

## Brush Selection

Choosing a brush is a matter of personal preference, but each brush hair and shape has its own unique qualities.

### Natural Soft Hair

For use with watercolor, oil-based products and acrylic specialty paints. Natural hair is more absorbent than synthetic hair.

- *Kolinsky*-Finest red sable. Finely pointed hair with superb spring, strength, and absorbency.
- *Red Sable*-Hair from the weasel family. Many qualities are available on the market. Ideally they hold a fine point with good spring and absorbency. Well suited to smooth strokes and blending in oils and watercolors.
- *Ox*-Strong, silken hair often used in moderately priced brushes. Lacks the fine tip of red sable.
- *Goat*-Possesses good absorbency with a soft, wiry feel. A relatively inexpensive hair.
- *Squirrel*-Highly absorbent, finely pointed hairs, but lacks the spring of red sable.
- *Camel*-An all-encompassing term for brushes made from a variety of hairs, none of which are camel. They may include ox, goat, squirrel, and pony hair.

### Natural Bristle

Coarse, strong hair that ideally has a natural curve and flagged tips. Well suited to work with heavier mediums like oils, acrylics, and tempera. White bristle comes in many grades. Black bristle is a stiffer, economically priced hair.

### Synthetic Hair

Suitable for all media. Easy to clean and ideal for use with acrylics.

Fibers are manufactured in various thicknesses, each tapering to a fine point. Available in white or dyed (Taklon). Taklon is softer and more absorbent. Performance characteristics and durability can vary. The best synthetic brushes combine filaments of 3 or more thicknesses.

### Synthetic Bristle

Stiff, coarse tapered fibers lacking the flags and curve of natural bristle, but suitable for work on rough surfaces, and excellent for use in stencil and fabric painting brushes.

### Long or Short Handle?

Short-handle brushes are the choice for most craft and hobby applications when working at a table or other flat surface. A short handle is also the preferred length for watercolors. Long handles are designed for easel work so that painters may distance themselves from their work.

## Brush Shapes and Strokes

### Liner Brush Strokes

Use for small details like eye lashes, thin lines and outlining objects. Thin acrylic paint with 50% water so paint will flow easily from the tip of the brush.



### Script Brush Strokes

Use for long thin lines, long thin strokes, tendrils, script style lettering and outlining the edges of projects. Thin acrylic paint with 50% water so paint will flow easily from the tip of the brush.



### Round Brush Strokes

Use for decorative stroke work like comma strokes, teardrops, "S" shapes, "Thin-Thick-Thin" strokes, "C" strokes, broad lines and filling round areas.



### Filbert Brush Strokes

Use for fat round "Teardrops", leaves, flower petals and floating shadows or highlights in rounded areas. This brush is also referred to as a "cat's tongue".



### Flat Brush Strokes

Use for stroke work with flat edges, base coating square areas, corner load to float color when shading and highlighting objects.



### Angular Brush Strokes

Use for stroke work with slanted edges, base coating square areas, corner load to float color when shading and highlighting objects. The long tip makes it easy to get into small corners and to make fanned out petals and leaves.



## Brush Care

Follow these tips to keep your brushes in top-working condition.

- When loading, using, or cleaning, work hairs in their natural direction.
- Do not leave a brush soaking in liquid for long periods, especially resting on its bristles
- Never allow paint to dry on your brush or work its way into the ferrule.
- Clean your brushes thoroughly and promptly with a cleaning solution suited to the media used. For best results use a brush cleaner and always read the instructions given on the paint/cleaner containers.
- Store brushes lying flat or with the heads upright so there is no pressure on the hair.