

Complete Watercolor Supply List (includes compact kit for Plein Air Painting)

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This very comprehensive 3 part list is designed to accommodate different needs and different budgets, so take a look and buy what fits your needs best.

1. Very Lightweight and Portable *Plein Air* Painting, Suitable for Hiking and Traveling and Quick Sketches:

Ziploc Bag with the following:

HB Pencil and plastic eraser

The smallest possible watercolor paint set filled with pans or cakes of watercolor:

Some possibilities: Van Gogh Watercolor Pocket Box, Sennelier Bijoux Watercolor Set, Winsor and Newton either Cotman (inexpensive) or Winsor Artist Quality (expensive) all of these make very small sets. The price varies depending on the quality of the paint used. You can decide how important the paint quality is to you. For lowest cost, a Prang student set works.

#4 and #6 round watercolor brushes, 3/4" flat brush, 1/2" flat brush

Water and water container

140 lb. cold press 100% rag Arches paper, available in single sheets which you can cut to size you need: bring a lightweight board and clips or a rubber band to secure paper. You can also make your own Arches sketchbook—FedEX Office will spiral bind the paper for you and you can cut it to your preferred size. For artists doing very light washes on top of drawings, the Moleskine watercolor journals can be a good option but these aren't good for heavy washes or where line work isn't the main element. I also really like Stillman and Birn sketchbooks. Try the ones for mixed media or wash.

Paper towel or rag.

Optional: watersoluble pens and pencils.

2. Heavier Weight *Plein Air* Painting, Suitable for Longer Periods of Outdoor Painting:

Portable easel

If you prefer sitting: a portable lightweight chair, plus a small table or camp stool on which to place palette, water and brushes, or a sit pad for working on the ground.

Drawing pencil HB (for watercolor undersketches)

Artist eraser, white Mars plastic (made by Staedtler)

Paper: Arches 140 lb. cold press watercolor paper, 100% rag cut to your preferred size for painting. Check out the new horizontal and square format blocks, too.

Lightweight board for paper mounting for ease of painting if you use single sheets with clips or rubber bands.

Brushes: Sable or sable/synthetic blend watercolor brushes: #6, and #4 round, 3/4" flat. Other sizes and types are optional. Synthetics are fine for #4 and smaller sizes. I like Da Vinci Maestro sable rounds the best, but they are expensive. A sable/synthetic blend works well and is cheaper. Other brushes I like using are smaller flat brushes with chisel edges (which are useful for softening edges, and lifting out), riggers or liners for small line work.

Water and water containers or waterbrushes

Old plastic water bottle for discarding dirty paint water safely

Palette: Alvin 18 pan with blue waterproof seal, filled with tube paints listed below in Studio

Paints: I use Daniel Smith watercolors

Reds: Cool: permanent alizarin crimson

Warm: pyrrol scarlet

Blues: Cool: phthalo blue (green shade)

Warm: phthalo blue (red shade) or French ultramarine blue or ultramarine blue

Yellows: Cool: hansa yellow light

Warm: hansa yellow medium

Violet: carbazole violet

Browns and golds: quinacridone burnt orange, yellow ochre or raw sienna (you can substitute burnt umber or burnt sienna for the quinacridone burnt orange).

Other colors you may want to add, in order of their usefulness: cobalt blue, hansa yellow deep or new gamboge, perylene green, perinone orange, indanthrone blue, Chinese white or Winsor and Newton permanent white gouache-it has more covering power than Chinese white.

Paper towels, rags

3. For Studio or Classroom Painting:

Drawing pencil HB (for watercolor undersketches)

Artist eraser, white Mars plastic (made by Staedtler)

Arches 140 lb. cold press watercolor paper, in single sheets 22 X 30: cut to preferred size for your painting. It's also available in blocks: 7" X 10" or 9" X 12" are good sizes.

Gator Board and gummed paper mailing tape, for stretching paper

Sable or sable/synthetic blend watercolor brushes: #12, #6, and #4 round, 3/4" flat.

Other sizes and types are optional. Do not buy a synthetic brush in #12 or #8 size: they are too stiff and do not lay smooth washes. Synthetics are fine for #4 and smaller sizes. I like Da Vinci Maestro sable rounds the best, but they are expensive. A sable/synthetic blend works well and is cheaper. Other brushes I like using are smaller flat brushes with chisel edges (which are useful for softening edges, and lifting out), riggers or liners for small line work.

Fine artist quality tube paints: Daniel Smith, Winsor and Newton (not their Cotman variety), Old Holland, Schmincke, Sennelier and M. Graham are some of the higher quality manufacturers. If you buy cheaper student-grade paints, be aware that they are not always lightfast and hues may vary considerably from artist-quality paints.

Your own palette is fine but if you are buying a new one these are my recommendations:

Required colors--a warm and cool hue of each of the primary colors, plus a few neutrals:

Warm means it leans towards red, cool means it leans towards blue (in the primary hue of red, warm means leaning towards orange, cool means leaning towards violet).

Reds: Cool: Daniel Smith or Winsor and Newton permanent alizarin crimson

Warm: Daniel Smith pyrrol scarlet or Winsor and Newton Winsor red

Blues: Cool: Daniel Smith phthalo blue (green shade) or Winsor and Newton Winsor Blue (green shade)

Warm: Daniel Smith phthalo blue (red shade) or Winsor and Newton Winsor blue (red shade) or Daniel Smith or Winsor and Newton French ultramarine blue or ultramarine blue

Yellows: Cool: Daniel Smith hansa yellow light or Winsor and Newton Winsor yellow

Warm: Daniel Smith hansa yellow medium or Winsor and Newton Winsor yellow deep

Violet: Daniel Smith carbazole violet or Winsor and Newton Winsor violet

Browns and golds: Daniel Smith quinacridone burnt orange, yellow ochre or raw sienna (you can substitute burnt umber or burnt sienna for the quinacridone burnt orange).

Other colors you may want to add, in order of their usefulness: Daniel Smith or Winsor and Newton cobalt blue, Daniel Smith hansa yellow deep or new gamboge, Daniel Smith perylene green, Daniel Smith perinone orange, Daniel Smith indanthrone blue or Winsor and Newton indanthrene blue, Chinese white, or Winsor and Newton permanent white gouache—it has more covering power than Chinese white.

Paint palettes: whatever you currently have is fine, but if you are buying something new these are my recommendations:

Studio work: my favorite is the John Pike Watercolor Palette—it's large, has a cover and multiple small wells. You may also need saucers or a palette with larger wells if you plan on mixing up larger washes. I use the San Francisco Slant Palette.

Water containers (small yogurt containers work fine, or glass jars)

3M Drafting tape (will not tear most watercolor papers)

Soft cotton rag, paper towels

Masking Fluid—best brand is made by Winsor and Newton (applied with a metal nibbed pen, bamboo pen, or Incredible Nib)

Some Optional Materials

Water-soluble pens: Stylist, Pilot G-2

Watercolor Pencils

Micron or Staedtler pens, .01 or .03, in black or brown

Posca pens: White