



the need for **Speed!**

by Gretchen Fleener

Whether our artistic sides like it or not, as face painters our business side often requires us to provide speed for our clients. Sure, we may not choose speed painting as our preferred method of working, but that doesn't mean that working on our speed can't help our business! And don't for a minute think that incorporating speed techniques is only good for those clients who can't afford to hire you for the time needed and just want you to do the work of several painters for cheap. Many professional artists actually charge a premium for "speed painting!" Don't sell yourself short...let your clients know that while painting at breakneck speed may help ensure the maximum number of kids are painted, it is an additional fee. You will likely burn through more product, be harder on your tools, and most definitely harder on yourself physically. It requires a little extra compensation! This is how you can weed out those just looking for the cheapest painter, for those clients who actually NEED the speed. Here are a few techniques to help speed up your painting operation, for those gigs that require it.

Strategic mirror placement

As long as you are okay with not seeing every child's reaction, instead of holding up the mirror for every child, set a tabletop mirror a few feet away from the painting chair. The kids will leap from the chair to go check out their art!

Be Flexible with Level of Detail

I like to display less detailed versions of my designs on my menu board. That way, I can do them fast and still give the kids what they fully expect...but when I have extra time, I can dazzle them with more details as an unexpected bonus! Decide what elements must stay and what can go if needed. For example, sometimes a few drop shadow lines look just fine as a replacement for full outlines.

Practice, practice, practice!

Don't avoid the things you are slow at...focus on practicing them! Many artists do "drills" where they will practice 100 teardrops on their arm, 100 dots, etc. Practice really does improve speed over time!

Practice Loading & Rinsing

Loading and rinsing your brush is another place where speed can be improved. Some artists use one brush for every color, eliminating the need to load and rinse all together!

Assembly Line

Some artists really speed up painting by offering just a few designs, then lining up several kids who want the same design and painting them all at once!

Give Yourself a Break!

We all want to live up to our own lofty artistic standards, but remember...in the end, the only thing that matters is a smiling child! They likely won't notice if you leave out a small detail. And take a break to stretch, too! You'll paint better and faster in the end!

Choose the Right Brush

There are so many ways to make complex details quickly simply by choosing the right brush based on the strokes it makes. See page 2 for one example!

The Right Brush!



Many artists complain that cheek art takes too much time. However, I'm a firm believer that with some practice and strategic use of your tools, detailed designs can be fast too! I've been doing super detailed yet incredibly fast cheek art for 19 years.

One of my best tricks for obtaining speed while still maintaining crisp details is choosing the right brush and utilizing it to its full potential. You don't need dozens of brushes to create dozens of shapes...you just need to at least have a few key shapes: round, flat, and filbert. If

you have a couple sizes of each shape, that's even better. A rake brush will also greatly speed up things like fur and grass.

The purple shapes above were all created with simple strokes of a flat brush. The red shapes were all obtained with one round brush. By simply varying your angle and pressure, you can create many shapes without having to outline them first and then fill them in, saving you LOADS of time!

Just because you might not offer cheek art in your repertoire does not mean that these tips won't be of use to you! By utilizing these tricks, you can add more detail to your full face and eye designs without compromising your speed. Take this checkered flag design, for example.

Why waste time tracing a grid when you can achieve this with some quick, short strokes using a flat brush! Use your tire track stencil for a super fast and cool full face design!

STOP
Tedious
Outlining!



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Checkered Flags



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