

GRAM **Painting with Natural Pigments**



Have you ever wondered how to make your own paint? Get inspired by the natural resources around you and use materials such as earth, sand, and coal mixed with a binder. Learn how to make your own paint from plants, minerals, and spices.

Painting with Natural Pigments

Pigments are nature's purest colors, so the options in selecting natural ingredients for making paint is almost endless! Anything like hibiscus, roses, blueberries, spinach, coffee, or charcoal can turn into a beautiful paint.

The ingredients we will use today are beets, blueberries, tumeric, coffee, charcoal, spinach, and chalk.

Selecting Ingredients



<https://www.popsugar.com/smart-living/Homemade-Natural-Dyes-31861660>

Choosing a Binder



www.earthpigments.com

Binders in paint are what allow pigment to stick together. There are many different binders you can experiment with to create different effects.

Artists like Alexis Rockman use acrylic matte medium to create an acrylic-like paint allowing him to create rich saturated colors.

Watercolor paint lends to building many thin layers of color. Water by itself can be used as a binder. To create a paint with a watercolor effect that dries a little darker you can add gum arabic.

Method

When making your natural pigments, you want to grind your pigments extra fine with a mortar and pestle. This is perfect for spices and other dry ingredients. The grittier your material, the grittier your paint will be on the paper. For vegetables and fruits, boiling and straining the juices will create rich color for painting.



<https://www.popsugar.com/smart-living/Homemade-Natural-Dyes-31861660>

Testing your Color



<https://www.handprint.com/HP/WCL/pigm3.html>

Test your pigments on watercolor paper to see what your colors look like both wet and dry. You can then adjust the opacity of your colors as desired. To make it more transparent: add water.

Storage

When storing your handmade pigments, make sure they are in a sealed container. Refrigerate the leftover paints for up to one week before throwing out. You can store the dry powder pigments in sealed containers for up to a year or more. Remember to label what the pigment is and the date it was made!



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Resources

Pigment Recipes

Watercolor paint:

1:1 ratio (equal parts) pigment and water

Acrylic paint:

1:1 ratio (equal parts) pigment and binder (acrylic matte medium)

For a thinner paint, add more binder until desired consistency. Add water as needed.

For a thicker paint, do not add water with your binder. As an alternative, you can also whisk in a 1:1 ratio of unbleached flour and water.

Material Sources

<https://www.naturalpigments.com>

an excellent source to purchase binders, natural bulk pigment, and DIY tool kits.

www.dickblick.com

This site carries a variety of binders from acrylic matte medium to gum arabic, and a variety of high-quality watercolor paper

Online Instruction

<https://www.naturalpigments.com>

This is a dependable source for up to date pigment articles and forum.

<http://www.ecohome.net/guide/diy-recipe-natural-healthy-paint>

This site features recipes for natural, homemade paint made in bulk

<http://www.thehippyhomemaker.com>

A great source for in-depth instruction on how to make kid friendly paint, face paint, and pastels