

Watercolor Jumpstart

Recommended Supply List

Time to go shopping! (and scrounging)

Household Items: You should be able to find most of these around the house.

- **white or tan masking tape** - 1” wide regular masking tape. Not drafting/artist’s tape. No blue, green, purple, etc. painter’s tapes.
- **water container** - one pint to one quart capacity is good. Yogurt containers, large mason jars, etc.
- **1.5-2 gallon ziploc bag or similar** plastic bag - to keep your paper clean and dry
- **household sponge** - for wiping a clear space on your palette
- **small terry towel or washcloth** - for controlling the moisture content of brushes
- **roll of paper towels** - for blotting off paint. I like VIVA paper towels because they can be used for lifting wet color. Textured paper towels will leave an imprint of the texture when you blot color off the paper.
- **facial tissue** - If you’re using textured paper towels, you can use facial tissues for blotting off paint. Don’t buy the type with lotion; they will leave oily spots on your paper.
- **painting supports**
 - 3-4 lightweight, waterproof, rigid surfaces for taping down your paper.
 - At least two around 12x16”. The other two can be as small as 8x10”. Nothing larger than 16x20”!
 - Best option: Visit the class page and do the “Getting Started” Project to learn how to make painting supports from scrap cardboard and clear packing tape.

Note: If you already know how to stretch watercolor paper, go ahead and do that. You may still want a couple of lightweight painting supports for quickly taping down small pieces of paper for the exercises.

Art Supplies:

- **pen or pencil** - for taking notes, sketching out ideas, whatever type you like to write with
- woodless pencil, 4B or 6B (as the name implies, this pencil is graphite all the way through, no wood) or a graphite stick
- kneaded eraser - used to lighten lines on watercolor paper without harming the surface
- Holbein watercolor spray bottle - this brand is the only one I know of that will make the type of spray we need for some techniques taught in class. (update: Alas, Holbein appears to have “improved” these so that they no longer easily make small droplets. You want a spray bottle that will make little drops when you depress the plunger (or pull the trigger) lightly, instead of only making a fine mist. I’m looking for a reliable alternative, but haven’t found one yet, sorry!)
- **(optional)** small “watercolor” or “mixed-media” sketchbook, 6x9” or smaller - for taking notes, keeping color references and sketching some options: Strathmore Visual Journal (mixed media or watercolor), Stillman & Birn multimedia journals, Bee Paper Creative Journal (mixed media or watercolor), Bee Paper SuperDeluxe Aquabee sketchbook
- professional-quality (a.k.a. artist-quality) tube watercolors in the following colors:
 - azo yellow or hansa yellow or cadmium yellow light or transparent yellow

- quinacridone rose or permanent rose or quinacridone crimson
- cobalt blue
- ultramarine blue
- burnt sienna or burnt umber

Student-grade paint (e.g. Canson, Grumbacher Academy, hobby store brands) is cheaper per tube because it contains less pigment. Not really a good buy because you just have to use more, and in some cases, can't really get strong color because there's just not enough pigment.

Pan watercolors (the ones in the little cakes) DO come in professional-quality, but aren't suitable for the way we will work in class. Save them for travel and sketching.

- watercolor paper - 3-5 full sheets of 140-lb cold-pressed professional-quality watercolor paper (stay away from **pads or blocks**) - Cut or tear the full sheets (22x30") into quarters (11x15") to make them easier to transport. There is a video on our class webpage showing how to do this.

Please don't use a pad of student paper thinking "I'll just use up this paper I already have, since I'm just practicing". There is no point in "practicing" with materials that won't do what you're trying to practice.

- brushes
 - a number 10 or 12 round
 - a number 0, 1 or 2 rigger (a.k.a. liner)
 - a small (1/4" or so) angle shader
 - a one-and-a-half- or two-inch flat hake (a soft goat-hair brush for wetting paper and laying washes, these carry a lot of water and are much less expensive than similar-sized flat wash brushes) If you already have a watercolor mop, you may use that instead.

The rigger and angle shader can be "hobby brushes" in the \$1-\$3 range. You should be able to find a hake for under \$5 (try the Yasutomo brand). For your first round brush, I recommend Princeton's SNAP golden taklon (around \$6) or something similar. Make sure it comes to a good point.

- covered watercolor palette - A cover is important to keep out dust and debris. Watercolor contains things that support mold growth - you don't want that in your palette!

If you want a folding palette that you can use for sketching and travel, I recommend the Alvin Heritage 18-well palette because it has a rubber gasket to prevent leaks in your tote bag, and has a good mixing surface in the cover, plus an additional removable mixing surface. If you plan to mostly paint in one place, any covered watercolor palette with adequate mixing space will do.

What if you already have one of those round palettes with the small wells and only a tiny mixing surface in the middle? Use a white plate or tray as a mixing surface and stack that on top of your palette as a cover. Not terribly portable, but it works.

If you already have some items (e.g. your mother's watercolors, supplies from another class), go ahead and try them, if you like. Just keep in mind that if you are struggling and getting frustrated, it could be that the supplies are the problem. This is especially true of paper and paint. If you suspect that might be the issue, it's worth buying a small amount of the recommended supplies to see if that will help.