

The Living Abstract

Workshop Supplies and Setup

Julie Bernstein Engelmann

Welcome! I can't wait to meet you and discover the beautiful artwork you will create! Below are the supplies you'll want to have on hand (or something like them).

• CANVAS or PAPER (+ Gesso)

One surface 18" x 24" (or 20x24). Optional second surface (smaller).

- If canvas, please add an extra layer of gesso ahead of time (generously applied, using curvy random motions rather than straight ones).
- If paper, I recommend good-quality drawing paper or watercolor paper (no gesso needed). Alternatively, if your paper is thin or recycled, please paint a layer of gesso on it ahead of time (using curvy motions).
- A second surface is optional, if you'd like to create a second painting between classes. You'll gain additional feedback and benefit from the workshop. Perhaps choose a smaller size, like 12x16, so as to finish.

• ACRYLIC PAINTS

Suggested colors (at minimum): White, Cadmium yellow medium (or better, instead get both Cadmium yellow light and Cadmium yellow deep), Cadmium red light, Quinacridone magenta, Phthalocyanine blue, Red oxide.

- Also helpful: Cerulean blue, purple (e.g. Prism violet), green (e.g. Hookers), and whatever you have on hand.
- Liquitex Basics brand is fine for most colors, but for the Cadmiums I recommend a better brand like Utrecht. Regular acrylic is better for our purposes than heavy body or fluid.



• BRUSHES

I like soft, synthetic. Two suggested widths: 1" filbert and 5/8" bright. Also helpful: a 1½ to 2" brush (can be cheap). And whatever you have on hand.



- **LIQUITEX PROFESSIONAL GLOSS MEDIUM** (available e.g. at Dick Blick [here](#)).
...or similar. Slightly dilute to approx. 15 parts medium to 1 part water.
(Formerly called Liquitex Gloss Medium & Varnish, so that's in the caption.)



- **LOW PLASTIC CONTAINER**
...with lid for keeping paint moist



- **FLAT SURFACE FOR MIXING**
...e.g. pie tin or palette

- **PAPER TOWELS**

- 1) Soft, smooth, absorbent, e.g. VIVA (as a subtractive painting tool)
- 2) Regular paper towels or rag (for dabbing brushes and wiping messes)

- **MARKERS**

- 2 colors Sharpie markers (or other non-water-soluble markers)
- If working on paper, can alternatively use ballpoint pen or pencil

- **MASKING TAPE or PAINTERS TAPE**, wide is better—for masking

- **ADDITIONAL ITEMS**

- Water container—for rinsing brushes)
- Spray bottle—to keep paint moist
- Computer or other device—for Zoom
- Camera (phone)—for taking photos of painting
- Table & Tablecloth.



Questions?

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Setup

Table or easel?

Either or both. I like to do the first half of the process with my canvas flat on a table so my arm moves freely across the whole surface (and it's easy to get to all the edges). Then, when the painting is at the “beautiful mess” stage, I move it to an easel for resolution.

Setting up for Zoom

Set up your Zoom device wherever is convenient for you to paint, watch my demonstrations, and participate in discussions. Your Zoom video camera doesn't need to show you painting.

Photographing your painting

Since the quality of Zoom video isn't ideal, you'll need to take photos of your painting at certain points in the process and email them to me, so I can give more accurate feedback.

- Include edges of painting
- Aim to square up the painting parallel to the photo borders (not a big deal though)
- Slanted natural light is ideal
- So as not to overfill my email, I prefer you send medium-size photos rather than full size.

How to take a screenshot

I'll be doing annotations on your painting-in-process photos to show you things about depth and flow, so at certain points you may want to take a screenshot before I clear the annotations. Here's how:

On a PC, hit Shift-Printscreen (PrtScr). That saves the screenshot, but you have to have a place to drop it, e.g. a blank Word document or email draft.

On a Mac, hit Shift-Command-4. Drag the plus sign to crop the part of the screen you want, then let go. The screenshot lands on your desktop.

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