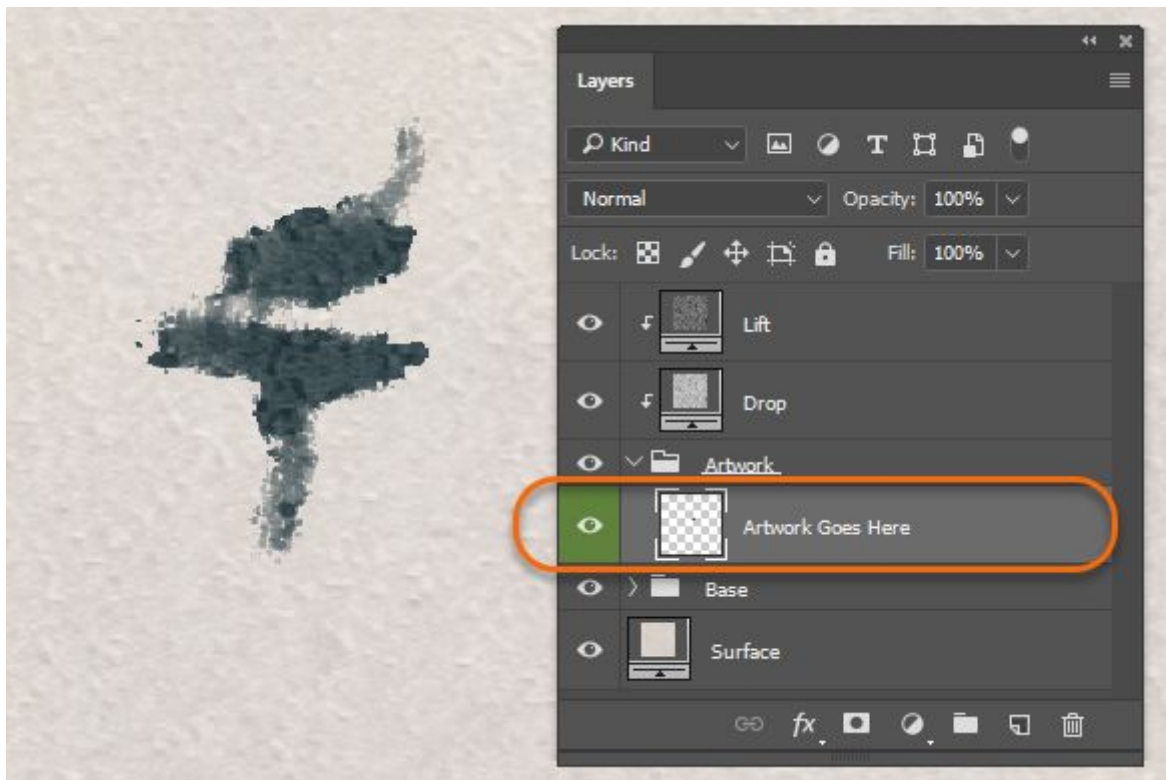


GrutBrushes Art Surfaces Manual

These Art Surfaces have a lot of features, so let's dive in so you don't miss out on anything...

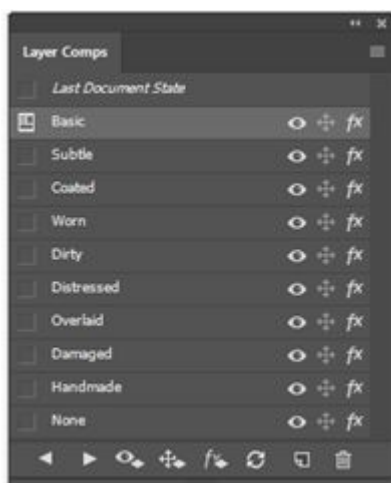
Quick Start ([video here](#))

To jump right in, open the PSD file in Photoshop and start painting in the green layer titled "Artwork Goes Here"



You will see that the paper texture is applied to your painting as you paint

Change the Look Instantly with Layer Comps



Each Art Surface comes with 4 to 10 Smart Surface settings which are available in the Layer Comps Panel (Open it from the menu: *Window > Layer Comps*)

Smart Surfaces are "non-destructive" which means they are not permanent and you can switch looks or remove them at any time and your original artwork will remain untouched!

These are the ten most common Smart Surface settings you will find in most GrutBrushes Art Surfaces.

When you open the Art Surface PSD it will probably be set to **Basic** by default.

To switch to any other look, just select the checkbox next to the you Smart Surface you want to apply and you will instantly see the effects applied to your artwork.

Personally, I almost always use the **Subtle** setting. I think it is the most realistic and useful of all the presets. The texture is less prominent and that keeps the focus on the artwork itself.

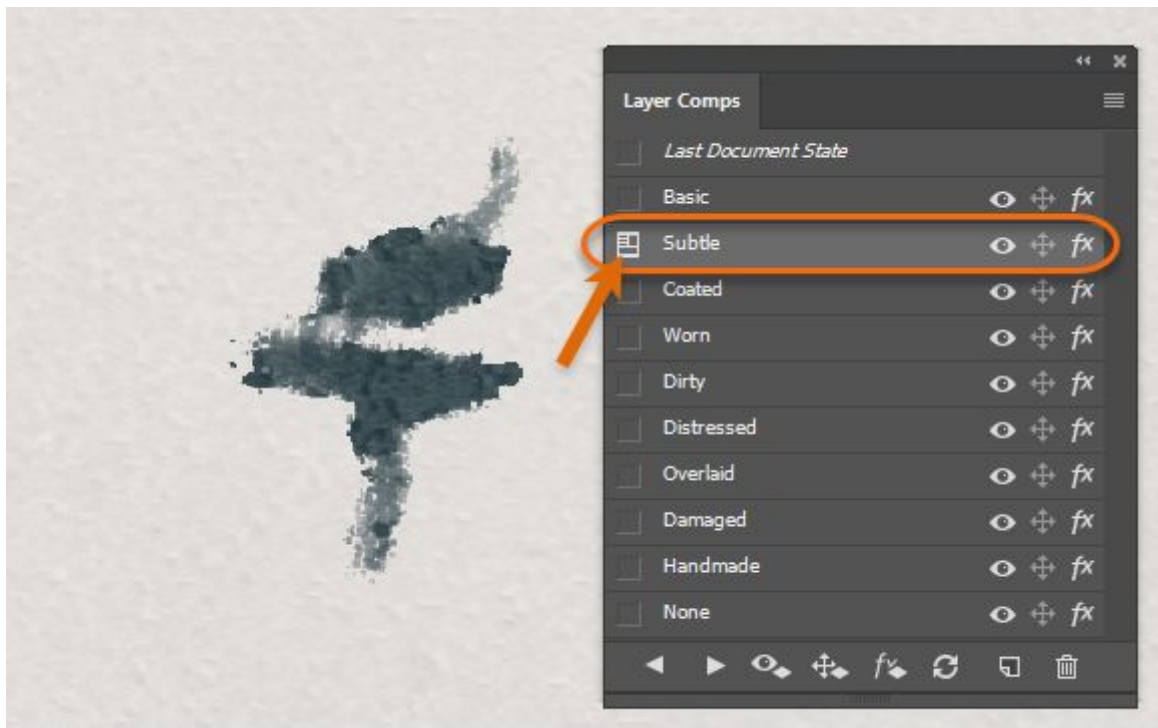
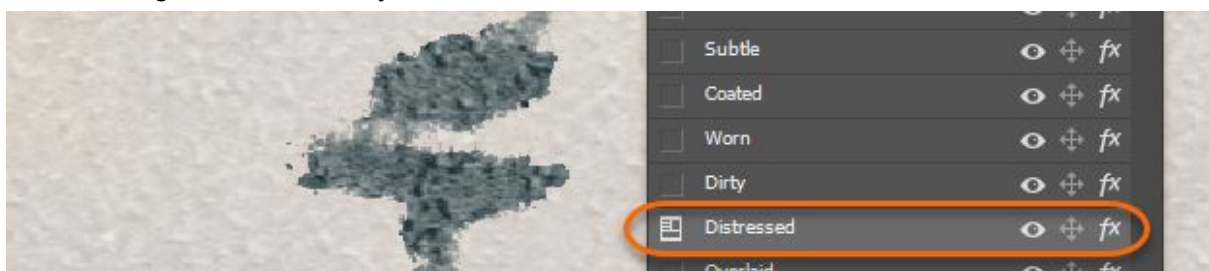


Fig 3. Click the box next to the Layer Comp name of the Smart Surface you want to activate

Other settings like Worn, Dirty and Distressed are much more dramatic



Every Smart Surface will affect each piece of artwork in a unique and different way. Only a few may be suitable for each particular piece but trying them all may give you a different perspective on your work

You will usually find that either the **Basic**, **Coated** or **Subtle** setting will do in most cases.

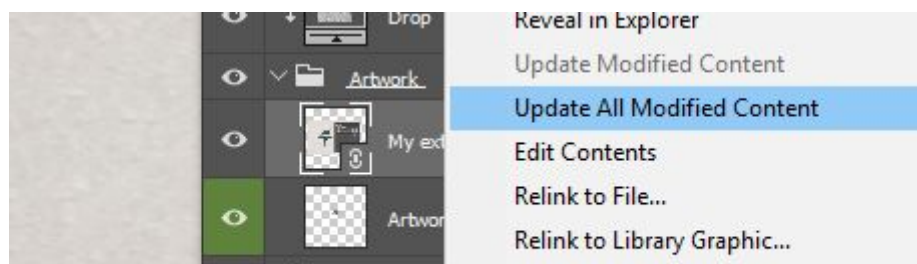
To check your art *without* any Art Surface texture at any time just select **None**.

To see your artwork **on top** of the surface without any lighting or shading effects, select the **Overlaid** setting

Import old work or photos into GrutBrushes Art Surfaces

You can put anything into an Art Surface, including previously created drawings, paintings, scanned artwork, graphics, logos or even photos. You can do this in a number of ways. Two of the easiest are:

1. **Copy the artwork** you want to place into your Art Surface then select the Green layer and paste it (cmd/ctrl + v) You can use merge down (*Layer > Merge Down* or cmd/ctrl + e) to merge it into the green layer which will keep it visible while switching Layer Comps
2. **Embed an external file** into the Art Surface. Select *File > Place Linked* to embed another file, even a PSD file into the 'Artwork' layer folder. If you use *Place Linked* you can always edit the original file and just update the layer to refresh it



Right-click linked layer to update external PSD files right inside the Art Surface!

Adding New Layers

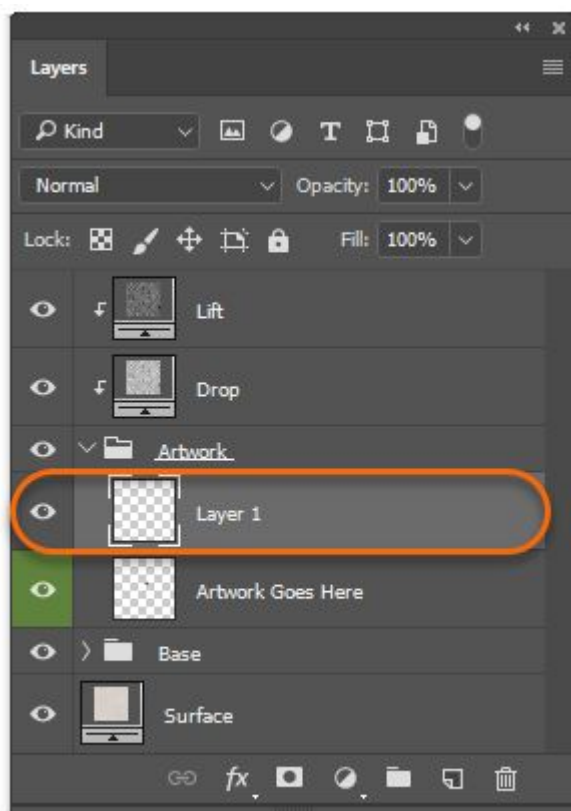


fig. 5 Add new layers inside 'Artwork' folder

To add layers to your artwork, always add them **inside** the *Artwork* layers folder (left). That way the lighting and shadow effects of the Art Surface will be applied to the new layer. Unless you are...

Painting With Thick Paint

To add layers of thick paint, like an impasto oil paint or a thick pastel, add a new layer above the 'Lift' layer and paint in there (fig. 6)

These will be unaffected by the Art Surface texture and will sit on top of it.

This is also great for painting like the Old Masters did. Paint your thin underpainting in the green Artwork layer and your

overpainting in a new layer above them all. Keep some of the green underpainting layer visible underneath amidst the overpainting, for an ultra realistic look.

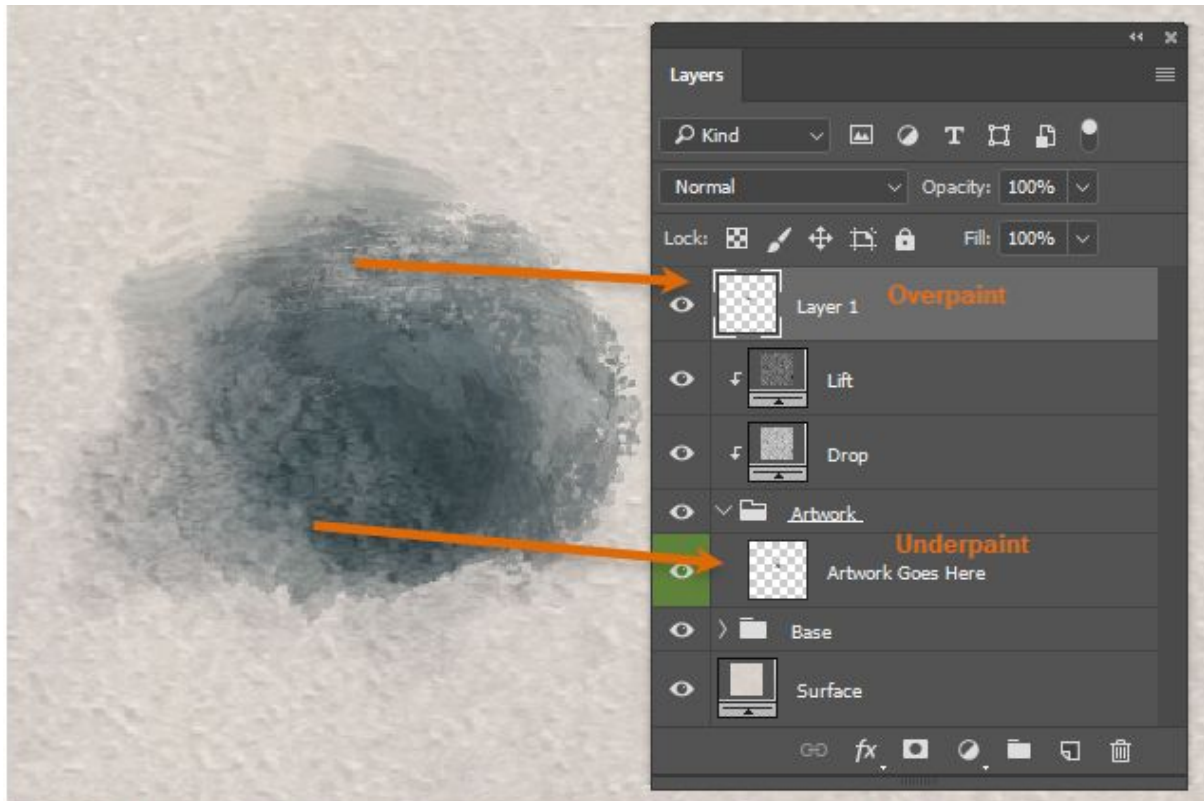


Fig. 6 For thick paint that sits above the surface texture add a layer above the 'Lift' layer

The Disappearing Layers Issue

Unfortunately, when you switch Layer Comps to apply a different look, any new layers you added will become invisible. This is due to the way Photoshop Layer Comps work and there is currently no way to stop it. To see them again, click on the eye next to the layer name.

Here are two imperfect workarounds:

1. Merge all paint layers into the original green layer. The green Artwork layer will always be visible in any Smart Surface Layer Comp. Or...
2. Click the *Update Layer Comp* button while your new layer is visible. The active Layer Comp ('Handmade' in fig. 7) will now include your new layers. You will have to do this once for each Layer Comp you switch to whenever you add new layers

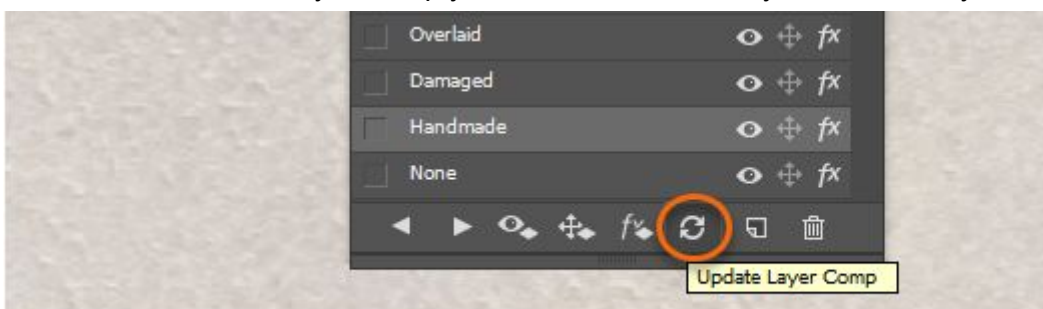
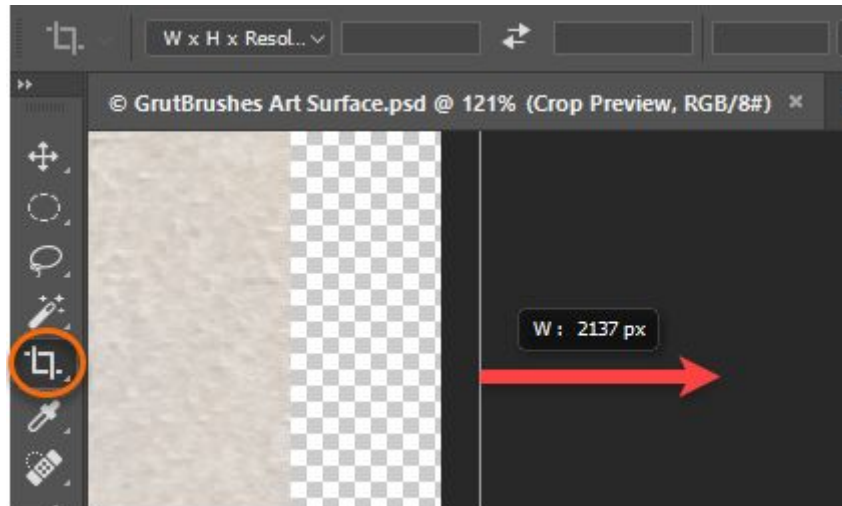


Fig. 7 Update the Layer Comp to include any new active layers you have added

Scaling and tiling your Art Surface

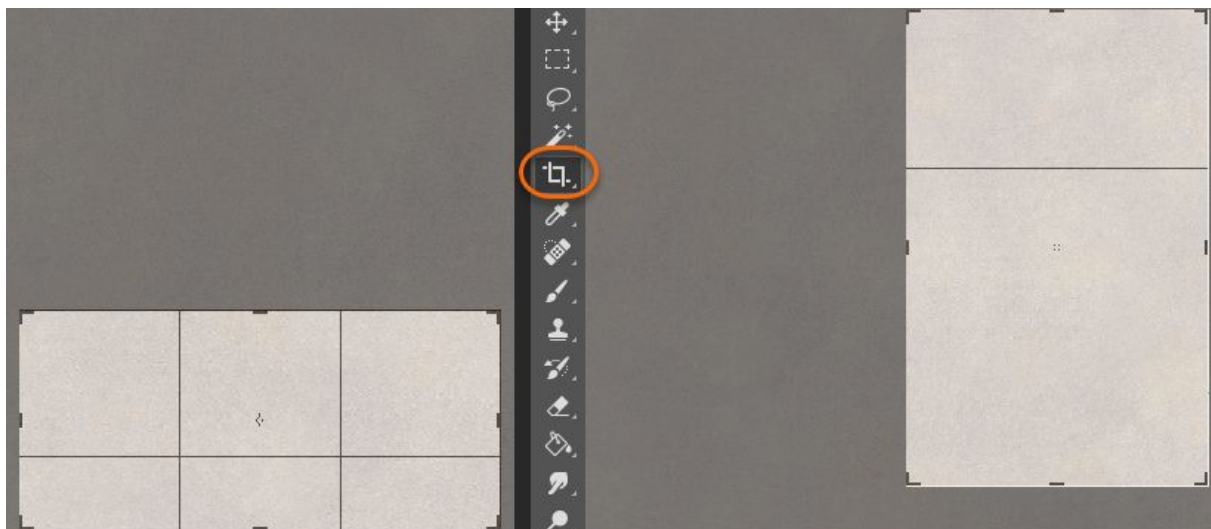
GrutBrushes Art Surfaces are infinite, seamless canvasses, which means that it tiles seamlessly forever in all directions beyond all four edges of your canvas.

To reveal more of this infinite canvas, just select the crop tool and drag *outside* the edges of your canvas and hit 'Enter' Once you do that the Art Surface will expand to fill in the new space where the checkerboard pattern is.



Using the crop tool, drag *outside* the bounds of your canvas to enlarge

Keep in mind that even a tiled surface will show a repeating pattern if you loop it too many times. The infinite canvas is really meant to free you from being locked to a fixed aspect ratio or running out of room at the edge of your image . You can easily switch from a landscape to a portrait format by dragging out one of the edges.



Landscape or portrait? Change the aspect ratio of your canvas crop any time you want, the Art Surface will fill the gaps

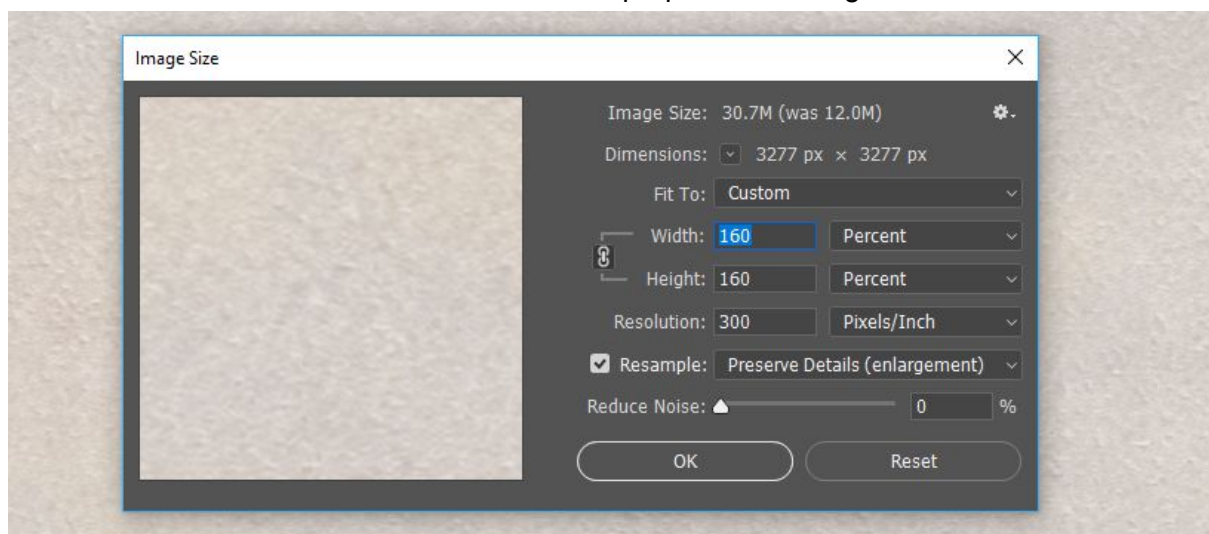
The larger you make your canvas, the more you are in effect 'zooming out' from your canvas and your surface texture will become less and less prominent, so try to crop inward if you

can, to keep the textures visible. There's no point in painting on a beautifully textured canvas if you are going to look at it from outer space.

There are times when you may even want to *zoom in* to show even more texture in a close up painting. All GrutBrushes Art Surfaces are 300 dpi so even if you zoom in to 200% they will still be 150dpi.

To do this, select *Image > Image Size* from the menu and select a width larger than the current size. Some Art Surfaces will be able to handle scaling better than others and how big you can go depends on how much sharpness you need.

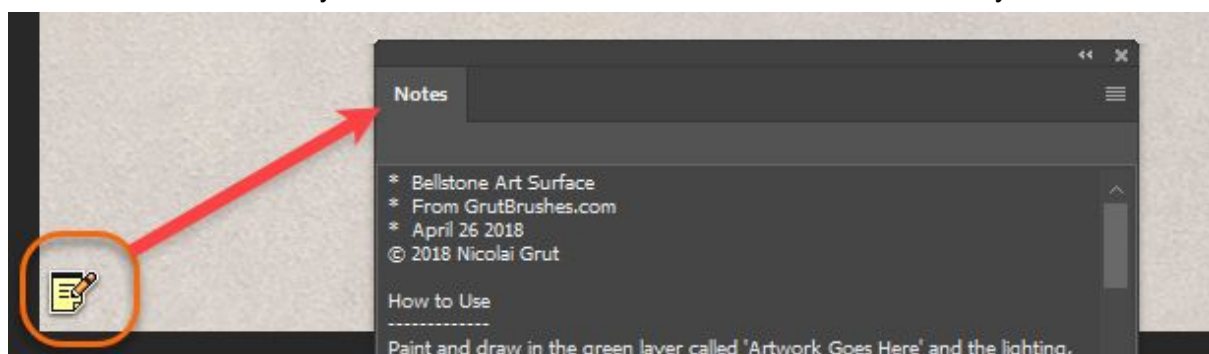
Ideally you would want to enlarge your Art Surface *before* you paint or your paint strokes will be scaled as well and that will defeat the whole purpose of scaling it.



Embedded Info Note

In the bottom left corner of every Art Surface is a little Photoshop note which can be opened by double-clicking on it. In it you will find some of the tips (like these) as well as the name of the Art Surface.

This can be useful after you have saved your artwork with a different name and want to know which Art Surface you used. Feel free to hide move or even delete it if you like



You can also find out the original Art Surface name embedded in the file from the menu by selecting *File > File Info*

Overview of Smart Surface Layer Comp settings

Basic: This is the default setting and shows the texture fairly prominently in both the background and on the paint layer.

Subtle: Both the background and the paint layer textures are toned down and less defined. This allows the artwork to be more prominent.

Coated: Subtler texture on the paint layer but strong surface texture below. This surface acts as if lightly coated in clay and is therefore less absorbent, so the texture on your paint will be subtler making it appear slightly more opaque.

Worn: The raised texture of the surface has been worn down and some paint has rubbed off.

Dirty: The recessed divots in the surface are darker where dirt has collected.

Distressed: Wear and tear appears on the surface bumps as well as dirt in the crevices.

Overlaid: Just your artwork overlaid on the background. No surface texture lighting or shadow applied to the artwork (very handy to quickly check your untouched artwork)

Damaged: Extreme version of Distressed.

Handmade: Raised surface texture like you find with handmade papers. This one may cause your computer to lag a bit when painting as it applies layer effects "live"

Oily: Has a slightly shiny or glazed appearance, mainly on the peaks of the surface. May have a lightly varnished look

Baked: Larger, more pronounced surface texture, similar to Oily but with a matte finish

None: Click this one to quickly remove both the background texture and the overlaid surface texture and lighting effects. Basically just your artwork on a white layer.

You can find the latest Art Surfaces in the shop at www.GrutBrushes.com/Shop/

Plain (no Art Surface)



Questions? Email me at info@grutbrushes.com