

Introduction to Diego Velázquez

Diego Velázquez (1599–1660) was a **famous Spanish painter** known for his lifelike portraits and rich, realistic scenes. He worked as the court painter for King Philip IV of Spain and created many masterpieces that captured the beauty and complexity of everyday life.

- He painted **people, animals, and objects** with amazing detail
- He used **light and shadow** to give depth and realism to his paintings
- His most famous work is *Las Meninas*, a portrait full of mystery and storytelling

This tutorial is inspired by one of Velázquez's lesser-known works that shows a warm and lively moment between musicians (and even a monkey!). It's a great example of how art can tell a quiet story.



Materials Needed

To complete this tutorial, you will need:

- A printed **line drawing** (or pencil and fine black pen to sketch your own)
 - **Oil paints** (or acrylics for easier clean-up)
 - Suggested colours: red, green, cream, brown, peach, black, white, blue
 - A **palette** for mixing colours
 - A set of **paintbrushes** (thin and medium)
 - **Water or solvent** for cleaning brushes
 - **Paper towels or cloths**
 - A **flat surface** for painting
 - An **apron or old shirt** to protect clothing
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Step 1: Complete a Clean Line Drawing

Begin your painting by preparing a detailed line drawing. This drawing will act as the guide for your painting process. Use clean, black outlines on a white background with no shading.

1. Carefully sketch the **three musicians**, the **monkey**, and the **table setting** just as they appear.
2. Include important **details**:
 - Each character's musical instrument (guitar, lute, violin)
 - Clothing features like collars, cuffs, and sleeves
 - Facial expressions and hairstyles
 - Background items such as the **framed landscape** and **glassware** on the table
3. Keep the **lines clear and smooth**, and make sure everything is in the correct place before you start painting.

This finished drawing sets the structure for your coloured painting in later steps.



Step 2: Add Flat Colour with Oil Paints

Now that your line drawing is ready, it's time to fill in the main areas with **flat colours**. This step is all about blocking in colour without any shading or texture yet.

1. **Use a clean brush** and mix simple, solid tones.
2. **Paint each area with one even colour**:
 - Use soft peach or light brown for the skin
 - Choose deep reds, greens, or yellows for the clothes
 - Add brown tones for the instruments and table
 - Use soft blue for the sky and green for the trees in the picture on the wall

3. **Be careful to stay inside the lines** and fill each area smoothly
4. **Let the colours dry** before moving on

These flat colours will be the base. In the next step, we'll add shadows, folds, and more detail.



Step 3: Add Shadows and Clothing Folds

Now that your flat colours are dry, it's time to add depth and texture using **shadows and clothing folds**. This will make your painting look more realistic and give the characters more form.

1. **Mix slightly darker tones** of the colours you've already used. For example:
 - A darker red for the boy's trousers
 - A deeper green for the violinist's tunic
 - A soft brown to shade under the table and around fingers
2. **Use a fine brush** to gently paint in folds in the fabric—look at the creases on the sleeves, trousers, and tunics.
3. **Add shadows:**
 - Under arms, beneath the table, around the neck and chin
 - Where objects overlap (e.g. the violin against the shirt)
4. **Blend softly** if you're using traditional oil paints, or keep the edges clean if you want a bolder look

This step makes your painting come alive with volume and shape.



✦ Extra Activities to Try

Here are some fun, creative follow-up ideas:

1. **Create Your Own Music Scene**
Draw or paint a group of musicians using different instruments or outfits of your choice.
2. **Add a Modern Twist**
Recreate the same scene but change the setting—maybe in a modern room or an outdoor park!
3. **Make Character Profiles**
Write a short story or comic about the people and monkey in the painting. Who are they? What's their relationship?
4. **Design a Frame**
Using cardboard or craft sticks, design and decorate a frame for your finished painting.