

Brush Tips & Techniques

Whether you are working with watercolors or paints, your brush is a technique tool. Try these variations.

Materials:

- Prang brushes - for watercolor; camel hair (Soft brushes are used for filling in color within outlines.) Prang brushes are available in sizes #1 through #12.
- Prang brushes - for paint; nylon brushes (Prang easel brushes are available in 1/4" through 1" sizes. (Stiff bristles are good for petals, leaves, and brand strokes.)
- Watercolor paper or
- Posterboard and newsprint paper
- Prang watercolors or
- Prang paints
- Water containers
- Saucers or shallow dishes for each color of paint
- Masking tape to tape down the edges of your paper
- Paper towels
- Newspaper or cardboard to protect table surfaces
- Glass (for tempera paints)
- Corrugated board

Learn To Handle Your Brushes

- New brushes are stiffened on purpose. Rinse the stiffener out before using a new brush.
- In watercolor painting you may have some drips and puddles. You can pinch the tip of your brush to wring out the excess water. A damp brush will draw more color than a wet brush.
- Never pull the bristles of a brush; it will ruin the brush.
- To create a point to your brush, hold the damp brush between your thumb and forefinger and roll it gently in the pan.



Practice Makes Perfect

- To blend colors, dip one side of a nearly dry brush in one color, and the other side in another color. Spread the colors across a damp piece of paper.
- For texture on dry paper, wipe most of the color off your brush with a soft cloth or paper towel. A drier brush will produce a more textured look.
- Double strokes are easy and add interest to your painting. Dip your brush in a color, then separate the bristles into two sections. Now as you paint, one stroke becomes two!



TIP You'll get different line widths depending on how you split the bristles. Use your fingers, a toothpick, or any other pointed instrument to divide the bristles into a variety of sections.

TIP The drier the brush, the darker the paint tones. The wetter the brush, the lighter the paint tones.

Once you're comfortable with your brush and have experimented with Prang watercolors or paints, try some of these basic brush techniques.

- A fast stroke shows a sense of activity and speed.



- A slow stroke shows weight and depth.



- Dragging the brush slowly creates a more pronounced effect.



- Twisting and turning your brush on the paper will create squiggles and swirls.



- Zigzag your brush for wavy vertical or horizontal lines.



Now that you've learned these brush techniques, create your own masterpieces!