

CULTIVATING TEXTURE: A GUIDE TO LAYERED, ORGANIC ACRYLIC BACKGROUNDS

Master the Art of Acrylic Mixed Media with Layered Techniques



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Welcome to a gentle exploration into the world of acrylic mixed media art, where texture and creativity flourish. This guide offers insights into building rich, layered textures using everyday tools, often found right at home. Just like nurturing a garden, this artistic journey requires layering, patience, and a dash of curiosity. Some textures will emerge immediately, while others may need time to settle before adding the next layer.

Inside, you'll discover a curated selection of tools that have become my trusted companions in the studio, as well as a few playful, unexpected treasures. I hope you find inspiration in these tools to create your own vibrant, textured art.

XO, Megan Colleen
Artist

Visit my art world: www.megancolleenart.com

Follow my journey: Instagram: [@megancolleenart](https://www.instagram.com/megancolleenart)

Studio Perennials: Tools I Return to Again and Again

- **Palette Knife:** Perfect for spreading and scraping paint layers.
- **Catalyst Wedges:** Great for creating sweeping textures and lines.
- **Brayer:** Ideal for rolling paint smoothly or creating layered prints.
- **Old Credit or Gift Cards:** Fantastic for scraping, spreading, and cutting edges.
- **Fork:** Versatile for scraping through wet paint or creating dotted textures.

Found & Foraged Tools: Playful, Unexpected Mark-Makers

- **Old Toothbrushes:** Excellent for splattering paint or adding fine textures.
- **Pen Tops:** Create unique circular patterns.
- **PEX Tubing:** Perfect for stamping circles onto your artwork.
- **Children's Toys or LEGOs:** Use these for their varied shapes and textures.
- **Your Fingers:** The ultimate tool for tactile engagement and expressive marks.

Paper & Collage Layers: Textures I Love to Build into Backgrounds

- **Thick White Cardstock (100 lb):** Provides a sturdy base or layer.
- **Vintage Wallpaper:** Adds character and history.
- **Old Book or Song Sheets:** Infuse a narrative element.
- **Maps, Calendars, and Printed Papers:** Offer diverse patterns and themes.
- **Napkins with Printed Designs:** Delicate with intricate patterns.
- **Paper Doilies:** Lend a decorative touch.
- **Stencils:** For precise, repeatable designs.

How I Use These Tools: There Are No Rules Here

Think of this creative process like tending a garden. Make marks freely and layer intuitively. If things start to feel muddy, take a break, let the surface dry, and then return to build more. Mixed media is vast and forgiving, welcoming exploration without fear of mistakes.

A Few Ways I Use These Tools

- **Credit Cards / Gift Cards:** Cut one edge with pinking shears to create a versatile mark-maker.
- **Forks:** Scrape through wet paint or create dotted textures with a fork's dull points.
- **Bubble Wrap:** Apply paint to the bubbles with a brush, then press onto your surface for soft, organic patterns.

Studio Notes

Surface Tip: I prefer wood panels or hardboard for heavy textures as they withstand sharp tools better than traditional canvases.

Paper Tip: Use gloss or matte gel medium to adhere collage papers. Liquitex gel medium is my favorite, acting as both glue and sealant, and it dries clear.

You'll see many of these tools in use as I share my process on Instagram. Join me as we explore the colorful, textured world of mixed media art.