HANDOUT FOR THE VIDEO “COLORANTS AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS”

I hope you were able to take away some useful tips for yourself and your art from my video “Colorants and Their Characteristics.” Since you probably can’t remember everything, I’ve put together this handout with all the important information for you.

COLORANTS IN RESIN ART

Color plays a major role in resin art: the combination of **successful color compositions** and **exciting effects** (such as cell structures) **creates fascinating pieces.**

Choosing the right colors is very important.

Which colors you select is, of course, up to you.

COLOR COMBINATIONS AND CONTRASTS

In addition to **color itself**, there are **different levels of opacity**, which vary from one colorant to another.

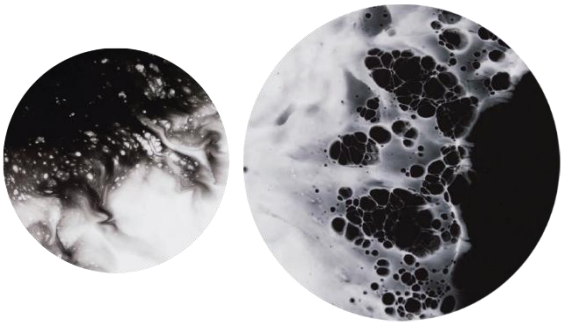
Most **containers have a symbol** showing whether the color is **opaque** or **transparent**, which may be labeled as “glazing” or “semi-transparent” on the packaging.

OPACITY AND DENSITY

An important factor is the density of colorants. Colorants have different densities, which greatly affects working with colored resin**. A higher-density colorant tends to sink to the bottom, while a lower-density one stays closer to the surface,** making it more visible on your artwork.

For example, titanium white is a colorant with high density, while carbon black has a low density. **The more low-density colorants you use, the more they will dominate your piece.**

Check the density information on your product’s safety data sheet. This allows you to easily compare different colorants.



THE CORRECT ORDER WHEN COLORING

1.) **Decide before mixing the resin** which **colors, colorants,** and any **additional additives** you want to use.

2.) Always **add the colorant to the fully mixed resin** (not to the individual components).

3.) The proportion of liquid colorants should not exceed 8% of the uncolored resin volume. Example: **100 ml of resin = maximum 8 ml of colorant**. This ensures the resin cures as intended.

4.) Addition of liquid materials, including liquid colorants: **The total proportion of liquid materials should not exceed 10% of the uncolored resin volume**. Otherwise, the resin will not cure properly.

5.) Addition of non-liquid materials, such as pigment powders or fillers: **The proportion of these materials can be up to 30% of the uncolored resin volume. The resin will still cure, but it may not be as hard as without this high amount.** It may also lose some gloss and become more matte.

6.) **All other additives** (such as alcohol, resi-BLAST, or silicone) **should be added last**, i.e., to the already mixed and colored resin.

POLYMER-BASED COLOR PASTES

Consistency: These color pastes have a very **high viscosity, meaning they are thick and dense.**

Note: Polymer-based color pastes are highly concentrated, so you only need a small amount to work with. For example, half a teaspoon is enough to fully color 200 ml of resin. This also puts the higher price into perspective.

Special features: Thanks to the prepolymers, these color pastes blend well with resin. This allows you to create amazing visual effects in your pieces without adding other materials. These pastes are available in many different shades, including metallic colors. **They usually have a high degree of lightfastness, which is often indicated on the packaging or in the safety data sheet.**

PIGMENT POWDERS

Consistency: As the name suggests, **pigment powders are powders, meaning they are dry colorants. Pay attention to their granularity:** Is the powder fine (low granularity) or coarse (high granularity)? **The finer it is, the easier it is to add to resin.**

Metallic pigments, for example, are very fine and can be added directly to the mixed resin. **The coarser the powder, the more likely you’ll need to dissolve it before mixing it in.**

Dissolving works well with alcohol. You don’t need much: **for a pinch of pigment powder, about half a teaspoon of alcohol is enough.** So dissolve the coarse powder first, then mix it into the resin.

Note: Make sure that not every pigment is suitable for use with resin. You can find this information at the time of purchase or directly from the manufacturer.

Special features: Pigment powders allow you to create amazing effects on your artwork. **Very fine pigments can be sprinkled or blown onto the still-wet resin surface**, which looks especially stunning with metallic pigments. You can also **mix fine pigments with alcohol** and **spray them onto your piece after pouring**.

COLOR SPRAYS

Consistency: Colorants don’t have to be in liquid or powder form - **they are also available as sprays.**

Note: Color sprays usually contain solvents, so wearing a respirator mask is necessary.

Special features: You can use sprays to create exciting effects on the resin surface. They can also be used to **color mixed resin directly in the mixing cup.**

ALCOHOL INKS

Consistency: These inks are very fluid, semi-transparent colorants based on alcohol.

Note: Alcohol inks are not lightfast and therefore not UV-stable; they may fade over time.

Special features: Since alcohol serves as the carrier, **you can drip the ink onto the still-wet resin after pouring.** This creates beautiful effects that you can further manipulate with a heat gun. You can shape and size the drops as you like. **Alcohol inks can also be used to color mixed resin**.

ACRYLIC INKS

Consistency: Acrylic inks are also known under the general term airbrush colors. **These inks have a low viscosity**, meaning they are **very fluid**.

Note: Acrylic inks have a very high **pigment content**, so you only need to **use a small amount**. Usually, just a few drops - depending on the total resin volume - are enough to color the resin.

Special features: Acrylic inks mix very well with each other, allowing you to create your own custom colors and make your artwork even more unique

ACRYLIC PAINTS

Consistency: If you want to work with acrylic paint, **choose a color with low viscosity** (thin).

Note: Use high-quality acrylic paints, as they generally contain less binder. Binders with a milky appearance can cause the mixed resin to cure somewhat matte.

Special features: You can avoid this by **using acrylic paint made with a clear acrylic binder**. Acrylic paints are often used for fluid painting and have high flow properties.

OIL PAINTS

Consistency: Oil paints color the resin but do not fully blend with it. Because **oil paint and resin don’t mix well,** you automatically get interesting effects on the resin surface.

Note: There are two main points to consider. First, you need to **stir much longer to incorporate the oil paint into the resin**. Second, you **cannot create additional effects with materials like silicone or resi-BLAST,** as these are also oil-based and will not interact or displace the oil paint.

Special features: Oil paint can create amazing effects on your resin surface.

OTHER CREATIVE COLORANTS

Where in your world can you find color? Can you use those materials in your resin art? Be adventurous!

Use so-called **mica pigments** from the cosmetics industry. Or create with **nail polish**. With **food coloring**. Be curious and experimental. If in doubt, test a tiny amount first to see how the materials interact and what effects they produce. **Unusual combinations often create fascinating effects, making your piece unique and special.**

Unsure about how transparent or opaque your mixed and colored resin is? Use a clear mixing cup and hold it up to the light. Then let the resin flow off the mixing stick - this gives you a good idea of its coverage.

If your resin contains a lot of additives, the surface may not fully cure. Here’s a way to fix it: **When about 70% of the surface has cured (no longer looks wet), pour an additional layer of clear resin.** This ensures the entire surface cures properly.

COLORANTS AT A GLANCE

• When choosing colors and colorants, **consider factors such as color combinations, contrasts, opacity, and density.**

• **Only use suitable colorants** and mix them into the resin according to the instructions.

• Liquid, dry, or spray - colorants come in different forms, each with its own characteristics.

Have fun experimenting!

Yours,

Stefanie Ellis