

## Supplies for Watercolor Workshop

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Art Witulski

### Sources

I have had good luck ordering art supplies from Plaza Art Stores (<https://www.plazaart.com/>), Jerry's Artarama (<https://www.jerrysartarama.com/>), Dick Blick ([www.dickblick.com](http://www.dickblick.com)), Cheap Joe's Art Stuff (<https://www.cheapjoes.com>) and Amazon. If you are lucky enough to live near an art store you can of course pick up your art supplies there. Plaza Art and Jerry's Artarama both have stores in Nashville, the people who work there are usually artists and can answer your questions. Michael's and Hobby Lobby also usually have a pretty good selection of art stuff as well.

### Notebooks/Journals/Paper

The most important point for watercolor is to get paper thick enough so you can do ink and watercolor washes without causing the paper to wrinkle up. Don't get a sketchbook labeled for "dry media." Look for sketchbooks/journals with 90 pound (equal to 190 grams per square meter, or gsm) paper or 270 to 300 gsm is even better. Also 100% cotton paper or cotton-wood paper blends are good because they hold water without wrinkling. Good choices I've used for notebooks: Strathmore Series 500 Mixed Media, Stillman and Birns Beta series, Pentalic. I find that 6 by 8.5 inch or 8 by 10 inch notebooks are about the right size for sketching. A lot of these same papers are available in tablet form or in loose sheets if you want to paint large.

### Pencils

Almost any pencil will do since we only use it in the preliminary phase of the sketch. I use a 2B, B or HB, but any of those hardness levels is fine. (2B is softer, B is harder, HB even harder.)

### Erasers

A good soft eraser is useful, like the Factic ES-20.



Fig. 1: Daniel Smith 12 color box set with half-pans.

## **Paints**

Watercolor paints come in tubes or in “pans.” Brands I have had experience with and like are Holbein, M. Graham, Daniel Smith, Windsor-Newton for good quality paints, or Da Vinci if you would like a reasonably good cheaper brand. Avoid “student” quality paints because they have less pigment than “pro” paint lines. The pro paints are definitely worth the extra dollars. Just like brushes, watercolor paints are cheaper if you buy them in sets. You can buy a pan set with a palette box from most manufacturers. You only need about 12 colors, but anywhere in the 6 to 24 color range should be fine. You definitely don't need more than 24 colors. One set I like is the Daniel Smith set shown in Fig. 1. You get twelve paints to start out with, then later you can start buying paints in tubes and squeezing those into the empty pans, plus it gives you some palettes space to mix your paints. Other watercolor sets are fine too, make sure it has a palette area where you can mix your paints with water, so you don't have to carry a separate palette when you travel. We will talk more about gouache paints later in the course, but for now I recommend you get 1 tube of Titanium White gouache from one of the same manufacturers listed above. When you buy paint in tubes, for now I recommend 15 ml tubes or smaller until you know which colors you really like to use.

## **Palettes for paint mixing**

If you would like to buy a separate larger palette for paint mixing, try to get porcelain or enamel on metal. Avoid plastic palettes, which often stain easily and then confuse your color mixes. You can also get a tablet of palette paper, which makes cleaning up easy.

## **Watercolor Brushes**

There is a bewildering array of brushes out there. Some good sizes in round brushes are 2, 4, 6, 8 and 12, plus a soft 1 inch or larger flat brush for doing washes for wet-into-wet painting. The Princeton brand 4050 series are a good compromise between price and quality. Princeton sells a set of four 4050 series brushes for about \$25, which is a good deal. Buying brushes individually can get expensive. There are many good brush sets, another one I like is the Jack Richeson 713995 Watermedia Pocket Plein Air Brush Set, which has short handled brushes for traveling in a useful case. Another good one is the Royal & Langnickel Majestic Deluxe Watercolor Artist Brush Set, 5-Piece, which has about the right selection of sizes. If you're just starting out, just get one big and one small brush of any kind to get going, or an inexpensive brush set.

## **Paper Towels**

Having a roll of paper towels around is a big help when using ink or watercolor.

## **Water Holder**

Having a container that will hold about a cup of water is very useful for ink washes and watercolors. I have used yogurt containers, peanut butter jars, old hand cream jars, etc. It should be something you don't mind getting stained with colors.

## **Spray bottle:**

A bottle for spraying water can be very useful. It doesn't have to be expensive, just be sure it sprays a fine mist instead of big droplets of water.