



Tips for Using Mediums With Atelier Interactive

When first using Atelier Interactive the best suggestion is to try the paint by itself and then with the water spray or wet brush. After getting used to painting with a water spray, it can then be really helpful to choose the medium that is right for your technique.

HOW ATELIER INTERACTIVE DRIES

To better understand how the mediums work with Atelier Interactive it is important to understand that Atelier Interactive dries differently from other acrylics. Atelier Interactive does not form a skin when it dries, rather it goes through a series of stages from wet to tacky to touch dry to cured. During the wet stage the paint will blend. During the tacky and touch dry stage the paint can be re-wet to bring it back to its creamy consistency. Once it has cured it cannot. As the paint goes from touch dry to cured it will become more and more difficult to re-wet.

If a water sprayer or slow drying medium is not used then the touch dry stage will happen fairly quickly. At this point you can start to gently over paint and you may get a more integrated effect than when using wet over dry with "old style" acrylics. If you are concerned about accidentally re-wetting a touch dry layer you can quickly dry it off by placing it in full sunlight or near a heater for 15 – 30 minutes - to speed drying even more, use a hair dryer. Without the use of a dry heat source the paint can remain in the touch dry, uncured stage for quite some time (especially in humid or cool conditions).

MEDIUMS THAT SLOW THE DRYING TIME

Slow Medium has a liquid consistency and is probably the most versatile of the mediums. Small amounts can be used to soften the paint as it comes from the tube. It is particularly helpful when used for glazing and other thin painting techniques. With acrylics that quickly form a skin as they dry, it is always the thinner applications which dry first - even Retarder won't help with thin areas. Slow Medium increases Atelier Interactive's ability to absorb water and paint which has been thinned with it. The layer can be brought back to life even after it is touch dry, making it easier to unify the painting. This is especially useful with large paintings. It is difficult to keep large areas moistened with just a water sprayer. If it goes too tacky give it some water to loosen it up again.

Clear Painting Medium dries a little faster than Slow Medium. It is used to dilute paint and add translucency for layering and glazing techniques without altering the sheen level.

Thick Slow Medium is just like Slow Medium except it has a gel consistency and will hold the heavy body of the paint rather than thinning it. It is excellent for plein air with plenty of water spray to keep it active. A good way to do this is to place it on top of paint laid out on a slab palette because it will protect against evaporation and you can mix it into the paint on the palette as you apply it to the painting. Spray is required to maintain moisture and it makes outdoor painting quite easy. Of course you may need to spray the painting and the palette as you proceed, because the evaporation rate of water can be quite high outdoors.

TIP – HOW TO LIFT PAINT OUT

Both Slow Mediums and Clear Painting Medium allow you to lift paint out if you want to make adjustments to what you have just painted. Use a moist soft brush to remove part of the wet layer. Another method is to wait until it is touch dry and wipe the surface with a rag dampened with Unlocking Formula.

THINK OF MEDIUMS AS “LUBRICANTS” FOR YOUR PAINTING

It is widely understood that mediums are used to change the consistency of artists' paints e.g. thinning paint for glazing techniques. When using Atelier Interactive, mediums also function as a lubricant, keeping the paint wet and workable.

Mediums for lubrication effects are:

- Liquid Slow Medium
- Clear Painting Medium
- Thick Slow Medium

What is meant by lubrication?

It is easier to understand this by discussing oil paints first. There is no problem in keeping oil paint wet while you are working it, but when you first start applying paint to a dry gessoed surface the paint does not move very well and most artists add some medium to thin the paint and make it spread easily. That is to say, they lubricate the surface and once this is done the paint which is added later will move comfortably on that surface as long as it is wet, which is usually a whole painting session at least.

When using Atelier Interactive, although it is now possible to keep the painting wet while you are blending, most artists work in stages taking advantage of the ability to dry their painting quickly so that they can get on with the next stage (which of course oil painters cannot do).

Because of this go stop go method most acrylic artists need to consider the lubrication effect that mediums can provide at each new stage of the painting process because a new fresh bed of moisture is needed to lubricate each stage when you are applying wet paint to a dry surface.

Water can be your only medium, applied by water spray or wet brush, but if you have read the information which describes each medium carefully, you may end up incorporating several mediums simultaneously if it makes painting easier for you. Consider also that once you have a wet layer with mediums in use which are helping to lubricate and keep everything wet for more blending, if you want to keep that layer “active” you may only need more water as you proceed rather than more medium.

A layer of oil paint stays wet “automatically” and can't be dried off quickly on demand. A layer of Atelier Interactive needs to be kept lubricated and wet if you are working wet in wet but you have the advantage of being able to quickly dry it off whenever you like.

MEDIUMS THAT SPEED THE DRYING TIME

Fast Medium/Fixer: Artists have been using “old style” acrylics for years to do multiple thin layering as their main method of unifying their paintings. This is known as wet over dry layering. To perform this technique with Atelier Interactive dilute your paint with Fast Medium/Fixer instead of water which will hasten drying and form a solid skin that will not re-wet. It can also be applied over the top of a touch dry layer of paint to seal it and prevent any accidental rewetting.

Binder Medium: Commonly used as a ground preparation to seal surfaces so as to prevent moisture absorption into the fabric or paper. With Atelier Interactive it can also be used in a similar way to Fast Medium/Fixer only it has a thicker consistency. Either mix it with Atelier Interactive so that the paint dries faster and with a tough skin or use it as a sealing layer. When used in this way it can be diluted with water 1:1 so as to allow for an easy smooth flowing application.

Impasto Gel: When Atelier Interactive is applied in thick layers it can take significantly longer to dry than old style acrylics. Impasto Gel will speed the drying time and add structure for sharp textural effects and also increases gloss.

Modelling Compound: Produces sharper texture than Impasto Gel. It can be applied by itself for texture and then painted over, or it can be mixed into the paint. It does not increase gloss like Impasto Gel.

NB. Impasto Gel and Modelling Compound are fast drying but if applied thickly they can still take quite some time to dry.

SOME USEFUL MEDIUM MIXES

Liquifying Medium: This was as an Atelier medium for airbrush and other liquid effects. It has recently been discontinued because you can make up your own very easily by diluting Liquid Slow Medium 50:50 with water.

Gloss Medium: If you like using Gloss Medium for more “glow” you can make a slow drying one with 2 parts of Slow Medium to one part of Binder Medium or a faster drying one with 2 parts of Clear Painting Medium and one part of Binder.

In attempting to describe the use of paint and mediums, words really never seem to suffice, the best way to learn how to use the mediums is to try out the ones which sound the most appealing to you and don't be afraid to experiment!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE REFER TO

- [Atelier Interactive Basic Users Guide - Info Sheet 101](#)
- [Atelier Interactive Fast and Slow Painting Techniques Info sheet 102](#)
- [Plein Air Painting with Atelier Interactive Info Sheet 103](#)
- [Atelier Guide to Grounds & Mediums](#)
- [Atelier Interactive Q & A Flier](#)
- [Atelier Interactive Combine Old and New Techniques A5 Leaflet](#)
- [Atelier Interactive Colour Chart](#)
- Atelier Interactive Website: www.atelierinteractive.com