

How to Paint Swirl A Guitar

(preparation)

1. Fill the plastic storage container with 40-45 gallons of water. You can use a smaller plastic container, but a 50-gallon container (trash can) will give you more room to submerge the guitar without bumping the sides. (A guitar is made of wood and will push back. So you will want to allow for room for movement, so that you don't bump the sides affecting the paint) You can use water from the taps, water jugs or a hose to fill the container.



2. Use a paint mixing spatula and a drill to mix the Borax in to the water. We are finding filling a container 1 to 3 gallons at a time and adding 1.5 to 2 tablespoons per gallon yields the best results for dilution of borax. Mix until you do not see any more Borax floating in the water and it has been completely dissolved.



3. Allow the water to sit and test the pH. The water should be in the range of 9.30 to 9.40.

4. Test a drop of oil paint) in the water to see if there is the correct amount of borax in the water. (Found that model paint Humbrol <http://www.buycheapr.com/us/result.jsp?ga=us13&q=humbrol+paint>, Krylon <http://www.krylon.com/>, or 5 drops of paint thinner [20 drops = 1ml for most commercial droppers] mixed well with a tablespoon of Rustoleum [http://www.rustoleum.com/oil based paint](http://www.rustoleum.com/oil-based-paint) with yields the best results. Borax helps to decrease the surface tension on the water and allows the paint to spread and swirl freely. Add a drop of oil paint to the water and



watch to see whether it spreads and swirls on the surface. If it does you have enough Borax. If the paint does not spread and swirl, add more Borax in 1/4-cup increments and retest using another drop of paint.

5. Prepare the guitar by priming and plugging any holes.

6. Wipe the guitar with a Tack cloth to be sure the surface is clean and ready.

(painting)

7. Add oil paint to the water with whatever colors you have chosen. Some paints are heavier than others. So to avoid any paints sinking add the paint by slowly rolling it off the end of the tablespoon close to the surface of the water.



8. Use a thin piece of wood (skewer) to mix the colors together in a swirling pattern. Test the swirl paint with different objects, scrap pieces of wood, etc. so you can see the process of dipping objects into the swirl paint and test the color strength. It is important to test the dipping and paint process before dipping your guitar into the paint. You may need to add more paint to the container in order to achieve a darker color. This will be a process of testing and re-testing until you have found your desired swirl look.



- Dipping the guitar and moving it side to side yields one effect
- “Chasing” the areas where the paint is settled the most yields another
- Allowing the paint to settle longer seems to yield a darker outcome (too long and the paint will dry on the surface of the water)

9. Slowly dip the guitar body into the swirled paint, but keep it moving at all times to avoid making a line across the guitar.



10. Remove the top layer of paint by laying down a newspaper on the top surface of the container.



11. Carefully remove the unwanted, excess paint spots with a Q-tip or similar object. (optional)

10 Allow the guitar body to dry (24hrs) before touching it.

