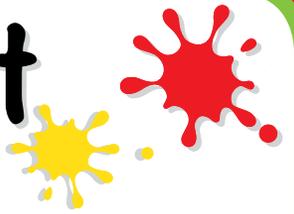




# Paintertainment



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## TIDINGS OF COMFORT & JOY!

by Gretchen Fleener

If you've been face painting for even a short time, you've likely noticed the strain that this job can put on your body. Whether you find yourself leaning in awkward positions, lifting kids in and out of your chair, or simply spending hours on your feet, this becomes especially clear this time of year, when so many of us are booked solid with long, busy holiday parties! This is time of year when we are especially expected to be joyful at our gigs, and sometimes our lack of comfort can make the joy part a challenge!

Doing any job that requires repetition over time can do a number on your body, and what works for one artist doesn't necessarily work for another. All of our bodies are different, and will respond to different techniques. That is why it is important to explore your options, try them all and find out what works for you! A huge part of ensuring your

comfort while painting lies in your own required combination of heights...the height of your table, height of the child, and height of yourself if you are sitting or standing.

### Sitting vs Standing

Some artists prefer to sit while painting, while others swear by standing. I have a lot of back problems, being that I have a mild case of scoliosis. For probably 15 years or so I only sat while painting. After that I decided to try a tall director's chair and have never gone back! What works best for me on really long hauls is actually a combination of the two. When I'm working 12 hour days at the county fair, I use a tall director's chair for the kids, and then have a hydraulic mechanic's stool on wheels that I sit on when possible. This way if I have a short kid, instead of hunching down to reach them, I sit on my stool which forces me to sit nice and tall to paint them. I find that making myself change positions every so often really helps me, and alternating between sitting & standing helps a lot! When standing, it is of course important to have good shoes. But, many artists also swear by using an anti-fatigue mat.

### Positioning the Child

Many artists also use pillows and booster seats to get the kids to their ideal height. Keep a booster seat on hand if it's not too much to carry, and it'll help lift little ones higher. If you use a tall, deep director's chair, it also can help to have a pillow to put behind smaller children, pushing them forwards toward you so you don't have to lean. Some artists have the child lean towards them, though I prefer to have them leaning on a chair to help them sit still. Having a hydraulic director's chair would be amazing, like a barber's chair, though isn't feasible to carry around. As an alternative, some artists have found success using furniture risers under their chair legs to

raise the child's chair. Just make sure they are super stable!

### Heavy Lifting

Okay, most of the kids we paint are either not that heavy, or big enough to get in and out of the chair themselves. But when you're painting dozens of kids over hours, and you have a tall chair, you're bound to have plenty who need help getting in and out of your chair. If you use a tall chair, make sure to have a good, sturdy step stool for them to climb up. Some people even use a tall stepping stool as their chair itself, having the child sit on the top step. The best thing to do though is to require the parents to help their child in and out of the chair. In this day & age it's better not to pick up someone else's child anyway, and it'll save your back! Some artists avoid carrying chairs and lifting kids all together, having the child stand while they sit themselves. Of course, this can be difficult when you have to paint an adult or teenager, so it's important to give yourself options!

### Kit Size and Position

Your kit can also play a role in the heavy lifting, so try to pack light whenever you can, or get everything onto some wheels!

There are many things you can experiment with adjusting in your setup, like the height of your table, height of your chair, height of the child's chair, etc. But also consider where your paints are placed. Make sure your most used supplies are all within arm's reach and don't require you to lean to reach them.

### Take a Break!

Don't forget to give yourselves a break! Standing up and stretching, even if only for a few seconds every 20-30 minutes, can do wonders for your comfort. I don't normally take a break for gigs that are 4 hours or less, but needing a rinse water change is a great excuse to get up, move around differently, and get a quick moment to stretch and refresh!

There are many options out there...if you are experiencing a lot of pain, make it a goal in 2019 to do some experimentation and figure out the best layout for you! Your back will thank you! 



# What's News?



## On the Blog

Check out the blog to see the progression photos of this ugly Christmas sweater I painted on my son!



## NEW in the Shop

We will have Superstar makeup up in the shop by the end of this week! Check it out in our makeup section!



## Wet Paint Magazine

We want stories of supportive significant others for our February issue! Check out [WetPaintMagazine.com](http://WetPaintMagazine.com) & click on "Submit" to participate!



# RUDOLPH & CLARICE



I used the BAM Hill Stencil for the background!

## December Coupon Code!

# 10% off

Enter code **COMFORT** at checkout. Shopping cart must total \$25 or more before shipping and taxes. Offer expires 1/31/19.