

# HOW TO APPLY AN ACRYLIC GROUND TO RAW CANVAS OR LINEN\*

In preparation to create a sound painting surface for your stretched raw canvas/ linen, you must apply a ground consisting of sizing (glue which protects the cloth fibers from the degenerative effects of acidic oils found in oil paint) and a primer (a base coat consisting of Pigment Whiting, Calcium Carbonate and Polymer vehicle) in the proper consistency which allows paint to adhere to the foundation of the primer. A properly primed surface is critical to the overall archival quality of a painting's life span. Poor preparation can lead to premature cracking, chipping or flaking in painting surfaces. Utrecht Acrylic Gesso is both sizing and priming in one, and prepares any appropriate support to receive oil, alkyd or acrylic paint. Please refer to options below. Our Acrylic Canvas Sizing is an excellent polymer size with low viscosity consistency and stable alkaline base that will not change or yellow over time.

## SIZING

Sizing is a critical step, some artists choose to apply an acrylic or PVA sizing underneath gesso to seal the nap of the cloth and preserve a tight stretch. Utrecht Acrylic Canvas Sizing is ready to use for this purpose. Refer to priming options.

## PRIMING PROCEDURES

For stretched canvas, linen or panels. The following are the recommended priming options for the preparation of acrylic gesso grounds for oil painting.

### OPTION 1

- 3 coats of Utrecht Acrylic Gesso
- First coat thinned 1 part water/2 parts gesso, second & third coats (diluted or full strength)

### OPTION 2

- 1 coat Utrecht Acrylic Canvas Sizing (item 6326)
- 2 coats of Utrecht Acrylic Gesso (diluted or full strength)

### OPTION 3

- 2 coats Utrecht Acrylic Canvas Sizing (item 6326)
- 1 coat of Utrecht Acrylic Gesso (diluted or full strength) \*Acrylic paintings do not require multiple coatings.

## WARNING:

Over diluting Utrecht Acrylic Gesso with water can cause gesso coating to crack, flake or loose adhesion. Maximum allowable ratio of water to gesso to guarantee the integrity of product is 1 part water/2parts gesso.

\* For Studio Series Gesso, follow directions on container.

## GETTING STARTED

First coat, thin Utrecht Acrylic Gesso with 1 part water/2 parts gesso. This allows the gesso to penetrate the fibers of the canvas or wood panel and assures a good bond. You may use Utrecht Acrylic Canvas Sizing item 6326 in place of initial thinned gesso coat as suggested above under priming options. Use Utrecht oil/gesso Priming Knife item 43953 for best results to spread gesso over entire canvas surface then use the Utrecht Gesso Brush item 40183 to smooth coating to achieve a professional finish.

The first coat will dry in 1 to 3 hours. Lightly sand first coating with a fine grit sand paper or sanding block to remove any undesirable roughness which will show on final coat. Take special care not to over sand edges.

The second and third coatings of gesso may be diluted or full strength depending on desired finish. Apply the same way as first coating. Do not sand the final layer. Clean brush and priming knife with soap and water.

## HELPFUL HINTS:

- Moisten brush to increase priming flow.
- Hold priming knife blade on a 45° angle while making coating passes.
- Don't forget the 3 coat minimum also applies to side edges. All four sides of the canvas should be coated with gesso, covering staples or tacks.

**When completely dry, the canvas is ready to accept oil, acrylic or alkyd paints.**



FIG. 1



FIG. 2



FIG. 3



FIG. 4