

WHAT ARE OIL PASTELS MADE OF

Oil pastels are made from pigment mixed with a binder of non-drying oil (like mineral or linseed oil) and wax, giving them a soft, buttery, creamy texture that doesn't dry like paint but remains pliable. This contrasts with soft pastels (pigment + gum/methyl cellulose) and wax crayons (pigment + wax only), offering vibrant colors and smooth blending on various surfaces.

Key Ingredients:

- **Pigment:**

The powdered colorant, derived from mineral, vegetable, or synthetic sources.

- **Non-Drying Oil:**

Mineral oil is common, providing a creamy consistency that keeps the pastel from drying out.

- **Wax:**

Beeswax, paraffin, or microcrystalline wax, which adds hardness and body to the stick.

- **Additives:**

Other ingredients might be included for specific handling or texture.

How They Differ:

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- **From Soft Pastels:**

Soft pastels use a gum or methyl cellulose binder, making them powdery and requiring fixative.

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- **From Wax Crayons:**

Crayons lack oil, making them harder and more waxy; oil pastels are oil-rich and blendable.

Characteristics:

- **Creamy Texture:** Allows for smooth application, layering, and blending.
- **Vibrant Colors:** High pigment content results in intense hues.
- **Versatile:** Works on paper, canvas, wood, and more without needing much preparation.