

Akua Intaglio Instructions

Ink Consistency

Akua Intaglio is different from traditional oil-based inks in that it has a buttery or liquid consistency. Separation may occur, therefore **mixing is necessary before using**. (This is especially true of Original Formula Inks. The stiffer, New Formula Ink may not need to be mixed.) Place the ink knife directly in the ink container and stir. Mix well from the bottom of the container to the top.

Akua Intaglio will never harden or form a skin in the container or when left uncovered.

The ink consistency varies depending upon the pigment and temperature conditions. Ink will be stiffer when cold and looser when warm.

When trying Akua Intaglio for the first time, we recommend using it right out of the jar without modification. However, if a stiffer consistency is desired, it is best to use Akua Oil Modifier.

Before mixing, work the Akua Oil with the ink knife until it is smooth. Then add Akua Intaglio Ink into the Akua Oil. Add small amounts of ink until the desired thickness is achieved.

An alternative is to put the jar of ink in the refrigerator or place it on a bowl of ice.

To loosen and thin the ink, mix in a few drops of Blending Medium with a knife. To loosen unmodified ink, work it with an ink knife under a warm lamp, hair dryer, or place the jar on a hot plate set a very low temperature.

To achieve transparency, Transperant Base can be mixed into Akua Intaglio ink to dilute the intensity of the color. Transparent Base is the Akua Intaglio Ink without the pigment.

Mixing Colors

Create new colors by mixing Akua Intaglio inks with one another using an ink knife, or by adding Akua Kolor into Akua Intaglio. Akua Kolor is so highly concentrated that a few drops added to the same Akua Intaglio color will enrich it. Note: Akua Intaglio will temporarily thicken when Akua Kolor is added to it.

Wiping the plate

Akua Intaglio is very soft ink. With intaglio printmaking, it can be applied and wiped off the plate much easier and quicker than oil-based inks. Therefore, at first there may be a tendency to remove too much ink. For best results, use cheesecloth, or very soft tarlatan to wipe the surface of the plate. Roll the cheesecloth or soft tarlatan into a large ball shape. Follow through with a paper wipe if necessary. Be careful not to press your fingers into the inked surface of the plate. Since the ink is soft, it will transfer fingerprint impressions easily.

Printing on Paper

Akua Intaglio ink prints well on most standard printmaking papers. We suggest conducting a test by printing the same plate twice. Make one print on dry paper and another print on dampened paper. Your results may depend upon individual plate characteristics and the type of paper used.

Printing on **dry paper** offers higher contrast prints. It also eliminates the possibility of paper shrinkage, making it ideal for printing multi-registered plates or combining prints with digital ink jet or letterpress images. Increase the press pressure and use soft printmaking papers when printing on dry paper. If the print results are blotchy or inconsistent it may be necessary to dampen the paper.

Printing on **damp paper** may offer greater tonal values and more consistent print results for aquatints. Soak western paper for 30 seconds and blot thoroughly before using. Japanese handmade papers should never be soaked. Instead, either mist lightly or place between sheets of dampened newsprint for at least one hour or preferably overnight.

Re-Soaking Prints

Akua Intaglio ink is permanent. If necessary, prints may be placed in a tray of water immediately after printing. Do not soak prints too long and be careful not to touch the image while wet.

Print Drying Times

Akua Intaglio ink does not contain dryers. Typically a shallow bitten plate will take 24 hours to dry. Deeply bitten plates may take two weeks or longer. Drying time may also depend upon paper absorbency, climate, and the amount of ink applied. Glossy or coated papers are not recommended. Absorbent papers, like Japanese Washi, will dry quicker.

In the case of very deeply bitten plates or relief prints which require a heavier application of ink, there are two ways to speed up drying time.

1) Cobalt dryers sold for oil-based inks will work with Akua Intaglio. If you choose to add cobalt dryers, please follow safety instructions from your supplier.

Add a maximum of 0.5% to 1% cobalt dryer to the ink (just a drop or two is usually enough).

Prepare just the amount of ink you need for the next 30-60 minutes.

IMPORTANT NOTES: The cobalt dryer starts to activate immediately after adding it to the ink. Never mix cobalt dryer into to the jar. Never put ink with dryer back in the jar! Stir the ink regularly during printing.

2) Thoroughly mix approximately 10% magnesium carbonate by volume into the ink. Allow the mixture to sit overnight. Do not skip this step; if you do, the drying time will not be changed. The ink will bubble slightly so cover it loosely but do not put it in an air tight container. Print as usual the next day.

We are experimenting with mixing magnesium carbonate into an entire jar of ink to see if that causes any problems over the long term, but for now, simply add it to the ink you plan to use the next day.

Cleaning Up

We recommend that you wear gloves while cleaning up. First, clean all inky surfaces and plates with a dry rag. Roll excess ink on brayers off onto newsprint or the pages from an old telephone book and then clean with a dry rag. Use 1 part liquid dish detergent to 20 parts water for cleaning up any remaining ink residue. If necessary, use a little vinegar diluted with water to clean any soap build up.

Safety

Akua water-based inks are safer to use, easier to clean up and work with than oil based inks. They can be used without special ventilation, toxic solvents, or fireproof containers. Akua inks have been certified by a qualified toxicologist and are labeled: Non Toxic Approved Product Conforms to ASTM D4236.

Technical Support

Contact McClain's or address questions and comments to Susan Rostow by email at wb-inks@att.net.



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