

RECIPE Milk Paint

Milk Paint is unlike any other natural water-based paint as it dries water-proof. However, it must cure for a certain time, usually about a week to a month. Despite this, it dries to the touch quickly, if painted thinly, so that many successive layers can be painted in one session. Thicker layers may take about a day to dry. Cracking can occur for a number of reasons: The paint may have an excess of binder, or the previous layer may not have dried completely. This however can be used to create beautiful cracking, antique effects. Simply paint on top of an incompletely dried casein gesso.

To consolidate a cracked surface, varnish with a few coats of **Klucel EF** solved in 10% ethylalcohol. This will not change the soft appearance of the casein surface.

The recipe for casein binder is fairly easy:

Soak 2 1/2 oz. (80 g) **63200 Casein powder** in 9 fl.oz. (250 ml) water for 12 hours.
Dissolve 1 oz. (32 g) **64000 Borax** in 9 fl.oz. (250 ml) hot water.
Stir hot borax solution into the soaked casein, stir.
Stir again after about 5 minutes.

Let the mixture stand for 1 hour to 1 day, until it is completely dissolved.
Add 6 cups water for use.

You can also use premixed **SCH50088 Schmincke Casein Medium**. This also has to be thinned 1:1 with water.

Use: Use on rigid, unprepared surfaces. Casein is brittle, so flexible supports should not be used. Prime the surface with diluted casein binder, and then mix some chalk and white pigment with it to create a gesso. Apply gesso as usual and sand fully dried coats (approx. 1 day) as needed.

Mix pigments with distilled water into a paste. Add equal amount of casein binder to the paste. Thin with water to desired consistency. You can test your paint by applying it on a piece of cardboard. If it rubs off after an hour, you need more binder. If it cracks, reduce the binder content (add pigment and water).

For a more detailed account of this process, see: *Mark David Gottsegen: The Painter's Handbook*.

Storage: Use distilled water for the binder. Store in the refrigerator, warm up before use. Keeps for 2-3 weeks.