

Oil Painting in Educational Settings: WHS-Aligned Safe Work Guidelines

This document outlines a risk-managed approach to oil painting in educational settings, aligned with common WHS principles and safe work practices.

Key Principle

The primary risk in oil painting relates to solvent use rather than the paint itself.
Eliminating solvents significantly reduces overall risk.

1. Solvent-Free Method

- Avoid turpentine and mineral spirits
- Use linseed or safflower oil sparingly
- Clean brushes by wiping excess paint, then washing with soap and water

2. Materials Selection

- Use reputable, clearly labelled oil paints
- Prefer low-toxicity or student-grade ranges
- Limit cadmium or cobalt pigments with younger students

3. Hygiene Practices

- No eating or drinking while painting
- Wash hands after use
- Avoid touching face while working
- Cover cuts or broken skin
- Use aprons or protective clothing as needed

4. Ventilation

- Work in a well-ventilated room
- Open windows or allow airflow
- No extreme ventilation required without solvents

5. Rag Handling

- Lay rags flat to dry OR
- Store in a metal container with lid
- Dispose once fully dry

6. Tools

- Standard classroom tools are appropriate
- Palette knives with supervision
- Use standard pencil sharpeners

7. Not Generally Required

- Solvents or chemical cleaners
- Goggles
- Mandatory long-sleeve PPE
- Overly restrictive studio conditions

Summary

Oil painting is a safe and effective classroom medium when solvents are removed, materials are used sensibly, and basic hygiene is followed.

This document supports risk-managed art practices aligned with WHS principles.