

ARTGROW. CREATIVE



# A WINTER'S RIDE AT REIF

## INSTRUCTIONS

[www.artgrowcreative.com](http://www.artgrowcreative.com)

# Getting Started



## The Story Behind the Scene

This winter painting is inspired by Reif Estate Winery, one of Niagara on the Lake's founding family wineries. Planted in 1977 and officially established in 1982 by Klaus W. Reif, the vineyard sits in Ontario's warmest sub-appellation where sun-loving grapes thrive.

The painting captures the original estate building, snow-covered vineyard rows, and a vintage truck that nods to the winery's heritage. As you paint, you're not just creating a peaceful winter scene, you're honouring a rich family legacy that continues to grow.

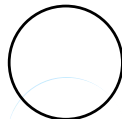
**Painting Title:** Midnight Dreams

**Skill Level:** Beginner-Friendly

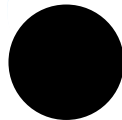
**Approximate Time to Complete:**

60-90 Minutes

## Supplies Needed:



- **Canvas** – Pre-stretched, sketched and primed, size of your choice.



- **Acrylic Paints** – Choose from the following colors:

- Titanium White

- Black



- Sky Blue



- Royal Blue

- Dark Blue-Grey



- Hunter Green

- Cream

- Grey



- Dark Brown

- **Brushes** – A variety of sizes, including flat, round, and detail brushes.

- **Palette** – For mixing colors.

- **Water Container** – To rinse brushes.

- **Paper Towels or Rags** – For cleaning brushes and surfaces.

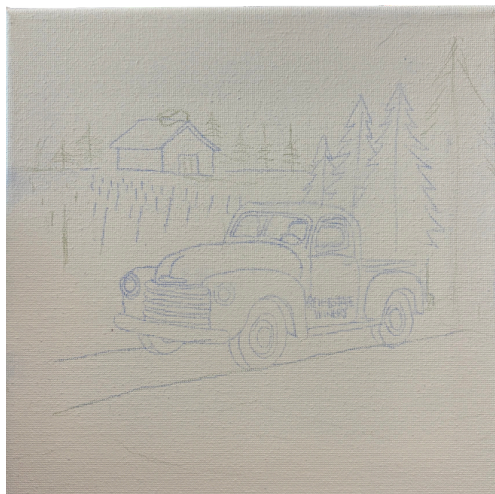
- **Apron or Old Shirt** – To protect clothing from paint.

- **Easel (optional)** – For comfortable painting posture.



Feel free to tailor the colors and supplies to suit your painting project!

# Painting Instructions



## SECTION ONE: SKY

### Instructions:

#### STEP ONE:

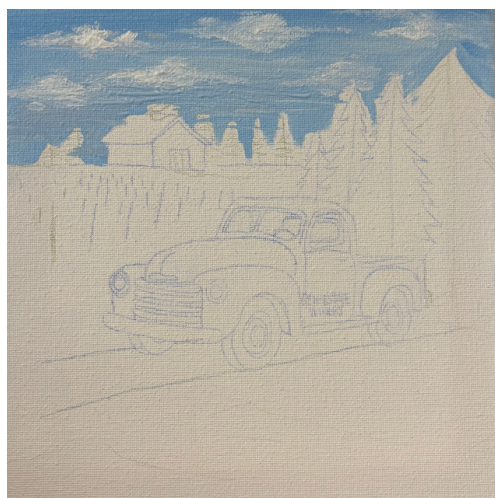
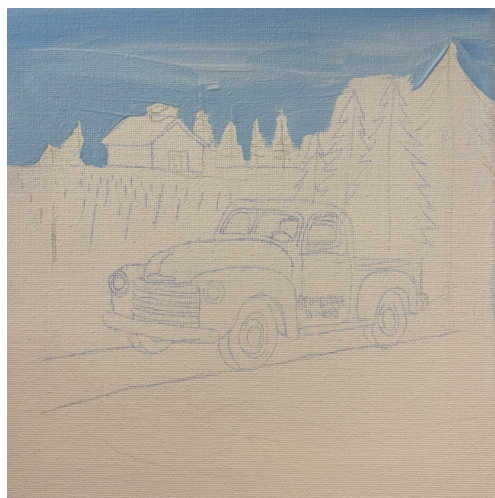
Medium flat brush, start by mixing a bit of white into your blue paint to slightly lighten it. Paint the sky using smooth horizontal strokes, starting from the top of the canvas and working your way down. Gradually add more white into your blue as you approach the horizon for a soft fade. You can loosely paint around the outlines of the building and truck if you prefer to keep them visible.

#### STEP TWO:

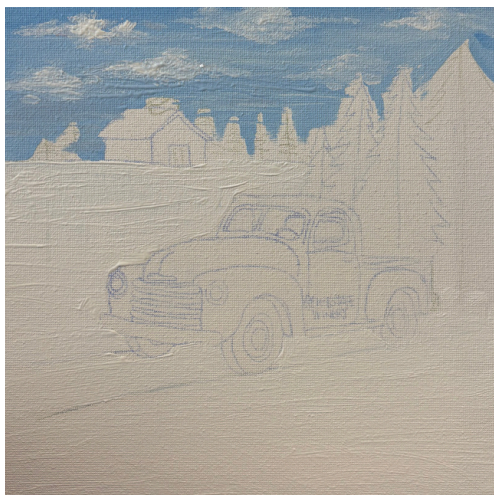
Once the sky is dry (or mostly dry), use your medium flat brush to begin adding clouds. Start with a soft blue-white mix for the base layer. Apply the paint using a tapping or tiling motion to create soft cloud shapes. Let it dry slightly, then layer a lighter mixture with more white. Finally, add pure white on top to create dimension and softness.

### Tips:

- It's okay to paint over the trees — they will be added back in later so no need to worry about preserving those outlines
- You don't need to mix your blue and white paint perfectly — streaks in the sky add interest and movement
- Let each cloud layer dry slightly before adding the next to keep them from blending into each other too much
- Building up the clouds in three layers — blue-white base, lighter white, and then bright white — helps create a soft, dimensional look



# Painting Instructions CONT'D



## SECTION TWO: SNOW BASE

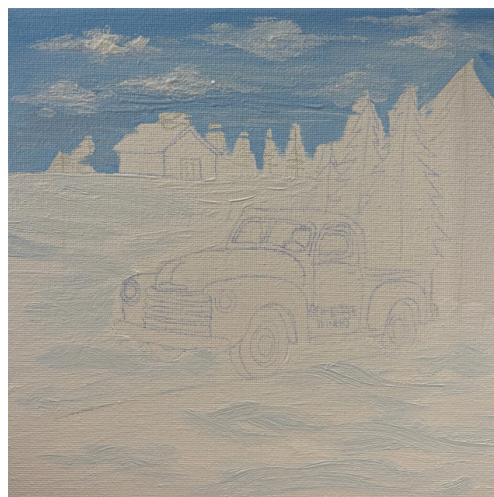
### Instructions:

#### STEP ONE:

Using your medium flat brush, fill in the entire ground area with white paint. This is your base layer of snow. Try to paint around the truck and building if you can, but don't worry about the vineyard, trees, or bushes — those details will be added back in later. The goal here is to get a clean layer of white that will act as the foundation for everything else built on top of the landscape.

#### STEP TWO:

Mix a very small amount of blue into your white to create a soft, pale blue — lighter than baby blue. Using the same medium flat brush, gently glide this color across sections of the snow in soft, side-to-side strokes. Think of it like a gentle wave, *figure 8* pattern, adding movement and texture to the otherwise flat white base. This helps the snow feel pillowy and natural.



### Tips:

- Stick with horizontal motions throughout to reflect how snow sits on the land
- The soft blue is there to add quiet texture so keep it subtle
- It's okay to paint over vineyard lines or bushes since they'll be redrawn later
- Focus on keeping the truck and building outlines mostly visible
- If the paint looks too streaky or bold, blend it lightly with your brush while it's still wet



# Painting Instructions CONT'D



## SECTION THREE: TRUCK BASE

### Instructions:

#### STEP ONE:

Use your small round brush to outline the main body of the truck using the bright blue paint. This includes the hood, cab, side panel, and the back bed of the truck. You're not filling anything in yet, just sketching the main shape so you can keep the curves and key details visible later.



#### STEP TWO:

Mix a little of the sky blue into your bright blue to lighten it slightly. This new blue should still look blue, but just a bit lighter than your outline. Use your medium flat brush to fill in the entire body of the truck with this lighter blue. Try to work neatly around the wheels and windows, but don't stress if it's not perfect.



#### STEP THREE:

Begin blocking in the tires. Start by painting the outer tire in black. Once that dries slightly, paint a clean white ring just inside the black to create the white wall of the tire. Inside that white ring, fill the center area with dark blue.

#### STEP FOUR:

Use grey to paint the front bumper, the inner circle of each wheel (center cap), and a touch of grey along the rear bumper. These early metallic details will help bring the truck to life later on.



### Tips:

- Use a lighter version of your truck blue for the fill so your original outline doesn't get lost
- Let each part of the tire dry briefly before layering the next color to keep lines clean
- Use your small brush for tighter areas like wheel centers and bumper accents
- Don't worry if it's not perfect yet — this is just the base and it's not meant to look "finished" because, it's not

# Painting Instructions CONT'D



## SECTION FOUR: BUILDING AND VINEYARD

### Instructions:

#### STEP ONE:

Use your small round brush to fill in the shape of the building in the distance using a light cream color. This first layer might look a bit patchy, and that's totally fine — let it dry and you can come back to add another coat if needed for fuller coverage.



#### STEP TWO:

Once the building is dry, use your small round brush again to start blocking in the vineyard. Begin with the thicker posts in the foreground. These should be spaced out slightly and will help set the direction for the vineyard rows.



#### STEP THREE:

From each post, add thin vineyard lines leading into the distance. These lines can be drawn with a small amount of brown or dark gray paint and should gradually get smaller and closer together to give the illusion of perspective. Don't worry about perfect spacing or precision — you're just giving the suggestion of rows and depth.



### Tips:

- Use horizontal strokes when painting the building to match its natural structure
- Don't stress about full coverage on the first layer — thinner layers dry better and are easier to build on
- Posts in the foreground should be thicker and more defined, while lines moving back can be thinner and lighter
- These vines and rows don't need to be perfect — just the idea of distance and structure is enough for the effect
- You'll be adding snowy shadows and soft highlights over this later, so this step is all about laying the groundwork

# Painting Instructions CONT'D



## SECTION FIVE: TREE BASE

### Instructions:

#### STEP ONE:

Start by blocking in the trees that are just behind the truck in the foreground of the painting. Use your small round brush with green paint and create the tree shape using a pressing or stamping motion. Hold the brush either upright or slightly angled and gently press to build out the shape of each tree — don't drag the brush. Reload often so the trees stay bold and textured.



#### STEP TWO:

Now move to the background trees near the building. Use the same green but mix in a bit of the sky blue to soften the color and help it look more distant and hazy. These trees should be smaller and less intense than the ones in the foreground. Keep using that pressing technique but with a lighter touch and less paint — you can even use the back of your brush handle to dot in the texture if you want.



#### STEP THREE:

Once the green is in place and has started to dry, go back in with black paint and the same pressing motion to fill in some of the spaces between the branches. This doesn't need to be a solid layer — it's just to give the trees more depth and make them feel like they have layers. We'll be adding snow later to finish them off, so don't overthink this step. Repeat this same process for the background trees as well, just using smaller stamping marks.

### Tips:

- Use firm pressing motions with your brush to build the shape of each tree
- Mix a bit of the sky blue into the green for background trees to create soft atmospheric depth
- Use less paint and smaller motions for the trees in the distance
- Add touches of black between the green dabs to suggest shadows and fullness — this creates dimension
- Don't worry about getting it perfect — once the snow goes on later, the trees will really come together

# Painting Instructions CONT'D



## SECTION SIX: TRUCK DETAILS

### Instructions:

#### STEP ONE:

Mix a deeper version of your original blue by adding a small amount of black or navy. Use this darker tone to add shadowed areas on the body of the truck such as underneath the fenders, under the doors, and along the underside of the cab to start creating dimension.



#### STEP TWO:

With your original bright blue, touch up the main body as needed. Then, add a lighter version of this blue (mixing in more white) to create highlights on raised areas like the top of the fenders, the top edge of the cab, and along the door curves. These highlights help define the curves and give the truck a more 3D shape.



#### STEP THREE:

Begin adding window reflection by creating a grey-blue tone and gently brushing in the glass shape on the windshield and side window. Keep your strokes soft and curved to match the shape of the window. You can add a touch of white to one edge to mimic light catching on the glass.

# Painting Instructions CONT'D



## SECTION SIX: TRUCK DETAILS CONT'D

### STEP FOUR:

Use your detail brush and a thin line of black paint to carefully outline the major edges and curves of the truck. This includes the wheel wells, doors, cab, and hood. Keep your hand light and confident.

### STEP FIVE:

Add a suggestion of the Reif Winery logo or a small marking on the truck door to hint at branding. Keep it subtle and soft. This is completely optional.

### Tips:

- Use small amounts of paint when working on highlights and shadows to build up slowly and keep control
- If your shadow tones feel too strong, you can soften them by blending a bit with the mid-tone blue
- The curved surfaces of the truck are a great place to show light bouncing off. Think: darker underneath, lighter on top
- If you're unsure about the window shapes, look back at the reference images. Keep it loose and soft so it doesn't feel too drawn on
- Add outlines only once you're confident with your shapes. These will help the truck pop off the canvas



# Painting Instructions CONT'D



## SECTION SEVEN: ROAD AND SHADOWS

### Instructions:

#### STEP ONE:

Begin by creating a soft grey mix using white, a small amount of black, and a touch of sky blue. Use your medium flat brush to paint in the road area beneath and behind the truck. Sweep your strokes horizontally, starting under the tires and gently fading out into the snow. Let the shape curve slightly toward the building to help the painting feel grounded in perspective.



#### STEP TWO:

Use that same grey mix to add a pathway leading to the front door of the winery building. Keep the shape subtle and let it taper off as it gets closer to the vineyard.

#### STEP THREE:

Deepen the shadows under the truck using a smaller brush and a slightly darker version of your grey mix (you can add a touch of navy or dark blue). Gently tuck these shadows under the wheels and front bumper to help the truck feel like it's sitting in the snow.



#### STEP FOUR:

Use a small round brush and lightly drag some of the same grey through the vineyard rows to create soft cast shadows. These should follow the shape of the vines and help anchor them to the ground.

#### STEP FIVE:

Add texture to the vineyard rows using a dry brush technique. Dip your small detail brush into a dark brown, wipe most of the paint off on a paper towel, then very lightly sweep or dab it across the vines. This will give a suggestion of branches and organic form without painting each vine in detail.

# Painting Instructions CONT'D

## SECTION SEVEN: ROAD AND SHADOWS CONT'D

### STEP SIX:

Now mix a warm cream color (white plus a touch of tan or yellow) and add small pops of highlight across the snow, especially near the edges of the path and around the base of the truck. This soft warmth adds depth and variation to the snow field.

### STEP SEVEN:

Finally, with a light grey or thinned down dark brown, add gentle shading on the building, especially under the eaves, under the windows, and where the snow meets the base of the building. This helps define the structure and gives it dimension.

### Tips:

- Let your shadows fade naturally into the snow by lifting your brush at the end of each stroke
- The cream highlights don't need to be everywhere — just a few areas will make the snow feel sunlit and layered
- Dry brushing means loading just a tiny bit of paint on your brush, then wiping most of it off on a paper towel before painting. When you lightly drag the brush across the surface, it leaves behind a soft, textured look — perfect for suggesting vines or snow texture without hard lines
- Keep a soft, painterly feel — none of these details need to be perfect or bold to be effective



# Painting Instructions CONT'D



## SECTION EIGHT: SNOW DETAILS

### Instructions:

#### STEP ONE:

Once the tree base layers are completely dry, use your small round brush and white paint to gently dab snow onto the tops of the tree branches using a soft, stamping motion. Focus on the upper areas of each tree to suggest snow resting on the branches. You can build this up in light layers to keep a fluffy look.

#### STEP TWO:

Using the same white paint and small round brush, add snow to the rooftop of the winery building. Gently sweep or dab the brush along the peak and edges of the roof, letting some of the burnt umber base show through underneath. This helps it look more natural and keeps a nice contrast.

#### STEP THREE:

Add a bit of snow texture to the fence and the vines. You don't need a lot — just a few dots or swipes of white here and there help tie everything together and suggest a dusting of snow throughout the scene.

#### TIPS:

- Be sure your tree layers are fully dry before adding snow to avoid muddying the colors
- Less is more — soft snow details add atmosphere without needing to be perfect or even
- Focus the snow on the top sides of things (like tree branches and rooftops), where it would naturally fall and collect
- For a fluffy look, avoid using too much water on your brush, a drier brush will give a soft, dabbed effect
- If you accidentally add too much white, wait for it to dry and then dab in a bit of green, black, or brown to restore depth underneath



# Painting Instructions CONT'D



## SECTION NINE: OPTIONAL LOGO'S

### Instructions:

To add a special finishing touch, you can suggest the Reif Estate logo in two places — on the truck door and on the building wall in the background.

Use your small detail brush with a mix of white and light blue. You're not aiming to paint the full logo — just a soft gesture that gives a subtle nod to it. Think of it like a tiny crest or suggestion of a flourish. On the truck, place it on the door panel. On the building, add it up near the peak of the roofline.

### TIPS:

- Keep it soft and understated — a few curved strokes or a decorative shape is enough.
- The goal isn't accuracy, just a little storytelling.
- Practice on scrap paper first if you like, or leave it off altogether — this step is entirely optional.

# You Did It!

You've finished your night landscape painting—great work! Before you hang it up or gift it to someone special, here are a few optional finishing touches to really make it shine:

## FINAL CARE & DISPLAY TIPS

- **Seal your painting** with a clear acrylic sealer (spray or brush-on) to protect it from dust, smudges, and moisture. Be sure it's completely dry before sealing.
- Want to skip framing? Try **gliding a sponge dipped in black paint** along the edges of the canvas for a crisp, finished look. It makes the artwork feel complete and polished on its own.
- If you do want to frame it, floating **frames from Amazon** are an affordable and easy way to elevate your piece. They make the painting really pop!

Now step back and admire what you've created—you brought this canvas to life!



# Behind the Brush



Hey! I'm Susan,

I created ArtGrow Creative because I know what it feels like to doubt your creativity — and how powerful it is to rediscover it. You don't need to be an "artist" to make something beautiful. You just need space to try, play, and surprise yourself.

Whether this was your first time picking up a brush or one of many, I hope you felt that spark. That moment where you realize you're allowed to create just because you want to.

Thanks for painting with us. Let's keep growing — one brushstroke at a time.

*Susan  
O'Sullivan  
Choros*

## Share Your Work

We'd love to see what you've created! Post your painting using **#ArtGrowCreative** and be sure to follow and tag us on Instagram **@artgrow.creative**.

### **Prefer to share by email?**

Send a photo of your finished piece (or your painting in action!) to [susan@heyimsusan.com](mailto:susan@heyimsusan.com) — we love seeing what you've made.

## Let's Do This Again!

**Paint Kits:** Order a paint kit that comes with everything you need — brushes, paint, and step-by-step instructions.

**Private Events:** Book a Private Party for birthdays, team events, or a creative night in with friends.

**Pop-Up Paint Socials:** Join a Pop-Up Paint Social happening in your community — no experience needed, just show up and paint!

**Stay Connected:** Join our mailing list to find out when the next event is happening near you!



# Troubleshooting Common Acrylic Painting Challenges

Even the most confident artists run into little hiccups! Here are some common painting issues and quick fixes to help you troubleshoot with ease, but remember, mistakes are part of the process. Trust the journey, and most importantly—enjoy creating!

:

## 1. Paint is streaky or see-through

*Problem:* The canvas is showing through too much.

*Fix:* Let it dry fully and add a second thin layer. Acrylic paint works best in layers—don't try to glob on too much at once.

## 2. Colours are muddy or blending weirdly

*Problem:* You're mixing colours on the canvas that weren't meant to mix.

*Fix:* Let each section dry completely before painting beside or on top of it. A quick blast with a hairdryer helps speed things up!

## 3. Brushstrokes look too harsh

*Problem:* You want smoother blends or softer texture.

*Fix:* Use a light hand and slightly dampen your brush with clean water to help the paint glide more smoothly. Blend while the paint is still wet.

## 4. Paint is drying too fast

*Problem:* You're losing time to blend or adjust.

*Fix:* Work in smaller sections or lightly mist your palette with water to keep paints workable. Some people also use a wet palette.

## 5. You can't see your sketch anymore

*Problem:* You painted over your outlines and feel lost.

*Fix:* That's okay! You can always re-sketch with chalk or a water-soluble pencil, or freehand with a brush or marker during outlining.

## 6. Paint looks clumpy or uneven

*Problem:* Too much paint or an old brush.

*Fix:* Wipe off excess paint before applying. Use a thin, even layer and try a softer brush. Clumps can often be smoothed once dry with a dry brush or sanding block.

## 7. The paint is lifting when you try to paint over it

*Problem:* You're going over an area that's not quite dry.

*Fix:* Stop and dry the area completely before layering again.

## 8. You're feeling stuck or frustrated

*Problem:* It's not looking how you imagined.

*Fix:* Take a step back and remember that acrylics are super forgiving. You can always paint over something or adjust it later. Keep going—perfection isn't the goal, progress is.