

Second Sunday Live Demo - 10 Mar 2019

Getting Ready for Plein Air Sketching—Products and Supplies Discussed in the Demo

NOTE: Links provided are not endorsements of the seller. They are only there to help you know what the product is. Please consider supporting your local art supply store with your business! BTW, knitters use LYS for “local yarn shop”; I think we have a great opportunity to start a similar trend with LASS for “local art supply store”. :) Support your LASS!

Travel palettes and related supplies:

metal watercolor palettes: Schminke & Daniel Smith make very nice ones. Schminke has the best selection of half-pan colors (they are also nice strong colors that dissolve quickly; easy to work with)

a less-expensive similar metal watercolor palette:

https://www.amazon.com/dp/B071HP6B4G/ref=sspa_dk_detail_5?psc=1&pd_rd_i=B071HP6B4G&pd_rd_w=AcdTi&pf_rd_p=733540df-430d-45cd-9525-21bc15b0e6cc&pd_rd_wg=UVbBa&pf_rd_r=HKD24N23HHRHYQF5MB7M&pd_rd_r=729837f9-436f-11e9-a6ad-055f6f41bc76

watercolor half pans with magnets:

I like these because I can stick an additional row of colors down the center (some people put a travel brush there, but mine doesn't fit). You can also use these for DIY metal palettes from Altoids tins, etc.

https://www.amazon.com/dp/B07G75R43R/ref=sspa_dk_detail_6?psc=1&pd_rd_i=B07G75R43R&pd_rd_w=FgRjd&pf_rd_p=733540df-430d-45cd-9525-21bc15b0e6cc&pd_rd_wg=SXE3j&pf_rd_r=PX6DPW3PERJ1BAAQAR7X&pd_rd_r=1d5cea81-436f-11e9-8db5-2d3c7a098537

folding palette with rubber gasket:

Forgot to mention this during the demo. Another nice option that can serve as both a travel palette and compact class palette. There is an inner liner that lifts out to add more mixing surface. The gasket helps keep wet paint from running out in your backpack or tote. Folded, this palette will lay flat in most tote bags, but it has as much mixing area as most studio palettes.

https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0049UZEWQ/?coliid=I1YWC7G6YY7TDZ&colid=1UUMWM3G9QGUVU&psc=0&ref_=lv_ov_lig_dp_it

Brushes

water brushes: generally come in several sizes; the brush part is pretty much the same for all brands, main differences are length and method of filling—Niji (one of the few with a half-inch flat available), Pentel Aquash, Koi (Sakura)—this one unscrews the opposite way from US standard (standard direction in Japan is the reverse of ours), Caran d’Ache (fills with a plunger)

travel watercolor brush (really nice): Escoda Prado #12

travel watercolor brush set (decent inexpensive option):

https://www.amazon.com/Artist-Acrylic-Watercolor-Painting-travel/dp/B01MTTYXVK/ref=sr_1_8?keywords=travel+watercolor+brush&qid=1552248432&s=gateway&sr=8-8

Tachikawa dip pen with a G-nib: This one is my favorite for drawing on watercolor paper. You can now buy them with a cover for the nib, so you don’t need my clumsy tube cover. :)

pen: <https://www.jetpens.com/Tachikawa-Comic-Pen-Nib-Holder-Model-40/pd/4573>

nibs: <https://www.jetpens.com/Nikko-Comic-Pen-Nib-G-Model-Pack-of-3/pd/12006>

Miscellaneous Accessories:

Carrier/Organizer Pouch

https://www.amazon.com/dp/B00SSXBEGU/?coliid=I2ZZ4KJ56J8A4A&colid=1UUMWWM3G9QGVU&psc=0&ref=lv_ov_lig_dp_it

mini collapsible shot glass:

https://www.amazon.com/Stainless-Steel-Collapsible-Shot-Glass/dp/B01M3Y1GJT/ref=sr_1_1_sspa?keywords=mini+collapsible+shot+glass&qid=1552248382&s=gateway&sr=8-1-spons&psc=1

Pebeo masking fluid marker: (.7 mm)

https://www.jetpens.com/Pebeo-High-Precision-Masking-Fluid-Marker/pd/23433?gclid=CjwKCAiAiJPkBRAuEiwAEDXZZeGP-gkOlBqAoAOtiAoAydyxLWK0XtG_XTbDjSrYSH8967vFQc hp8xoC750QAvD_BwE

Molotow Masking Fluid Marker: (2mm)

https://shop.bombingscience.com/molotow-grafx-art-masking-liquid-marker-2mm.html?fee=3&fep=598&gclid=CjwKCAiAiJPkBRAuEiwAEDXZZR9NTQWGf7ufiGh46ITtScveN4mOmlpRjldKlkkG-4apxJDJPWs8_hoCb8wQAvD_BwE

velcro dots:

<https://www.amazon.com/VELCRO-Brand-Sticky-Fasteners-Perfect-x/dp/B002IXGUAQ>

Caran d'Ache watercolor pencil palette:

https://www.dickblick.com/products/caran-dache-palette-aquarelle/?clickTracking=true&wmcid=pla&wmcid=items&wmckw=04862-1025&gclid=Cj0KCQjwjpjkBRDRARIsAKv-0O1wS7TE_DIW1wtWiaFZXjrXdzbKq4xI93kQ44sFIGMNTNdTuKAQ-KQaAjJZEALw_wcB

Watercolor Pencils and Markers:

Caran d'Ache Museum watercolor pencils: pricey, but a good pigment load so they last a loooooong time; made with the same collection of pigments as your watercolors (you'll have to consult the color chart because they are labelled by number--grrr). They can be bought in sets, but they are also sold individually, so you can buy exactly what matches the colors on your usual palette.

I also like the Derwent watercolor pencils, but really, start with anything and see if you even like this way of working first.

Tombow watercolor markers: I forgot to mention that these have two tips: a fine drawing marker tip and a brush tip. Also sold individually so you can buy exactly the colors you actually use (and in sets if you prefer).

https://www.tombowusa.com/craft/markers/dual-brush-pen.html?gclid=Cj0KCQjwjpjkBRDRARIsAKv-0O2u9idLaq5Zz15YD7MjzS0OMzvBR62tkxGsQzepny-8h3gK3D541-waAj_7EALw_wcB

Good Sketchbook Options for Watercolor:

Stillman & Birn (spiral bound, hardbound and softcover): Beta (white, cold press), Delta (ivory, cold press) or Zeta (white, hot press)

Handbook Paper watercolor sketchbooks (hardbound): good for line and wash

Aquabee Super Deluxe (spiral bound): good for line and wash; can't handle lots of water

American Journey (Cheap Joe's, spiral bound): 140 lb watercolor paper (but not pro grade)

Strathmore Visual Journal (spiral bound): 140 lb watercolor paper (make sure you're getting the 140 lb watercolor journal; comes in several versions)

Bind your own: If you want REAL watercolor paper, cheapest option is to bind your own. No need to be an experienced book-binder. Coptic stitch is easy (lots of online DIY info). Or, three-ring binger, disc binding system, spiral-bound at print shop.

Disc binding systems (all are interchangeable):

Levenger Circa: These are pricy, but they ARE a significantly better quality so if you fall in love with this method, you might want to check them out (especially the punch).

<https://www.levenger.com/circa-326/circa-discs-punches-1008.aspx>

Staples Arc system: <https://www.staples.com/deals/Staples-Arc/BI1414809>

Almost as nice as the Levenger ones, and you can go see them in person.

. . . and a jillion imitators: I've tried several of these (TUL, Talia) and so far, they've all been fine. Main difference seems to be how smooth the discs are.

https://www.amazon.com/s?k=discbound+notebook&ref=nb_sb_noss

Post binding systems (not good for a sketchbook as the pages don't lie flat at all, but nice for gathering loose sheets into a book later):. Here's one example (search for "post bound book" and you'll find many others and lots of DIY info).

https://www.dickblick.com/products/pina-zangaro-bex-screwpost-binder/?clickTracking=true&wmcp=pla&wmcid=items&wmckw=15281-2508&gclid=Cj0KCQjwjpjkBRDRARIsAKv-0O0NzxUaQ5lEJTz2AhyyOFwy5v129EfpH-UsYZ1slzbzUEKbhZsSQJ8aApr0EALw_wcB

Japanese stab-bound or ribbon-bound books are a similar (and even nicer-looking) presentation.

Watercolor Board

Sorry I didn't have this info at my fingertips last night; I didn't anticipate that question. I started using watercolor board mostly because I had a bunch of it around from other projects and wanted to use it up, so I cut it down to artist-trading-card size to sketch on.

I am still using Arches cold-pressed watercolor board, but it's no longer being made, so when that's gone, I'll have to switch. I'm not as fond of the alternatives, but maybe that's just because I'm used to Arches.

For all of these boards, you have to cut them down to size. However, I forgot last night about another alternative if you want the little bitty size I'm using. Strathmore makes illustration board in an art trading card size:

<https://www.strathmoreartist.com/cards-atc/500-series-illustration-board-artist-trading-cards.html>

They are supposedly for dry media, but they're not too different from hot-pressed sketchbook paper. And they're already cut to size.

Another alternative you might want to try is to buy the teeny artist-trading-card size canvases and put a coat of cold-pressed watercolor ground on them, which would make them into watercolor canvases.

Golden watercolor ground: <https://www.dickblick.com/products/gor-watercolor-grounds/>

Daniel Smith watercolor ground:

<https://www.dickblick.com/products/daniel-smith-watercolor-ground/>

So far as I know, here are the options for watercolor board:

Canson Watercolor Art Board:

<https://www.dickblick.com/products/canson-montval-watercolor-art-board/>

Arches and Canson are owned by the same parent company, and this board was just re-released in a bunch of new sizes, but I don't think it holds up to washes as well as the old Arches watercolor board.

Crescent Watercolor Board:

<https://www.dickblick.com/products/crescent-watercolor-boards/>

Crescent Premium Watercolor Board:

<https://www.dickblick.com/products/crescent-premium-watercolor-board/>

I have tried all three. I think the difference between the regular and premium Crescent boards is thickness (oddly, the regular is thicker) and whether the entire board is acid-free or just the surface and core. I didn't notice a lot of difference in the surface of the two boards.

For Working on Larger Paintings in the Field:

I gave up on doing this—I just like working wet-in-wet too much and that's a problem in the field as soon as you are working much bigger than about 8x10". :) For small paintings, there's really no need to lug all that stuff.

But, before I gave up, I tried just about every field easel and pochade box out there. Most are really more practical for oil painting, but this one was a good option for what a watercolor painter actually needs:

En Plein Air Pro Tripod shelf: Of all the field easels, pochade boxes, etc. I tried, this one worked best for me as a watercolorist. (if your tripod legs are too skinny like mine were, try putting foam pipe insulation from the hardware store over the tripod legs to make them thicker)

https://www.amazon.com/Traveler-En-Plein-Air-Pro/dp/B00B2N9WLM?ref_=fscpl_pl_dp_3

1/4"x20 t-nuts (and an alternative): (For making your own support board similar to the one sold by En Plein Air Pro, but much cheaper.) These are the right diameter and pitch to match the standard camera tripod mount (obviously, you don't need a zillion, most hardware stores sell them individually). The one I showed in the demo was 5/16" in length, but shorter or longer works as long as you don't go so long that it punches through the opposite side of your Gatorboard. (You can also use a lightweight wood panel.)

https://www.amazon.com/Bolt-Dropper-Pronged-Climbing-Cabinetry/dp/B01MSVU3WF/ref=sr_1_1_sspa?crid=ANCE9XFDZXF&keywords=t-nuts+1%2F4-20&qid=1552324785&s=gateway&sprefix=t-nut%2Caps%2C446&sr=8-1-spons&psc=1

If you want to use a plastic or plexiglass sheet as your painting support, you can use this type of nut instead and glue it on. Super-glue works well.

https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0081D1YGC/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_asin_title_o08_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1