

Making Paint

Until about a hundred years ago, paint was created by hand. Painters mixed pigments (colors) with a sticky material called a *binder*, such as gum arabic, egg (egg white glair or yolk), or oil.

Materials

- Mussel shells or condiment cups or plastic pallets
- Natural pigments (e.g., raw umber) or instant coffee, Kool-aid, and crushed colored chalk
- Dropper
- Coffee stirrers
- Gum arabic and honey, egg white, or egg yolk



Steps:

1. Place $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of ground pigment into a mussel shell or pallet.



2. Using a dropper, add a couple of drops of water to the pigment to create pigment paste. Use just enough water to create a paste. Mix the solution with a coffee stirrer.



3. Add equal parts of pigment paste and a binder.

- For gum arabic: Purchase online or at an art store.
- For egg white glair: Beat egg whites to stiff peaks until it has a meringue consistency. Let the egg whites sit over night. Once the liquid separates reserve the yellow liquid, which is the glair. Dispose of the whites.
- For egg yolk: Separate egg yolk and drain.



4. If using gum arabic, add one drop of honey to improve the sheen of the paint and mix.



5. Repeat steps 1–4 for each color of paint desired. You may wish to make a variety of primary and secondary colors.