

Why isn't my painting working?

A painting that feels wrong usually needs a clearer diagnosis, not more detail. Many problems come from relationships—value, shape, scale, edges, or color temperature—rather than a lack of painting skill.

FOUR STUDIO MARKERS

1

Name the intended experience

Complete this sentence: 'I want the viewer to notice or feel ____.' Keep it to one idea.

2

Check it in grayscale

Squint or photograph the work in black and white. Are your important shapes distinct, or have the values crowded together?

3

Inspect the pathway

Trace where your eye moves. Are several bright areas, sharp edges, or highly detailed passages competing for attention?

4

Choose the smallest test

Cover a distracting section with a paper scrap or make a tiny study before changing the original.

TRY THIS NOW

Take a grayscale photo and circle the area with the strongest contrast. Does it belong to the subject you meant to emphasize?

CONTINUE THIS TRAIL

Find the next step, related resources, or an optional studio companion.

</go/painting-not-working/>

You are an artist, even here.

QR CODE

reserved for launch