

WATERCOLOR - Suggested Supply List – 2026.5

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The most important supplies are listed in **red**. PLEASE NOTE: *this is a SUGGESTED list only - if you have your own favorites (colors, paper, etc.) that differ from mine, please feel free to use them - in addition or instead.* You may already have everything you need!

COLORS:

A basic, comprehensive palette of colors should include 6 colors - a warmer and a cooler version of each of the 3 primary colors. The following list of basic colors follows this criterion - plus a few extra, and a couple of “specialty” colors, at times supplemented with colors not listed here. **Feel free to use substitutes.** The list below is comprised of several brands, including the following: Winsor & Newton, Holbein, Daniel Smith, Sennelier, Daler-Rowney, M Graham. Although it is NOT NECESSARY for you to have the same colors I use, my favorite studio palette is listed below. The nine colors (3 yellows, 3 reds, 3 blues) I find indispensable are shown in **red**. The ones I favor in particular brands are marked – and if not stated, I favor no particular brand:

YELLOW or Yellow-ish

Winsor Lemon OR Winsor Yellow
New Gamboge Yellow (Daniel Smith)
Indian Yellow (Winsor & Newton)
Cadmium Orange

RED or Red-ish

Scarlet Lake (Holbein) OR Quin. Red
Permanent Rose (Quinacridone Rose)
Quinacridone Magenta (Winsor & Newton)
Cobalt Magenta (Daler-Rowney) OR
Cobalt Violet
Rose of Ultramarine (Daniel Smith)

BLUE or Blue-ish

Cobalt Blue (Sennelier)
Cerulean Blue (Winsor & Newton)
Prussian Blue (Sennelier)
Transparent Turquoise (Daler-Rowney) OR
Phthalo Blue Green Shade
Manganese Blue Hue (Daniel Smith)
Cobalt Turquoise Light

OPTIONAL – one “non-color” such as Indigo, Payne’s Gray, Black, or Burnt Umber, etc., for mono-chromatic studies

OPTIONAL – a few OPAQUES - **white** and a **few very light-value/pastel colors**. This can be an “intro” to gouache if you like. Here are a few I sometimes use to re-claim lost whites/lights, or “atmospheric” look, or when I want a more opaque gouache-type look. These colors also go into my gouache palette although this list is NOT meant to be a true or complete gouache list:

- **Titanium White:** Gouache or Opaque Watercolor (no particular brand)
- White **Matte** Liquid Acrylic (Apple Barrel) – great for splattering white in a water scene
- I also like to add a few additional Holbein Watercolors that are opaque but sold in their watercolor line: **Naples Yellow**, **Jaune Brillant #1**, **Jaune Brillant #2**, **Shell Pink**, **Lilac**, **Lavender**, **Horizon Blue**...
- RE palette organization, I have a palette that contains both traditional watercolors and opaque watercolors – mostly for travel – and divided between traditional and opaque. For studio use I normally don’t put the opaque colors into my watercolor palette but have a separate palette for opaque watercolor/gouache. Then at other times I just squeeze out as needed onto a separate “palette” such as a cottage cheese lid or some such.
- Please see page 2 for additional thoughts on including opaque watercolors in your watercolor palette.

BRUSHES - use your favorites - these are mine:

- **#8**, **10**, **12** or **14 round** (Kolinsky sable, nylon or synthetic/natural blend – a favorite is Connoisseur Kolinsky sable #8)
- **#12 round Mimik Kolinsky** (a synthetic-hair brush from Creative Mark – Jerry’s Artarama)
- Round Sumi bamboo – I use Royal & Langnickel LB2 (5/8” hair length) & Connoisseur Red Pony Round 8610-2 (1” hair length)
- **#4** and/or smaller or larger sizes “Quill”, AKA mop – Raphael, Isabey, Rosemary & Co and other brands
- **½”, ¾”, 1” Aquarelle (flat brushes with beveled tip to the handle - no particular brand)**
- Winsor & Newton Artists’ Watercolour Sable # 3 or 4 Pointed Round (“pointed round” is longer hair than “round”)
- 2” wash or Hake
- “Scrubber” or other brushes meant for lifting paint from the paper, such as the Rosemary & Co “Eradicator”

SUPPORT OPTIONS - watercolor paper, watercolor canvas, clay board, etc.:

- **Paper: 100% rag, 140 lb. or 300 lb. rough or cold press** - such as Arches, Hahnemuhle, Saunders Waterford, etc. - high quality paper is your most important item – I use 100% cotton rag acid-free paper.
- **SIZE:** I usually demonstrate on a 10x14 watercolor block, or 9x12 sheet, both portable sizes for class work and travel and easily framed.
- Watercolor Canvas Panels or Multi-Media Boards/Panels - great for water-media paintings to be framed without mat or glass. FYI, for paintings to be framed without glass, I normally seal with cold wax - I don’t intend to do that in class.

MISCELLANEOUS MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT:

- **Watercolor palette** - I use a Mijello or Mr Pen 18-well watercolor palette (also sold under other names)
- **Large water container – or smaller collapsible water containers for travel**
- **2B drawing pencils, or personal choice**
- **Pencil sharpener**
- **Eraser:** “Vanish” eraser (Jerry’s Artarama), “click eraser”, gum eraser, or kneadable eraser
- **Sketch book** of your choice for sketches and notes
- **Watercolor Sketch book** of your choice for watercolor sketches and color test swatches – I prefer sketch paper specified for watercolor, rather than for multi-media.
- **Spray bottle** - I often use eyeglasses cleaner spray bottles because of their fine mist spray.
- **White facial tissues – non-lotion**
- **Natural Sponge**
- Glycerin – after a painting session I coat my brushes with glycerin to help keep them from drying out.
- Table salt
- “Drawing board” - if not using a “watercolor block” I clip my paper to a stiff board with binder clips.
- Old towel, bath size or larger – white or neutral color is best – or a blotting surface of your choice, such as a sponge
- Pad of tracing paper – 11x14 – or a size to match the size of paper you will be using
- Dura-Lar Wet Media Film (Wet-Media MUST be specified on the tablet) sold in pads of different sizes – optional but extremely useful – I order from Dick Blick.
- Water soluble pen/black (I use Expo Vis-à-Vis Wet Erase) - helpful for use with the Wet Media Acetate
- Artist’s tape or masking tape
- Apron
- Masking Fluid – (“Incredible White Mask”, “Frisket”, “Maskoid”, etc.) – OPTIONAL, I only use it occasionally and sparingly.
- Rubber Cement Pick-up to remove dry masking fluid
- Hair dryer - often useful

NOTE – I understand that this supply list can seem a bit overwhelming. If you find yourself overwhelmed with all the options, please stick to the items listed in **RED**. All you absolutely require are a **tablet of watercolor paper**, a **pencil**, a **few primary colors**, a **small watercolor palette**, a **couple of brushes**, and a backpack to carry it in!

THOUGHTS ON INCLUDING OPAQUE WATERCOLOR OR GOUACHE IN YOUR WATERCOLOR PALETTE

WATERCOLOR UNLEASHED + GOUACHE! I use watercolor, opaque watercolor and gouache both separately and together, depending on the painting. This document is not meant to be a “gouache supply list”. However, I have included some opaque colors that behave very much like gouache – and I incorporate them into my watercolor palette as well as into my gouache palette. In my mind these colors are kind of a “hybrid” and can be thought of as an introduction to gouache if you like. If you would like to have my full Gouache supply list, just let me know. Opaque Watercolor or Gouache can be used in the following manners:

- **JUICY AND “WATER-COLORY”** – just like watercolor though not quite as transparent – when diluted with more water it’s hard to tell the difference...
- **OPAQUE** – more like oil or acrylic – **NOTE:** for thicker, more impasto-type brushwork I use Acrylic Gouache which is less likely to crack – opaque watercolor and regular gouache can crack when applied too thickly. FYI, NO Acrylic Gouache is listed here...

I use opaque watercolor and gouache in these basic ways:

1. As an addition to traditional transparent watercolor where the goal is to incorporate opaque watercolor/gouache when needed and for the painting to still have the look of a traditional watercolor...
2. As a gouache painting from start to finish where the opaque passages allow the transparent/translucent underpainting to show through, but for the opaque nature of the gouache to be quite evident. For this option you will want to have a more comprehensive palette of gouache colors. Note – you can still incorporate some of your traditional watercolors.
3. Using its ability to be used both as an opaque and translucent medium to revive failed watercolors – it’s amazing how an opaque medium can breathe new life into a watercolor once destined for the scrap pile!

NOTE: regardless of my intent for the finished work, I always begin with transparent – or translucent – washes. This is my standard practice for watercolor, gouache, acrylic, and oil. Therefore, if you are more interested in option #1, it is not necessary to have a full palette of gouache colors - because you can add a little watercolor to whatever white you have for some opaque finishing touches, when needed.

IF YOU'RE PACKING YOUR SUPPLIES FOR A TRIP:

MISCELLANEOUS NON-PAINTING ITEMS - YOUR CHOICE - During any plein air outings where we might be painting, doing a few quick sketches while absorbing the atmosphere of our location, or just taking photos - we need to consider:

- Comfortable shoes and clothes appropriate for a bit of walking – suited to the location
- Camera, extra batteries or portable charger as appropriate for your device - I use a digital camera with my phone camera as back-up.
- An electronic tablet, such as iPad, Samsung, etc., or small computer, is wonderful for viewing – and painting from - images later in the studio – I find the phone screen to be too small.
- Hat
- Gloves without fingertips - protection for either sun exposure or cold temps
- Sunscreen
- Jacket
- Drinking water (could be used for on-the-go sketching as well)
- Snacks or lunch
- A collapsible stool might be a wise option if you will be staying in one location rather than a walking tour – check with the venue to find out what to expect. Standing is uncomfortable for me, so I usually do take a collapsible stool.
- Backpack

Packing supplies for a painting trip can be rather daunting. This list of painting supplies is meant to be comprehensive – because, for one thing, the very thing you leave behind is often THE very thing you need! A lot of time can be wasted lamenting that you wish you had brought something you hadn't thought of.

So - before a trip, I print out my most current supply list to use as a checklist, then choose from it what to take on that particular trip. Since it's a comprehensive list, I know that if it isn't on the list, I don't need to worry about it - AND I do not necessarily include every item on the list. I try to pick supplies necessary for the particular trip coming up.

If you are expecting a "light" plein air trip where you might be doing some sketching, watercolor sketching, and photo-taking, you could organize your supplies for the plein air outings in a couple of ways. For example, you could have a small pack dedicated to very light painting or sketching that would be separate from your studio supplies, making it easier to "grab & go". I have a very small palette for "light" plein air that makes my grab & go kit even easier to manage. It's a Daler-Rowney 24 half-pan set in which I've replaced some of the colors with a few of my M Graham favorites.

OR you could simply pick a few essential items from your main supplies.

I recommend that you make a list ahead of time, so you don't spend a lot of time deciding what to take.

Please "pick and choose" carefully in order to have a painting kit that meets your own needs.

There are so many times when "maximal" plein air painting equipment is just too much stuff. Of course, I do have a list for that type of plein air painting – if you would like to have that list of equipment just ask.

This list can serve as your checklist – or you can make up your own.

I must stress that the supplies listed here are what I enjoy using but are only my suggestions – please understand that you are encouraged to use your own favorites!