

WATER COLOUR -

1. Colour

2. Papers

3. Brushes

4. Techniques

Other Considerations

- Planning the picture
- What/where/how
- Planning the composition
- Working from photographs
- Still life
- En Plein Air (painting outdoors)
- Using a sketch book
- Other:.....
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2 PAPERS

The surface that you choose to work on is just as important as the brush and the paints. Watercolour paper is absorbent, allowing for multiple applications of washes without much buckling.

Cold Press

Perhaps the most popular form of watercolour paper is cold press paper. It is referred to as “cold press” since the paper is rolled on cold cylinders during the manufacturing process. This process produces an irregular dimple pattern in the paper.

Hot Press

Hot press papers are a bit smoother in texture since the paper is rolled on hot cylinders during the manufacturing process. Brush strokes are usually visible on hot press papers.

Rough

Unlike hot press and cold press papers, rough papers are not rolled on cylinders at all. Instead, they are hard pressed, or not pressed at all. The resulting texture is a heavy tooth of an irregular pattern.

Papers are also categorized according to their weight. Heavier papers are usually desired because they are more rigid and capable of holding many washes of colour. The weight of the paper refers to the weight of a ream of paper (500 sheets).

Typically, watercolour papers are available in three different weights...

- **90 lb** (180 gsm) – Thick enough to absorb wet applications.
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- **140 lb** (300 gsm) – Thicker paper capable of absorbing multiple applications with little buckling.
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- **300 lb** (640 gsm) – Very thick paper capable of absorbing multiple applications without any buckling.
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Usually, heavier weights of paper are more expensive and are considered higher quality.

There are two main grades of watercolour paper: artists' quality and students' quality. **Artists' quality, sometimes known as archival paper, is acid-free and designed to endure.**

Papers that aren't acid-free will become yellow and brittle over time.

Acid-free papers are made using alkaline paper making technology. This means the pH of the pulp that is used to form the paper is above 7 (neutral). The paper is also buffered with an alkaline reserve, such as calcium carbonate, to neutralize acid compounds absorbed from the atmosphere or formed through natural aging.

Although there are no universal standards in regards to what makes a paper archival, there are some generally accepted properties. In addition to being acid free, the paper should contain no wood or unbleached pulp, meet strict limits on metallic content and be free from optical brighteners which artificially make the sheet whiter.

If you are looking for the ultimate in permanence use acid free surfaces made with 100% cotton

3 BRUSHES

Sable - Named for the animal from the mink family, the Sable Marten, sable brushes are soft and springy. Mostly used with watercolour and oil painting, sable brushes are capable of holding a sharp point for controlled painting. Although its name suggests that the hair fibres are taken from an animal called a "sable", the hairs commonly originate from a weasel or mink.



Squirrel - An alternative to sable, squirrel brushes are soft but lack spring making them a bit harder to control. Despite a lack of spring, squirrel brushes are capable of producing a fine tip. As their name suggests, squirrel hairs are taken from the tails of Gray and Brown Squirrels. Squirrel brushes are best for use with thin paints such as watercolours or inks.



Goat - Goat hair brushes lack spring but are capable of producing nice washes of colour.



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- A hake brush is **an oriental wash brush with a long, flat wooden handle used in watercolor painting**. The brush is typically synthetic, squirrel, goat, ox or bristle. These brushes hold a lot of water so they're perfect for wetting the surface, doing a large wash, or for picking up excess paint.



Pony - Natural hair from mature horses (not ponies) is used in these brushes. Fibres are coarse and tough. These brushes are mostly used for water-based paints such as watercolour, tempera, and acrylics.



Synthetic - Made from nylon or polyester fibers, synthetic brushes offer the most versatility. Synthetic brushes can be used with virtually any type of painting medium. If you are not sure what type of brush to purchase, synthetic brushes may be the best way to go.

Paint brushes differ according to several characteristics.
These include...

- **Hair or bristle type**
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- **Shape of the bristles**
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- **Width or thickness of the bristles**
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- **Length of the handle**

Modified from: <https://thevirtualinstructor.com/choose-the-right-paintbrush.html>

4 TECHNIQUES

Wet in Wet	
Flat wash	
Graduated wash	
Glazing	
Line and Wash	
Dry Brush	
Art masking fluid	
Ox Gall	
Gum Arabic	
Mixed media – incorporating watercolour pencils, pastels, inks,	
Other	

