



Since the moment man was capable of modifying and explaining nature, he has materialized his spirituality and his creative thinking in different ways and by means of different materials that reflect his cogitation, interest, conviction, or sense of beauty. In art, this is called technique, that is, the utilization of a material to perform an artwork. In general, an artist's technique is directly related to the final pigmentation, shape, texture, and durability of his or her artwork.

Oil painting is the most important pictoric technique since the fifteenth century. Although Van Eyck is supposed to have been its inventor, there are references of its utilization in the Antiquity. It entails pigments dissolved in oil, which for many years have been applied on such surfaces as walls, canvasses, or wood. The oilpainting technique utilizes such agglutinants as fatty oils to dissolve the pigments, as well as essences and resins. Among the first ones linseed oil is an important ingredient. Essences do not leave traces, they completely evaporate and leave thin color films. One of those of vegetable origin is the essence of turpentine. Direct oilpainting is the briefest procedure, because the painter works on the final effect of his picture. On the other hand, the layerwise application of color is the oldest procedure; the base layer is the drawing, modeling with lights and a slight indication of color. At the upper layer, the artist devotes him or herself directly to the representation of the chromatic effect. Another one of the characteristic oilpainting techniques is the application by glazes, which are subdued and fluid layers from light to dark.