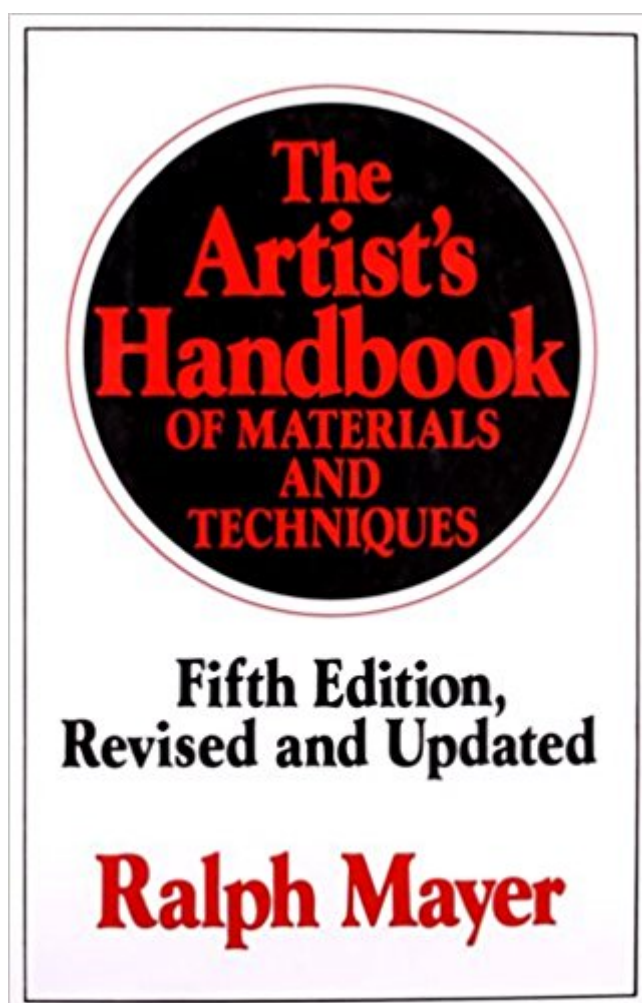


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# The Artist's Handbook Of Materials And Techniques: Fifth Edition, Revised And Updated (Reference)



## Synopsis

Since 1940, when it was originally published, *The Artist's Handbook* has been indispensable for thousands of practicing artists and art students. The book has remained continuously in print through many editions and has some more than a quarter of a million copies. It is, as *American Artist Magazine* calls it, the "artist's bible," an invaluable reference for the painter, sculptor, and printmaker. During the past few years, however, new art movements and new research have led to many changes in the technology of artist's materials. With the assistance of Mayer's widow, Bena, and his colleagues, Viking and Steven Sheehan, Director of the Ralph Mayer Center at Yale University, have prepared this latest revision of the book, which is now completely updated and expanded. The Handbook does retain its original, user-friendly format. Mayer intended that this encyclopedic volume be referred to frequently, and he therefore gave specific, practical advice on every aspect of his subject. In addition, he compiled valuable lists for the artist: retail sources for materials, a pigment catalog, a bibliography, and an extensive appendix. And the detailed index makes all of this information immediately accessible.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Ralph Mayer (1895-1979) was a painter and art conservator. Educated as a chemical engineer, he worked in paint manufacture and studied painting at the Art Students League of New York before going on to teach at Columbia University. He founded the Artists Technical Research Institute in 1959. He is best known as the author of *The Artist's Handbook of Materials and Techniques* (1940),

which is still a point of reference for artists today, and he also wrote *The Painter's Craft* (1948) and *A Dictionary of Art Terms and Techniques* (1969). --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Well, plenty of reviews here relate the content on this book. From reading, apparently historically, before mass production, fine art was often more a 'craft' than an 'art'. Ralph Mayer's book is chock full of explicit details on the analytical side of things that relates more to the chemistry and physics of things than the artistic side. Does not mean this material is not useful to the artist, for it adds a great deal of insight into what the art is all about from that clinical, analytical explanation. It perhaps gives a viewpoint more from a curator's point of view, than an artist. For me, at least one benefit was explanations on why certain materials degrade over time [ie yellowing, cracking], and how to preserve or initiate from scratch a better preservation. I would offer Ralph Mayer's reference book remains in an artist's must have list to compliment a plethora of reference that will advance one's understanding of what they do.

This is a great reference for any artist. Whether you're into oils, acrylics, watercolors, encaustics, pastels or any other medium this book has information for you on just about anything you can think of. There's a chapter where you can brush up on your chemistry and one on solutes and solvents. Thinking of making your own media? There's a chapter on pigments and all of their chemical and physical properties. A chapter on Miscellaneous Notes actually makes for good reading throwing out information on various topics related to already mentioned media but also discusses others such as etching, silk-screening and lithography. It's a wealth of information squeezed into 710 pages with an added 48 page index. It's impossible to find this much information on art technique and tools in any 1 other book (IMHO). No pictures (there are charts and graphs) just good information.

After decades of publication this still remains as the definitive text for artists to determine the characteristics the various forms of media. I had to have it. I got it. It does not disappoint.

I think this book is an absolute necessity for any serious artist's library. Even if you aren't interested in other disciplines or media, it will help you become a well-rounded, well informed visual artist.

required reading for any artist working with paint and polymers

There are two books entitled "The Artists Handbook": the one here by Ralph Mayer, the other by Ray Smith. Both are valuable resources, both are worth owning as complements to each other. Smith's book has a bit more humanity in its descriptions and colorful glossy photos. But for sheer technical data THIS is the book you want.

The text is detailed written in language of yesteryear. It probably has all the information you need to know about paints and materials but the prose is dense and readable with concentration. You won't find the information you are looking easily but the when you find it it's usually accurate. It is a great reference if you have time to sit and absorb its information.

I used to have this art manual many years ago, then I lost it. It was time for me to get this manual again, because I changed art mediums, from oil painting to painting with Casein. It is a wonderful manual and it has everything you would want to know about any medium. Very erudite, but incredibly interesting. I would recommend it to anyone. Thank you. Theodore Heard

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