



**Utrecht Art Supplies**

## **Product Profiles: "Pure Pigments" Explained**



**Ask the Expert: "I notice you use the term "Pure Pigments" in describing some of your paints. Are they not all equally pure? What would make a pigment 'impure'?"**

**A:** Selecting the highest quality pigments has always been key to our formulas. Pigments, like most materials, come in different grades of quality and purity. The purest pigments cost more but offer the best performance, while colors diluted with fillers have a lower bulk cost but perform much less well in paint. Only Pure Pigments are selected for use in Utrecht Professional Artist's Colors.

### **Fillers and Co-precipitates**

In "student grade" paints, fillers may be added in the manufacturing process, but they can also be present in the raw pigment. Cadmium-based colors, for example, can be manufactured in a process that simultaneously produces barium (a chalky filler) as a co-precipitate. The final product contains enough cadmium to impart color, but compared to a pure pigment with no barium, color intensity, tint strength and covering power are significantly less. According to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston materials database:

**"Cadmium barium yellow is a permanent color that has poorer hiding power and lower**

**tinting strength than pure cadmium yellow pigment. "**



We use the word "Pure" in the names of specific premium colors to communicate our choice to use only top quality raw materials, but we also apply this standard across all our Professional Artist's Color lines. For example, we still use real hydrous chromic oxide for Viridian, as opposed to phthalo-based mixtures. Utrecht genuine Raw Umber still offers the characteristic, subtle undertones of the historical color because, unlike some manufacturers we do not add black to produce a darker, more generic "brown".

While some paint makers have reformulated key colors to include cheaper materials, we continue to use pure, authentic pigments and bring each one to its best advantage.

Questions? [Ask the Expert](#)

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