

MISSOULA PUBLIC LIBRARY WATERCOLOR COLLABORATIVE SUPPLY LIST SUGGESTIONS

Welcome! A few suggestions for supplies, especially if you are new to watercolor as a medium:

Consider waiting to buy new supplies until after your first meeting. Bring whatever watercolor paints, paper, and brushes you already have; if necessary, you can borrow something if you don't already have it. The program is a great place to see what art supplies others are using that you may want to eventually acquire.

When you do go shopping, purchase medium to high quality supplies. Better quality supplies will help with better results. Choose quality over quantity.

Here is a helpful video as you get started:

<https://youtu.be/Ls620E6YhJl?si=3HUNzOLgEs5jBU-z>

Watercolor paper:

Whatever brand or size or style (i.e. a block or pad or loose sheets), make sure it is **140 lb. 100% cotton rag paper**. (Some painters find that Dick Blick, an online art supply vendor—see below, carries a good but cheap block version.) Start with cold press. Larger pieces can always be cut or taped into a smaller size, if necessary.

Some brands: Arches is the most widely known but Sennelier, Stratford, and Hahnemüle also make good options.

Other watercolor paper to explore at some point is hot press (smoother than cold press), rough (more “tooth” than cold press), and Yupo (a kind of plastic paper that is good for very loose styles of painting).

Brushes:

Start with three basic brushes:

- Flat wash – 3/4 or 1 inch preferred
- Round #8 or #10
- Round #6 or smaller

These are often better to buy in person as personal preference is a big factor here. Get a medium grade plus.

Some brands: Rosemary & Co. makes a great beginner's set for not much money. Princeton and Windsor & Newton also make a good line of brushes. Kalinsky Sable is the gold standard but very expensive. There are good quality synthetics.

Try to avoid the large pre-packaged sets found in craft and hobby stores as often they are not very high quality, though having a couple of cheap brushes for masking fluid (see below) is a good idea.

Watercolor Paints:

Watercolor paints come in tubes or pre-made pan palettes. You could even start with a travel size palette. Do not buy cheap sets of paint such as kids use in school art programs or gouache (pronounced gwash), which is an opaque watercolor. Get fewer higher quality paints and build gradually from there (see below). Get tubes or pre-filled pans; companies often make them in both versions. There are advantages and disadvantages to both.

Good brands with artist grade paints include Windsor & Newton, Daniel Smith, Lukas, Sennelier. There are handmade paints from real minerals, such as by Greenleaf & Blueberry but they can be more expensive.

COLORS: To begin with, you will need a red, blue, yellow, and a black. CMYK is the term for the modern primary sets: Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, and Black. A basic “modern primary colors set” with both warm and cool versions of the primary colors would be an excellent choice to begin with as you could mix almost any color with those six colors plus black. (In watercolor, some painters never use white, allowing the paper to show through as the white in areas of their painting. Other painters use a watercolor white, such as Titanium White or Chinese White, in their palette.)

After that, the sky is the limit in terms of pre-mixed colors vs mixing your own. Tube paint can be used to refill pre-made pan palettes or to fill empty palettes that you buy and customize. Take your time in experimenting before investing in a lot of paint and/or palette configuration options.

Other things to consider having:

- A good drawing pencil and eraser.
- A permanent black ink pen.
- Masking fluid--consider getting a brand that has a nozzle option as masking fluid can ruin brushes if they aren't cleaned immediately and thoroughly after applying masking fluid with them.
- Painters tape or washi tape for taping down individual sheets and for making borders.
- Palette--plastic or ceramic for mixing colors: often combined with pan type paints in a kit form. A cheap white ceramic plate works very well.
- Small spray bottle filled with water: brushes are damaged if put onto dry pan paints. Wet pan paints lightly before beginning to paint to extend the life of your brushes and your palettes.
- Stiff board, such as foam core or a stiff plastic cutting board, for taping down individual sheets. (Not needed if you use block watercolor paper.)
- Tissues for lifting paint.
- Salt for adding effects to a painting.

- Basic "How to Watercolor" book or online tutorials to familiarize you with terms and techniques (see suggested video at the top of this document).

Additional items:

- There are all kinds of "additives" one can buy to mix in with watercolor paint: gum arabic, ox gall, watercolor medium, aquapasto and impasto, and more. These are items that you might consider later when you have a better feel of the basic watercolor medium, brushes, and paper. YouTube videos can be helpful on how best to use them.

Places to look for art supplies include:

- Frame of Mind (on Brooks just south of Mount in Missoula): more expensive but high quality
- Giving Art to Missoula - <https://www.gammissoula.org/> (they take used art supplies for all kinds of mediums and give you your first five items free. After 5 items, they charge a small amount for each additional item.)
- Wind River Arts -WindRiverArts.com (they sell an excellent beginners set of Rosemary & Co. brushes for a very good price as well as the full line of these "handmade in England" brushes)
- St. Louis Art Supply - shop.stlartsupply.com/ (unusual art supplies not found in other places; they have a line of homemade watercolors called Tonic)
- Greenleaf & Blueberry - one source for handmade, artisanal watercolors and accessories
- Cheap Joes - www.cheapjoes.com*
- Jerry's Artarama - www.jerrysartarama.com*
- Dick Blick - www.dickblick.com*
- Amazon.com*
- Michaels* or other larger craft/hobby stores*
 - *These bigger companies can be controversial. They may have great prices and even free shipping at times but they also undercut smaller, local art supply stores. Think: Amazon vs a local independent book store. There is a place for both if used wisely but consider supporting smaller, independent art supply stores first, if possible.
- Garage sales are a great place to look for frames.

Each week, see what other students are using and poke around art supply stores. Over time, you will be able to build a good quality collection that reflects your painting style.

Happy Painting!

