

How to Care for Original Oil Paintings:

These tips will protect your painting and keep it in great condition for decades.

Oil paints are usually dry to the touch within one to two weeks but ***take up to a year to fully cure***. Paintings that have not cured are more susceptible to damage because the paint is softer. If the painting is newly finished, be especially careful not to touch the surface, as it may damage the paint.

1. Be sure your oil paintings are properly framed. While you may be used to framing artwork under glass, ***oil paintings should be framed without glass***. While glass will protect from dust, it makes the painting harder to appreciate and can even damage the delicate surface, especially if in direct contact.
2. Protect your oil paintings from environmental damage. Many of us have seen before and after images of oil paintings that have been cleaned, and can see the harm done by smoke and air pollution. ***Limit any smoking near oil paintings, and limit the use of candles and incense***. Prolonged exposure to ***direct sunlight will fade the colors*** in your oil painting. Please be aware of this when choosing a location for your work
3. ***Never expose your painting to extreme heat, extreme cold, or to extreme humidity.***
4. ***Dust your oil paintings***. A thick layer of dust will dry out the paint, possibly causing cracking. Don't spray anything (like Pledge) on the painting. ***A soft, clean brush, like a paintbrush, may be used to dust paintings***. You can also keep artwork dust free by using a low power vacuum with a hose and brush attachment.

If a painting is severely dirty, warm water with a small amount of mild detergent may be used. Using a clean, soft cloth, blot the painting gently. ***Regular dusting will prevent the need for further cleaning and is a critical part of caring for artwork.***

5. Your painting has a temporary varnish on it, which protects the surface. ***After a year, it can be permanently varnished***, if desired. It can last longer, so whenever it appears to lose its sheen, and the tones appear not as intense (especially the dark tones), it's time to re-varnish. Have a professional framer or art restorer do this.

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If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me.

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