PAINTING A CAT

SOFTWARE: PhotoImpactXL
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TITLE: Painting a Cat
SKILL LEVEL: Beginner / Easy
TOOLS USED: Paintbrush Tools: Bristle; Retouch Tools: Bristle Smear
ADDITIONAL FILES:
Download cat-ufo.zip from Tutorials Index. (Cat lineart I made of our cat while he was looking out the window.)

NOTE for beginners: The **Preset** option in the **Attribute Toolbar** will be set to **None** even though you've chosen a preset. This is a glitch and you can rest assured your settings are correct.
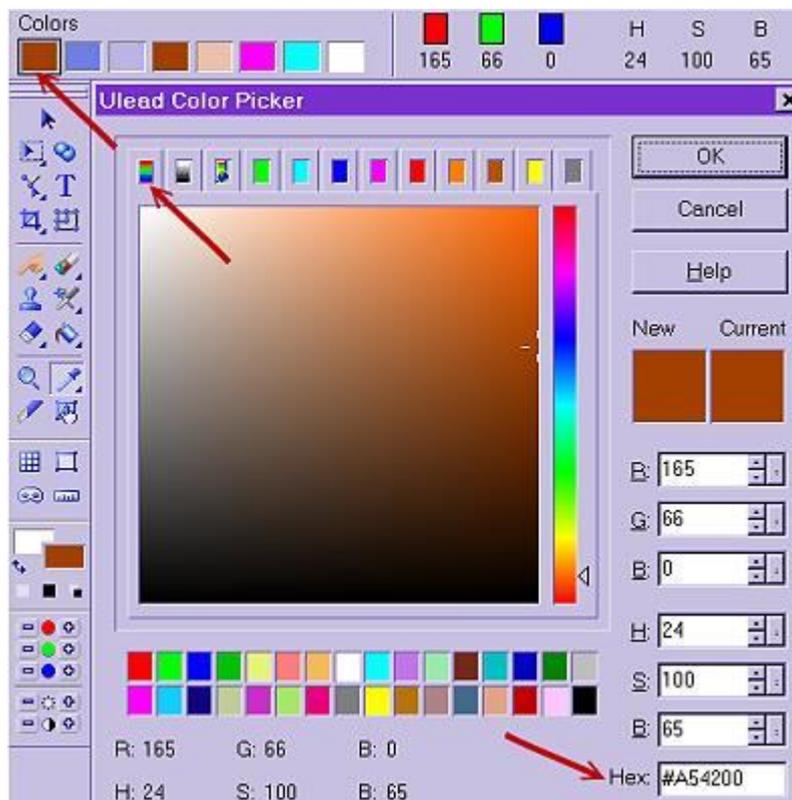
DESCRIPTION: Use a line drawing as the base for painting a realistic cat with depth.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Save often. Drag your cat to your EP to store from time to time so you can go back to a previous save if you need to.

1. Open the cat.ufo. Make sure it's active by clicking on it. Drag it to your EP to store.
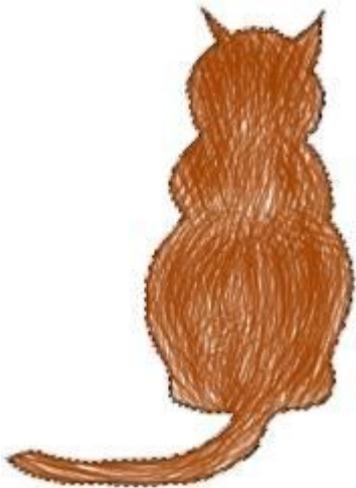
2. Press the **Y** key on your keyboard to access the **Color Swatches**. We'll keep our colours here so we can refer to them when we want. I've worked with only 4 colours for this painting. Click the first swatch and in the **Color Picker** dialogue box that comes up, click the first icon (tab) at the top left, then type #A54200 in at the bottom. Click **OK.**

3. Select your **Bristle Paintbrush** from the **Tool Panel** by toggling from the **Y** key you're in to the **P**. Toggle backwards and forwards from **P** to **Y** each time you wish to change colours or paint. **Settings: Size** 50, **Preset** Grass. The colour I've chosen is a mid colour and we'll be going lighter and darker from this base colour. With the cat selected, work your way down the body to the tip of the tail, following the contours of the shape. No need to be precise.
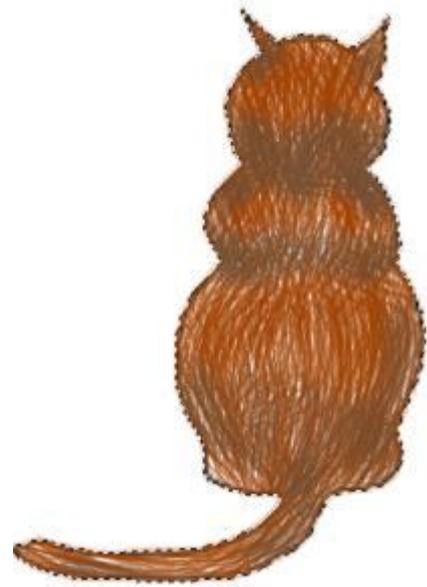

4. After going down the body once, do the same again starting from the top not filling in too heavily.

5. **Y** key. Click the second swatch and paste #A54200 in the Hex box to get our original colour. With the first tab open as before in the **Color Picker**, move the crosshairs down to a darker shade. I chose #75523A but it's up to you. Click OK.

6. **P** key. Brush **Size** 30. Make sure cat is active :) and continue painting, this time on the ears, back of neck, below the shoulders and bottom area where the shadows fall.

7. Pick a darker colour again storing it on your swatch panel and work a little more over these same areas.

8. **Retouch Tools (H key), Bristle Smear**. Work your way in short strokes from top to the tail tip, blending the light and shade together.

9. **Y** key. Make your fourth swatch along a lighter shade of the original. I chose #E5B18C. **P** key. In the **Brush Panel / Texture** tab, click on the down arrow and choose **Paper30.jpg**. Lightly brush over the ears, top of the head, shoulders, middle of back and tail. Go back over the brightest parts where the light would hit.

10. **H** key and **Bristle Smear** again to gently blend. If you find the smearing is pushing the colours down the animal, smear upwards where it needs it.

11. Use your colour swatches or new shades to bring back any colour lost and blend where it needs it til you get more of a cohesive whole. I'm reasonably happy with my cat. All that's left is to put him in a view.