



Artists' Brush Types

- **Round:** pointed tip, long closely arranged bristles for detail
- **Flat:** for spreading paint quickly and evenly over a surface. They will have longer hairs than their Bright counterpart.
- **Bright:** shorter than flats. Flat brushes with short stiff bristles, good for driving paint into the weave of a canvas in thinner paint applications, as well as thicker painting styles like impasto work.
- **Filbert:** flat brushes with domed ends. They allow good coverage and the ability to perform some detail work.
- **Fan:** for blending broad areas of paint.
- **Angle:** like the filbert, these are versatile and can be applied in both general painting application as well as some detail work.
- **Mop:** a larger format brush with a rounded edge for broad soft paint application as well as for getting thinner glazes over existing drying layers of paint without damaging lower layers.
- **Rigger:** round brushes with longish hairs, traditionally used for painting the rigging in pictures of ships. They are useful for fine lines and are versatile for both oils and watercolors.

Sizes

Artists' brushes are usually given numbered sizes, although there is no exact standard for their physical dimensions. Smaller numbers, smaller sizes. Sizes *000* to *20* are most common.

Handles

Handles can be made from wood or plastic.

Short handled brushes are traditionally for watercolor or ink painting

Long handled brushes are commonly used for oil or acrylic paint.

Bristles

Types include:

- watercolor brushes which are usually made of sable, synthetic sable or nylon;
- oil painting brushes which are usually made of sable or bristle;
- acrylic brushes which are almost entirely nylon or synthetic.

Bristles may be natural — either soft hair or hog bristle — or synthetic.

- **Soft hair brushes** are made from Kolinsky sable or ox hair (sabeline); or more rarely, squirrel, pony, goat, mongoose or badger. Cheaper hair is sometimes called camel hair, although it does not come from camels.
- **Hog bristle** (often called China bristle or Chungking bristle) is stiffer and stronger than soft hair. It may be bleached or unbleached.
- **Synthetic bristles** are made of special multi-diameter extruded nylon filament, or Taklon, multi-diameter polyester. and are becoming ever more popular with the development of new water based paints.