

ALCOHOL INK SUPPLY LIST

Below is a list of the main supplies I use when I work with alcohol inks. Some are essential, others are fun to have but not necessary—just depends on what you want to do, what effects you want to get, etc.

ESSENTIAL PAINTING SUPPLIES

These are your bare minimum supplies that you will need to get started. While there are lots of lots of things you could buy, these four are the foundation.

Inks Brands include Ranger, Jacquard, Spectrum Noir, Blick, Copic, Art-C, Brea Reese. I have several brands and use them interchangeably. Ranger and Jacquard are fairly easy to find at places like Michael's, and often come in sets. Other brands, such as Copic, are sold individually and can be found at art supply stores such as Dick Blick. You don't necessarily need to have lots of colors to get started—just grab some that appeal to you and you can always add more. I suggest getting at least half a dozen to begin with, more if you just can't resist. I know I can't!

Alcohol: I use 91% isopropyl that you can buy at any drugstore. This is what you will use to dilute ink, blend colors, clean your tools and workspace, get ink off your hands, etc

Blending solution: This is also used to dilute inks, blend colors, and so forth. Most ink companies make a version of this. Ranger's is called Alcohol Blending Solution, Jacquard makes Claro Extender, Copic's is called Colorless Blender. Using this rather than straight alcohol can help your inks stay shinier as they dry.

Paper: My go-to is Yupo paper, which is a synthetic (plastic) paper, and what I suggest you begin with for this class. Yupo is the original brand, and I believe there are also some newcomers out there in the synthetic paper field, though I've not tried them yet. I recommend you

buy at least one pad to get started. You can find Yupo paper at most art supply stores, and of course online.

TOOLS

These are the things I use most often for all of the techniques I will be sharing with you.

Gloves. While you can certainly work without them, you'll find that these inks can be quite drippy and messy, and don't easily come off of your skin. Gloves will keep your manicure looking decent :)

Plastic drop cloth or some kind of nonporous sheeting to protect your work surface and floor. And walls, if you're working near them.

Paper Towels—for cleanup, absorbing drippy inks, etc.

An apron or smock to keep your clothes protected. Or, wear clothing that you don't care about—the inks will not easily come out if you get it on you.

Painting tools: cheap paintbrushes, sponge brushes, cosmetic sponges, q-tips, and old credit cards all make interesting possibilities for mark making. For your brushes, use something you don't care about, and remember that you need to clean them with alcohol to get the ink out. I find that smaller round brushes are what I use most often, though any shape and size can work, depending on the effect you're going for.

Watercolor palette: for mixing colors when you want to get away from straight-out-of-the-bottle colors, or for fine brushwork.

Small needle nose bottles. I like these for dripping alcohol or blending solution and mixing custom colors.

Small plastic cups, for mixing colors

Pipettes or eyedroppers—for dripping alcohol, colors, etc

Spray bottle: fill with alcohol or blending solution and use for getting interesting texture in your paintings and/or for cleanup.

Straws—for blowing/moving ink around. Different sizes if you can find them.

Canned air—for manipulating ink without a brush. This is one of my favorite tools, and I go through a lot of it.

A hairdryer or heat gun—for moving the inks around and getting them to dry more quickly. Ideally you'll want something that has variable heat and speed settings, so that you have more control over how you're blowing the ink around and how quickly it dries. Be careful with the heat—you can warp your paper if you're not careful.

An airbrush—While I don't use one (yet), I know many AI artists love using an airbrush rather than canned air. Over time, it will save you money if you use lots of canned air.

Alternative substrates—Alcohol inks can be used on any non-porous surface, including glass, plexiglass, glazed ceramic tiles, metal, photo paper (use the back side, not the photo side), vellum, pre-gessoed canvas, mineral paper, claybord—basically, the less absorbent it is, the better the inks will flow on it. If you feel like experimenting and have any of this on hand already, give it a try!

Kamar Varnish and Kamar UV Protectant: we will use these to seal and protect any pieces you want to display. Two to three coats of varnish first, and then two to three coats of UV Protectant should help your artwork to last. Be sure your ink is completely dry before spraying.