

How to Paint a Boho Giraffe



Type: Real-Time

Time: 1-Hour

Medium: Acrylic

Section #1: Draw a rough sketch of Giraffe and flowers using reference photo provided in the tutorial library. Apply darkest tones to spots and face foreground.

1. Mix Burnt Sienna and Raw Sienna
2. Apply paint to spots.
3. Mix Portrait Pink and Naples Yellow.
4. Apply to face around spots.
5. Leave outline around eyes temporarily.
6. Work the paint down the neck.
7. As you progress down the neck, add in Naples Yellow.
8. Continue with spots using first color mixture.
9. Add first color mixture to neck hair, using tip of medium brush to create hair.
10. Mix Raw Sienna, Vermillion, and Burnt Umber.
11. Apply to horns, ears, and mouth.
12. Apply Burnt Umber to eye.
13. Mix Burnt Umber and Titanium White.
14. Apply to horns, ears, and nostrils.

Section Notes: Don't worry if you go outside the lines of your sketch. In the detail stage we will fix that. Make sure you wash out brush along the way. Adding paint around spots may become very difficult as paint dries to the bristles.



Section #2: Painting flower and leaf crown.

1. Mix Grass Green and Naples Yellow.
2. Apply first layer to all leaves.
3. Apply Burnt Umber to centers of flowers.
4. Mix Yellow, Titanium White, and Vermillion.
5. Apply to Echinacea flower pedals.
6. Mix Cadmium Red and Titanium White.
7. Apply to largest flower pedals.
8. Mix Naples Yellow and Titanium White.
9. Apply highlights shown by Lauren.
10. Work this color down neck.

Section Notes: Make sure by the end of this section that all graphite pencil has been painted over.

Section #3: Creating contrast with light and dark tones.

1. Mix Raw Sienna, Naples Yellow, and Vermillion Orange.
2. Apply medium tone according to Lauren's paint placement.
3. Mix Titanium White and Portrait Pink.
4. Place highlight according to Lauren's paint placement.

Section Notes: "Dab" paint instead of "painting in" to create abstract look. This also allows base colors to pop from the bottom.



Section #4: Adding a color gradient to background.

1. Choose whatever two colors you would like to paint the background with. We are creating a color gradient so try to choose two colors that are somewhat similar. Examples: Pink and purple, Lime green with Turquoise, Yellow with Orange.
2. Mix Viridian with Ultramarine Blue.
3. As you progress to the top, add in the lightest color. In my case, I was using Viridian at the top.
4. Apply fast, wet into wet paint, in order to blend properly.
5. **Color Gradient**: The gradual transition from one color hue to another.
6. Mix Titanium White and Viridian.
7. Apply to the top of painting.

Section Notes: Allot enough time for yourself to do background in one sitting. This step requires paint to be wet in order to create color gradient.

Section #5: Adding final medium tone to Giraffe face.

1. Mix Raw Sienna with Yellow Naples.
2. Apply to areas needing contrast. Watch Lauren demonstrate.

Section Notes: Keep up dabbing or blotching paint instead of painting in. Try your best not to paint over spots.

Section #6: Adding highlights and shadows to flowers.



1. Mix Grass Green and Naples Yellow.
2. Apply highlight to all leaves. Watch Lauren demonstrate.
3. Mix Cadmium Red with Naples Yellow.
4. Apply highlight to the pedals of largest flower.
5. Mix Naples Yellow and a very little Cadmium Red.
6. Apply highlights to Echinacea flower pedals.

Section Notes: Don't worry if colors don't look exactly like mine. Matching colors can take years of practice to Master. Try your best to get somewhat close to the colors I mix. And always test the color if you are not sure.

Section #7: Adding highlights to the eye, hair, and final highlights to the crown of flowers.

1. Mix Titanium White and Mars Black to create different grey tones.
2. Keep detail brush clean.
3. Apply different grey tones to eye. Mixing Titanium White in when necessary.
4. To complete the eye, add in a small amount of Mars Black to create more shape around the eye.
5. Mix Vermillion Orange with Naples Yellow to create flower highlights
6. Mix Burnt Umber with Titanium White to create small dots within the center of each flower.
7. Mix Naples Yellow, Titanium White, and Raw Sienna to create first layer of highlight on neck hair.
8. Optional Step: create medium tone on neck hair by mixing Raw Sienna with Burnt Umber.

9. Mix Titanium White with Naples Yellow to create lightest highlight on neck hair.



Section Notes: Be patient with the process. Great paintings require a lot of steps, but each step is just as important as the other.

Section #8: Adding highlights to spots.

1. Mix Raw Sienna with Vermillion Orange. Mix enough to dab highlights on every spot.

Section Notes: In this section all we're doing is adding one color to the spots. It's a very easy section, don't sweat it!

Congratulations! You are FINISHED.

Need Help?

If you would like feedback, advice, and/or would like to share your work with me, go right ahead! My email is linked below.

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Materials List: The colors you use may differ than the colors I used for this tutorial.

A. Acrylic Paint

- a. Raw Sienna
- b. Burnt Sienna
- c. Naples Yellow
- d. Yellow
- e. Portrait Pink
- f. Titanium White
- g. Mars Black
- h. Cadmium Red
- i. Grass Green
- j. Vermillion or Orange
- k. Optional background colors (Your choice):
Viridian and Ultramarine Blue

B. Paint Brushes

- a. Medium round brush - primary brush
- b. Medium flat brush - painting the background
- c. Small detail round brush - tiny detail work

C. Canvas

- a. Dimensions: 11" x 14"

D. Water

- a. Plastic cup or glass jar of water

E. Paint Pallet

- a. Paper plate, glass, or plastic paint pallet



F. Paint Cloth

- a. Paper towel or old cloth

G. Pallet Knife (optional)

- a. Brushes work fine, but pallet knife is great for mixing paint.