

The Waterbase Technique™

Revised 1992

The revolutionary china painting method, known as the Waterbase Technique, is presented below. Dry china paints are used, and they are meticulously matched to the colors of antique and modern dolls. Best results are obtained by mixing these China Paints with Waterbased Media, and applying the paint with specially designed brushes. Seeley's developed several white porcelains, Lady White™, Pure White™, and Nordic White™, to further enhance the quality and authenticity of reproductions of antique and modern dolls.

Contents

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. China Paints | 3. Brushes |
| 2. Media | 4. Painting Guide |

1. CHINA PAINTS

GENERAL: China paints will show their true color only **after** they have been fired. The color is also determined somewhat by the color of the porcelain beneath, as all china paints are translucent to some extent.

Always **test-fire** all color mixtures as the proportions of the individual colors might vary.

The following colors appear darker in the unfired state:
Bisq-Tone #1, 2, 3, and Cheek Blush about 1 shade darker
Rose Red - 1-1/2 to 2 shades darker

Gloss colors **appear** lighter after firing than matt colors. The more flux is added to a color, the lighter the resulting fired color. This is an optical illusion; it has to do with the light reflection. The color does not fire off.

OVERALL WASH On white bisque.

BISQ-TONE #1 Creamy Rose

A creamy rose color particularly suitable for many French, as well as some German dolls.

BISQ-TONE #2 Raspberry

A strong rose color with a slight touch of blue. Often found in German dolls.

BISQ-TONE #3 Apple Blossom

Very pale rose for pale French and lady dolls.

BISQ-TONE #4 Oriental

For exact match of the skin tone on antique oriental dolls. For rosier tint, add a little Bisq-Tone #1. Fire only to cone 018.

BISQ-TONE #5 Early French Matt

Pale flesh wash suitable for early French and some German dolls.

BISQ-TONE #6 Peachberry

Developed for large C Steiner, suitable for Jumeaux and early Kestners.

EYEBROW COLORS Feathered or one-stroke brows.

EYEBROW #1 Toffee

A light toffee color with the slightest hint of olive green, a color often seen in early A.T., Jumeau, and Bru dolls, especially blond ones.

EYEBROW #2 Olive Brown

A medium greenish-brown color, very common with both German and French dolls.

EYEBROW #3 Copper

A coppery brown with a hint of green. This color is suitable for many German dolls especially character dolls. Also for some baby dolls' hair.

EYEBROW #4 Dark Brown

A medium to dark brown color, often found in K*R and Simon & Halbig dolls, but also many others.

EYEBROW COMPANION COLORS

For brow strokes, over strokes, feathering and color intensifying. These four colors were developed as a match in color but deeper in intensity to be used as companions with Eyebrows 1-4.

Eyebrow #1D	Dark Toffee
Eyebrow #2D	Dark Olive Brown
Eyebrow #3D	Dark Copper
Eyebrow #4D	Dark-Dark Brown

EYEBROW #5 Topaz

Brown with a touch of golden olive. An exact match to Arielle brows.

SMOKY TOPAZ

Deep dark brown that will hold color in fine strokes.

MOCHA

Mocha has an olive tinge, perfect for Tete Jumeau (Arielle) and many other dolls. Mix with Black to match the olive-grey tone on Long-Face Jumeau eyebrows.

MAHOGANY

Mix with Mocha for eyebrows on many dolls.

Variations:

Mix 1 part **Brow #1** plus 1 part **Brow #2**. The resulting color is excellent for Circle Dot Bru Estelle, Seeley mold S112.

Black added to **Brow #1** and **#2** darkens the color and intensifies the hint of green.

Brow #4 added to **Brow #1** and **#2** darkens the color a little.

Black and **Brow #4** added to **Brow #1** or **#2** darkens the color without intensifying the hint of green.

HAIR COLOR

RUSSET Baby Hair

A reddish-brown with khaki overtones - particularly developed for dome-headed dolls, such as Dream Baby, Baby Averill and many others. Also excellent as skin tone shading color for modern children and babies.

LIP COLORS

ROSE RED

A rose color particularly suitable for earlier French, as well as some German dolls.

YELLOW RED

A light orange-red, often found in German dolls, as well as some late French dolls.

YELLOW POMP ROSE

This is a factory-mixed **Yellow Red** and **Rose Red**. It is a light red color with orange overtones, frequently found in both French and German dolls.

CHEEK COLOR

CHEEK BLUSH*

A deep red-rose color, suitable for all dolls. Density of color is governed by density of application. For a darker shade, add **Pompadour Red Matt** or even **Blood Red Matt**.

RUBY CHEEK BLUSH*

Ruddy rose/pink/bluish color that is very versatile. Has a wide range of uses for antique and modern reproductions such as cheek and lip color and body shading.

LID BLUSH

DUSKY LILAC*

This is a pale lilac rose with grey overtones often found in French dolls - for example, Long-face Jumeau, some Bru dolls, Stobe and others.

LAVENDER MIST*

Lavender shade with touch of grey. Shadow blush for very early French dolls. Multiple applications and firings produces opaque coverage for decorative painting on jewelry, masks, etc.

EYE COLORS

TEAL BLUE

A beautiful soft gray teal color suited specifically for the K*R 114. Mix with **Celeste Blue** for a brighter blue tone or add a few grains of **Black Matt** for a touch of gray.

SLATE BLUE

Intense gray-blue with a hint of green. Developed for eye painting of modern dolls, lovely for antiques also. Light in vial yet fires to steely blue.

BLACK

Use for eyelashes, painted eyes (pupils) and for mixing with brow and eye colors.

ONYX BLACK

Very black black also for lashes, lid lines on modern dolls, shoes/boots.

WHITE

For eye highlights and for mixing with Bisq-Tone #1 and #2 to lighten color.

FACE SHADING COLORS — PORTRAIT PAINTING

PEARL GRAY

Creamy gray used to emphasize sculpture contours. Apply around nose, ears, under lips, over/around eyes to give depth and dimension. Mainly used for adult dolls.

RUSSET (See Hair Color)

SPECIAL ITEMS

FLUX

A white powder which adds extra gloss to china paints and helps fuse the color to the porcelain when fired.

MATTER

A white powder which reduces gloss in china paints. Used normally in the proportion of 1 part **Matter** to 5 parts china paint. Never use in excess of 1 part **Matter** to 3 parts china paint

2. MEDIA

GENERAL: Use media sparingly. They absorb atmospheric moisture and it is this combination of medium and water that works so particularly well. Avoid working too close to direct heat.

LINE MEDIUM #1910

A colorless, odorless, non-toxic and non-corrosive, waterbased medium that is non-drying.

It dissipates through evaporation at a very low temperature, unlike oils which carbonize or burn off at a fairly high temperature, producing fumes.

Line Medium is used for all fine line work such as eyelashes, brows, accent lines and stroked baby hair. Also excellent for penwork. It is used in conjunction with Anti-Blotch in lips, underbrows and painted eyes.

AREA MEDIUM #1912

This medium is more liquid and thinner than Line Medium and will partially dry off in time. It is also colorless, odorless, noncorrosive and non-toxic with a low temperature evaporation point. It is used wherever color is dry-stippled, blotted or polished as in the application of overall wash, cheek blush, lid blush, and some baby hair. It can also be used for blotted lips or dry-stippled shadow brows.

ANTI-BLOTCH #1913

This is an optional additive. It is a slightly brownish, waterbased liquid which is added to Line Medium to minimize blotching. It will dry off completely in time. Used mainly for eyebrows, lips and painted eyes. It can be reconstituted with water.

WATER

Water is the essential ingredient upon which the entire Waterbase Technique is built. It is used to further dilute the paint during the painting process.

Always dip your brushes in water before using. Shake or blot out excess moisture with a **Lint Free Wiper**.

If you need to dilute the paint, use a brush dipped in water **without** blotting. Lightly swivel the brush in the paint mixture until the desired consistency is achieved. Too much water dries the paint too fast; too little water makes it difficult to paint smoothly. The correct combination of medium and water is achieved through experience - you will learn quite fast when it feels right.

Water is also used to clean the brushes, they do not normally need any other cleaning. All paint rinses out immediately.

Water is used to remove unwanted paint from the doll. It is essential to have a cup with clean water close at hand at all times.

3. BRUSHES

Brushes developed specifically for the Waterbase Technique have short handles and are color coded. Brushes developed primarily for modern dolls have short red handles. Both styles are interchangeable based on dollmaker's preference.

*Available dry or as a premixed Blush Pac

EYEBROW BRUSH #1 (Red Tip) #SBR17

A long, fine, pure Kazan-squirrel-hair brush.

Untrimmed for soft, translucent and thicker lines (as in some Brushes), for one-stroke brows on smaller dolls and some underbrows.

Use trimmed for fine, soft lines - mainly feathered brows.

EYEBROW LINER #2 (Green) #SBR18

A long, thin, synthetic brush. Used mainly trimmed for extra fine and sharp brow feathering; particularly suitable for German doll brows. Must be loaded for each stroke to obtain best results.

SUPER BROW BRUSH (Lilac) #SBR27

An extra long, fine Kazan-squirrel-hair brush. This brush is excellent for large feathered brows and underbrows. It holds paint extremely well and needs little reloading of paint.

Can be lightly trimmed for finer lines.

EYELASH LINER # 1 (Blue) #SBR20

A shorter version of the Eyebrow Liner #2. Use untrimmed for thicker lashes and trimmed for extra fine and tapered lashes.

LIP BRUSH (Yellow) #SBR19

A medium-thick synthetic brush. Excellent for lips and eye painting. Also used for one-stroke brows and underbrows.

ACCENT LINER BRUSH (Orange) #SBR22

A very fine pure Kazan-squirrel-hair brush. Excellent for accent lines, soft lashes, lidlines, brows on miniature dolls. Can be used untrimmed or trimmed.

MEDIUM AREA BRUSH (Maroon) #SBR28

Soft and pliable synthetic sable brush. For smooth lips on medium size dolls; for one-stroke underbrows, and for painted clothing on tiny dolls.

LARGE AREA BRUSH (Pink) #SBR29

Larger version of SBR28. For even coverage of largest mouths and underbrows. Also for painting clothes on all-bisque dolls.

KB MOP #5 (Grey tip) #SBR23

Smaller, puffy, soft china mop for overall wash, cheek blush and hair on medium-sized and smaller dolls.

CHINA MOP #8 (Black) #SBR21

A thick, slightly pointed, squirrel-hair brush for smoothing and polishing out the overall blush, and applying cheek, lid, and chin blush.

MODERN LIP BRUSH (Red handle) #SBR30

Super quality mid-size brush. Excellent for lips, nose dots and eye dots and for face and body contours.

ANGULAR SHADER (Red handle) #SBR31

Use to smooth lip color after it has been applied. Also for eye shading and blending eye shadow.

MINI LINER 18/0 (Red handle) #SBR34

For even lashes and brows - single stroke or feathered.

MEDIUM FILBERT BLENDER (Red handle) #SBR32

For shading contour areas. After application of color blend with Filbert. Also for blending eye shadow.

LARGE FILBERT BLENDER (Red handle) #SBR33

Larger version of SBR32. Helps make subtle shading of knees, elbows, torso, neck and face contours.

CHINA MOP #6 (Red handle) #SBR35

Medium size soft mop for cheek blush and blending overall wash.

Brush Care

Always clean brushes in clear water. Do NOT pull the Kazan squirrel-hair brushes through a cloth: The delicate hair tips will break off and ruin the fine point. Protect the brush hairs from bending. Pure Kazan squirrel hair will splay when dry, but will come to a fine point immediately when the brush is dipped into water.

The China Mop will become a little firmer with use, which actually improves its performance. It only needs cleaning in warm water and a little detergent, occasionally. With a little care, these brushes will last a very long time.

Trimming of Brushes

Use a small pair of scissors with very sharp tips. Carefully trim a few hairs from the base of the hairs close to the ferrule. Turn brush as you trim. Test periodically and stop before cutting too much.

Special Item

DOLL SPONGE

A soft foam sponge, shaped as a wedge, with many uses. For applying and removing media. For applying Overall Wash and painted hair with smooth effect.

Cut up in smaller pieces for removing all kinds of china-painting errors. Exception is removing eyelashes. A toothpick or DOLLY DOUGH works better for one eyelash. The biggest advantage with the Doll Sponge is that it does not leave any trace of lint on the bisque. Wash in mild detergent after use.

4. PAINTING GUIDE

GENERAL: All utensils used in the Waterbase Technique must be completely devoid of any traces of oil or grease. Clean old brushes or tiles with "Fantastic" spray cleaner and rinse thoroughly in warm water.

Use a Palette Knife and a glazed Tile to work the dry paint with the medium. Mix thoroughly.

Always dip brushes in water to season before using (except China Mop for blushing). Shake or blot out excess moisture with Lint Free Wiper.

OVERALL WASH

Mix dry china paint with Area Medium to a smooth creamy paste. Apply with Doll Sponge (a fine-textured foam sponge), to lightly sanded and well fired porcelain. Use a circular wiping motion to apply the paint. Use the Sponge with enough pressure to spread the paint without wiping the color off. Do not, at this stage, attempt to smooth color totally. The Doll Sponge only distributes the color evenly.

Where there are still a few accumulations of color, usually around the nose, mouth, eyes and ears, stipple the sponge lightly over those spots. This will easily lift out the excess color and even it out.

Now take a clean, dry China Mop #8 and hold it by the base of the hairs with your middle, forefinger and thumb. This will stiffen the brush temporarily.

Stipple and pat the color until perfectly even, always following the same sequence: Eyes, nose, mouth and ears.

Now release the brush hairs and polish the remaining areas smooth, turning the bisque in different directions. This "cross polishing" is important to achieve a smooth even coat of color. Imperfections in the bisque will show progressively more, as the Area Medium starts to dry off. Do not be tempted to keep working on the blush too long, as it will ruin - not improve. If it looked even and smooth while the

Medium was still apparent, then the fired result will be fine. **Do not overwork the blush.**

Fire to cone 018 (junior cone 017 in kiln sitter).

Notes:

Paint too dry? - Color does not spread. Apply a small dab of **Area Medium** to the Sponge. Re-wipe overall wash and re-polish as before.

Paint too wet? - Remove excess medium with Doll Sponge. Reapply denser color mixture, continue as described above.

The color of the china paint when mixed with **Area Medium** will slowly change to a darker shade. This does in no way affect the final, fired result. All china paints mixed with either **Area** or **Line Medium** will keep indefinitely. Just keep them covered to keep out dust.

CHEEK BLUSH

Mixing the Blush Cake (some colors available pre-mixed)

The paint will have to be mixed to a firm "Blush Cake" before the color can be applied to the porcelain. This blush cake can be used indefinitely.

Mix 1/3 of the dry cheek color of your choice with **Line Medium** to a very stiff paste. Now add the remaining 2/3 of china paint and enough water to comfortably combine all ingredients to a smooth paste. Transfer the paste to any small, flat container, preferably with a lid. Place the freshly made Blush Cake in a dry, warm place until the water evaporates. The resulting Blush Cake should be quite firm, similar in consistency to shoe polish.

If it is still much too wet, add more dry china paint and water, repeating the procedure. Otherwise, blot off the excess moisture which collects on the cake's surface with a folded paper towel.

The Blush Cake matures and improves with time. It is advisable to use at least two vials of china paint to make this Blush Cake -- it saves time and effort.

Note:

The Blush Cake dried out too much? Rub a little **Line Medium** over the surface. (If using fingers -- wash hands well). Place the Blush Cake into a small plastic bag overnight. This reconditions the cake.

Applying The Blush

Rub a very thin film of **Area Medium** over the porcelain, extending beyond the required area of color application. This ensures well-blended blush edges.

Remove excess medium with a dry sponge. Rub the dry China Mop firmly over the Blush Cake. Hold the China Mop by the base of the hairs in one hand, the Blush Cake in the other. This makes it easier to remove color from the cake onto the brush. Just patting the cake with the brush is not sufficient.

Now apply color to the fattest part of the cheek, fading the color gently outwards. Add color to chin and lids as required.

Notes:

Paint looks chalky? - Porcelain too dry; color cannot shift? The color was overworked. The brush was not rubbed firmly enough over the Blush Cake. Apply a few drops of **Area Medium** to Doll Sponge and remove existing color. Do not add extra Area Medium. Re-apply color as before.

Paint collects in patches and will not adhere? Many small brush hair particles stick to the porcelain? Too much Area Medium rubbed on porcelain. Remove excess with a dry sponge. Re-apply color as described above.

LID BLUSH

Proceed exactly as described for Cheek Blush. Apply color to lids,

where needed, from the prepared Lid Blush Cake with a China Mop #8, **Small Stippler**, or **Filbert Blender**.

EYELASHES

Mix dry china paint to a smooth creamy mixture with **Line Medium**. Paint lashes with **Eyelash Liner #1** or **Mini Liner 18/0**. Re-load br for each stroke for even color density on lashes.

The color of the lashes, ranging from black to light gray, is determined by the amount of Line Medium used.

Dark lashes - small amount of Line Medium.

Light Lashes - larger amount of Line Medium.

Notes:

Paint drags? - Mixture is too dry. Add a little **Line Medium**.

Paint looks too grey and light? - Too much medium. Add more china paint.

Paint "beads" on porcelain? - The beading is a sign of grease on the porcelain. Clean paint off. Rub a little saliva or alcohol over the problem spot and the beading will disappear instantly. Re-paint lashes.

EYERIM

Use same paint mix as for eyelashes.

Paint by rubbing the base of the Lash Liner along rim edge.

Crowquill pen: Dip rounded, front part of pen into paint. Rub this part along the rim edge.

EYEBROWS

One Stroke Brows

Mix dry china paint with **Line Medium** to a smooth, light consistency. Add a fraction of a drop of **Anti-Blotch***. Paint light, smooth br with moistened Lip Brush or Super Brow Brush.

Note:

***To mix a fraction of a drop of Anti-Blotch into paint:** Place 1 drop of Anti-Blotch on side of tile. Pick up required amount by dipping the tip of a Palette Knife lightly into the Anti-Blotch. Blend thoroughly in the paint mixture.

Underbrow

Proceed as for One-Stroke-Brows.

Variation:

Area Medium can also be used to paint the underbrow. However, it is easier to paint with Line Medium and Anti-Blotch because this mixture stays constant. Area Medium will dry off in time, thus changing the paint texture.

Feathered Brows

Mix paint with **Line Medium** and add **Anti-Blotch** as described in One-Stroke-Brow.

It helps to glide the strokes, if a very thin film of Line Medium is rubbed over the brow area.

Use Eyebrow Brush #1 for softly feathered brows.

Use Eyebrow Liner #2 or Mini Liner 18/0 for sharply defined lines.

For finer strokes, trim brushes as described above under 3. BRUSHES.

Painting the Brows

Always start loading the water-moistened brush thoroughly with paint. Lay the tip down first and gently lower the brush so the hair is laying on the porcelain. Drag the hairs along the porcelain in a smooth arc. This is achieved by pivoting the hand on the outer edge of the ball of the hand below the little finger. Use a Frisbee-throwing

movement. Keep your fingers perfectly still and relaxed -- the brow arc will be formed through the wrist movement.

Hold the head so you are looking at it in profile. To change the brow-lines, change the position of the head -- do not alter your hand movement.

On one side the lines run from the nose bridge outwards, on the other side they start on the outside ending along the nose bridge.

LIPS

Shaded lips - first coat

Method A - Line Medium

Mix dry china paint with **Line Medium** to a smooth, light consistency. Add **Anti-Blotch** as described in Underbrow.

Using a Lip Brush #1, **moistened with water**, paint a smooth, light-colored coat. Long, smooth strokes, with slight pressure exerted on the brush flattening the hairs lightly against the porcelain, will give best results. (Stippling with the brush tip causes blotchiness and an overworked appearance.)

Do not blot the color. Do not overload the brush with paint.

Method B - Area Medium

Area Medium can be used to paint the lips, if they are to be blotted with Lint Free Towel (WIPER).

Mix color to a fairly dense mixture. Paint lips with Lip Brush. Let dry a little. Blot lightly. Smooth remaining color with a dry and soft Small Square Shader (SBR01) or Angular Shader.

Note:

Color Streaks? - Too much medium. Wait a few minutes, until medium starts to dry off, or, warm the head in an oven or kiln, then smooth color as before.

Fire to cone 018 (junior cone 017 in kiln sitter) before proceeding with the lip shading and accent lines.

Shaded lips - second coat

Shading

Use remaining lip color and paint shading where needed. To achieve greater depth of color, a darker shade of china paint can be added to the paint. Use Lip Brush or Modern Lip Brush.

Accent Lines

Use a moistened, lightly trimmed Accent Liner Brush.

Unshaded lips - single coat

Proceed as for Shaded lips first coat, Method A or B.

NOSEDOTS

1. **Shaded Nosedots:** Paint very pale first coat with tip of water-moistened Lip Brush. Color mix usually same as first coat of shaded lips. Add a slightly darker inner nosedot using the shading color from the lips with Lip Brush. Fire between coats.
2. **Single Coat Nose Dots:** Use lip color mix and tip of Lip Brush.

PAINTED EYES

First Coat:

1. **Iris:** Mix iris color with **Line Medium** adding **Anti-Blotch** as described in underbrow above. Paint entire pupil and iris area with a moistened Lip Brush. Shade a little where needed.

2. **Lidline:** Paint lidline with a trimmed Accent Liner Brush or Lash Liner #1.

3. **Lid Crease Line:** Paint pink lid crease line, where required. Fire to cone 018, with junior cone 017 in kiln sitter.

Note:

The **lidline** and **lid crease line** can also be painted in the second firing; it is easier in the first firing.

Second Coat:

4. **Pupil:** Mix color with **Line Medium** to creamy consistency. Paint pupil with Lip Brush. Rinse brush thoroughly in water.
5. **Iris Shading:** Paint iris shading as required using remaining color and Lip Brush. Add a little dry color for extra depth.
6. Dry off in kiln (Low/Medium) or oven (circa 200° - 250° F) until all traces of medium have disappeared. Paint will look **very pale** and chalky. Do **not** rub paint -- it is **not** fired on.
7. **Highlight:** Mix color with **Line Medium** to a creamy consistency. Use the tip of a round toothpick to apply. (As the highlight paint is applied, some of the moisture is absorbed by the surrounding paint. **Ignore this**, as it will not affect the fired result at all.)

PAINTED HAIR - streaked effect

You need a Fan Brush for this.

Mix the dry paint with **Area Medium** to a fairly creamy mixture. Depending on the doll -- normally apply base color and fire. Next firing -- mix the same color to a denser consistency. Load the tips of the Fan Brush bristles and streak the hair starting at the crown and working out.

PAINTED HAIR - smooth effect

Mix the dry paint with **Area Medium** to a fairly creamy - dense mixture. Using a moistened and squeezed-out sponge, apply color starting at the crown. To achieve a "sprayed-on" look (common in early 20th century baby dolls), use a **fine-textured** Doll Sponge. Then stipple and pat the color gently, starting at the crown, then blending and fading the color towards the hairline.

For extra smoothness, let color dry for a few minutes. Then polish with a clean, dry China Mop #8. Repeat this process in the subsequent firing to add extra depth of color if required.

The following items are available as a kit:

Decorating Kit for Waterbase Technique (#WBK1)
Modern Doll Paint Kit (#MODKIT)
Modern Brush Kit (#BKITMD)

China Paints, Media, Brushes, Doll Sponges, and Kits, as well as molds, composition bodies, patterns, wigs, shoes, stands, porcelain slip, kilns, kiln accessories, and tools are available from Seeley's, P.O. Box 669, Oneonta, NY 13820-0669. Phone (607) 433-1240.

Doll Artisan Guild offers seminars in the Waterbase Technique. Check with the Guild or Seeley's Seminar office for complete information. Doll Artisan Guild phone (607) 432-4977. Seeley's Seminar office (607) 433-1240.

Copyright. 1988, 1990 and 1992, Seeley's Ceramic Service, Inc.