Why Use A Fixative?

To Protect Against Smudging
If your drawing is touched either while in process or after finished, pigments can smear and smudge easily if your art has not been protected with a fixative. Unprotected artwork is exceptionally fragile.

To Prevent Dusting of Pigments Behind Glass
Even when framing behind glass, loose particles of some dry media can dust off over time, especially when your artwork is moved. This is why spacers are used to keep artwork away from the glass; however, this is still not enough protection to prevent the loss of fine particles of dry media which can dust the inside of the glass. Before applying a fixative, always make sure you remove any loose dust from your drawing with a soft brush or by lightly tapping your drawing from behind. Once the artwork is fixed, the pigments will not dust off.

To Add UV Protection
While glass offers some UV protection to fragile dry media, using both glass and a fixative with UV light absorbers and stabilizers provides the best combination of protection.

To Protect Against Moisture
Moisture can easily damage unprotected artwork – even if it is framed behind glass. In humid environments especially, all artwork using dry media should be protected with a fixative.

To Protect Until Art is Framed
Many times a drawing or pastel painting is not framed right away. If unprotected artwork is stacked while in storage, smearing and smudging may occur.

To Protect Against Wax Bloom
Unprotected colored pencil drawings are likely to be affected by wax bloom, which is a white haze that appears over time as the wax medium rises to the surface. Using several coats of fixative will prevent wax bloom and preserve the look of your original art.

To Display Without Glass
While watercolors and dry media are traditionally framed under glass, there is an increasing trend away from glass that some artists are embracing, especially with watercolor. Watercolor paintings without glass are lighter to hang on the wall, won’t have the reflections from glass and can garner higher prices in galleries. Spraying a UV protective artist fixative over the watercolor (if desired), and then finishing with multiple coats of a UV protective artist quality varnish will allow you to leave the glass behind. Please note that many watercolor societies will not allow varnished work in their competitions as most consider these paintings to be mixed media. Varnishing watercolors and dry media can also make a conservator’s job more difficult as these fragile media can be harder to restore.
Why Use A Fixative? (continued)

Left unprotected, dry media can dust, smudge, smear, fade and be susceptible to moisture damage; however, not all fixatives are created equally and care should be used in selecting the right fixative to protect your artwork. Most fixatives dissolve the whites and light colors of chalks and pastels to some degree. Additionally, pump sprays easily spatter and will not provide the fine, even mist of aerosol fixatives. Never use hairspray – it will yellow your artwork over time. Most hairsprays also contain hair conditioners, which are oils that could leave grease spots on your art. A high quality UV protective artist fixative is your best choice for a final fixative, and you should always test the product to be sure it performs to your expectations. Krylon® Fine Art Fixatif contains an exclusive blend of powerful UV light absorbers (UVA) and stabilizers (HALS) to protect your dry media, invisibly safeguards the look of your original art without dissolving whites and lights, and can be used as both a workable and final fixative.

For more information on Krylon® artist products, visit krylon.com/galleryseries.