

Watercolour Materials List

Adam Cope – Painting Holidays. © 2025

[For complete details about the painting course click here](#)

Packing your art materials for a painting holiday needs preparation.

TIP : Do a dummy pack beforehand to make sure that it all fits & that it's not too heavy to carry.

Your total loaded weight shouldn't be more 4 kilos max. Travel light! Reduce it! Don't bring too much.

You will need a bag to transport your watercolour materials, since you will have to carry your stuff to the place you are going to paint. So choose one which is easy to carry, ready to grab & light weight.

Please note it is probably best to put your art materials into checked hull luggage, not cabin. Watercolour artists colours (not paints) are allowed on flights but you must check this with your flight provider. Pack tubes into zippable freezer bags to protect against cabin pressure in air flight & for ease of airport inspection. Never bring any knives or inflammable solvents.

Here are the required materials that you need to bring:

DRAWING

- A5 sketch pad for drawing (which is about the size of a hand). Cartridge 160 GMS. Make sure it's this heavy, so that you can lay a fine watercolour wash over the drawing.
- 2H, HB & 3B pencils
- Pencil sharpener
- Plastic eraser, not putty
- Black rollerball pen or felt tip
- Pencil case

BRUSHES (UK sizes... they aren't international...)

- 1 x No 6 (3,7mm or about 1/8 inch) Sable round pointed watercolour brush
- 1 x No 10 (6mm or 1/4 inch) Synthetic round pointed watercolour brush
- 1 x 'one stroke flat' brush either sable or nylon. About 1 cm or 1/2 inch wide.
- 1 x organic sponge
- A small towel (tea towel), made of fluffy cotton
- A brush wallet or bamboo roll (otherwise roll them up in the & some paper)
- A water pipette or syringe

Optional : if you like wet in wet, a small goat hair hake.

Or a small oval pointed mop, squirrel hair .

I recommend Yorkshire based [Rosemary & Co Artists Brushes](#). You can see the above selection [online here at Rosemary's](#).

Good article here : [A Beginners Guide to Choosing the Right Watercolour Brush](#)

WATERCOLOUR PAINTS

Small tubes, rather than pans/cakes.. Artists quality is better than student quality. You really see this in the transparent yellow and the cobalt blue. My favourite brands are Winsor & Newton and Daniel Smith.

The Split-Primaries - a warm & cool of each.

This is the place to start learning colour mixing. [Here is Adam's online course for the Split-Primaries.](#)

- Artists Quality transparent yellow (Winsor Yellow or Daniel Smith Azo yellow)
- Yellow Ochre (Daniel Smith French Ocre)
- French Ultramarine Blue
- Cerulean Blue
- Cadmium Red Light
- Permanent Rose

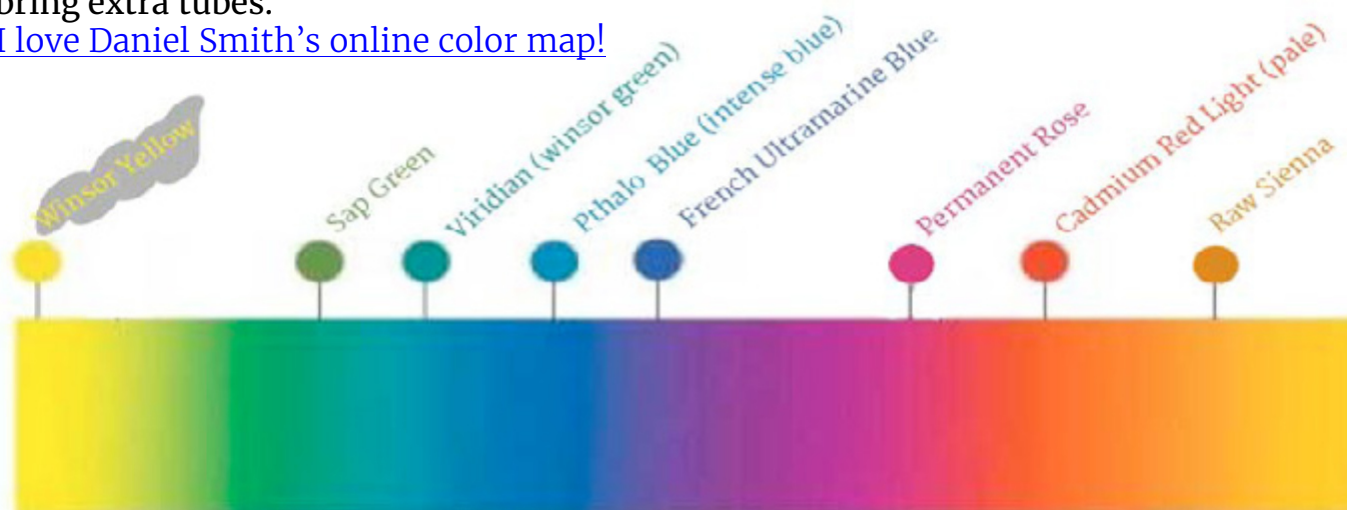
Then you will need these colours as well:

- Sap Green
- Viridian (PG7 : Winsor Green (Blue Shade) or Daniel Smith Phthalo Green (Blue Shade))
- Artists Quality Cadmium Yellow Pale (or Hue)
- Sepia (I paint my 'notans' with this forgiving paint)
- Dioxazine Violet (PV23 : Winsor Violet or Daniel Smith Carbazole Violet)
- Neutral Tint
- Burnt Sienna
- White gouache

Optional color (very expensive) : Cobalt Blue

You can bring a travel set of pans/cakes but these are not ideal and will be difficult to use with the well palettes. Too dry. Please make sure your set has all these colours. If not, bring extra tubes.

[I love Daniel Smith's online color map!](#)



Mapping Pigments to the spectrum. To understand the cool & warm varieties of each colour, it is helpful to see where each pigment falls along the colour spectrum. The magenta-like Permanent Rose, for example, lies closer to the violet end of the spectrum, while red light is relatively warmer and lies towards the yellow end of the spectrum.



4 round plastic palettes with wells

Please get yourself four of these as I will teach you how to dilute & mix with these.

Plastic Atomiser / Diffuser

I like 250 ml because it can double up as water bottle.



LIGHTWEIGHT DRAWING BOARD/ PAPER TRANSPORTER



You will need one of these drawing boards on your painting holiday. They are easy to make. You will need :

- two A3 x 5mm thick foam board (If A3 is way too big for you, then cut it down to your preferred size). There are various suppliers of A3 5mm foam board on Amazon
- tape top (shortest) edges (tape both inside & out) with a taped hinge using Gorilla tape.
- 3 big clips
- A3 plastic sleeve to transport & protect your paintings/paper.



This system doubles up as a really very comfortable, light weight drawing board. There is no point in bringing a watercolour pad on a painting holiday week since most of its weight is the cardboard backing, which you will never use. Make this board size A3 because we will painting A4 or 9 x 12 inches. The margin acts as a hand rest.

PAPER

We will working 9 x 12 inches (A4 will do, if you must). You can work larger if you like. But larger often takes longer. I'm hoping that 9 x 12 will take students two to three hours in one sitting. Then a finishing session in the studio. A5 is great for quick sketching!

You can buy a gummed pad. Take it off the cardboard back. Slip it into the A3 plastic sleeve and tuck it away into the light weight drawing board/paper transporter. Your paper will be nice & safe, with no risk of being damaged in transit.

I recommend these papers:

Bockingford NOT Watercolour Paper Pads. 9" x 12" gummed (140lb, 12 sheets).

This is a good paper for beginners. The NOT surface is neither too smooth nor too rough.

Arches Aquarelle Gummed Watercolour Paper Pads. Gummed 9" x 12" (140lb, 12 sheets).

This is the classic paper, if somewhat 'gummy'. Rough, Not or Hot Press, as you like.

Please also bring a few scraps of waterpaper for your colour mixing swatches

