

BENEFITS, PRO'S AND CON'S OF USING DRYING WATER BASED MEDIUM (d.w.b.m)

First of all, let me say that I really wouldn't be without it..... its such wonderful handy stuff.....and so useful. You can use it to pen with, mix textures such as I-Relief, Gold Underlay, White Velvet, Raised White Enamel, Satin Metallic Powders and many others etc. etc. You can of course also mix paint with it and pad colour on with it too...in fact the list goes on and on. It's extremely handy if you need to cut corners too (when we get desperate or short of time!!) because if you paint or pad it on finely enough, then let it dry..... you can then apply another coat of paint over it using paint mixed with an open type painting medium..... with-out the first coat moving or being damaged.....hence you can achieve two fires in one.....very useful at times. I would warn though to beware of lumping or piling on too much paint at any one time especially when working on Porcelain or it may chip off. The trick is to apply thin but dense coats of colour.....plus a bonus is that any paint mixed with Drying Water Based Medium can be stored in small airtight pots ready to use at any time..... and never goes off.

VERY IMPORTANT.....There are TWO types of Water Based Mediums and it is essential that you don't confuse the two. The one I only ever use and highly recommend for all the procedures throughout these notes is the DRYING Water based type.....simply because of the fact that it will dry. So as not to confuse.....the one to avoid.....or maybe buying mistakenly is an 'open' water based type medium. The 'Open' water based painting medium first came onto the market for its "green" type properties plus for those china painter's who are allergic to certain mineral based painting medium etc. Whilst also on the subject.....the 'Open' Water Based Medium is a great alternative if you do suffer from allergies, but it will not be suitable for any of the following. It is essential you use the Drying Water Based Medium.

HOW TO USE.....WHAT ITS GOOD FOR..... PLUS TIPS AND HINTS:

1 A clean separate tile is a must when using water based medium.....using a worn/old tile could lead to contamination and you may end up with the mix not working well, or maybe splitting or going into tiny globules and wondering why it won't work properly! Once the powder paint is mixed with the d.w.b.m. you should only use a little extra d.w.b.m....and/or an appropriate amount of water depending on what you are doing with it.....which ever will help to thin the mix or generally help in its application....don't ever try to combine paint mixed with d.w.b.m. with paints mixed with open painting medium or any other type of medium....such as copaiba balsam or fat oil etc, all you will do will create glue!!!!

2 Brushes - I use squirrel when appropriate as they are very soft and good for applying smooth coats of even colour.....but sometimes they are too soft and bend too much when placed in water.....a good trick is if the brush has been in water to clean or change the colour is to have a little of the d.w.b.m. in a small dish and dip the brush in it first to soften and condition it. Sable or Sable/Synthetic brushes work wonderfully too. It's also a good idea to keep a small neat sable or nylon brush for cleaning/tidying up fine edges too, especially when doing pen-work. It pays to experiment when starting out.....combining a little d.w.b.m.a little water.....plus pre-mixed paint.....juggle amounts to suit.....too much water and the colour may dry off too quickly.....plus a very hot day or overly warm room will also speed up the drying process.

I would also add here that too much water and not enough medium when painting may result in a somewhat dull finish or possible duller areas after the firing process....try to balance amounts.....you can always apply another coat of paint to remedy problems.

3 Mixing Paints, Storing and Application - Use paint in powder form and mix thoroughly using d.w.b.m. Mix to a toothpaste consistency, then add a drop or two more of the same medium, re-mix, then store in small dumpy airtight jars. To work with it, place a little on a clean tile, thin with d.w.b.m. to suit and thin down further with a little water....again to suit. Mix well and vary amounts of medium or water to depending on what style of work you creating. Extra water added will of course speed up the drying process. Once you are happy with the application you can fire at this stage. After firing, you can of course just carry on using colours mixed with just the d.w.b.m. method until you are happy with your piece.....alternatively if you want to cut corners and do a

two in one colour application then read on and apply as instructed in No. 4 below.

4 Achieving 2 coats of colour in one fire - To do this you need to apply the first coat of colour as in No. 3 above and then when dried off completely..... apply a second coat of colour on top using paints mixed with an open painting medium. Before starting the second stage, clear away all your d.w.b.m. mixed paints and materials etc. and get out your basic pre-mixed palette of colours mixed with Open Painting Medium, plus open medium and brushes etc.

The method only works well because of the contrast between the two mediums (oil and water don't mix!!) and it will only work one way round only.....i.e. dried coat applied first.....and when dry..... the open medium application will just rest on top and not budge the first layerunless you scratch or damage it with spit or water!!!

Tip - and worth another mention.....two coats of colour works extremely well, especially on Bone China due to its soft glaze and is especially useful when trying to achieve rich dense colour quickly.....but BEWARE..... whilst working on Porcelain it is essential to avoid thick/lumpy applications of paint or they will chip off.....this is due to the hard glaze of Porcelain..... a smooth even and creamy application is the way to go.

a. When applying colour mixed with open medium you will need to use a little extra Open Medium as you work as it tends to be absorbed more easily and it also to thin the colour down a little more for easier application and less drag.

b. If it's necessary to wipe or clean back to the first dried coat of colour for any reason you can use clean Genuine Turps.....it will not harm or affect the first coat of paint in any way.

c. Another tip on cleaning/wiping back is that you can also dip a cotton bud in turps to gently clean paint away.

5 I-Relief - Applying I-Relief texture powder mixed with D.W.B.M is great as it is so flexible and you never waste any. Mix to a toothpaste consistency and then thin to any suitable consistency you like with either more medium or the addition of water. It can be trailed or strung on.....placed on thickly.....or thinned with water, remixed and padded on with a sponge. I-Relief that has been mixed with D.W.B.M. can be placed next to unfired Lustre (or even on top of it....but sparingly as it may shift a little). If it has shrunk back a little or turned somewhat pink during the firing process, due to contamination with the lustre.....don't worry as it will be covered over when gilded. You can save any left-overs in an airtight jar and use it whenever.....it won't go off.

6 Lustre can actually also be applied gently applied over dried unfired pen-work that has been mixed and applied using D.W.B.M. (don't try any other type of medium though as it won't work). It is essential that before applying lustre that you gently remove any stray particles of dust etc. with a soft brush.

7 Satin Metallic Powders - D.W.D.M is great for mixing and applying Satin Metallic Paint - when applied with a sponge or brush, you won't achieve the same smooth appearance as the ground-lay method but it is still very effective. When mixed to a suitable consistency they can then be applied with a fine sponge pounce or brush. You can also try pressing a real leaf into the mix then placing it on the ware to create various effects (remove leaf after through!!), experiment with random strokes, loose sketchy effects, or maybe drizzling or distorting it too.

8 Using a Peel Resist Masking Fluid - When using D.W.B.M and you need a type of peel resist that is impervious to water (or the resist will melt). You will find one available from your china painting suppliers. *Tip - You can try applying a double layer of the basic Peel Resist Masking Fluid.... it does work as long as you don't hang about removing it!!!

9 White Velvet and Etching - Briefly, White Velvet is a pink tinted very fine matt textured powder (turns white in the firing process) and is thinly applied and padded on using d.w.b.m./water. It is then allowed to dry off and harden. The next step is to then to etch into it creating lace like patterns and designs. It is then fired to approx. 770-780 deg. Mother of Pearl is then applied over the etched area and re-fired. Alternatively, any colour of paint applied or padded on using a D.W.B.M can when dried and hardened off thoroughly, be etched into to create words or patterns etc. For either method, use sharpened brush end, stick, etching tool, cocktail stick etc.

10 Simple Borders - Using paint mixed with D.W.B.M and a bit of scrunched up Cling Film, Bubble Wrap or perhaps a stipple type brush, you can create some very simple borders or patterned areas. e.g. Mix Black Green powder (or any appropriate colour) with D.W.B.M and then thin with water to a suitable consistency (e.g. similar to thin single cream or thinner). Now scrunch up your cling film, or fine bubble wrap etc. and dab lightly in to the loose

colour mix and apply a scrunched or stipple type pattern where appropriate. Clean up and dry thoroughly. Now using paint mixed with open based painting medium and open medium and also using a lighter shade of colour e.g. Emerald Green. Load your square shader and paint a thin layer over the dry patterned area. Clean up and Fire at approx. 800 deg.

11 Carbon - If using a carbon, do make sure you use a wax free type as the more basic type carbons can create havoc with any pen-work. This is because the pen picks up the grease from the carbon.

12 Using D.W.B.M. as a temporary glue - d.w.b.m. is great for using to temporarily stick on a glass bead or glass dewdrop to anchor it ready for firing. Allow it to dry off though before taking it to the kiln (so they won't roll!!!).

CREATING A REALLY GOOD PEN-MIX WITH D.W.W.M I guarantee it will work.....

- On a tile mix a reasonable amount of dry powder colour with the drying water based medium to quite a loose-ish consistency (similar to single cream). You now need to create an 'ink-like' consistency by adding water and re-mixing. Keep adding a drop at a time until you think it's suitable and then test. Experiment until your pen-work will flow correctly without skipping or missing as you work.
- Because the medium is water based, it will tend to dry off quite quickly, especially in a warm environment. As you work, re-mix as often as necessary and add drops of water to keep it going until it flows again - remember 'think ink'. Again because the mix dries off so quickly.....clean the nib constantly to stop it clogging.
- A fresh mix always works best and is far superior.....but you can re-use your pen-mix. Keep it in an air tight box. I've always got one on the go....it's handy for penning your name on items. To reconstitute, add a few drops of water and re-mix well. Don't over use a pen-mix as it does deteriorate eventually.
- Always spit clean the ware to remove any grease, Turps. or Meths. Because the medium is water based it doesn't tend to like them...not only that but I find the pen works better. Spit cleaning the ware, also makes it easier to use a Bic Biro on top to draw designs straight onto the ware.
- As mentioned in earlier sections, once the paint has dried off completely, you can paint over it with paints mixed with an OPEN mineral type medium and your pen-work will not move....effectively cutting out a firing. This method is great for a Pen-and Wash type scene similar to a water colour effect.
- When penning don't try to pen too fast or it will skip parts.
- HINT: Cleaning up or re de-fining Pen-work - To scratch or fine down pen-work lines etc. try a cocktail stick, scraper, blunt darning needle, dart, old pen nib, stylus, fibre tip wipe-out tool - in fact anything reasonably sharp or similar are very useful. A little cotton wool wrapped around a cocktail stick and dipped in water is good for cleaning up or a small sable brush dampened with water. Make sure you remove any particles of paint before you fire.

Drying Water Based Medium and Enamel:

- The medium works well with Raised White Enamel Powder, and can create lovely soft translucent type effects, especially when working on a very dark surface. To start, just add the medium to the powder and mix and grind really well, add a drop at a time mixing to a suitable toothpaste type consistency and by this I mean that you want the mix to be stiff enough to work with and stay proud and not that soft that it will sag and spread too much. Fire between 760 - 780 Deg.
- Flow Enamel - D.W.B.M. can be used to apply flow enamel but it mustn't be used too wet or it floods out too much. Also, ideally any flow enamel work is much better applied into pre-fired pen-work lines (they have to be pre-fired or the mix would dissolve them if they have been applied with D.W.B.M). If colouring the enamel, mix Raised White Enamel Powder with about a 5th portion of colour powder paint. Mix and grind well. Load the brush and flow the mix keeping a barrier of enamel mix between the brush and the ware (this avoids brush strokes or indentations). Repeat the action as necessary. Allow to dry thoroughly before firing.
- If after firing any type of Raised White Enamel, you decide you would like to gild over it with Liquid Bright Gold, you must drop the firing temperature at least 10 - 15 deg. Or the gold will crackle or may slide off. Ideally 745 - 750 deg.

Drying Water Based and Simplified European or Dresden style Work:

There are many ways of tackling the European or Dresden Style work and the purist would tackle it in the traditional manner using Fat Oil & Genuine Turps combination to apply and also use traditional brush strokes etc. This particular method will achieve great strength of colour and detail. However, the Fat Oil/Turps method does not suit everyone and not everyone is conversant with the traditional style brush stroke that work so well with this particular style.

A more simple solution would be to try using D.W.B.M. as an alternative instead as it enables you to achieve good depth and detail, especially in the initial stages. Additionally, you could also perhaps do a little pen-work to enhance the detail first (or even after). It works wonderfully well. As a bonus, corners can be cut by the addition of an extra coat of paint on top before firing, by using paints mixed with an open mineral based medium. Alternatively, you can of course fire in-between. Beware when using this method though..... as mentioned previously.....it works better on Bone China, as too much paint applied at any one time on Porcelain, may cause it to chip off due the extra hard glaze of Porcelain ware.

I am sure there are many more ideas for using with Drying Water Based Medium.....I'm never without it.....experiment and try some of the above tips and hints and see what you think.....you may come up with even more uses.