet paper.



## PAINTING

Whether you are painting a still-life, a figure or a landscape the same rules apply. The pictures opposite show how a painting is built up in stages.

**1** Simple tonal sketch of the composition in diluted yellow ochre and brown. Allow to dry. The artist has made a feature of the dramatic sky by keeping the horizon line low in the composition. The farm building provides a useful focal point.

**2** The sky area is blocked in with thicker paint applied with the square ended brush. A basic mix of blue & white is used for the sky and yellow and white for the clouds. The darker areas of sky are created by mixing the blue with a touch of crimson to make purple, and applied while the other areas of sky are still wet. Areas of white are also blended into the clouds to create highlights. The basic underpaint of the path and grass areas is blocked in with mid green and cream.

**3** The background trees are created by adding blue with the green mix, giving the impression of

distance. The basic underpaint of the farm buildings and large tree is added. (It's advisable to allow the sky to dry before adding tree detail).

**4** More layers of tone have been added and the picture is now at full strength. The medium allows both dark and light areas of detail to be painted on top of the undercoat, as shown clearly in the foreground grassy area. As a general rule, undercoat layers should be thin, with the consistency of the paint increasing for the top layers. Areas of detail have now been added to the farmhouse and the large tree. The paint has been scraped on sparsely to create the broken texture of the tree's leaves. Finishing touches are added with a small brush. The picture is impressionist in style, so no attempt has been made to paint individual leaves or blades of grass etc.

## FINISHING TOUCHES

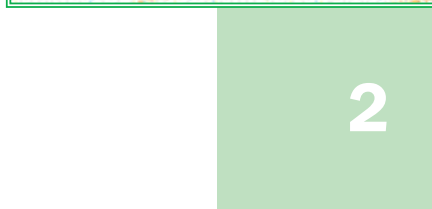
Acrylic paintings can be framed under glass like watercolours, or without glass in the style of oil paintings, depending on your personal preference. If you choose glass, it is advisable to also use a card window-mount, which will prevent the glass pressing against the picture and causing damage.

## CARE OF EQUIPMENT

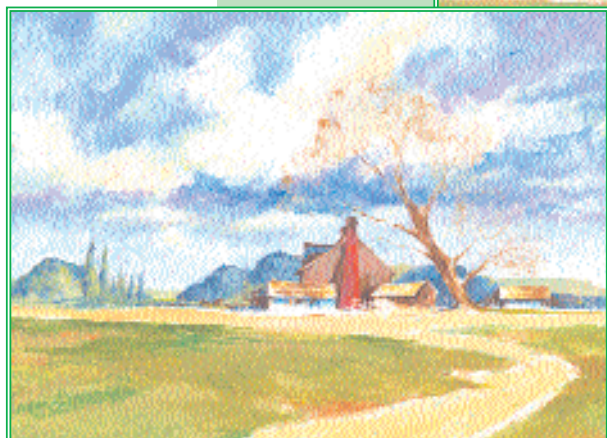
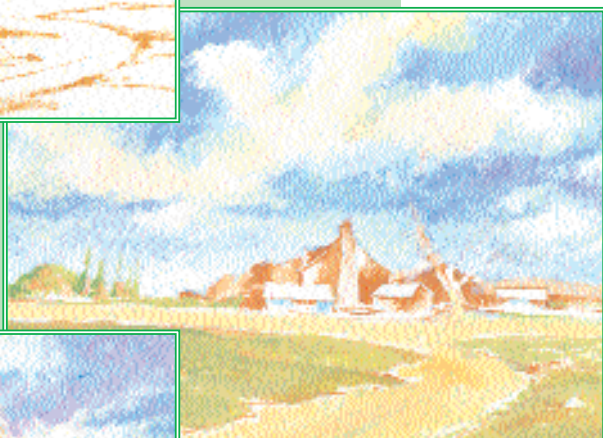
Acrylic colour must never be allowed to dry on a brush, as water becomes ineffective once the colour has dried. Never stand brushes upright in water jars. This ruins the bristles. Always thoroughly clean brushes in soap and water at the end of the day and restore their shape before putting them away. Do not contaminate the purity of your paints by dipping brushes into them, or by using the wrong tops. Always use the palette for mixing. Make sure the tops are firmly screwed onto the tubes to avoid drying out.



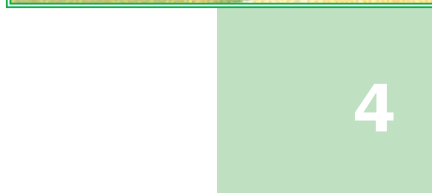
1



2



3



4



$$\text{Red Circle} + \text{Green Circle} = \text{Brown Circle}$$

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$$\text{Red Circle} + \text{Yellow Circle} = \text{Orange Circle}$$

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$$\text{Red Circle} + \text{Blue Circle} = \text{Purple Circle}$$

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$$\text{Blue Circle} + \text{Yellow Circle} = \text{Light Green Circle}$$

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$$\text{Blue Circle} + \text{Light Green Circle} = \text{Teal Circle}$$

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