

7 Steps to Getting Unstuck

1. Notice what you like in the painting and write it down in a notebook. These are the things you want to keep in the piece. Now start working to go over the parts you don't like. Just do something, anything.

2. Take a photo and look at it. Many times you notice things differently in a photo. Turn it into a black and white version and notice if there is anything that jumps out at you that you want to do next.

3. Sit down and go through an inspiration file you have created for yourself. I have a resource binder that can sometimes give me an idea for when I get stuck. Or I look at a magazine, usually a home magazine, and I think of what would I do to my painting if it were going into one of the rooms in there.

4. Do you work on several at a time? If not, this is something you might want to try so when you get to an impasse on one you can work on another. Often this will offer insights to the first painting.

5. Take some time to just play in the studio without pressure. Easy, quick, fun exercises can sometimes open the floodgates to ideas. Do some color studies, organize your studio, do some quick collage pieces without gluing them down, just to change where your focus is.

6. Are you judging yourself or your painting too much? Are you striving for perfection and not progress? This can put a break on ideas. Let go and give yourself permission to play.

7. Let go of thinking about the outcome and just do one small thing next. Take one small step.

