

DAVID WEBB ~ Materials list for painting courses & workshops.

It's not necessary to buy half the contents of your local art shop to create good paintings, so I try to keep materials to a minimum. Don't buy lots, but buy good quality.

Paints

A small selection of watercolour paints (tubes or pans). 'Artist' quality are best, however the Winsor & Newton 'Cotman' or DalerRowney 'Aquafine' range of student colours can give good results. Very cheap paints from, say, your local '£'shop are really a waste of time though, as they are very inferior and they cannot produce decent results.

If you are new to painting then it is far better to buy a small selection of decent quality tubes. A good basic palette could include:

Aureolin (cool yellow)

Raw sienna (warm yellow)

Cobalt blue (warm blue)

Alizarin crimson (cool red)

Burnt sienna (transparent brown)

This small selection will achieve a very wide range of colour mixes. However, you may have similar colours already so, as long as you have a warm and a cool version of each of the primaries, plus a brown or two, you should be fine. You'll see that there are no greens here, as I prefer to mix my own. I prefer tubes to pans as, being soft, they are quicker to work with.

You'll need one more colour:

Ivory Black (used only for monotone sketches)

It's also important to have a mixing palette with 5 or 6 large mixing wells.

Paper

Watercolour paper of at least 140lb weight is advisable. Anything lighter than this tends to buckle if you apply a wash. A size of around 15x11 inches, or A3, is good. If you're working with loose sheets you'll also need a drawing board to attach it to. This should be at least an inch larger all round so that you can attach the paper with tape. If you prefer, there are pads available and also watercolour blocks, which are like pads but the pages are gummed all around the edges. After you complete a painting, the top page is removed by running a knife around the edge to

release it from the block. The advantage of blocks is that the pages don't flap in a breeze, when you're working outside.

Scrap Paper

We'll be doing several exercises in watercolour during the course/workshop, which are best done on scrap paper. It makes sense to do these on watercolour paper as cheap kitchen paper, or cartridge paper, will not produce satisfactory results. I suggest keeping a supply of any failures (we've all got them!) for this purpose. You can always paint on the back.

Brushes

Quality is better than quantity with brushes. One large round, which should be big enough to paint a sky, plus a smaller one for detail, should be able to cope with most situations. Make sure you buy watercolour brushes. I have seen students arrive with oil brushes. The bristles, of which, are totally unsuitable for watercolour painting.

Pencils

Soft grades such as 2B – 4B are most suited to working on watercolour paper. Harder grades tend to make a groove in the paper.

Additional items

Water pot, masking tape, eraser, kitchen roll.

And, for outdoor courses...

Small sketch pad, bulldog clips (for holding down pages in a breeze) and a bag/rucksack to carry it all in. If you like to stand when you're working outdoors, you may want to bring along a portable easel. Otherwise a small folding chair could be useful. Hopefully we will have good weather, which means that some protection from the sun is advisable (some protection from the rain is probably a good thing too!).

Remember, it can get cold when you're sitting/standing in one spot, even in summer. A wide-brimmed hat also doubles as a sunshade for your drawing pad.