

Watercolor Fundamentals I

Bill Wise

Welcome! This class is designed for students new to watercolor and those who would like a review of some watercolor fundamentals. Class discussions will include a review of the following watercolor supplies:

Materials List – See below for important details

- (1-2) 22x30" watercolor paper sheets, Arches 140lb Cold Press
- #10 or #12 round watercolor brush (synthetic or synthetic blend)
- (6) colors of watercolor paint (1 warm and 1 cool of each Yellow, Red, and Blue).
- Palette
- (2) 1pt water containers (Preferably plastic to avoid breakage)
- Pencil
- Large soft white or kneaded eraser
- Sponge: a small inexpensive grocery store sponge or old terry cloth rag
- Paper towel: Viva brand is recommended for its strength.
- 12x16" Support board: Waterproof surface to paint on (some available for use at DAI)
- Note pad: to take notes
- Sketch pad optional
- Camera
- Brush carrier, canvas or bamboo (protects brushes tips)
- There is a chance you might get watercolors on your cloths. Wear something appropriate.

Background

You needn't buy the most expensive art equipment but it is essential that you buy good quality supplies. Inferior quality supplies are a recipe for frustration and marginal results. For best results, good paper is most important, followed by a good brush, paint is last.

Paper

Paper comes in a combination of three characteristics: weight, surface texture and size. Quality watercolor is made from 100% cotton, not wood fibers! I suggest Arches brand or equal, 140-lb (140 pound) Cold Press, either bright white or natural (no significant difference), 22" x 30" sheet. \$8-\$12/sheet. You can also buy Arches brand paper in tablets. These are expensive to start with. One or two of the large sheets will be good. We will rip these large sheets into smaller sizes. **Avoid Strathmore 300** (yellow cover tablets) watercolor paper. It is very difficult to get desired results with this paper (more on that when we are together).

Brushes

Choose only brushes designated for watercolor. They are softer and made to hold water. Generally they have shorter handles than oil and acrylic brushes. No camel or bristle brushes.

#10 or #12 round, synthetic or synthetic blend brush is recommended. \$8 - \$11 (not readily available in Duluth). Avoid inexpensive, student brushes. Optional additional brushes are: #6, #0, ½" flat and 1" flat. Prior to purchasing additional brushes, mine will be available to experiment with during class. Suggested brands: Robert Simmons Sienna, Jack Richeson Series 9000, Robert Simmons White Sable (synthetic).

Watercolor Paint

You will see a big difference in price for watercolor paints. The less expensive paints are student grade paints. They have less pigment and more filler. Common student brands include Cotman Series by Windsor & Newton, Grumbacher Academy Watercolors, and Van Gogh. Others brands include Yarka, and Prang, etc. These paints are acceptable but if you get serious you will eventually want to replace student grade with Professional grade paints which are more than double the price. Pro Brands include Windsor & Newton Professional (most available in Duluth), M. Graham, Daniel Smith, Holbine, and many more (available at online stores). You will find both grades of paints in tubes and pans or cakes. Both are good.

Recommended Colors:

I suggest starting with just ONE warm and ONE cool of each primary color (Yellow, Red, and Blue).

1. Cool Yellow (yellow with a hint of green): Aurolin or a Lemon Yellow
2. Warm Yellow (hint of orange): New Gamboge or WN Yellow Deep or Indian Yellow
3. Cool Red (touch of violet): Permanent Alizarin Crimson
4. Warm Red (touch of orange): Vermilion Red, Scarlet Lake or Cadmium Red
5. Cool Blue (touch of green): Antwerp, or Prussian Blue
6. Warm Blue: French Ultramarine Blue or Cobalt Blue

* Other optional colors you might already have and will buy eventually (not needed for beginner class):

Dark Orange: Burnt Sienna

Darker Yellow (more neutral): Yellow Ocher or Raw Sienna or Quin Gold

Dark Cool Blue (touch of green): Indigo or Paynes Gray

Light Cool Blue Cerulean or Manganese

Brown: Burnt Umber or Raw Umber

Green: Viridian green or Sap green or Hookers Green

Near Black: Neutral Tint or Indigo or Payne's grey

The DAI will have sample amounts of the recommended paints available the first night if you don't have what you need. I will be covering some of the differences of quality and price in Watercolor Paints, Brushes and Paper.

Palette I use a John Pike palette.

There are many types of acceptable palettes. Make sure your palette has a fairly large mixing area and a cover. Most good ones have 20-30 paint wells around the sides. During class you can use a white plate that will be provide if you haven't yet bought a palette. If you are undecided, wait and we will discuss this. Just bring your paints.

Where to buy your art supplies

Most of these items are all available locally at Michaels, UMD bookstore, Pineapple Arts in downtown Duluth and Hobby Lobby. In the Twin Cities, try Wet Paint, Blick and others.

There are many online resources for art supplies:

Cheap Joe's: www.cheapjoes.com

Daniel Smith: www.DanielSmith.com

Dick Blick: www.dickblick.com

Jerry's Artarama www.jerrysartarama.com

Amazon has some supplies, especially paper pads and blocks, and their prices are competitive.

www.amazon.com