

Recommended Basic Materials List

Most artists love browsing art supply stores and art catalogs for all the wonderful supplies & materials. However, **restraint** is the key, especially if you are diving into watercolor for the first time. A relative few colors, few brushes and a single brand of paper will serve even the most serious of watercolorists for a very long time. The first two pages include descriptions of recommended materials as well as explanations of the particular recommendations. The last page is an itemized list that can be used to assess your current stock of supplies and as a shopping list for your next trip to the art supply store.

Paint: Simplicity in the palette should be a guiding principle, especially for beginning watercolorists. Working with a limited number of colors from the start will help you develop a sensitive eye for color and exceptional color mixing skill. Basically your palette needs only one cool and one warm hue of the primaries, 3 secondary colors at most, and two versatile neutrals. This suggested list will help keep your palette simple but versatile. Student grade colors are much less expensive than professional colors and will do just fine for learning and experimenting with watercolor.

<i>Color/ Temperature</i>	<i>Professional Grade Color Recommendation</i>	<i>Student Grade Color Recommendation</i>
Cool Yellow	<i>Any Professional Brand - Lemon Yellow</i>	<i>Grumbacher Academy Lemon Yellow</i>
Warm Yellow	<i>Any Professional Brand - Cadmium Yellow Medium</i>	<i>Grumbacher Academy Cadmium Yellow Medium</i>
Cool Red	<i>Any Professional Brand - Permanent Alizarin Crimson</i>	<i>Grumbacher Academy Alizarin Crimson</i>
Warm Red	<i>Any Professional Brand - Cadmium Red Light</i>	<i>Grumbacher Academy Cadmium Red Light Hue</i>
Cool Blue	<i>Any Professional Brand - Thalo Blue (or Pthalo)</i>	<i>Grumbacher Academy Pthalo Blue</i>
Warm Blue	<i>Any Professional Brand - Ultramarine Blue</i>	<i>Grumbacher Academy Ultramarine Blue</i>
Orange	<i>Any Professional Brand - Cadmium Orange</i>	<i>Grumbacher Academy Cadmium Orange</i>
Green	<i>Any Professional Brand - Viridian</i>	<i>Grumbacher Academy Emerald Green</i>
Violet	<i>Any Professional Brand - Thalo or Dioxazine Violet</i>	<i>Grumbacher Academy Violet</i>
Neutrals	<i>Any Professional Brand - Burnt Sienna and Raw Sienna</i>	<i>Grumbacher Academy Burnt Sienna and Raw Sienna</i>

Palette : Any large – at least 10" x 12"- sturdy, deep welled, white plastic palette with a cover will do. Again, there are many manufacturers that produce good plastic watercolor palettes. I have and use two John Pike palettes. This palette is a great choice, as it is made of extra sturdy plastic, has large wells for paint and a large, open mixing area. The Pike palette is one of the most expensive plastic palettes on the market but is easily worth its cost. With just a little care, one of these can last as long as you continue to paint in watercolor. Beyond the John Pike palette, there are many less expensive plastic palettes that will also perform well for years. In this category, I like the Robert Wood, Tom Lynch, Frank Webb and the Cheap Joe's Original Palette.

Paper: This is an area where I recommend not trying to save money. Many beginning watercolor painters start out working on those rather popular watercolor paper pads found in most art supply shops. While relatively inexpensive, readily available and convenient, their surfaces have a heavy application of sizing. The sizing affects the papers' working properties by keeping most of the water and color on the surface, rather than being absorbed into the fiber. For someone new to watercolor, the results can be surprising and unpredictable.

I recommend starting with either *D'Arches* or *Cheap Joe's Kilimanjaro 140lb Cold Press* paper. Both of these brands have excellent working characteristics and are not only great to start on, are great for those accomplished works you will create as you progress! They are both moderately absorbent – an important factor in wash and fluid control – and will stand up to a good bit of work and re-work. While both are high cost relative to other papers, they are both worth it. The best way to minimize the cost is to buy paper by the full sheet (22" x 30") and cut or tear them to a workable size – 11" x 15" (quarter sheet) or smaller.

D'Arches is the leading brand of watercolor paper, favored by many of the best watercolorists over the years. Generally speaking, it can be found in the same art supply stores that sell those same watercolor pads that so many choose to start with.

Kilimanjaro is the private brand for Cheap Joe's Art Stuff. Cheap Joe's is primarily a mail order supplier which stocks a wide variety of brands and materials, including *D'Arches* as well as their own. Find them on line at www.cheapjoes.com.

Brushes: Most watercolorists have a quire full of brushes – and most of them are usually too small for good watercolor work. Five quality synthetic or synthetic/natural blend brushes are really all that are needed to do the trick. There are many quality brushes made by many different manufacturers. The most important characteristics in watercolor brushes are water absorption, springiness and, for rounds, coming to a fine point at the tip. Brushes called "white sable" (which is really synthetic nylon) or "golden nylon" are good choices as they generally combine the best characteristics for moderate cost. I recommend staying away from so called "mop brushes" which tend to lack springiness, "hake" brushes, for the same reason, as well as "fan", "blade" and other brushes with shaped bristles. What ever brand you chose these are the types and sizes that are needed to start.

Rounds : # 8, 12 and 20

Flats : 1" and 2"

I've found these brands to be excellent values:

Winsor Newton 965 Series , the Robert Simmons White Sable line of brushes - 785 Series Rounds & 755 Series Skyscraper Flat Wash brushes, Loew-Cornell Golden Talkon series – Ultra Round, Wash Glaze & Sky Wash, Cheap Joe's Dream Catcher Series – Rounds & Flats.

Other Related Materials:

- a couple 2B drawing pencils
- a pencil sketch book – 11 x 14 or smaller, for sketching and value studies
- a small watercolor sketchbook, 9 x 12 or smaller, for quick color sketches and color studies.
- one natural and one cellulose "kitchen" sponge
- paper towels
- two water containers – one for clean water and one for dirty rinse water
- board to support your paper, a product known as "Gatorboard" is popular as is tempered masonite, plywood or luan sealed with varnish
- tape or bulldog clips for mounting or holding paper to the board



Watercolor Materials Inventory Check/Shopping List

<i>Paint Color</i>	<i>Needed/Option</i>	<i>Less Expensive Option</i>	<i>More Expensive Option</i>
Lemon Yellow	Needed	Student Grade	Professional Grade
Cadmium Yellow Medium	Needed	Student Grade	Professional Grade
Permanent Alizarin Crimson	Needed	Student Grade	Professional Grade
Cadmium Red Light	Needed	Student Grade	Professional Grade
Thalo Blue (or Pthalo)	Needed	Student Grade	Professional Grade
Ultramarine Blue	Needed	Student Grade	Professional Grade
Cadmium Orange	Option	Student Grade	Professional Grade
Viridian Green	Option	Student Grade	Professional Grade
Thalo or Dioxazine Violet	Option	Student Grade	Professional Grade
Burnt Sienna Neutrals	Needed	Student Grade	Professional Grade
Raw Sienna	Needed	Student Grade	Professional Grade

<i>Palette</i>	<i>Needed/Option</i>	<i>Less Expensive Options</i>	<i>More Expensive Option</i>
large plastic – at least 10" x 12", deep paint wells, large mixing area	Needed	Frank Webb or Tom Lynch or Tom Jones or Cheap Joe's Original Palette	John Pike Palette

<i>Paper</i>	<i>Needed/Option</i>	<i>Less Expensive Option</i>	<i>More Expensive Option</i>
140 lb weight, cold press surface	Needed	Cheap Joes Kilimanjaro	D'Arches

<i>Brushes</i>	<i>Needed/Option</i>	<i>Options</i>
Rounds : # 8, 12 and 20	Needed	Winsor Newton 965 Series , the Robert Simmons White Sable line of brushes Loew-Cornell Ultra Round, Wash Glaze & Sky Wash, Cheap Joe's Dream Catcher Series – Rounds & Flats.
Flats : 1" and 2"	Needed	Same as above

<i>Other Related Materials</i>	<i>Needed/Option</i>	<i>Options</i>
2B Drawing Pencils	Needed	Many similarly priced Options
pencil sketchbook	Needed	Same as above
watercolor sketchbook	Option	
natural sponge	Option	
cellulose kitchen sponge	Needed	
paper towels	Needed	
two water containers	Needed	any plastic container from home
Board to support paper	Needed	Gator board, varnished luan, plywood or masonite
tape	Option	gummed butchers tape to stretch wet paper or drafting tape to hold dry paper
Bulldog Clips	Option	available at office supply stores