



Brush Strokes



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PAINTING YOUR PETS

Wouldn't you love to paint your pet dog or cat? It could even be a pet bird or monkey. My best friend had a pet monkey for years and what a show he put on when she brought him inside. Have you heard the phrase "the eyes are the windows of the soul?" If you are made aware of that then this is the first thing you need to learn to paint.

The markings of your pet are very important. The whites or reflections of light need to be in the right place, and the drawing and the eventual painting should look like your pet.

One thing an artist often gets wrong is the angle of the light in the eye, or leaving the light out entirely. Then the eyes cease to exist since they will become flat. In a cat's eye, for example, the eyeball itself is like a marble, and in order to show that, the light in the eye has to curve so that the pupil and the color of the pupil seem to be on a flat surface behind the clear part of the marble out in front. It's all about the light in the eye. The cat above was painted by Nan Scott, and her cat's name is "Tiger Woods." She's captured both this cat's personality and his coloring.



Another serious "beginning" to the eye, particularly if it is brown like most dogs, horses, cattle and domestic pets is the base coat in the eye of Burnt Sienna. The steps are as follows: first use masking fluid to paint in the white or light of the eye as it appears. This is based on where the light is coming from and both eyes should show that feature. If the photo you are painting from shows two white dots in each eye, that portrays the use of a flash, and should not appear that way in the painting. Begin with where you want the light to show, and work from that angle.

Many cats have gold or green eyes, but if you look closely you will see that those colors are floaters. In that case begin with a yellow instead of Burnt Sienna, such as Raw Sienna and while it is wet, drop in a little Cerulean Blue. After that is dry, think of the pupil. In every case I've seen it is black, but with the base you have painted in the eye will glow. The two little dogs are "Baily and Kelly" by Elyse Hendrick.