

# GUIDE TO WATERCOLOR ART SUPPLIES

how to start  
your journey  
to the world  
of watercolor





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*Hi!*

*I am a watercolor artist and art teacher from Moscow now based in Berlin. I'm a big fan of watercolor and it is my favourite medium for the past 19 years. A couple of years ago, I gave up my career of journalist and editor to become a full-time artist.*

*Since 2020 I have been taking part in international exhibitions. My artworks are stored in private collections in Russia, Czech Republic, Austria, Germany, Italy and the USA.*

*This guide sums up my experience with watercolor art supplies, I hope you'll find it useful.*

# WATERCOLOR ESSENTIALS LIST

Paper for sketches  
and color tryouts

Watercolor paper

Brushes

Masking tape

Paper towels

Plastic or wooden  
drawing board

Paint water cups

Plain pencils

Eraser and eraser-  
nag

Palette



Nice to have: masking  
fluid, white gouache,  
white pen





# PAPER

## What are the types of watercolor paper?

There are three main characteristics of watercolor paper you should pay attention to. They are texture, content and density.

### Texture

**Hot pressed paper (Grain Satine)** is perfect for botanical and animalistic motifs. It has smooth surface which is really comfortable for painting small details.

**Cold pressed paper (Grain Fin)** is a multipurpose type of paper which can be used for still lifes, portraits and landscapes of any kind.

**Rough paper (Torschon)** is a type of paper which suits artists who have a loose style. It has grainy texture which serves well for landscapes and abstract paintings.

### Content

#### Wood pulp (cellulose)

This is the option for sketches and fast studies. This paper doesn't absorb water and paints and all the pigment stays on top of the paper sheet. That is why paintings on this type of paper are more fragile and can fade away.

#### Cotton

Professional artistic watercolor paper is made of 100% cotton. The paint and water are absorbed with this type of paper, which makes the painting resistant to light and humidity. The image on this paper stays fresh and colorful for 100+ years.

#### Mix of cotton and cellulose

Compromise option for beginners. If you want to use the advantages of cotton paper but want to pay less, you can try this type of paper.

#### Tip:

When it comes to paper it's better not to spare money. Sometimes you can reach better results and avoid disappointments simply by using proper paper.

# PAPER

## Density

The higher the density of paper, the more resistant it is to paint and water. On the paper pack you can see numbers from 180 to 800 grams per square meter. For most occasions the optimal density is 300 g/m<sup>2</sup>.

## Which brand to choose?

There are a variety of watercolor paper brands, and this choice is a matter of taste. Before buying an album or a block of paper you can get yourself a single sheet and test it.

Here are the most popular paper brands with good reputation: Arches, Winsor & Newton, Fabriano, Hahnemuhle, Saunders Waterford, Bahong.

### Tip:

Every type of paper has different surface on each side of the sheet. So you still have a choice of texture even if you have one single piece of paper.



# BRUSHES

The choice of brushes often depends on motifs that the artist prefers and the size of paper. It's better not to try saving money on them. High quality brushes will serve you well for years, so they are a good investment. Here is the short list of brushes that will be useful for the beginner.

- Round squirrel brush (or synthetic imitation of squirrel) N°12-14 for large washes and blending
- Synthetic wash brush N°30-50 for covering large areas of paper
- Synthetic round brush N°6 for accurate detail work
- Synthetic round brush N°1 for smallest details

## Which brand to choose?

The round squirrel brush will probably be the most expensive purchase from the list above. And it would be better to buy this one from an established brand such as Escoda, Da Vinci or Winsor & Newton. The synthetic brushes can be purchased from any brand.







## PAINTS

There are two types of paints you can find in art supplies stores: the student grade paints and the professional (artist) grade paints. The main difference between them is the quality and content of pigments. The professional grade paints will not fade away and they are more predictable in mixes. But if you are a beginner, you can start with a student set.

### Which brand to choose?

You can build up your palette with paints from different brands. Here are some of them: Winsor & Newton, Royal Talens, Daniel Smith, Sennelier, Schmincke, White Nights.

### Tip:

You can start with a set of watercolor paints in crates and then fill up the empty crates with paints from tubes.



## CONTACTS



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Questions?

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you are looking for a watercolor tutor or you need an advise or a consultation on watercolor supplies.

Jenny