

SANDRA TEMPLE

# BASIC TECHNIQUES OF WATERCOLORS

Contents:

Information on paints, brushes, papers and techniques.

Plus

Ways to paint: clouds, sunset, rocks, waterfalls,  
reflections, oceans, portraits, fur and trees

With

36 step by step exercises to help you improve

[Wildart-teacher.com](http://Wildart-teacher.com)

The special luminous quality of a good watercolour painting comes from the white of the paper reflecting back from under the transparent washes of colour. This medium's simplicity comes from planning before you paint and although many will tell you it is a difficult medium to master, and that you cannot fix your mistakes, which is not entirely true.

When dry, watercolour can be lifted off; colour can be dropped in or layered; gouache, coloured pencils or pastels can be added to adjust your painting; fine waterproof pen lines can be used to sharpen edges or sketch on top of your painting... and there are many 'special' effects like salt, indenting and plastic wrap that add extra textures.

The lovely 'accidents' that sometimes appear in watercolours can be difficult to recreate as a deliberate technique, but by allowing the paint to do its own thing you will have a wonderful time learning.

Watercolours come in a variety of types and brands. There are also many mediums you can use to change and enhance the watercolour painting. The main differences are between pans and tubes, student and artist quality.

### **PANS, TUBES, PENCILS or MARKERS:**

**Pan** colours are solid, usually in a little hard square that is already in a palette with individual colours if they allow refilling. They come in artist and student quality.

Mostly chosen by beginners as they are thought to be easier to control with regard to strength of colour, and by artists painting 'on the go' or when travelling.

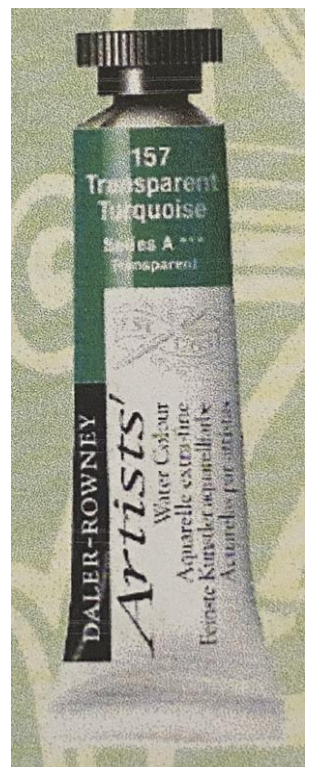
Pans may take a bit of work to activate enough for bright colours.

**Tubes** are paste like and come in different sizes depending on the brand but they are usually quite small. They provide more, and stronger colours that are quickly mixed with water.

The most popular form of colours, they are suitable for large washes and working big, or for using small amounts of consistent washes in small artworks.

Paints left on the palette will dry out, but can easily be reactivated with water and used as before. This is an advantage when working over a period of time as the colour mixes are still available.

I squeeze 1/6 of a tube into each well of my palette and the rest stays in the tube for when I run out.



**Watercolour pencils** are great if you like more control. They are water soluble-pigment in pencil form and work well on their own or to detail and tidy watercolour paints. Many people try and use them like a paint and are disappointed by the results, but if used correctly you will have a vibrant result. There are some differences to the traditional watercolours when trying a range of techniques, they don't do the salt, gladwrap or detergent methods as they are not transparent.

I prefer Albrecht Durer Watercolour pencils by Faber-Castell and like using them on Pastelmat too.  
Every pencil that is water soluble has a small brush symbol on it.

**Watercolour markers** can be used straight onto dry or wet paper, or by scribbling pigment onto a palette and using water and a brush. Many companies are making student and artist brand markers so the range is comprehensive.

Markers also have very strong pigmented colours in the artist range. And many have double nibs, some markers re-activate with water and some don't so practice first.



## STUDENT OR ARTIST QUALITY:

**Student paints** - and I am not referring to children's paint or the Cheapy Store stuff – cost much less than decent student or artists pigments, they may have similar sounding colour names but fewer of them to choose from.

If they are all one price give them a miss as it is very frustrating to use inferior paints.

A 'Hue' in the colour name tells you that a modern colouring agent or pigment has been used instead of the often more expensive traditional one. Some Hue colours are still rated with a very high permanency, you can check this on the tube or pan by the number of \*\*\*. The higher the number, the more lightfast the colour. Both Artist and student ranges use hues.

A colour chart for your chosen brands will contain a lot of information on the lightfastness, opacity, pigments used and series. Some companies provide them free, some don't.

**Artist paints** have a higher pigment strength and greater transparency. They come in a number of series, getting more expensive the higher the series due to the strength and cost of the pigments involved.

Artist colours are able to be mixed with student colours successfully so many beginners buy student paints first and replace them with better quality paint as they go.

Personally I use the Daler Rowney Artist watercolour tubes, Holbein Artist Watercolours, and Faber-Castell markers, pencils and pigment sticks (triple the pigment of a pan) but other popular artist brands include Winsor & Newton, Schminke, and Art Spectrum.

A medium can be mixed with acrylic paints which makes them look similar to watercolours.

## **WATERCOLOUR MEDIUMS:**

**Masking Fluids.** Although not strictly a medium I have included them as they allow the masking out of areas to be kept as clean paper. The tinted ones are better to use as they can be easily seen for removal - unlike the colourless masking fluid.

**Gum Arabic** is the main binder in a watercolour paint (holding the dry pigment together as a paint) and is also used as a medium, it increases the transparency and gloss of the paint as well as adding brilliance. The most commonly added medium.

**Ox Gall** is a wetting agent, which when added to a wash will improve the flow on watercolour papers. Rarely used by students or professionals if the correct paper is being used.

**Aquapasto** is added to watercolour paint to thicken and adds texture to the wash. It also enables scratching out of any chosen areas.

**Iridescent Medium** can be mixed with watercolours or applied over dried paint to give an iridescent or glittery effect.

There are other mediums and products that are sometimes added to watercolours and different companies may have their own specialist products but these are the most commonly used mediums. If I use any, I prefer to use the Winsor & Newton mediums.

## **WATERCOLOUR PAPERS:**

Not only is there a huge range of watercolour paper but these also come in many different weights, textures and forms; postcard packs, pads, blocks (gummed together on 3 sides) and loose. The thing to remember is you get what you pay for and if you can afford to spend a little extra on your paper the result will be worth it.

GSM is talking about the thickness (weight) of the paper, the higher the number the thicker it is. Generally 300gsm is the most commonly used as it is in the middle of the weight range.

HP refers to Hot pressed or smooth paper, CP is cold pressed and a medium texture, RGH is a rough texture paper. Different brands may vary in just how smooth or rough they are. I use Arches 300gsm or heavier in loose sheets cut to size, or Canson watercolour boards. I prefer cold pressed (medium texture) or hot pressed (smooth texture) in most cases, although sometimes for a looser painting with less detail I will use a rough paper.

## **STRETCHING WATERCOLOUR PAPER:**

When using watercolour paper lighter than 300gsm or if you are planning on using a lot of water in your painting, your paper will need to be stretched onto a ridged board to stop it cockling (rippling). You cannot control the paint if you have valleys and hills all over it. Immerse the paper in rainwater (a bath is a good place) until the corner stays lifted for a few seconds when you roll it up out of the water - this may take up to 10 minutes depending on the paper.

Carefully lay the paper onto your drawing board and gently blot with a clean towel. Using brown gum paper tape (pre measured and ready) stick down all the edges. Don't press too hard or you will remove the gum.

Leave the paper to dry and work on it attached to the board, cutting it loose when the painting is finished.

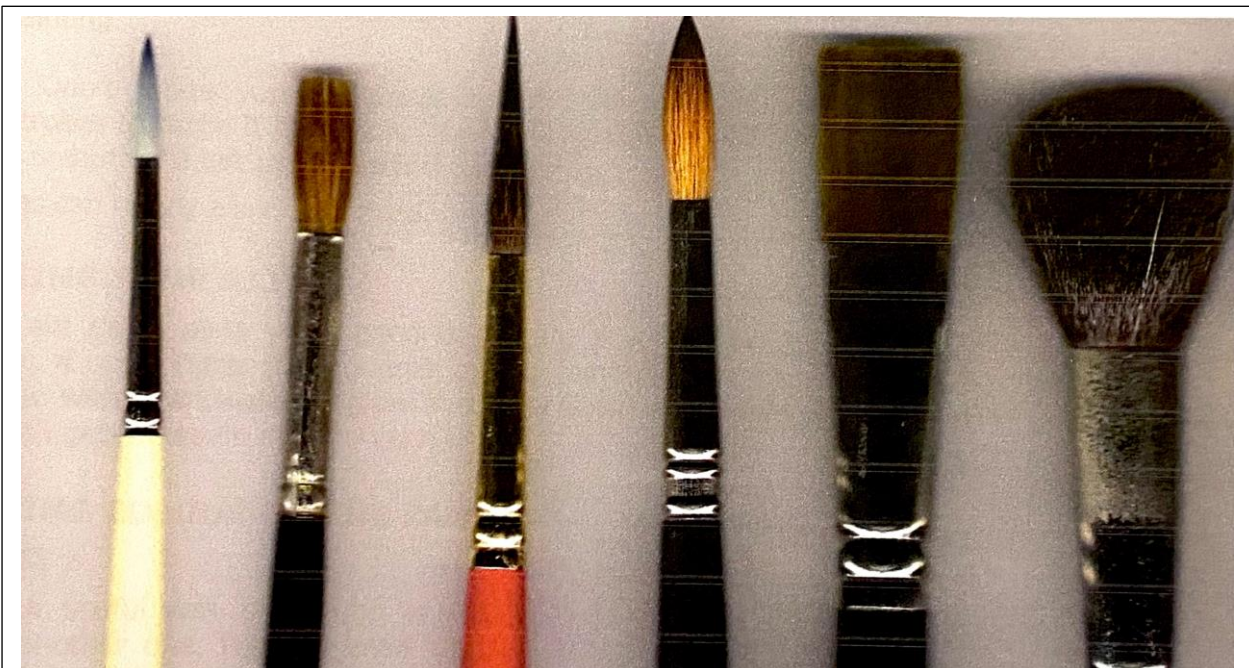
NOTE: I always staple the corners (maybe a few on the sides if a big sheet), this stops the drying paper tearing the free. The paper is surprisingly strong as it shrinks and dries.

## **WATERCOLOUR BRUSHES:**

In all mediums, you will develop a 'favourite' brush type. You may also prefer a natural hair over a synthetic or a mix. I prefer synthetic brushes as they have a heat set memory shape which enables re-shaping with almost boiling water.

Watercolour brushes are generally divided into flat, round and mop although other popular shapes are daggers, fans, hakes, needlepoint, cat tongue and liners.

Many watercolour brushes can be used with acrylics but keep them separate as once used for acrylics, they are probably no longer going to be suitable for watercolours. Brushes used for gouache can be used with watercolours and vis versa.



To start with you should invest in a good quality round synthetic in the biggest size you can afford, a large mop brush densely packed, and a small well pointed synthetic round.

## **ADDITIONAL MATERIALS:**

If you plan on practising the exercises and techniques in this booklet, you will also need a few additional materials. Some may be purchased at the supermarket and some at your art store. Many can be utilized in different ways in other mediums.

Man made sponge	Table salt
Old toothbrush	Detergent (washing up liquid)
Natural sea sponge	Salt crystals (rock or table salt)
Watercolour pencils	Gladwrap
Rubbing alcohol (isocol)	White household candle
Stylus	Hair dryer (if you are the impatient type)

Watercolour's main attraction to artists is it's transparency. If you spend a little time practising the following techniques you will become more confident with the medium and better able to utilise this asset.

Don't always mix the paints together in a palette; try overlaying washes of pure colour, letting them dry between coats; mix colours on the paper; use salt and wax and masking fluid.

Practice wet in wet, graduating washes, wet on dry paper, sponging, dry brush and lifting out. Scratching and indenting, mopping with a scrunched up paper towel and many more. Enjoy your painting time and paint the subjects that appeal to you.

## **NOTES:**

Don't judge your watercolour until the paint is dry.

No fiddling or going over brushstrokes to make it look more 'even'.

Watercolours will almost always level themselves to appear smoother if left untouched.

Mistakes can nearly always be fixed.

## **DILUTING YOUR PAINT:**

If you are using **pans** you'll need to agitate a wet brush over the colours you want to use first to activate the pigment. Then mix as normal in your palette.

If using **tubes** squeeze a small amount of the colours you need into your palette on one side of the well, this allows a wet brush to activate it when dry later.

Always mix a little more paint than you think you'll need as it is difficult to get same dilution each time you mix it. Better to have too much than too little.



If you are using **watercolour pencils**, colour in each area with a decent coverage. The rougher the paper, the more pigment you may need.

To activate intense colours, wet a brush and then wipe on paper towel once. This should give you the correct amount of water on the brush to pat the colours – this activates them without dislodging the pigments.

#### NOTE

Watercolour needs to be mixed with clean water to glow so have 2 tubs of water, 1 for dirty and one for clean. A bucket for the dirty water and a bottle of clean water for refills is a good idea when painting, as well as a towel or paper towel to dry the brushes.

### **DILUTING COLOUR ON THE PAPER:**

#### EXERCISE 1:

This is how to get variations or gradation in the paint strength without adding another colour.

Slightly tilt your paper towards you and paint a small area of strong colour onto dry watercolour paper from left to right at the top (the excess should bead along the bottom).

Rinse the brush and load with clean water, then brush the lower edge of the paint, just touching the bead of colour. Do not fiddle or overpaint.

Leave to dry.



### **MIXING COLOURS ON THE PAPER:**

#### EXERCISE 2:

Mixing yellow ochre and ultramarine in your palette to make a green results in a totally different colour to when you are mixing it on the paper.

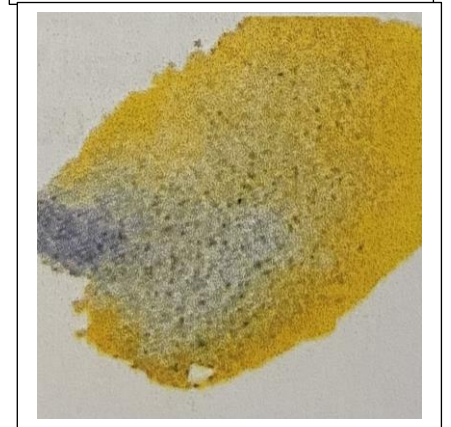
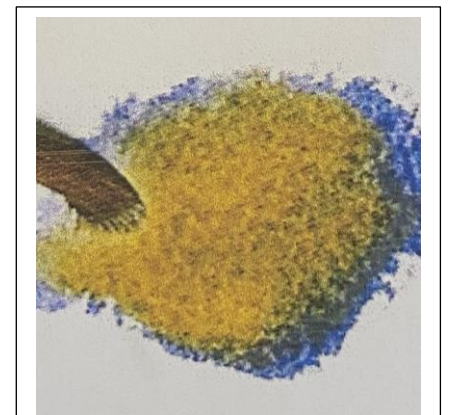
Lay a wash of ultramarine and near it, a wash of yellow ochre.

Drop a drip of yellow ochre on the blue, no fiddling.

Drop a drip of Ultramarine on the yellow, no fiddling.

difference between that and when yellow ochre is dropped on to ultramarine.

When one colour is gently laid or dropped onto another slightly damp one, they blend together softly creating a much more interesting looking blend.



Do not try to spread the second colour, leave it and allow the paint to dry without fiddling.

**NOTE:**

The golden rule with watercolour is 'leave it alone and see what happens'.

Hot pressed paper (smooth) is more likely to make 'cauliflowers' than rough paper due to its ability to hold large puddles of watercolour on its surface. Rough paper can have a nice mottled look caused by the paper indents.

## **PAINTING A FLAT WASH**

This kind of wash is mostly used as a tonal under wash. It is a good way of learning a bit of control though.

### EXERCISE 3:

Mix up enough paint to cover a reasonable area. Load the brush and lay one stroke from left to right, load the brush again allowing the bottom of the top band to slightly overlap the top of the bottom band, continue until all the paper is covered.



**NOTE:**

Never go back over the wet paint as this will result in streaks, back runs or cauliflowers. Although the paint may look uneven when wet, it usually dries flat. To assist with this, you can tilt the paper slightly so the wet paint runs downwards, you can apply the wash over a damp paper surface, and you can use a large wash brush like a Hake.

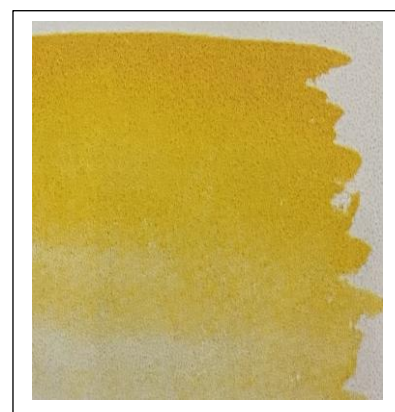
## **PAINTING A GRADUATED WASH**

This is a wash that gets lighter (more water, less paint) as it progresses. As with a flat wash you must be sure to have enough paint mixed.

### EXERCISE 4:

**On dry paper.** Using a strong colour mixture load the brush and paint one smooth stroke left to right at the top of the space.

Add a brush load of water to the paint in the palette then do the second stroke underneath, but just touching, the first stroke.



By picking up the bead of colour above, the strokes should flow together.

Continue in this fashion until the mix on your palette is almost water – or space runs out.

If the wash appears streaky DO NOT go over it with a brush, tilt the page slightly to help it flow down, then let the paper dry flat.



### EXERCISE 5:

**On wet paper.** Wet the paper area you are going to use, then lay in 2 strokes of saturated colour left to right at the top of the page.

Dilute the paint mix by adding half as much water and brush 2 more strokes underneath, picking up the bead of colour.

Now paint a few strokes with just clean water and allow the colour to run together, gaining a bit of control by tilting and angling the paper. DO NOT go over with a brush.

When the paint is dry, check out the differences and think about how both ways would be suitable techniques to use, and what subjects could be suitable.

## **PAINTING A VARIEGATED WASH**

This is what a blended wash of two or more colours is called. Used paint on wet paper this is a great way to lay in an out of focus look, or for blurry backgrounds, which are still full of interest and subtle colours.

Used wet paint on dry paper, soft edges give a linear blend such as in sunsets and rainbows, a slightly hazy look while keeping more true to the initial colours.

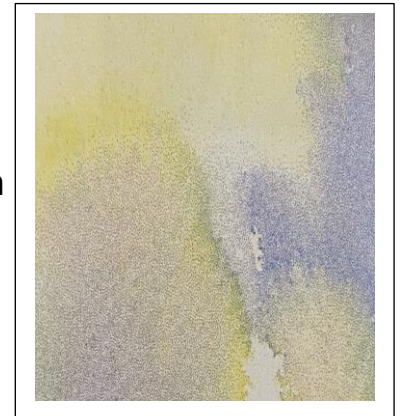
### EXERCISE 6:

#### **On wet paper.**

Pre-mix 3 colours with one a dark. Wet an area of your paper.

Drop on a small drip of your palest colour first, then the medium tone next to it, and finally the darker one.

Allow the colours to bleed into each other on the wet paper. If needed to help combine them, tilt the paper slightly.



### EXERCISE 7:

#### **On dry paper.**

Make sure you still have enough paint mixed and lay the lightest colour onto the paper. Wash and dry the brush.

Add the other 2 colours, one at a time, to the preceding stroke with wet edges JUST touching – as in exercises 3 and 4.

Allow the edges of the colours to blend softly, without help, on paper laid flat.

Notice that the colour only runs where your brush puts it, unlike in exercise 6, where the underlying water made the paint move great distances from where it started.



## GLAZING

Because watercolour is a transparent medium, overlaying the same colour washes allows the underneath base to shine out, influencing the covering ones.

You can layer the same wash over and over to achieve a variety of darker tones. Using green, this can provide grass, using brown it could be fur or hair, blue could be choppy waves....

Think about how this technique could be used with 2 or more colours overlaying each other. Different greens for foliage or leaf veining for example.

### EXERCISE 8:

Lay a wash of watery green and allow to dry totally. Using the same wash, paint some long, thin, fan like strokes across it. Allow to dry.

Repeat a few times (including drying) to see how the depth of colour deepens and the 'grass' looks thicker.

Try indenting a few lines with the end of the brush on the last Layer and watch what happens to the colour.



### EXERCISE 9:

Using yellow, blue and green paint, prepare a wash of each. Paint a small area in yellow on the dry paper.

When the paint is dry, overlay a few patted brush dabs of the green paint wash. The green will allow the yellow to glow under. Allow to dry.

Add dabs of blue in areas that help make this look like foliage.



## MASKING

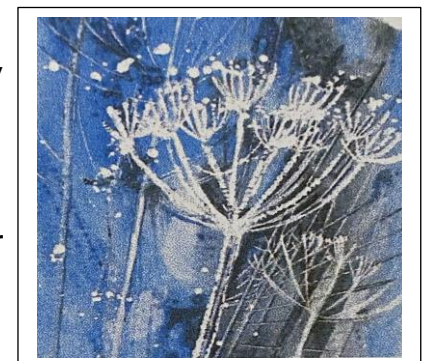
A variety of materials can be used to mask out areas you don't want paint to cover. These include masking fluid, paper masks, white wax crayons and even wax candles.

### EXERCISE 10:

Lay some marks of masking fluid directly from the bottle onto dry paper. Allow the masking fluid to dry – easy to see, if you have the tinted kind which changes colour slightly when dry.

Paint over the dry masking fluid with a medium to dark colour (or Both if you fancy). Light colours don't show the paper well.

When the paint is completely dry, remove the masking fluid by



gently rubbing it with your finger. The paper will be white where the masking fluid was painted. If your paper is still wet, the paint can stain the white areas.

### EXERCISE 11:

Paint a shape on your dry paper. I used yellow. Let dry.

Rub a white candle on the dry yellow areas you want masked out.

Paint a wash of another colour over the area and let dry. I used sap green. This works better if the colour on top is darkest.

The wax cannot easily be removed so areas that are masked will remain the paper colour or, in this case, yellow.

NOTE: If using a brush to apply masking fluid always wet it and rub soap into the bristles. This stops the masking fluid drying in the brush and ruining it. I prefer to use a small pointed colour shaper or a toothpick.



## **SPLATTER**

Create exciting textures on rocks, or sand effects with different layers of painted splatter. This technique is also great in other mediums.

### EXERCISE 12:

For a fine splatter use a thicker wash of paint in an old toothbrush, running your finger along the bristles. Always test practice control, direction and your paint mix consistency on spare paper.

For bigger blobs load your brush with strong colour (you don't want the lovely patterns to disappear when dry) and flick paint onto the picture from the end of the brush by tapping it onto another brush handle.

Splatter masking fluid to make the appearance of winter snow or while wet, drag a toothpick through some drops to form stars.



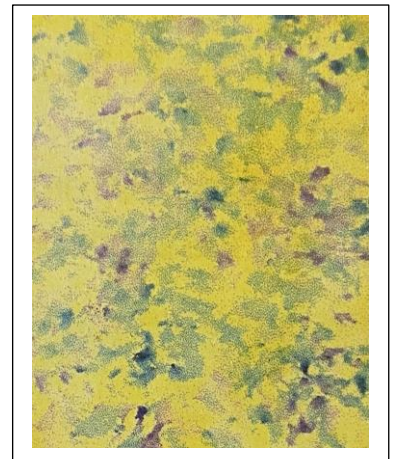
## **SPONGING**

### EXERCISE 13:

Use a small natural sponge dipped in paint to get another textural effect. The sponge will absorb a lot of paint so mix enough.

Sparse foliage can be painted effectively by using a light dabbing motion in various Greens and yellows.

The suggestion of sand can be made by dabbing a darker wash of tan over a flat dry wash of the same colour thinned down.





Experiment with different colours, pressures, amounts of paint.  
On wet or dry water, on wet or dry paint. On a base colour or on a plain wash.

## **SALT EFFECTS**

Sprinkling salt onto a damp, coloured wash creates a lovely crystalized effect.

### EXERCISE 14:

Choose a dark to medium colour and mix a wash. Paint a flat wash using smooth strokes with a large brush, wait a bit.

Sprinkle table salt lightly over the paint while it's still damp.  
Leave to dry completely.

As the salt slowly dissolves on a wet wash, it leaves tiny darker spots of condensed colour.

On slightly dryer paint, the salt absorbs the pigment but doesn't dissolve, leaving pale starry marks. Using rock salt will produce bigger stars.

The best effect is seen using a dark wash and waiting until the paint loses its wet sheen to place the salt.

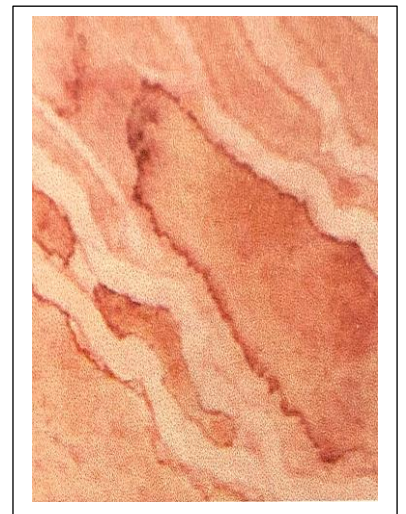


## **RUBBING ALCOHOL**

### EXERCISE 15:

Into a damp wash of bright red, add very thin lines of rubbing alcohol in a marble like pattern.

Try dropping tiny amounts of rubbing alcohol off the end of your brush and watch as the paint is first pushed out as the extra liquid is added, then draws back in as the rubbing alcohol evaporates.



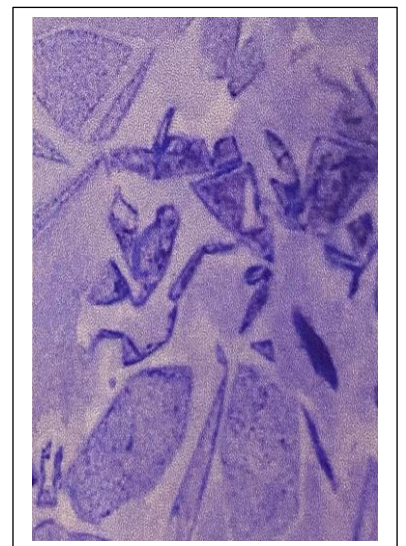
## **GLAD WRAP**

### EXERCISE 16:

For a textured effect similar to fabric use gladwrap over a wash and manipulate the plastic to get the folds you want.  
For a sharper look to the edges place something heavy and flat on top and leave until dry. No Peeking!

Make a wash with purple and paint an decent size sample area.

While wet, pull out a sheet of gladwrap a bit bigger than the wash and stretch it roughly out over the painted area.



Pull and adjust the gladwrap to the desired look and place some cardboard and a heavy weight on top, making sure it's all covered.

## DETERGENT

An interesting effect can be made by adding a little detergent to a watercolour wash in the palette and swooshing around to make bubbles.

### EXERCISE 17:

Using some of the paint washes on your palette, add a couple of drops of detergent to them. I had blue and green available.

Make sure you have enough to try the next exercise too.

Swoosh around a bit to produce bubbles (not froth) and paint as normal. The bubbles follow the brushstrokes and when dry, pop, leaving little dark spots or light bits circled by a darker line.

### EXERCISE 18:

Mix a wash in a small, shallow container and add detergent drops. Use a straw to blow bubbles so that they rise up over the lip of the container.

Place your watercolour paper horizontally over the bubbles and then lift off. What could this effect be used for? What if you try it in a few different coloured washes (drying between each layer)?



The next section of this workbook is  
**HOW DO I PAINT...**

These exercises are shown using watercolour paint, but give them a go in your pencils, markers, or crayons. They will work with slightly different results.

## CLOUDS

The most common techniques are wet in wet, wet in dry, and lifting out. Use your white paper for the brights and use a mix of hard and soft edges for the nicest effect.

### EXERCISE 19:

Lay in a wash of any blue sky colour to outline the top of the main cloud on dry paper. Dampen the area above the lower cloud with clean water and drop on a little colour.





Add a little alizarin crimson to the blue mix and place in the shadow areas of the cloud. This helps to keep the shadows warm. You could add a little yellow ochre or burnt sienna for a different feel to your clouds.

Fade to more diluted blue down to the horizon line.

When dry, use clean water to wet the lower parts of the clouds - making sure to leave dry the highlight areas, these must stay white.

Using the same colours drop in more colour and allow to bleed upwards to add soft shape to the clouds.

If needed, when dry put some finishing shadows in onto dry paper. Don't overwork it.

NOTE: Always use clean water - replace continuously.  
Avoid the urge to over work, fiddle and touch-up.



### EXERCISE 20:

Lay in a graded wash of sky colour and while wet, use a clean scrunched up tissue to lift out your clouds in a dabbing motion. You can then add shadows underneath by following the steps above.

## **SUNSETS**

### EXERCISE 21:

Try a sunset sky by the ocean.  
Mask out the sun and reflection the using masking fluid. Let dry completely.

Use a graded wash of burnt sienna, getting darker towards the horizon line.

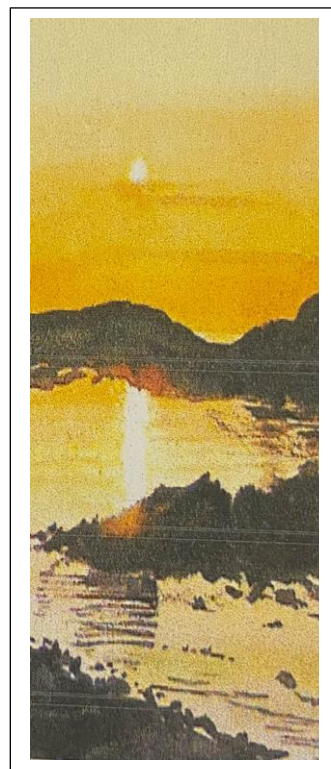
While still wet ,wash in weak ultramarine blue to cool the ocean area.

Let dry.

With a mix of burnt sienna and indigo - try to mix on the paper - paint in the rock forms and the dark ripples in the water.

Let dry completely.

When dry, rub off the masking fluid.



Experiment with different colour schemes, formats and changing horizon lines.

## ROCKS

The huge variety in the shape of 'rocks' means it is hard to go wrong. From smooth river rocks, to towering cliffs and big boulders.

### EXERCISE 22:

With a pencil, very lightly sketch in some rock shapes.

We will use the wet in wet technique, so brush water over the area the rocks will be painted.

Our main colour mix is viridian and mauve, so drop in those colours and let them mix together on the paper.

While still wet, flick and drop in weak ultramarine and raw sienna.

Let this dry totally or you will lose the freshness of your colours.

With small amounts of a Prussian blue and burnt Umber mix, shape the shadows between the rocks with a liner or a fine round brush.

Separate each individual rock shape from the blob.

Vary the thickness of your line and don't just outline. Use your sketch as a guide but also take advantage of the interesting shapes and forms presented by your watercolours. Add extra colour if you like. Let dry.

Now we can highlight to make these rocks come alive.

This can be done with white gouache; lifting out using a wet brush and a tissue; using a white pastel pencil or using a white watercolour pencil.

The rocks now look like they have been painted individually but still sit together in different colours.

### EXERCISE 23:

For the initial wash try blue and yellow ochre with olive green and purple dropped in. Following the steps in exercise 22 and using the same darks for the line work.

### EXERCISE 24:

Using different variations of colours try the following techniques to enhance your rocks. Find some different types and shapes of rocks to study.

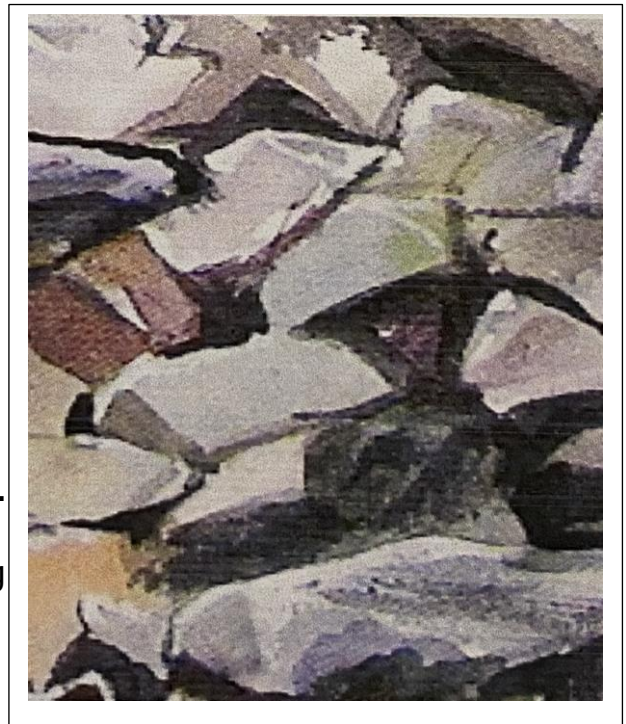
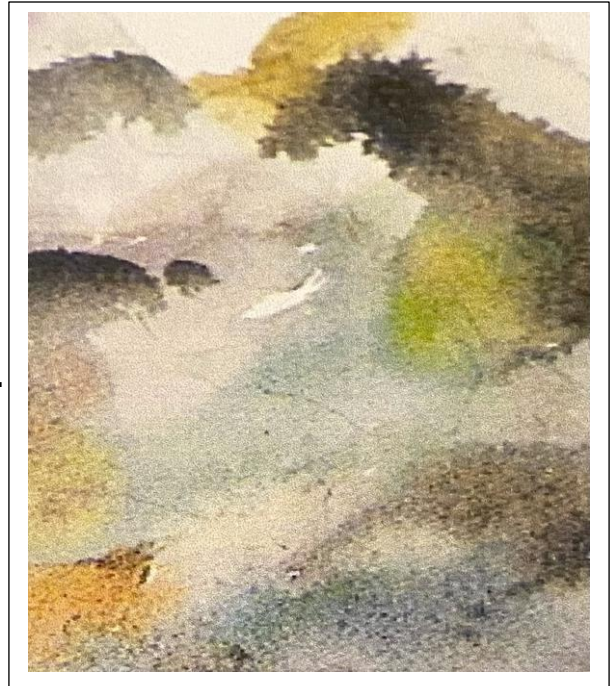




Table salt can add the lovely look of lichens to your rocks which can then be tinted with a wash of watery viridian.

A natural sea sponge can add a lot of texture when using your dark colours and dabbing across the edge between the shadow and the light.

If you cut out a rough paper stencil to the shape of your main rock and splatter with an old toothbrush and a variety of colours.

## **WATER**

Water has properties that other objects you will learn to paint do not. It can be shallow or deep, fast flowing or still, with the exception of waterfalls it is always level and it can be used to reflect light and colours around your painting.

If you intend to include a lot of water in your paintings, there is only one way to excel and that is know your subject intimately. Observation and practice.

## **WATERFALLS**

The secret to painting a waterfall is to blur your eyes and look for the dark and light patterns. Water in motion becomes aerated, losing its ability to reflect and appearing as though white. White isn't pure white though as there are shadows of different tones.

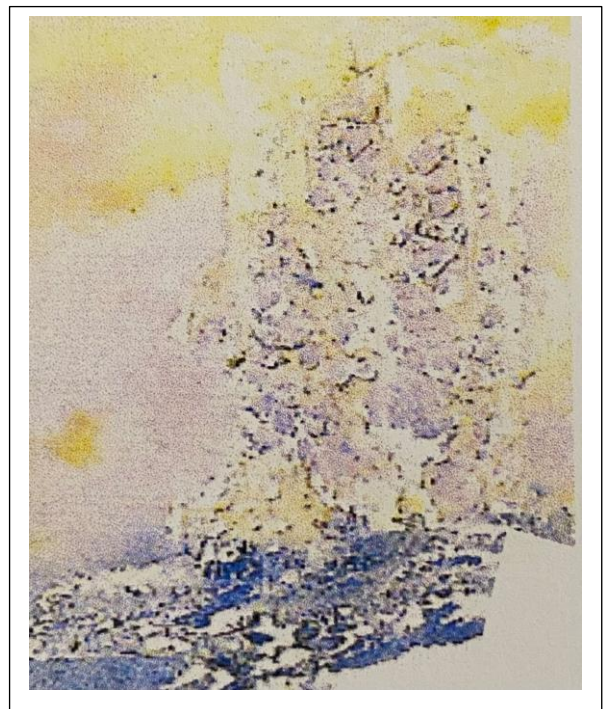
To preserve the bright white areas of paper there are a variety of techniques we can use including careful planning and detailed drawing, wax resist and gouache highlighting.

Here we'll try the dragged masking fluid method which takes a little practice.

### EXERCISE 25:

Mask out your water falling area and any other bright white highlights in your painting using enough masking fluid to dry 3D. Let dry completely.

When dry, lightly drag a vinyl eraser down the masking fluid in the direction of the water.



The aim is to scuff off small sections that will stick to themselves in a random pattern, but not to remove it all.

Wash yellow ochre over the whole painting and when dry, start to push the masking fluid a bit more onto itself. The paint must be completely dry for this, or it will contaminate the pure white areas.

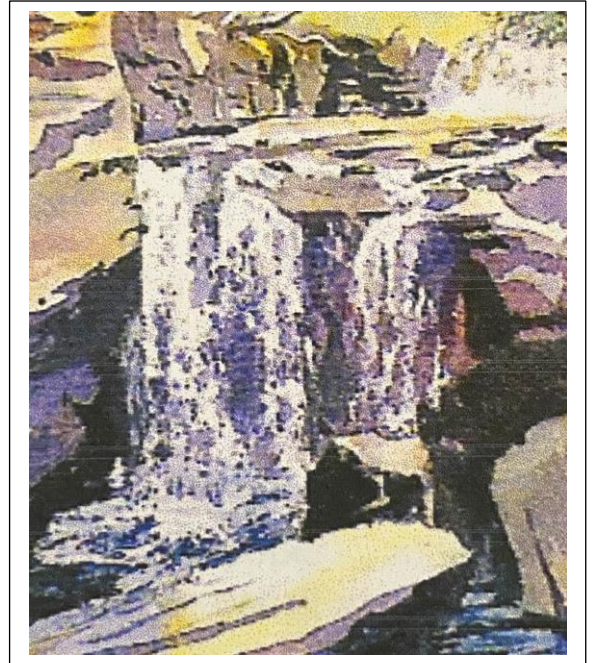
Add a weak wash of blue to the falling water and stronger blue to the pool below.

Let dry.

Rub a bit more of the masking onto itself to reveal more white paper and darken the rocks and water with a Prussian blue and Burnt umber mix.

Paint the rest of the scene in the normal way and When dry, carefully remove all of the masking.

You may need to add a few more washes to the Finished painting, depending on how your masking Ended up.



### EXERCISE 26:

Try doing a similar painting using wax candle to cover the waterfall area. Rough paper will work really well as long as you work backwards carefully.

First put wax ONLY where the brightest whitest bits are. Wash thinly with weak blue and let the paint dry. Add more wax and add a wash again, let dry. Add more wax and then continue to paint your waterfall to completion.

For the rocks behind the water, try a wash of sepia and light red, or olive green and diox purple.... experiment and see how this works on river rocks.

### **MIRROR REFLECTIONS:**

When water is flat we see a mirror like image of the objects reflected in it. The water carries the colours, values and shapes of the objects.

The size of the object is measured from the top to the base and the reflection is then measured from the base (not the waters edge) to the required distance.

Reflections come to the viewer, they don't head off to one side unless they are reflecting a slanted object.

### **RIPPLED REFLECTIONS:**

Tidal movement, the wind, and even small disturbance of the water's surface – like a moving boat in the distance will ripple the reflection.

Reflections are still measured from the objects base downwards but the edges are wavy or rippled and the image is broken up by areas of sky and other background reflections.

The reflection is still the same length as in mirror reflections even though some of the water is angled to catch the sky or background.

## EXTENDED REFLECTIONS:

Very strong rippling of the water's surface, like a boat passing close by or a very choppy sea will extend the end of the reflection by about half the distance again.

The image is reflected on the faces of the chop, areas of reflection in shadow are still shown as water, thus extending the reflected image.

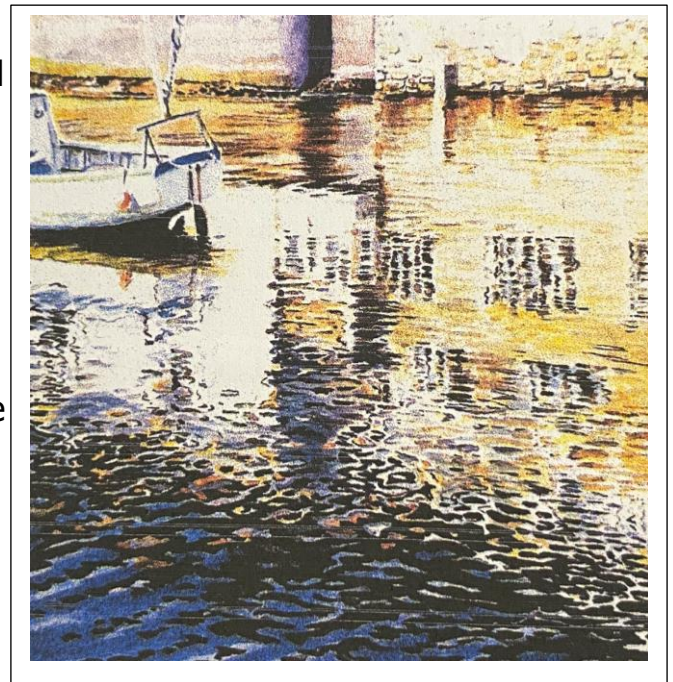
NOTE: When seeing a reflection under an overhanging object eg. a jetty, you will be seeing a different perspective (like holding a mirror under your chin) and the image will reflect what we cannot 'see' from the top.

### EXERCISE 27:

Look at this picture (or one you have referenced yourself) of rippled reflections. You cannot see the buildings above but you know what is there by the reflections.

Make a sketch to correspond to the reflections  
And transfer onto watercolour paper using your kneadable eraser to lighten the pencil marks.  
Make a list of the colours you think you may use (you need not be exact) and paint this Picture, or your own, as you see it.

Leave the white as paper by masking or by carefully planning it at the drawing stage.



## OCEANS

### SWELLS:

The uplifting of water by moving the energy underneath and usually too thick for light to pass through.

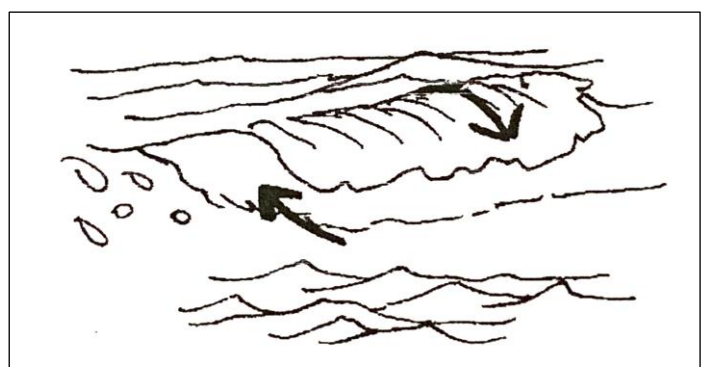
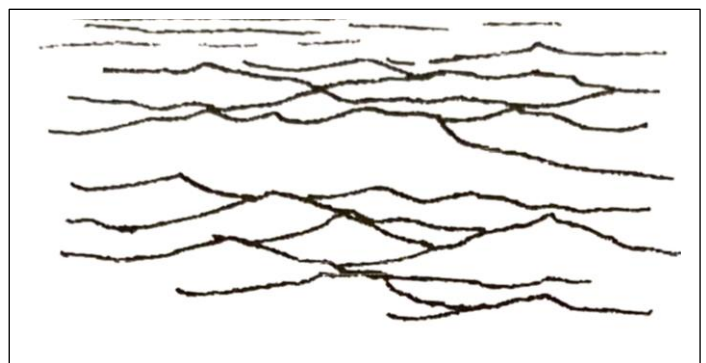
Swells sometimes have little bits of foam on their leading edge and each big swell is made up of lots of mini swells.

Each mini swell touches another.  
Swells are situated behind breakers.

### BREAKERS:

The area at the top right near the curl over is thin enough for light to shine through.

Breakers are not translucent near the base as this area is too thick to allow light to .



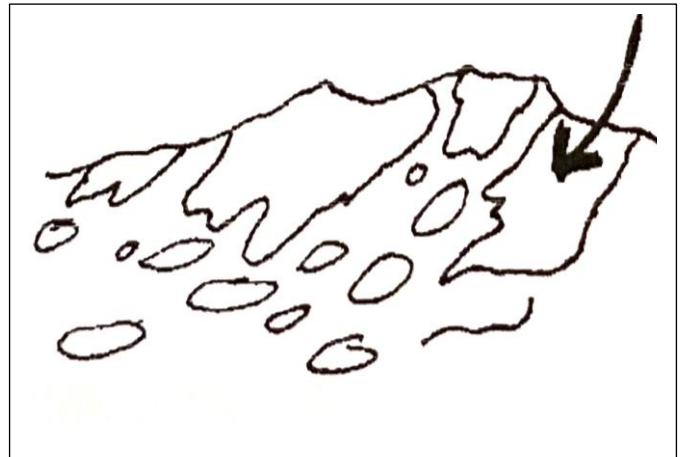


The curl over starts with clear water at the top and then mixes with air to create foam. The foam edge should never be hard as it's surrounded by flying mist which gives a soft effect. Notice the arrows showing the water direction.

#### FOAM:

When a breaker collapses, the foam breaks up like a lace blanket on the surface of the next swell, they form repeating patterns until the beach stops them. This remains for a few moments.

Don't leave all the foam bright white there are changes to the thickness of the foam, and this allows more, or less, of the water 'colour' to show through.



Add a few shadows to make your water rise and fall.

With the addition of crashing waves, rocks, beaches and driftwood you have the makings of a great ocean painting.

Colours for the ocean use different combinations of viridian, hookers green, ultramarine blue, cobalt blue and cadmium yellow deep. The white paper will be your highlights, foam and sparkly bits.

#### EXERCISE 28:

Take a photo of the ocean or use the one below. Don't use a painting someone else has done as they already chose what to leave out or put in.

Study the swells, breaker, sand, foam patterns, movement, then sketch and paint them using the ideas above.



## A PORTRAIT

The centre of interest in a head and shoulders portrait is usually the eye and the highlight on one side of the face. The sharpest edges will be there.

Decide if the shadows are warm or cool. If the skin is warmly lit, the shadows will be cool and vis versa.

Finally decide on the colour scheme.

You will need a 1" flat and a #8 round watercolour brush; good (arches) 300gsm cp watercolour paper; a HB pencil and kneadable eraser; spare paper; masking fluid; and these colours: rose madder genuine, alizarin crimson, raw sienna, aureolin, cobalt blue, viridian, burnt sienna - this is usually a standard watercolour palette.

Draw the portrait first on your spare paper, take your time to get it right. Transfer it to good watercolour paper when happy, then use an activated kneadable eraser to lighten the lines by gently rolling it over them. Stretching and folding activates your kneadable eraser.

### EXERCISE 29:

To preserve the white areas you can use masking fluid, or just be careful when painting -If you overwork and haven't managed to leave enough white, you can use white gouache or a watercolour pencil to fix it.

Using a large brush wash the skin area in diluted raw sienna leaving the lightest areas, allow the paint to move through the hair and into the background.

While wet, drop into the light cheek area a small amount of weak rose madder genuine. Let dry completely.

This wash should represent the light areas of the skin and should be dark enough to allow the white paper highlights to show but light enough to see your pencil lines underneath.

Wash in the shadow shapes using greens for the forehead and cheeks (made up of aureolin and viridian), to red-violets in the under eyebrow, chin and jawline areas (made by mixing cobalt blue and rose madder genuine).



Drop in a little rose madder genuine in the shadowed cheek and let it all dry.

Continue with a smaller round brush, laying in further washes of the red-violet wash previously mixed. Let dry between washes.

Use cobalt blue to paint the eyes, the shadows cast by the lashes and, with a little burnt sienna added, the eyebrows and irises.

Make sure your highlight is still there and let it all dry completely.

The nostrils are put in with a light touch of alizarin crimson, the nostril in the shadow side of the face should be less distinct and cooler.

Using rose madder genuine on the lips, and starting with the line where they meet and in the shadow area, drop in some alizarine crimson to cool.

Finish the hair with raw sienna, burnt sienna and the green and red-violet washes. Leave some edges soft and let dry.

Remove the masking fluid if used.

NOTE: Start each portrait the same way, drawing carefully, transferring to good paper.

### EXERCISE 30:

Paint this portrait using a cadmium orange under wash and raw sienna, yellow ochre and cadmium orange in the darker shadow areas, dried and re-applied with final darks of light red and Vandyke brown.

Use weak light red and burnt sienna for the lips.

The eyelids and nostrils can be painted using Burnt sienna while the hair was yellow ochre, cadmium yellow and burnt sienna.

The eyes themselves are a mix of layers of ultramarine and for the pupils use ultramarine and a little Vandyke brown or burnt umber



### EXERCISE 31:

In this portrait use an under wash of permanent rose with raw sienna with a little cadmium red dropped in the nose and cheek area of shadows.

Using the paint diluted and then drying between washes allows a soft build-up of strong colours.

Add Cobalt blue to mix the darks and a little raw umber with it.

Try to keep the white of the paper glowing Through the lightest parts





## MORE 'SKIN COLOUR' COMBINATIONS:

### Pale skin colour:

Base: Cadmium scarlet, Cadmium lemon, Titanium white and Phthalo green

Warm light: + permanent rose. Cool shadow: + ultramarine blue and alizarin crimson

### Olive skin colour:

Base: Alizarin crimson, Cadmium lemon, Titanium white and Ultramarine violet

Warm light: + Cadmium lemon and Titanium white. Cool shadow: + Ultramarine violet

### Black skin colour:

Base: cadmium scarlet and Ultramarine blue

Warm light: + Cadmium lemon and Ultramarine blue. Cool shadow: + Ultramarine blue

## FUR

An animals coat is comprised of either fur or hair, both are painted in a similar way, however fur and hair vary greatly in texture and colour between species.

You can get very detailed effects with watercolour if that's the look you want ,but this will take a lot of time, drying between each layer and using the same washes over and over in overlapping glazes.

Try the painted exercise below, then attempt the same technique to the other furs. I know you can do it!

### EXERCISE 32:

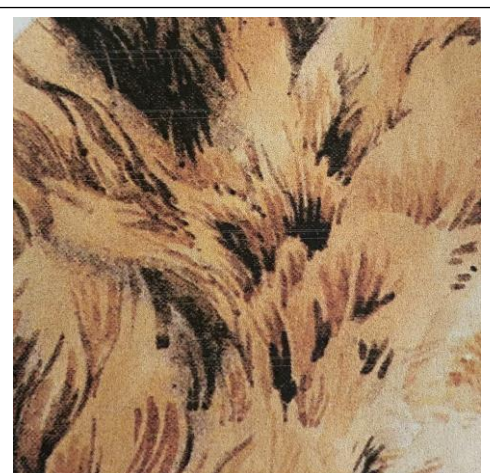
Dense fur like a bear.

Choose your medium tone colour and wash over area with a diluted wash of it, leaving lighter areas for the highlights and let dry.

Define the darker hair areas (exercise 8) with another Wash of the same colour or add another colour to intensify the mid tones , use your crisscross lines - this is your 'fan' or 'grass' stroke.

Be aware of the direction of the hair and avoid 'hooking' your strokes by working too fast.  
Let dry completely.

Continue to build form with more medium and dark values and drying as needed, use a cool hairdryer about 20cm away from the paper to speed up the process if you don't like the waiting.



As the details are added the contrast between light and dark becomes stronger, helping achieve the depth required.

An overall wash can alter the colour of some areas if needed. These areas will be reworked in the final stage and again let dry completely.

Now you can add the final details, the darkest and Lightest values.

If some areas have been overworked and need to be lightened you can do this by either wetting and lifting with a tissue, or adding a touch of white gouache over your watercolour.

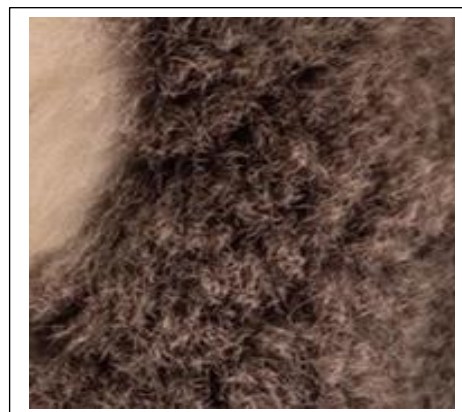


#### EXERCISE 32:

Using the same technique but different colour washes, give this dense Koala fur a go.

Choose a dark, medium and light tone and imagine what strokes you would use to draw it, then adjust to paint it.

Layers and drying are the same, as are repeating the same made wash a few times.



#### EXERCISE 33:

Now that you have the hang of it, try this long haired dog fur a try. Colours first.

Imagine you are stroking the fur, feel the flow with your Brush as you layer and dry... always the drying.

How did you manage? There should always be room for improvement. That is how you learn to excel.



#### EXERCISE 34:

How about giving this wet otter fur a go? Unlike the dry fur which starts at the skin and gets finer, wet fur starts from the tips.

See how the water flowing across the fur causes it into little pointed triangle shapes?

Look for other kinds of fur too.





## TREES

Trees come in many varied forms. An ancient twisted oak tree bears very little resemblance to a swaying palm tree.

They also come in an amazing range of colours and shapes, and that's only the trunks.

Then you have different leaves and added to that, different seasons too!

Some tree bark colours to mix are burnt umber and ultramarine, with areas of burnt sienna.

Don't just mix yellow and blue. Add sap green and Diox purple, lemon yellow and Hookers green, yellow ochre and turquoise, try different strengths.... practice and experiment.

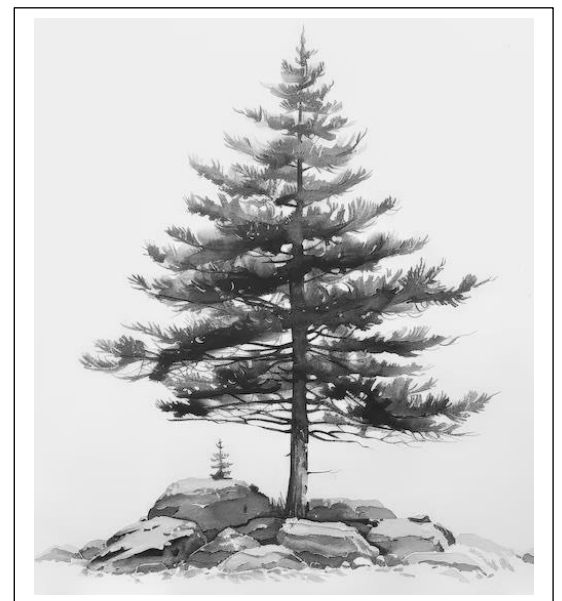
### EXERCISE 35:

Take a sketch pad and a WC pencil into the park or your back garden and sketch the different trees.

Pay attention to the negative spaces caused by light trunks against a dark background of foliage and the shapes of shadows you see on a bright day.

Look at the texture different types of tree trunks have, study to how the branches grow from the trunk and how the leaves are placed on the branches.

Check out the differences between the young and the more mature trees of the same species.



### EXERCISE 36:

Remembering about layering washes, leaving white paper for highlights and how to add textures, choose one of your garden sketches or draw a new one on spare paper. Transfer and lighten with a kneadable eraser as previously described. LET DRY between washes.

