

2021 Materials List for "From Ordinary to Extraordinary"

With Alexis Lavine, NWS

PAPER: Paper is the most important item, as far as quality and expense are concerned. Buy the best paper that you can afford; save your money on other items, such as paint and brushes. I recommend good quality paper, such as Kilimanjaro, D'Arches, or Fabriano, preferably 140 lb. cold-pressed paper. Buy several full sheets, (22" x 30".) These can be cut into halves or quarters for smaller paintings. Using a block is fine too, and very convenient.

PAINTING BOARD: If you are not using a block, you will need a waterproof board to support your paper, about 1 inch larger than your paper in both directions. A board that measures 16"x23" will work well for either a half or quarter sheet of watercolor paper. Gatorboard works very well for this. If you buy one of those standard brown drawing boards with the big clips attached, it may not work well for the sizes of paper you will be using.

PAINT : My favorite brands of paint are American Journey and DaVinci watercolors. These are professional quality paints, reasonably priced. There are many brands available, with a huge variety of pigments, tube sizes, and prices. Whatever you buy, it's a good idea to check the permanency rating first - you don't want your paintings fading away!

Basic pigments: Here is my palette. The pigments in capital letters are more basic, if you are just building a palette. The others are less essential for a basic set-up, but I love to use them, and you will surely see me dipping my brush into them. I generally choose pigments which are not heavy stainers. LEMON YELLOW, GAMBOGE, quinacridone gold, YELLOW OCHRE, BURNT SIENNA, sepia, CADMIUM RED DEEP, PERMANENT ROSE, opera, cobalt violet deep, PERMANENT MAGENTA, mauve, ULTRAMARINE BLUE, cobalt blue, CERULEAN BLUE, Prussian blue, turquoise, Mint Julep (American Journey brand only,) VIRIDIAN GREEN, SAP GREEN, green gold.

BRUSHES: The best brushes are made out of sable hair and other very expensive animal hair. You can, however, buy very serviceable synthetic brushes or synthetic/natural blends at a fraction of the cost. Don't invest a lot of money in brushes until you know what kind you like to work with. If you will be painting small, the following brushes will suffice: 1" flat, 1/2" flat, and a #6 round brush. You may also want a 1/4" flat brush, a larger round brush such as a #12, and a larger flat brush, such as a 1 1/2" brush, particularly if you will be painting larger paintings. Most of my flat brushes are "one-stroke" which means that the hairs are longer and they hold more pigment. An old toothbrush is great for spattering paint. It is also helpful to have a couple of different sized scrubber brushes, such as the "Fritch" scrubber, and a couple of fan brushes for blending.

PALETTE: I use a "Miller's Workhorse Traditional Watercolor Palette" from Cheap Joe's. A covered palette, such as the "workhorse," or the Heritage, Pike, or Wood palette, is best, since it will keep your paints moist between painting sessions. You can also use an enameled butcher tray, or even a white dinner plate, and cover your paints with plastic wrap. Whatever you use, make sure you have spaces for all of your pigments and a large, white mixing area.

OTHER SUPPLIES: Small (3.5 x 5 inch) sketchbook, tracing paper, sketching pencils, soft eraser, plastic water bowl, absorbent cloth rags or paper towels, natural sponge, cotton swabs, salt, 4 bulldog clamps, spray bottle (with an adjustable spray.) Liquid frisket is very helpful to use with some subjects; if you use it, you will need several old or inexpensive brushes to apply it with, and a small amount of liquid soap, and a frisket remover (rubber cement pick-up tool.)

I will be using photographs as references for my demos. I will provide you with copies of them. You are welcome to use my photos as the basis for your own paintings. Or, better yet, use your own photos. Or sketches. You can even bring small, easily portable still life items to the workshop, if you prefer.