

Materials List for Plein Air Painting

This is a list to get you started. I always try to keep my painting kit simple so that it fits into a backpack and is easy to travel with. It's important to be comfortable when painting outside so keep tweaking your kit to get it just right for you!

Paints – Below is a list of colors that I would recommend starting with. Buying them individually or purchasing a watercolor kit is fine as long as the quality of the paint is good. I use Winsor & Newton, however there are lots of other brands that are perfectly fine and more affordable. I prefer tubes of watercolor paints, but if you already own cakes, then those are fine. If you already have a pallet laid out with colors that you prefer, please bring it to use.

- Cadmium Red
- Alizarin Crimson
- Cadmium Yellow/Lemon Yellow
- Yellow Ocher
- French Ultramarine Blue
- Cerulean Blue
- Burnt Sienna
- Viridian Green

Paper - 140 lb. watercolor paper is very important for the techniques that we will be using in class. I recommend using a high quality cold press surface such as Arches. These sheets can be bought individually and are fairly large but can be cut down into 8 or so pieces. Watercolor blocks are available at art stores and are convenient because the paper is sealed down and ready to be painted. CAUTION! It is very important that the blocks are sealed on all four sides, not two.

Support board – if you are not using a block style pad of paper, you will need a piece of something that doesn't absorb water cut to a manageable size. I use a piece of plastic corrugated board I bought from Staples. This will be used to attach paper to if loose pages are being used. Make the board large enough to have at least a 3" margin of wood once your paper is attached.

White artist tape or masking tape (just make sure it isn't too sticky)

Pallet - a white plastic pallet with wells for individual colors and plenty of area to mix color in is great. When you are painting plein air it is helpful to have a small pallet with a cover. I prefer to use one that has a hole to put my thumb through when holding it.

Brushes – two round brushes (#4 and #10, or something similar), large flat (1" works well), and a mop brush (this is a brush with lots of soft bristles that is able to hold large amounts of water)

Pencil and sketch book – I also use scrap paper to block off parts of my painting so bring extra scrap paper if you don't want to remove pages from your sketchbook.

2 lidded containers with water- one for washing brushes and one for clean water for washes (peanut butter jars work great)

Spray bottle full of water

Watercolor Easel- I do recommend using an easel. It is quite important to be able to have your hands free to paint! Watercolor easels are inexpensive, light weight, and make painting plein air much easier. You can also purchase a tray to connect to the easel that is helpful as a little holding spot for your brushes, water, etc. Another option are artist chairs that are collapsible chairs that have small side tables attached. These are quite nice and can make it comfortable to hold your painting in your lap as opposed to using an easel. The only downfall to the chairs is that they can be a little cumbersome to carry.

Towels paper/cloth

Pencil, kneaded eraser, black pen

Some suggested personal items - Visor or hat, sun block, stool to sit on if preferred, lots of water to drink and food to keep you nourished, insect repellent, comfortable walking shoes, camera