



Dorland's Wax Instructions



Dorland's Wax Medium is a mixture of waxes and resin to be mixed with oil paint, powdered pigments, powdered metals, colored sands, dyes and other compatible fine art materials. The proportions of medium to pigment depend largely on the characteristics of the pigment and the desire of the artist.

NOTE: If using more than 1/3 cold wax medium to 2/3 oil paints, a rigid support such as a wood panel should be used. Paintings may crack on canvas due to the flexibility of the surface.

Oil Painting and Cold Wax Techniques

TEMPERING The pure medium is first thoroughly mixed and blended with each individual color (tube oil colors or pure pigments). Mix with a painting knife or spatula. This is known as tempering. After the virgin colors are tempered by the medium, they may then be intermixed and used in any fashion that the artist dictates. The proportions of medium to pigment depend largely on the characteristics of the pigment and the desires of the artist.

Mix desired proportions of wax medium with oil colors or dry pigments. (Some common ratios are 10% - 25% to 90% - 75% oil paint for oil painting; and 30% - 50% wax to 70% to 50% oil paint for more impasto techniques. As stated before, however, the proportions are flexible and depend on the effect the artist is trying to achieve).

Apply at room temperature using a brush or palette knife. The translucent wax allows light to penetrate into the paint body giving richness and vibrancy of tone. Cold wax paintings dry and cure faster than pure oil paintings, and may be polished when dry if desired.

Mixed Media

Wax is unlimited in this technique. Thinned washes or thick translucent impastos of Dorland's Wax Medium may be applied over drawn or painted artwork, or combined with a wide variety of media; dry or dispersed pigments, metallic powders, tempera powders, paper, wood, etc. A Masonite or wood panel with a gesso ground makes an excellent support. Use the wax for over painting, glazing, finishing, as a resist, etc.

Glazing and Thinning

Use turpentine and/or poppy seed oil for thinning or glazing to desired consistency. Adding Damar Varnish or another good quality artist's varnish will increase gloss and improve brushability. Other additives such as cobalt drying agents, etc., can be experimented with in conjunction with Dorland's, but may take away the characteristics of the wax.



Coldwax Technique Artist: Sue Stover

Other Uses for Dorland's Wax Medium

Dorland's Wax Medium is a museum-quality, matte finish protective coating. It is unsurpassed for cleaning and preserving antiques, woodcarvings, bronze, plastics, and other items worth protecting. For use over paintings photos, picture frames apply by rubbing wax over surface. Let harden for up to several days then buff with soft cloth.

WAX COATING PAINTINGS: For oils, cold wax, caseins, tempera, etc., rub wax medium over painting, brush off excess, smooth with brush (soft horsehair shoe brushes are excellent) and let dry several days or weeks before final polishing with a soft lint free cloth. Use directly from jar. For brushing or spraying, thin wax medium to a liquid with turpentine or mineral spirits. For more gloss, add damar or modern water-white synthetic varnishes that are turpentine soluble.

AS A FINAL PICTURE FINISH: Dorland's Wax Medium seals artwork with a clear, tough satin finish. It will not yellow or turn brown with age like some resin picture varnishes. Apply unthinned, brush smooth, and let dry several days if polishing is desired. Never varnish a wax-oil painting.

CLEANING WAX PAINTINGS: Use water or water with a mild detergent to remove dirt and grime. (Wax paintings only. Do not use water on oil paintings.)

FRAME FINISHING: Use gold, silver, or other metallic powders, dry pigments, oil colors, dyes, etc., mixed with wax medium. Rub on frame, wipe off excess, and polish. For spray or spatter, thin to liquid.

PHOTO SEALING: Rub wax medium over photo, brush off excess, smooth surface with brush, polish immediately to desired surface.

BASIC CLEANING FORMULA: Mix 1 part Dorland's Wax Medium to 6 parts turpentine. Rub on with cloth or swab, wipe off, repeat as necessary. (For more "bite," add alcohol, diacetone, or acetone to the above formula. CAUTION: These solvents may work faster, but are extremely flammable, toxic, and may remove paints and varnishes.)

WAX COATING: Rub wax medium onto surface, brush excess out of cracks, brush smooth. To receive full benefit, let harden several days before final polishing. For spray coating, thin wax medium to liquid, spray on, air blast excess from crevices, let dry and harden.

WAX POLISHING: Mix 1 part wax medium with 2 parts mineral spirits for a basic polishing wax. Rub on, wipe off, and polish immediately.

WAX STABILIZING: For porous and weakened pieces, worm eaten wood, weathered and decaying objects, repeatedly coat the surface with wax medium while using heat lamps to keep the surface warm and aid in penetration (Use heat lamps in well ventilated area). For hard to move garden sculpture, apply wax medium in hot sun.

*We do not recommend using Dorland's for hot wax painting because of the possibility of fire and the release of toxic fumes when the solvent is heated.