

Copic 101

Instructor: Jan McKee



Welcome to Copic 101, a beginner's class to working with Copic Markers.

Why are Copic Markers special?

- *No retired colors
- *Formula has never changed, so colors are always the same
- *Low odor
- *358 colors
- *Acid free

Choosing Paper and Inks

*A good paper allows you to add color within a specific area and not have feathering. (Feathering is when your marker ink spreads beyond where you put your pen down. Bleeding is when your ink soaks through the back of your paper. You can have a good paper that doesn't feather, but will bleed.)

*Can use coated or glossy papers; however, you cannot color on it the same way you can with uncoated papers.

Good inks to use:

- Tsukineko Memento (my fav!!)
- Ranger Distress Inks
- Tsukineko Brilliance (must heat set)
- Memories Dye Ink pad (must heat set)

Inks to Avoid:

- Staz-On (solvent based)
- Stampin' Up!, Close to My Heart, Washable inks (water based, will bleed)

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Copic Marker Styles:

All Copic Markers have the same ink. All styles are refillable. All Copic Markers are hand tested 3 times each in Japan before they are imported. All Copic Markers have a guaranteed 3 year shelf life, meaning that they won't go dry just sitting there.

Copic Original - has a square body, only 214 colors, but most customizable style with option of 9 different nibs.

Sketch Marker (My fav!) - the most popular, available in all 358 colors. Color numbers are embossed into casing and will never rub off. The color number is printed on the end cap.

Ciao Marker - This marker was introduced with children in mind. They cost about \$2 less per marker, have a special child safe cap with air holes in case a child accidentally swallows the Ciao lid, they'll still be able to breath. Available in 180 colors, and cannot be used to airbrush. Ciao hold less ink, and have to be refilled more often.

Wide Marker - Available in 36 colors, uses more ink, but refilling is easy, as the little U-shaped notch in the body near the nib is exactly the size of the tip on an ink bottle. Wide Markers are useful for special effects, filling in large areas, and great for backgrounds.

Various Ink Refills - In all 358 colors, each bottle will refill a dry marker up to 15 times, depending on the style of marker. Each bottle has a built in dropper tip for easy application. The air tight inner seal will protect your ink from drying out for many years.

Alcohol ink straight from the bottle are great for altered art, and adhere to most surfaces. I offered a refilling service to my customers for those who own the markers, but do not want to purchase a whole bottle of ink for each of their markers.

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Taking care of your Copic Markers

Storage - You can store your markers either horizontally or vertically without any side effects.

Clean Up - Clean your marker with either Blender solution, rubbing alcohol, or alcohol based hand sanitizer. All of these contain alcohol and will remove gummed up or spilled ink.

Replacing nibs - If your tip gets damaged, dirty or broken you can easily replace them. Simply pull out the damaged nib with your fingers or tweezers. Note: You DO NOT need to replace the nibs each time you refill.

Dried out markers - If a cap is left off your marker and one nib completely dries out you can remove the nib and soak it in a few drops of blender solution until it looks lighter in color to clear out the pores. Let the blender evaporate before you put it back in your marker. Color should flow back out in a few minutes. If both ends are dry then you will need to clean both nibs and refill the marker.

Copic Color Theory

Color Letter -

The letter represents the color family, E is for Earth, C for Cool Gray, B for Blue, RV for Red-Violet, etc. All the color families except E follow the same basic rules.

Color Saturation or Intensity Number -

This is the first number in a color. Saturated colors are on the outside of the color wheel. As you move closer to the middle of the wheel, colors become desaturated and closer to gray.

Color Brightness Number -

This is the last digit on any color showing how bright or light that color is.

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Applying the number system to your work!

Think about the images you will be coloring before you pick your colors. If you will be coloring more earthy or muted images, like forests or antique pictures, choose colors that are less saturated. This includes colors in the 70's, 80's or 90's, like BG93 or G99. If you are coloring bright things like children's toys or spring flowers, you might want to pick colors that are in the 0's, 10's or 20's like Y08, RV04 or G14.

Natural Blending Groups

In each larger color family you can break down the full range of colors into smaller sequences, such as B20-B29. These colors are called a Natural Blending Group. These are colors that naturally go well together. There is no saturation variation, only brightness variation. When you blend these colors together you know that the colors will perfectly coordinate.

For blends to look more natural, pick colors from the same blending group. In general, keep a 2-4 digit difference between the last numbers and keep the letter and first number the same. As you find combinations you like add them to your example book. Remember, these rules are simply guidelines, and are not set in stone.

Working with Grays

As a crafter you may think that there are too many grays in the Copic Color wheel; however, anyone who uses Copic markers should have a few grays in their collection. Copic makes 46 different shades of gray, in 4 color families.

Each color of gray brings its own tone and feel to a picture. Cool grays add a hint of blue, warm grays add a hint of brown. Neutral gray is a true neutral. Toner gray is half way between neutral and warm.

Shading and Blending

Marker Blending on Paper - This is the most common technique. When you first try this, use lighter colors, given that darker colors quickly get too dark. Once you are comfortable with blending, it will be easier to add in darker colors.

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Feather Blending

Unlike the Marker Blending on Paper technique, this is a good technique to use when you're trying to blend very different colors that would turn into a color mess if you tried the first technique.

Tip-to-tip Blending

This technique really demonstrates one of the unique properties of Copic Ink. Tip-to-tip blending is good for long, very skinny areas like flower stems, where you wouldn't have enough room to get a blend using one of the other techniques. Works for any color combination, though it's easiest to learn with a light color and a dark color.

Colorless Blender

So far, all of the blending techniques covered have not included the Colorless Blender. The name "Colorless Blender" is actually misleading, because the marker doesn't really blend colors as much as it re-wets the marker dye on your paper so it can be moved around or changed.

One of the qualities of the blender is that it pushes color. Any color that is on your paper can be pushed and manipulated. How you manipulate the color comes down to technique. Used one way, the blender will lighten an area, or add highlights, used another way it will fix mistakes.

I hope you've enjoyed this Copic 101 class, and use the information that we've covered to create beautiful art. I'm currently working on a very special project that will help you use your markers and take some of the stress of color matching out of the art, so you can enjoy the simple joys of coloring and receive all the therapeutic benefits. Keep watch on my page at janmckee.com/page/my-shop for its release.

If you would like to continue to learn how to use your Copic markers, please consider joining my Copic Club at janmckee.com/members/vaults/221 where for a small monthly subscription you'll receive a project each month and step-by-step instructions on how to color using your Copic markers. Please follow me at Creative Frugal Wonder Woman on Facebook, and at His Drops of Hope on Instagram.

Have a blessed day!

Jan