

## My Art-Making Process | Jenna Paulsen Fine Art

1. I am always taking photos of nature scenes during family hikes and trips to the lakeside, and I use these photos throughout the year as painting inspiration. The first step is to **decide on the composition of the painting**, and choose which photo(s) will serve as my reference.
2. I **start with a primed canvas** (purchased) and I use high-quality **acrylic paints**.
3. I lay a base color on the entire canvas as the first step. The first/background color is called **"toning" your canvas or "underpainting"**, and I almost always use a combination of warm reds, oranges, and occasionally purple. Because I paint with lots of greens and blues in my landscapes – and greens and blues are opposite from reds and oranges on the color wheel (aka complementary colors) – this allows the greens and blues to "pop" much more than they would on a plain white canvas. I occasionally leave a hint of that bright reddish orange to peek through, which adds depth and richness to the color you see in the finished product.
4. I then begin **"blocking in" the larger areas of color** – in other words, painting the overall shapes in the piece without a lot of detail. This will serve as the first "layer" over the underpainting
5. I gradually begin **building layers of color** over those shapes, and adding more detail as I go
6. **When is it finished?** That's often a tough question. I hang the painting up in a visible spot in my home – usually over the fireplace in the living room – for a few days, paying attention to my reaction as I observe the painting. Are there any areas that bother me or need further developing? Then it goes back into my studio. Does it seem to deserve to be showcased in my home? Then it's worthy of being called "finished"!
7. I also **paint the edges of the painting**, so that the edges are an extension of the front of the piece. This allows for a finished look when hanging the piece without a frame.
8. I then **seal the painting** with 2 coats of satin varnish, which protects the surface of the painting from the environment, and prevents any changes to the pigments in the paint due to UV light exposure.
9. After the varnish is dry, I **wire the back** so that it's ready to hang! Some collectors prefer to add a frame before hanging.