

Beginner watercolour supply list



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WATERCOLOUR

Want to build your own set? Buy in this order, and only as much as you need. You don't have to use my brands – **a set you know is better than an expensive set gathering dust in a cupboard.**

1 Buy first

TO GET STARTED

- **Large round brush (No. 10–14):** your workhorse for broad washes, backgrounds and big shapes.
- **Small round brush (No. 4–6):** for structural mid-tones, stems and finer line detail.
- **Watercolour paper:** one A4 or A5 pad, 200–300 gsm (90–140 lb). Canson Aquarelle, Fabriano or similar.
- **A small paint set:** I demonstrate with the Mungyo 12-colour Basic Travel Set – affordable, and enough for months.

Brushes: look for synthetic ones that hold plenty of water but still come to a sharp point. Golden Tacklon, Daler-Rowney Aquafine and Dala are all good. **Not water brushes** – they don't allow the control of water to pigment that our techniques require.

ALREADY AT HOME

- **Two bottles** – one for dirty water, one for clean.
- **Paper towel or kitchen roll** – to control the water in your brush.
- **A white plate** – your first palette.
- **Pencil and a putty eraser** – which won't damage the paper.
- **Printer or photocopy paper** – for shape and layout studies.

2 Buy next

IF YOU PAINT REGULARLY

- **A palette** with 6–12 deep wells – preferably ceramic.
- **Masking tape and a backing board** – to tape your paper down flat.
- **Fine-mist spray bottle or pipette** – to activate pans and keep paper damp.

BETTER PAINT: A SPLIT PRIMARY PALETTE

Yellow warm (New Gamboge) & cool (Lemon Yellow)

Red warm (Scarlet) & cool (Permanent Rose)

Blue warm (Ultramarine) & cool (Cerulean)

Earth Burnt Sienna or Raw Umber

Six to seven tubes mix almost anything without mud. Winsor & Newton (also Cotman), Daniel Smith, Daler-Rowney and Roman Szmal are all good. More on this on N4.

3 Can wait

FOR PLAYING AROUND

- **White gouache** – for opaque detail and highlights.
- **Permanent fineliner** – waterproof (Micron or UniPin) for lines.
- **White gel pen** – (Sakura Gelly Roll) for fine, high-contrast detail.

THIS IS WHAT A COMPLETE SET LOOKS LIKE

Buy one thing at a time, and paint with it before you buy the next. You learn more from two brushes you know well than from a set of ten.