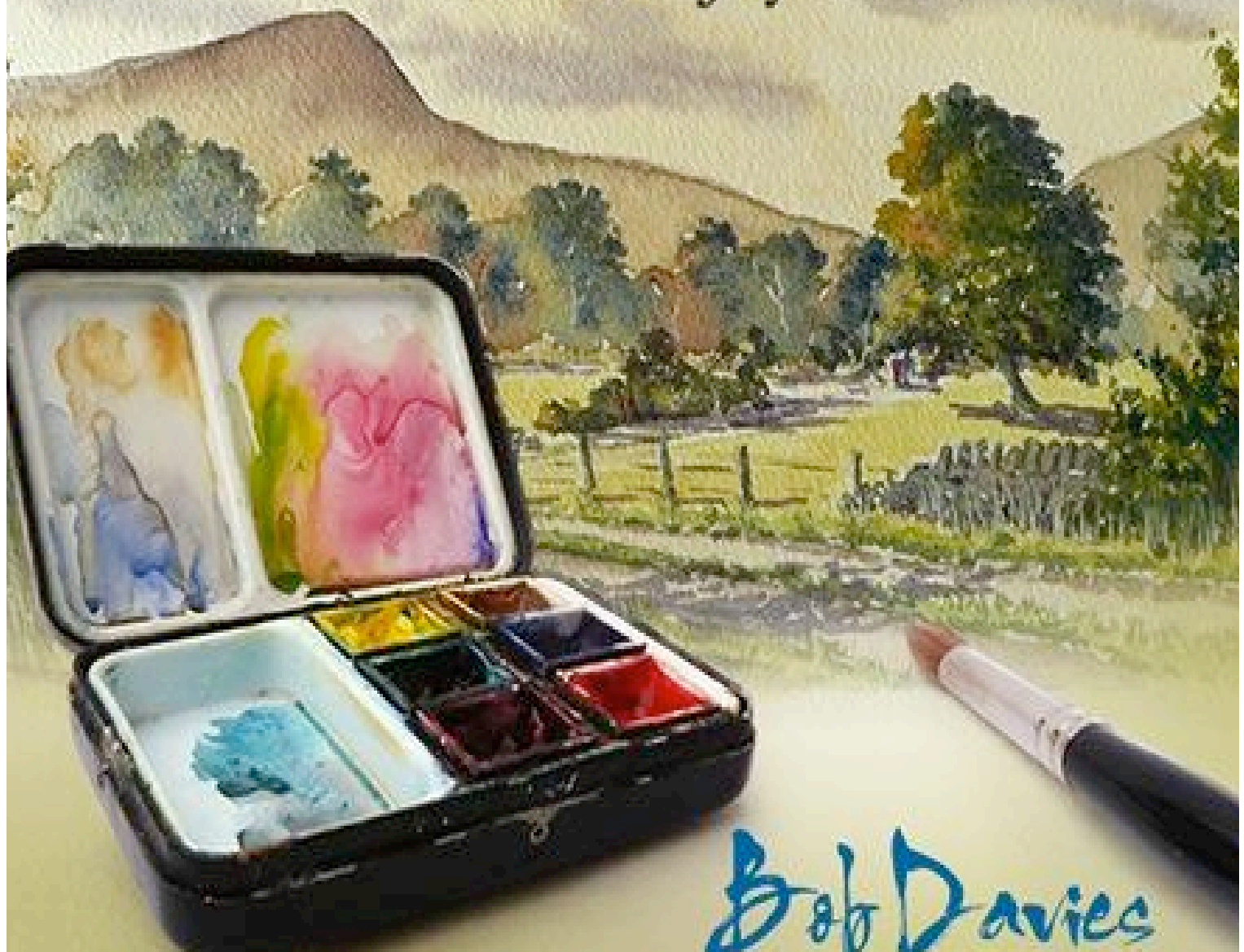


Watercolour SECRETS

Tips & Techniques To Make
Watercolour Painting Easier
& More Enjoyable



Bob Davies

About The Author

Bob Davies is professional art instructor and co-founder of ArtTutor.com.

Bob is passionate about helping others discover the immense satisfaction of producing artwork they are proud of and is a staunch believer that you **don't** have to be born with 'special artistic talent' in order to enjoy the wonderful pastime of painting and drawing.

In this e-book, Bob takes you through some of the basic foundations of watercolour painting that no one bothered to show him at school. In fact, Bob's experience of art at school is like so many others'...



“ So many of my students have told me that they passed through school wanting to learn art, but were frustrated that they were never taught basic techniques like drawing skills. Far too often they were told to 'follow the rules of art' and concentrate on creating 'mood' and 'energy' and 'themes'.

They tried, but floundered because they were never shown how to draw simple shapes like trees or led through the principles of perspective. So they gave up altogether. Sadly, they lost art - and art lost them...

This mirrors my own experience at school i.e. "...develop your theme and you'll pick up the basics as you go along..."

Well no, actually you don't!

You need to understand some simple building blocks of drawing and painting techniques before you get into the heady heights of symbolism and representation in your work.

Why have so many "TV Artists" enjoyed such popularity in the last decade or so? It's because... they show you how...!

I often wonder how long Catering Colleges would survive if their students weren't shown how to beat an egg before they were let loose baking a Christmas cake...”

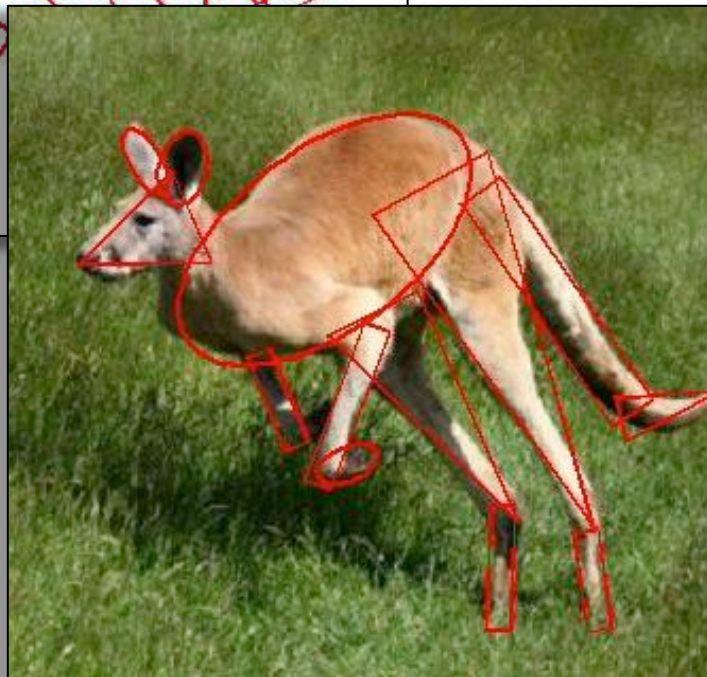
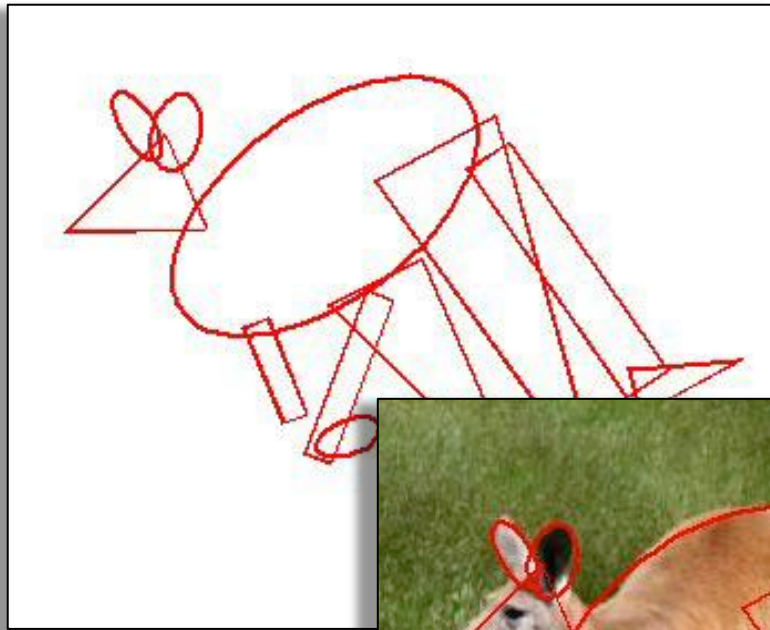
Bob Davies

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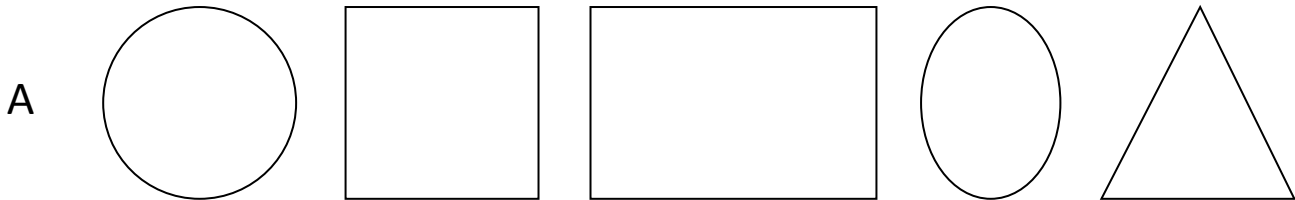
Watercolour Secrets

SECTION 1

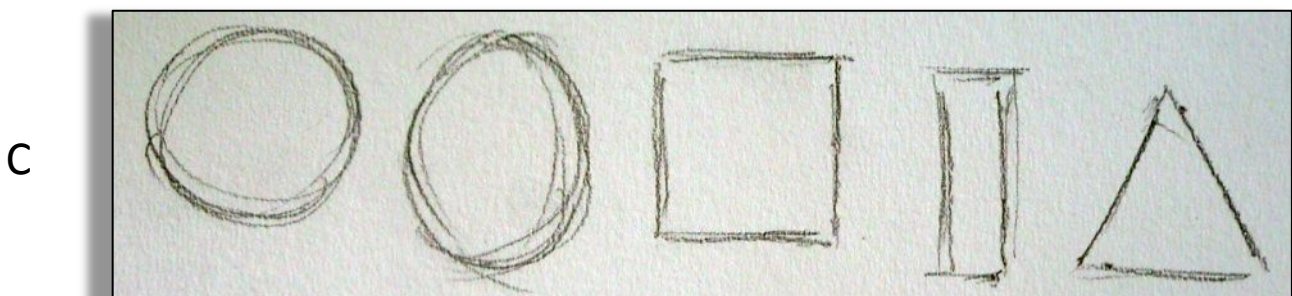
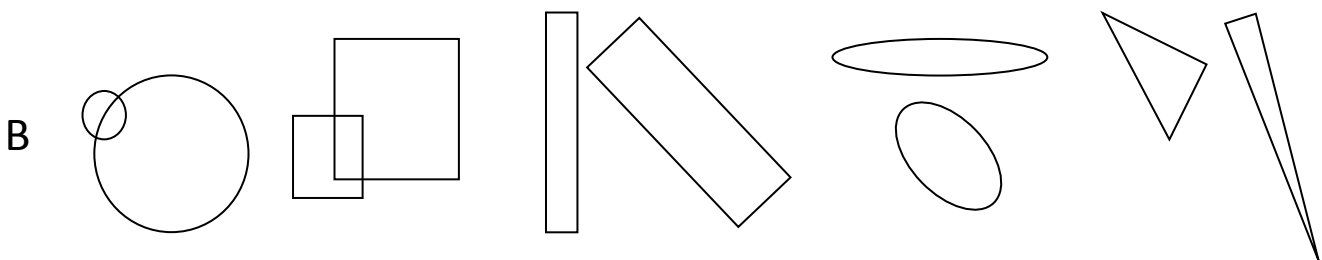


**CREATE WHATEVER YOU
WANT WITH SIMPLE SHAPES**

1. Using basic shapes to create any object, whether it's a flower, a figure, animal or anything else isn't new. It's been used for hundreds of years. Breaking down an apparently complex object to a series of basic shapes makes it a whole lot easier to draw before you even have to think about adding paint!



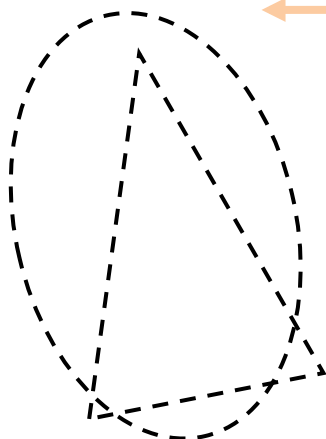
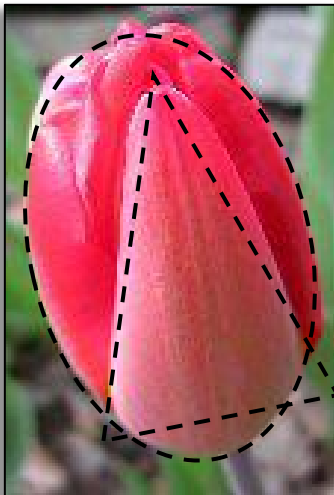
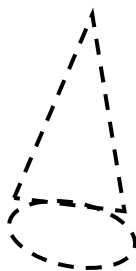
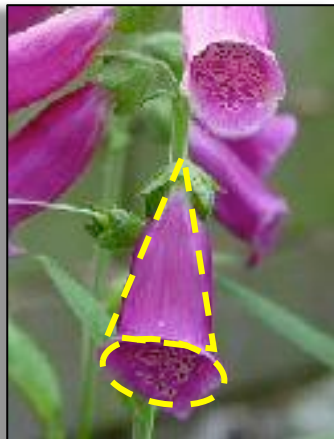
2. I just use five basic shapes – circle, square, oblong, oval and triangle, as (A) above. You can see how you can easily manipulate these shapes (B) below, by stretching or compressing them to suit your subject. And don't think you have to draw your basic shapes as neatly as I've achieved with these computer images. All that's necessary is something like my (very!) rough outlines (C) further down. You can watch a video version of this lesson in my [Drawing Foundation Video Course](#) on ArtTutor.



EXTRA TIP:

I've deliberately drawn many guidelines throughout this short-course a lot heavier than they need to be, like the ones above. This is so you can see them easier. However, I recommend you keep your own guidelines as light as possible – just enough to be able to see them. Then, when you come to erase them having drawn your finished item, they'll be much easier to erase and this is less likely to damage your paper.

3. Here, you can see how, just by using triangles and ovals stretched in different ways, you can produce the ideal shape for two completely different flowers.



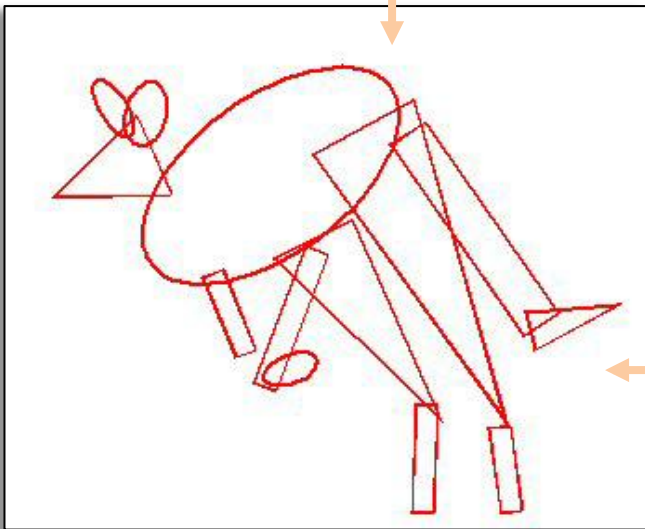
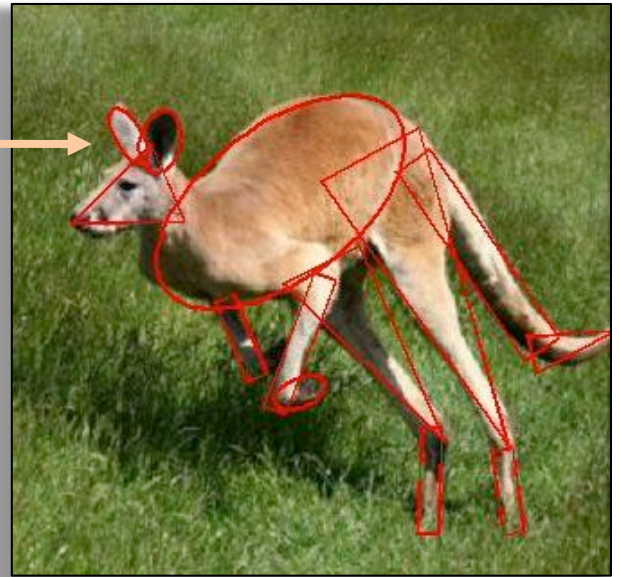
4. First you have the foxglove (left) with its long, distinctive trumpet shape and then below that, the tulip with its equally well known... erm... tulip shape!

5. These shapes I've shown as dotted lines give you the perfect basis of 'scaffolding' to go on and draw more realistic outlines (bottom of page), with all of the added the confidence that gives you, that you've 'caught' the right shapes, ready for painting.

6. And don't forget, you don't have to produce a detailed drawing - you only need an outline if you're going to add paint. In fact, as a general rule with watercolours, the less pencil marks the better, as too many can make things look cluttered and scruffy. The outlines, on the left are more than enough to give you an accurate basis for adding your paint.



7. We can move this idea on easily to produce the same outcome for what might *appear* to be more complex subjects - but really aren't if you take it one step at a time. Animals are a case in point. See how I've put shapes round the main parts of the Kangaroo in the right hand photo. Take the photo away (below) and see how the red 'scaffolding' already looks like a pretty good representation of the animal.

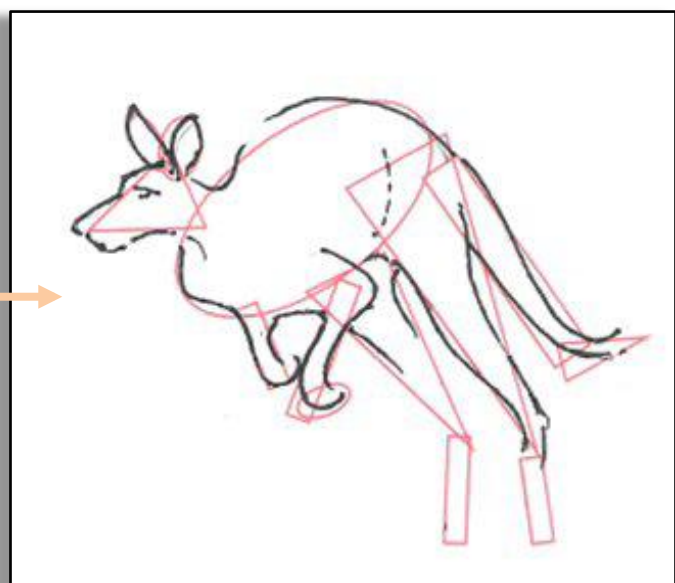


8. The beauty of this approach is that you can use whatever shapes suit you. You don't have to use the same ones I've shown - you could, for example, use various sizes of long ovals for the legs and an oblong for the face.

9. Remember, simple shapes are merely a means to get your basic outline correct - and it's much easier to erase and re-do a basic shape that's wrong, rather than rubbing out a detailed part of the body that you've laboured over for an hour, knowing all the time deep down that's it just not going right...!

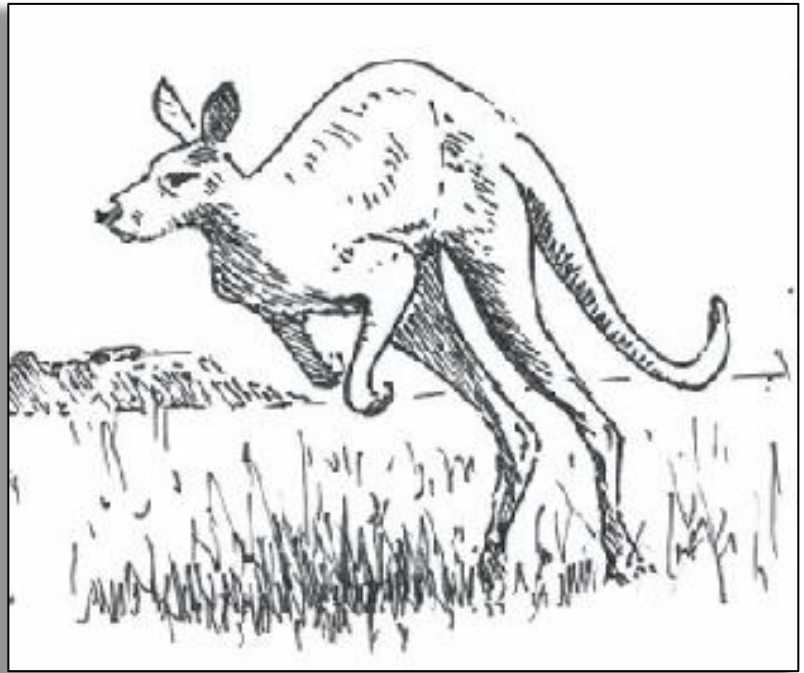
10. In this next picture (right), I've started to outline the more realistic shape of the Kangaroo. The red guidelines have been paled off so this shows more clearly. I've also inked in the shape so it shows up better. Normally I would be doing this bit in pencil.

You can see from the pale red lines that I haven't tried to follow them very closely in certain areas - around the head and the top of the Kangaroo's back, for example. So always bear in mind **these are only guidelines to help you** to place features in the right position and correctly proportioned. If you get the guidelines wrong first time, simply rub them out and re-do them!



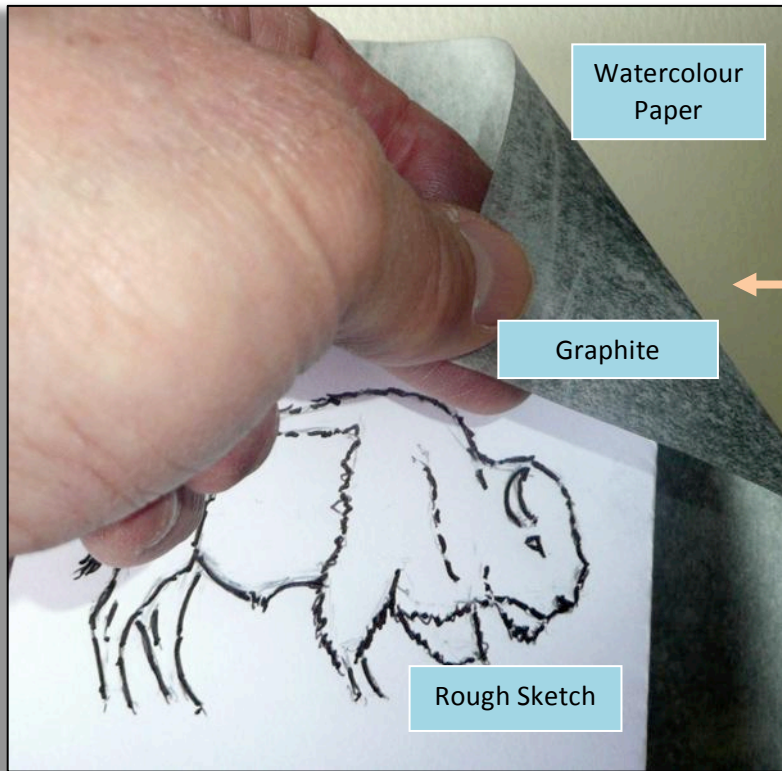
11. Now if I was just going to produce a pencil or ink drawing, the fully shaded sketch on the right is what I would produce. I could add some light washes of paint over this provided I'd used waterproof ink so it wouldn't smudge.

12. However if this was going to be part of a 'conventional' watercolour painting, I wouldn't put in this amount of detail – just a basic, lightly- sketched or traced outline on my watercolour paper.



EXTRA TIP:

Here's the demonstration sketch I produced in one of the lessons in my Watercolour Foundation Course at www.ArtTutor.com. However, don't try to draw this, complete with all the guidelines that will need erasing, directly onto your Watercolour paper. The outline was developed exactly as I've described, but on cheap copy paper and *then* I traced it onto watercolour paper to ensure I was painting over a clean image on an undamaged painting surface. See next page for how to do this.



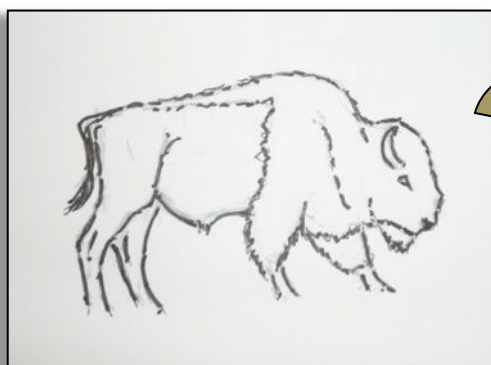
1. I've mentioned several times in this tutorial about 'tracing down' from a rough sketch to your watercolour paper.

2. There are two main ways to do this. First, as in the photo on the left, you can buy special graphite tracing paper.

3. This is used exactly as you would use carbon paper, i.e. you put it, graphite side down, between the original rough drawing and the watercolour paper.

4. Then draw lightly over the outline of your original sketch and the image is transferred onto the watercolour paper to give you a clean, tidy image to paint on without damaging the painting surface.

5. The second way is slightly messier but much cheaper. Here on the left below we have our rough sketch of a bison. Turn the sheet over and take a fairly soft pencil such as a 2B and scribble on the back of your rough sketch as in the right hand picture. There's no need to scribble all over the sketch - just the parts where you have drawn any lines. If you look carefully, you can just see the image showing through from the other side here.



Rough Drawing

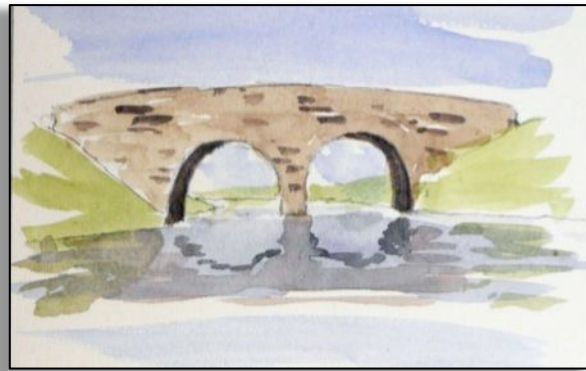
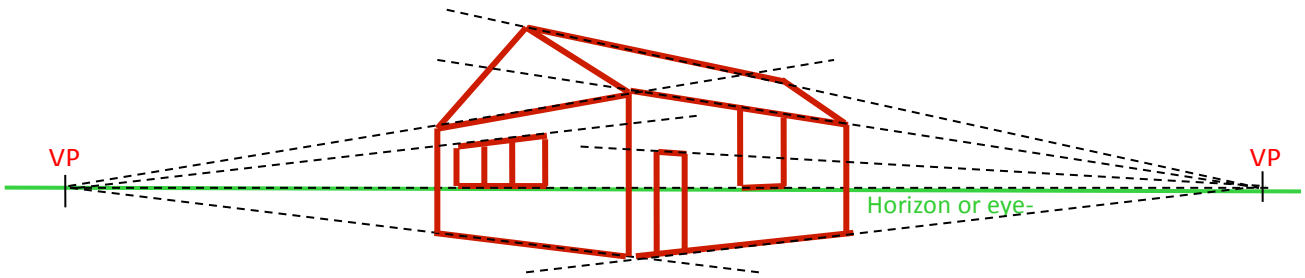


Reverse Side

6. Now place the sketch the right way round on your watercolour paper and draw over it as described when using the trace-down paper above. Either method should transfer a good enough image that will allow you to paint. Don't press too hard when tracing over your sketch as it will put grooves into your watercolour paper which may fill in with paint and cause an unwanted outline.

Watercolour Secrets

SECTION 2

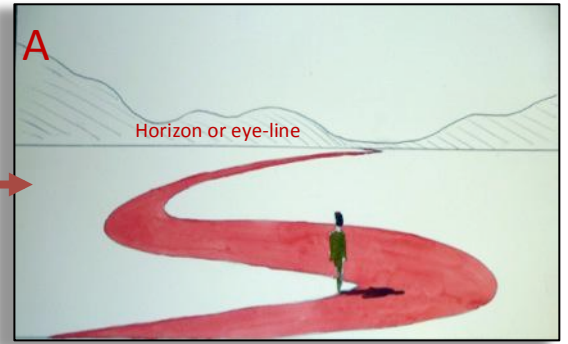


KEEPING THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE

1. Perspective is the way that you draw a picture so that you create the illusion of a foreground, middle ground and the distance. Objects appear to get smaller as they get further away but they also change shape slightly, depending on the height or angle that you're viewing them.

2. Always try to draw (or imagine) a horizon line (or eye-line) in your picture. Draw it lightly as you may want to erase it later when everything is drawn in the right place. It's called the eye-line because it is **always** the same height as the height of your eyes from ground level as if you are looking straight ahead.

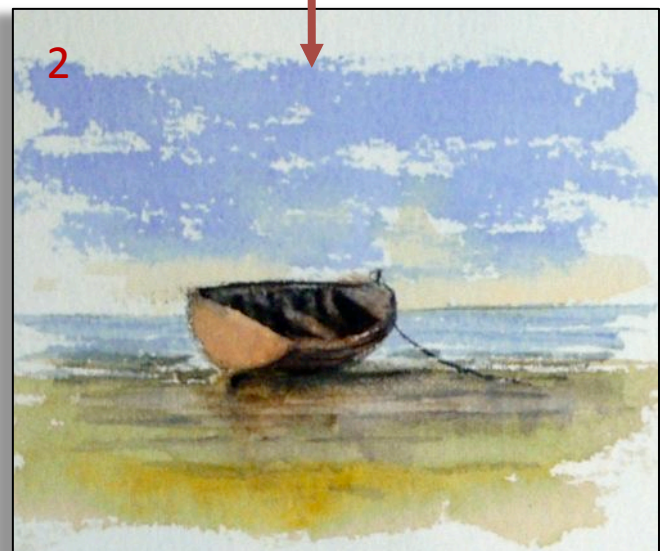
3. Look at the two pictures (right). In 'A' the horizon (eye-line) has been drawn about $\frac{2}{3}$ of the way up the picture. See how your view of the scene automatically rises up in the air to follow the eye-line - you appear to be looking down on the scene about several feet above the figure, as if from an upstairs window.



4. In 'B' by drawing my eye-line near the bottom of the sheet, my view has also dropped right down as if I'm sitting on the floor. In 'A' you see much more of the red S-shaped road than in 'B'. But notice that where the road runs directly away from you on the bends (eg: immediately to the right of the figure in 'B') you see its full width, as opposed to the foreshortened width as it veers backwards and forwards across the picture. The figure in 'B' also rises quite a bit above the horizon because he's in the foreground and you're viewing the scene from a low position.

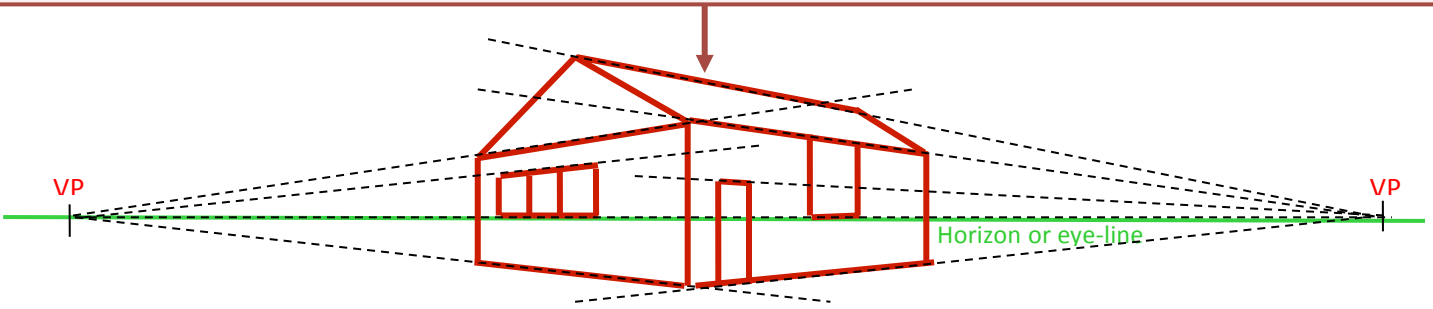


5. Now look at the pictures left and below of a more realistic beachside scene. See how the principles work exactly as described above. In Picture 1, because the horizon line is much higher, you can see more of the sea and more inside the boat than in picture 2 where your eye-line is below the half-way point of the picture. And note how the visible sea area has been compressed in picture 2 to less than half the area in picture 1, yet both pictures look in the correct perspective.



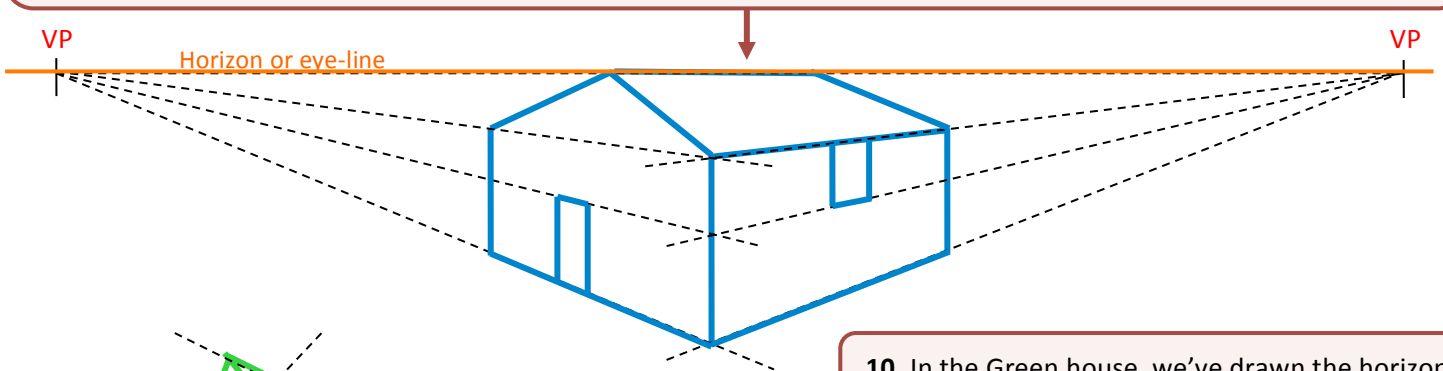
6. These diagrams explain how just by altering the horizon line (your eye-line) you can change the perspective of a building very simply indeed. I've added some dotted perspective lines on which sit the horizontal lines of the door, roof and windows. You can draw these with a ruler to use as guidelines. Draw lightly so you can erase them later.

7. The 'VP' to the left and right is a theoretical Vanishing Point where these lines appear to converge. They don't of course, but they do give you a convenient point from which to start your lines. Imagine them as spokes on a bicycle wheel radiating from the VP. You can add as many of these lines as you wish to help you get the perspective of doors, windows and roof-lines correct. If you use these guide lines in the way I've described you'll never get your perspective wrong again. By the way, notice in the Red house that I've used the green eye-line as one of the perspective lines. You don't have to, but in this case it was a convenient line on which to sit the bottom of the windows.



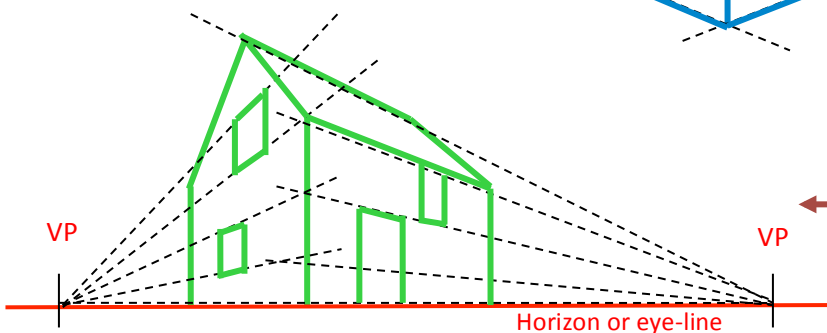
8. You'll also notice with the Red House that some of the red lines fall below the eye-line and some rise above it. In the Red House, the eye-line is about your normal standing height - in other words, about $\frac{2}{3}$ of the way up the door. As a result, you are looking down at the parts of the building below the eye-line and up at the rest of the building above it. **Therefore the simple rule is that any perspective lines drawn above the eye-line will rise up and any drawn below, will move down.** Now that we know this rule, it's easy to adjust the view we have of a building.

9. In the Blue house, to get this view of being above it –or certainly at roof level - the roof is placed along the eye-line and so all the other perspective lines have to be drawn downwards and below it. Automatically, your view rises up as if you're looking at the Blue house from an upstairs window...



10. In the Green house, we've drawn the horizon line along the bottom of the building so all the perspective lines have had to be drawn above it - some quite steeply as we get up to roof level.

11. This now gives us the opposite view to the Blue house. Here, it's as if we are lying down on the floor, looking up at the building. If you've ever come home worse the wear for drink, this may be a familiar view...



1. Now what about other features such as looking at things slightly side-on? Well, let's look at an arched bridge over a river. Once again, that eye-line is the key.

2. Look at these three outwardly similar sketches. In 'A' the view is as if you're sitting in a boat in the exact centre of the river, looking straight through the arches. Your eye line, marked with the red dotted line, is therefore very low down.

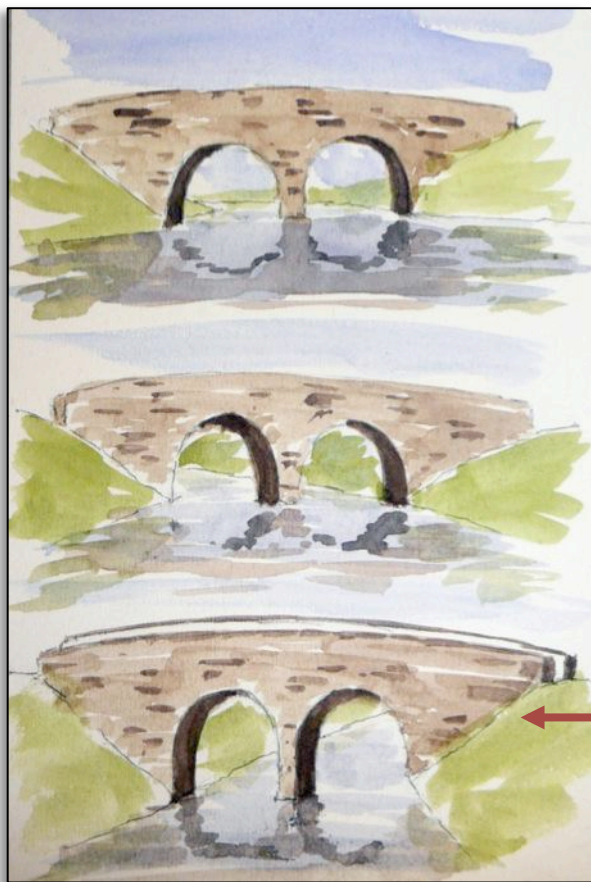


3. Notice also how the river banks, marked by the dark dotted lines, are drawn at a very shallow angle to the eye-line, which emphasises that your view is right down at water level. You also see a little of the inside of both arches - but the opposite sides of each one - because you're looking at them straight on from the centre of the river.



4. In sketch 'B' (left) see how I've set my eye-line towards the top of the arches by drawing the river banks at a steeper angle than in the first sketch. Right away, my view of the river is several feet above it.

5. I've also painted just the right hand side of the arches which now pushes my higher view away from the middle of the river and to the left of the bridge.



6. In sketch 'C' above, I've drawn the river banks even steeper and this time, added the inner arches on the left side. My view therefore goes off to the right and is high enough now to include the far wall of the bridge. Note also with all three sketches we can see all of the underside of the arches in the reflections in the water because we're viewing the reflections from a different angle than the bridge itself. We'll look at that in a little more detail later on.

7. Finally, on the left I've put all the sketches together so you can see how easy it is, just by altering the angle of a few lines here and there, to change your viewpoint up, down and sideways at will.

Watercolour Secrets

SECTION 3



COLOUR MIXING WITHOUT TEARS

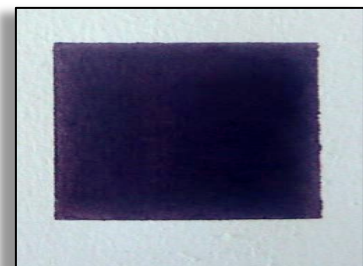
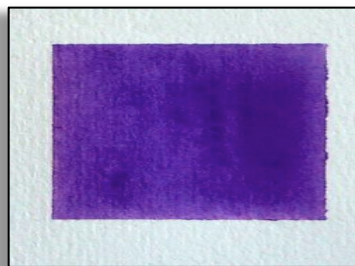
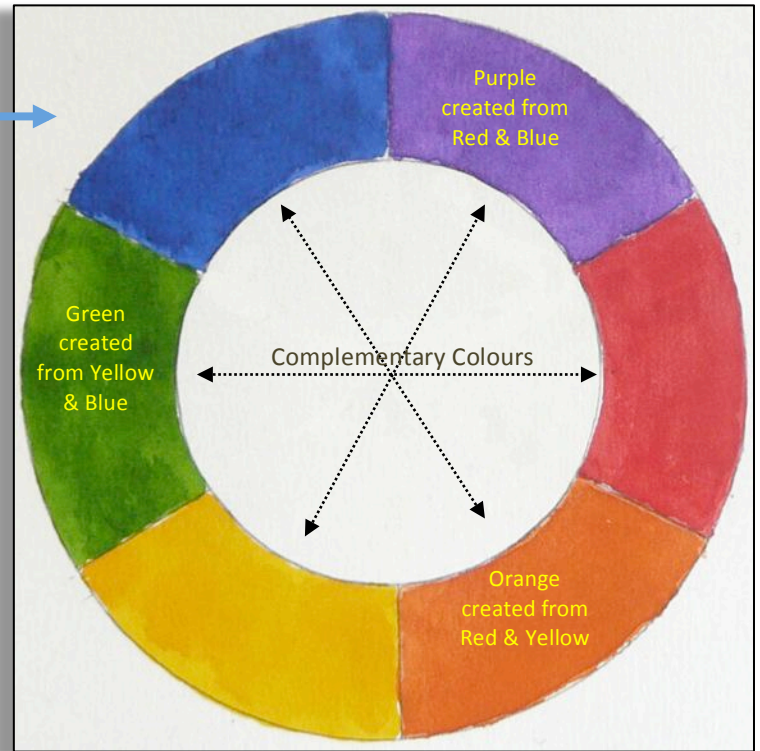
1. Let's get the most basic (and for many, the most boring) part of colour mixing theory out of the way. Hundreds of books and thousands of articles have been written about colour theory, but I'm going to deal with the absolute basics on this one A4 page – and much of that will be taken up by the photos!

2. There are **three primary colours** - red, blue and yellow. These are called primary colours because you can't mix any other colours to create them. You may well have heard of a colour wheel, complementary colours and colours being placed 'on opposite sides of the colour wheel' - which all sounds a bit technical, but is really very simple.

3. Have a look at the colour wheel on the right. It contains six colours - the three primaries of red, blue and yellow - and **three secondary colours**; purple, orange and green. They are called secondary colours because they are created by mixing two primary colours - red and blue for purple; red and yellow for orange; blue and yellow for green.

4. You can see that the secondary colours have been placed on the wheel between the two primaries that created them. On the opposite side of the colour wheel to each secondary colour is a primary colour – its **complementary colour**. So red is opposite to and the complementary colour of green, blue the complementary of orange and yellow the complementary of purple.

I explain colour mixing and colour theory fully in my [Watercolour Foundation Course](#), which you can view at ArtTutor.com



5. One of the benefits of placing a primary colour and its complementary colour next to each other is that they both make each other look much more vibrant. However, if you mix them together, you create a dull grey or brown. This happens because by mixing them together, effectively you're then mixing the three primaries of red, blue and yellow. However, we'll see later on how you can exploit this situation by mixing a wide range of your own greys and blacks.

6. Remember that for centuries, artists have placed complementary colours next to each other in their paintings to create a subtle vibrancy and brilliance. And when they want to tone down a colour, they've done so with a touch of its complementary colour, which gives much more harmonious and satisfying shade, rather than adding black, which can all too easily kill a colour (and a picture) stone dead. Have a look above at the complementary colours of yellow and purple. Placed next to each other, they're vibrant and bright. Mixed together, as on the right they're anything but...

1. One of the most frustrating problems the aspiring watercolourist faces is how to control the way watercolour paint spreads – at times in a most frustrating and unpredictable way.

2. Don't worry, it's not nearly as difficult as you think and in fact, Watercolour paints are the province of many happy accidents – where the paint produces a wonderful effect that you never envisaged, but which you happily take the credit for - especially when it's later admired by others...!

3. Probably the two biggest reasons for success - or failure - in Watercolour painting are **paint strength** and **timing**. By paint strength we simply mean how much or how little water is in the paint mix. By timing, it's down to when you add a layer of paint to damp paper or one that already has a moist coat of paint on it.

4. Look at these two patches of paint on the right. The paper was on a drawing board on a slight slope so the paint naturally ran from top to bottom...



5. Both the pictures have a base colour of medium strength Raw Sienna. In each case the paper was placed on a sloping drawing board so the paint would run down from top to bottom.

6. In the top picture, while the Raw Sienna was still very wet, I put on a strong mix of Ultramarine and Light Red. See how this strong mix has run uncontrollably, has been diluted by the wet Raw Sienna and in fact has almost disappeared, creating an elephant's head shape as it's run down the page (happy accident ?!!)

7. However, the left hand picture was left for the Raw Sienna to dry for about 90 seconds to just damp before the Blue/Red mix was added. It's still spread slightly, but I've been able to control this far more readily and the paint has stayed much nearer its original intensity.



8. Now, moving on to colour-mixing, the next 'Watercolour Secret' is to understand the importance of the **strength** of colour you use. In the top picture I've made three mixes of Light Red. The left-hand well has 3 brush-loads of water and one of paint; the centre well, three of water and two of paint and the far one, three of each.



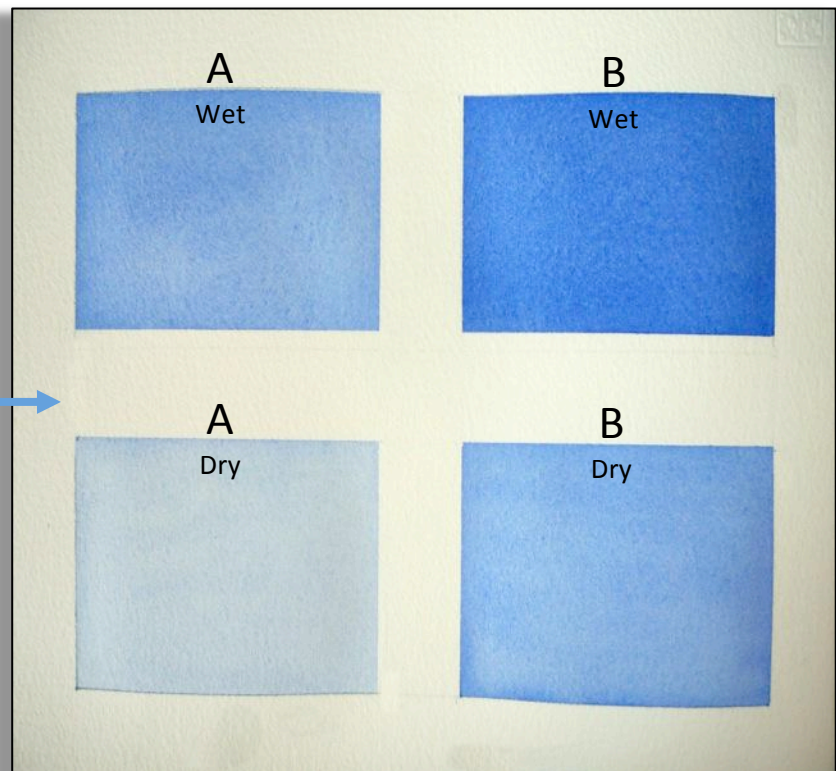
9. The lower picture shows what these colours look like once they have dried on your paper. See how much lighter they've gone than the liquid versions in the palette. In fact I'd regard even the strongest on the right to be only a mid-tone - so you can see just how bold you can afford to be with the strength of paint you mix!

1. Now watercolours dry around 50% lighter than when they're put on wet. But what does this 50% look like? Well, here's a good example where you often end up with a sky that's too watery and insipid. In the picture I've painted four panels. In 'A Wet' this is the strength of paint that most newcomers put on their sky. Because it's quite strong and a medium blue when it's wet, it looks right.

2. However, in the lower panel this is how it dries, pale and washed out - with little chance of lifting out clouds that will actually show up!

3. In 'B Wet' this is what your paint *should* look like when it first goes on the paper. It may look too strong when you put it on, but see how much it lightens in the panel below it.

4. And note how in 'B Dry' the colour is as dark as the original wet wash that was put down in the top left panel...



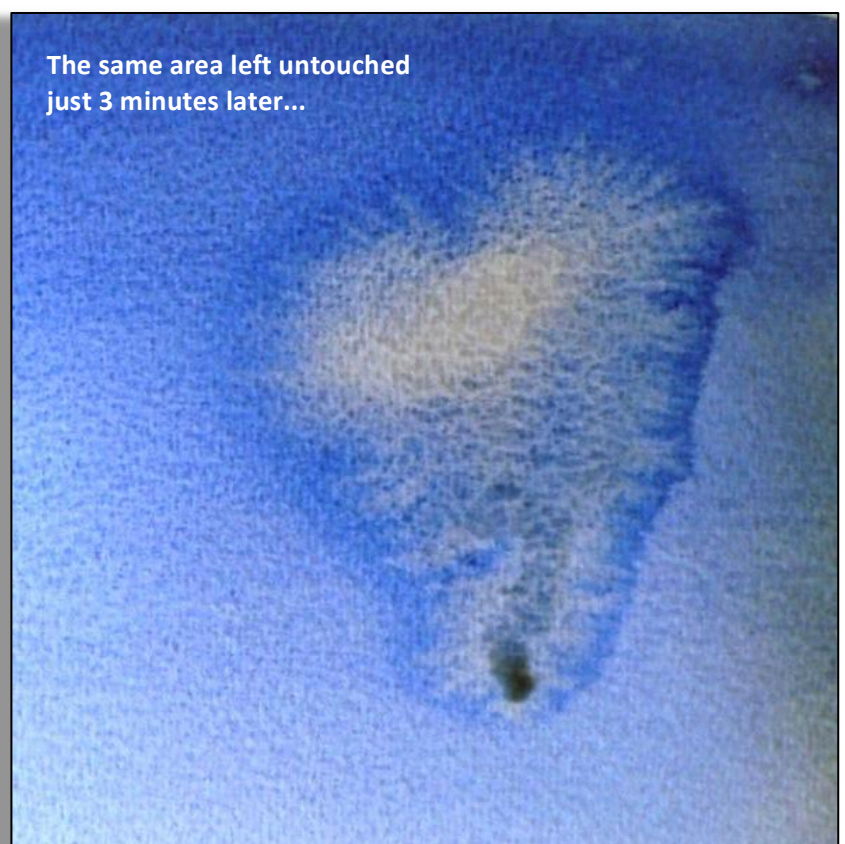
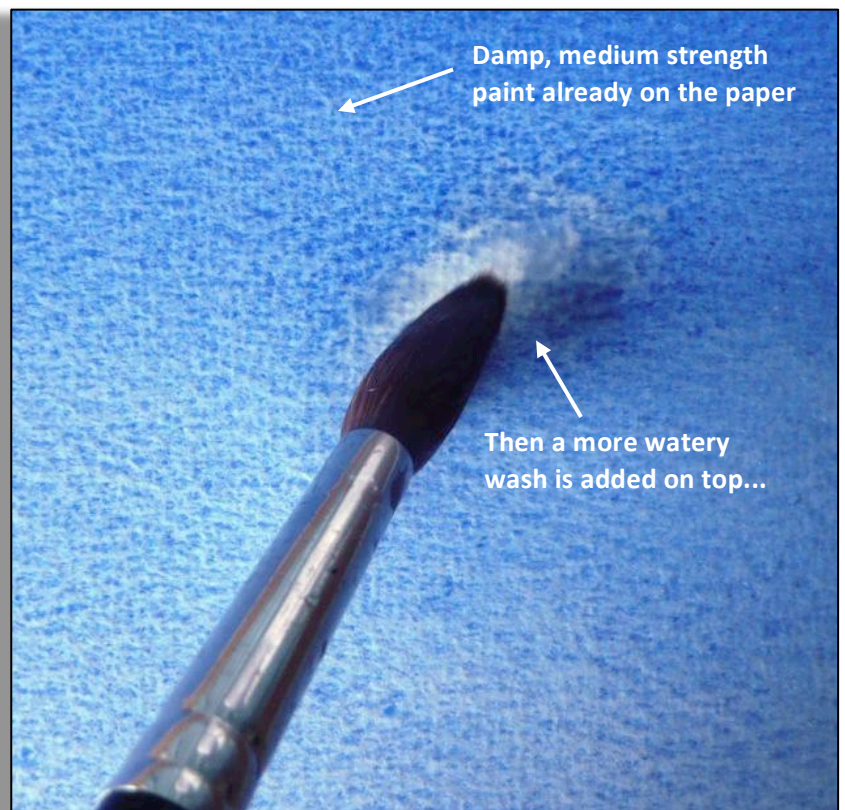
5. Now, the next big step is learning to put one colour on top of another that's still damp, without causing those awful run-backs and cauliflowers that are the curse of the newcomer (and not-so-newcomer!) to watercolours.

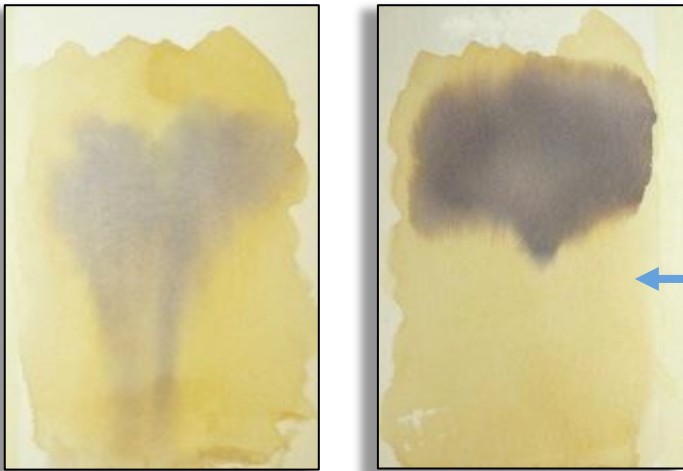
6. Let's have a look first at how to create a cauliflower. This will really help because once you understand *how and why* it happens, it's easy to avoid in the future. We'll look again at a sky because that's where it most often happens in a picture – and usually in the most prominent place!

7. Without getting too technical, the problem arises when you try to put a watery wash on top of a still damp layer. The water in this second wash lifts the pigment already on the paper and pushes it to one side. When the watery wash finally settles into the paper, so does the displaced pigment, giving you the classic tide mark and cauliflower outline in your sky.

8. You can see in the top picture how, instead of adding a thin wash, the brush looks like it's starting to lift paint off. What's happening is that the water on the brush is being sucked onto the damp paper by capillary action and this water is starting to push the pigment already there to one side.

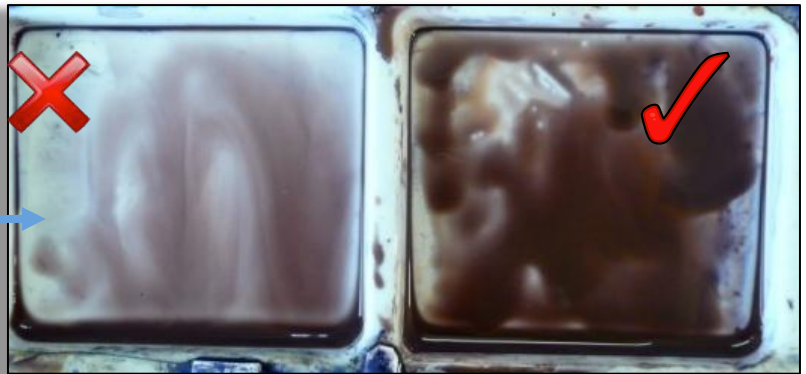
9. In the lower photo I've left the picture untouched for only about three minutes and you can see how much damage has been done as the watery wash has spread out before it's started to dry. Never mind, let's look at the easy solution in the following pages.





1. Look again at the examples I showed in Stage 1 of this tutorial. Even though the paint has run in the far image because I put it on when the Raw Sienna layer was too wet, it hasn't gone into a cauliflower **because I used a strong mix** of the darker colour, i.e. stronger than the Raw Sienna that was already on the paper... There was enough pigment in that second mix to stop the water running amok and creating a run-back.

2. On the right, you can see how strong the paint actually had to be. In the close-up of the palette you can see the dark, wet paint that was used from the right-hand well, as opposed to the same mix but with too much water in the other one. Underneath that picture is what the colours look like, when they've dried out on dry paper.



3. So, the solution is very straight-forward. To avoid cauliflowers in the future, you need to **make sure that any layer of paint you add is stronger than the one that's already on the paper and still wet** - in other words, it has more pigment in it than the preceding layer.



4. And of course, don't forget timing. Look at these two pictures of a Raw Sienna wash, taken about 90 seconds apart. The top one has picked up a shiny reflection from the camera flash whereas the lower one has a much more muted highlight - usually, the ideal point to add your next layer of paint.

Don't forget, I cover all these tips in more detail and in video format in my [Watercolour Foundation Course](#) on ArtTutor.





5. Adopting this idea in a practical sense, and using the strong mix from the palette pictured on the previous page, see how we can confidently place some warm grey clouds over the damp Raw Sienna wash to create the basis of a lovely evening sky!

6. But look also how that dark wash has already diluted with the water in the paper! However, it's only spread a little and it's much easier to control where you want it to go because we've let the base colour go to that damp sheen...

7. In the close-up right, I've now touched in some almost neat Ultramarine Blue to give some strength and variation in the cloud colour. You only need to touch the paper here and there with the paint – it will run off the brush onto the paper. Then let it spread its own way. And see how the left side of the cloud has also started to dry, creating a nice mixture of hard and soft-edged effects – another happy accident!



8. To finish off this little exercise, I put in a few jagged streaks for more distant clouds. By the time these were added, the underlying Raw Sienna wash was almost dry. You can tell this from the relatively hard edges of these smaller clouds. However, *now* I was able to use paler, more watery paint to create these clouds without problems as it can't push dried paint around as easily as wet paint...



9. So get your colour strength right, watch your timing and when you tackle the main Skies tutorial, you'll be able to confidently produce those cloud shadows without fear of the dreaded cauliflower!

Watercolour Secrets

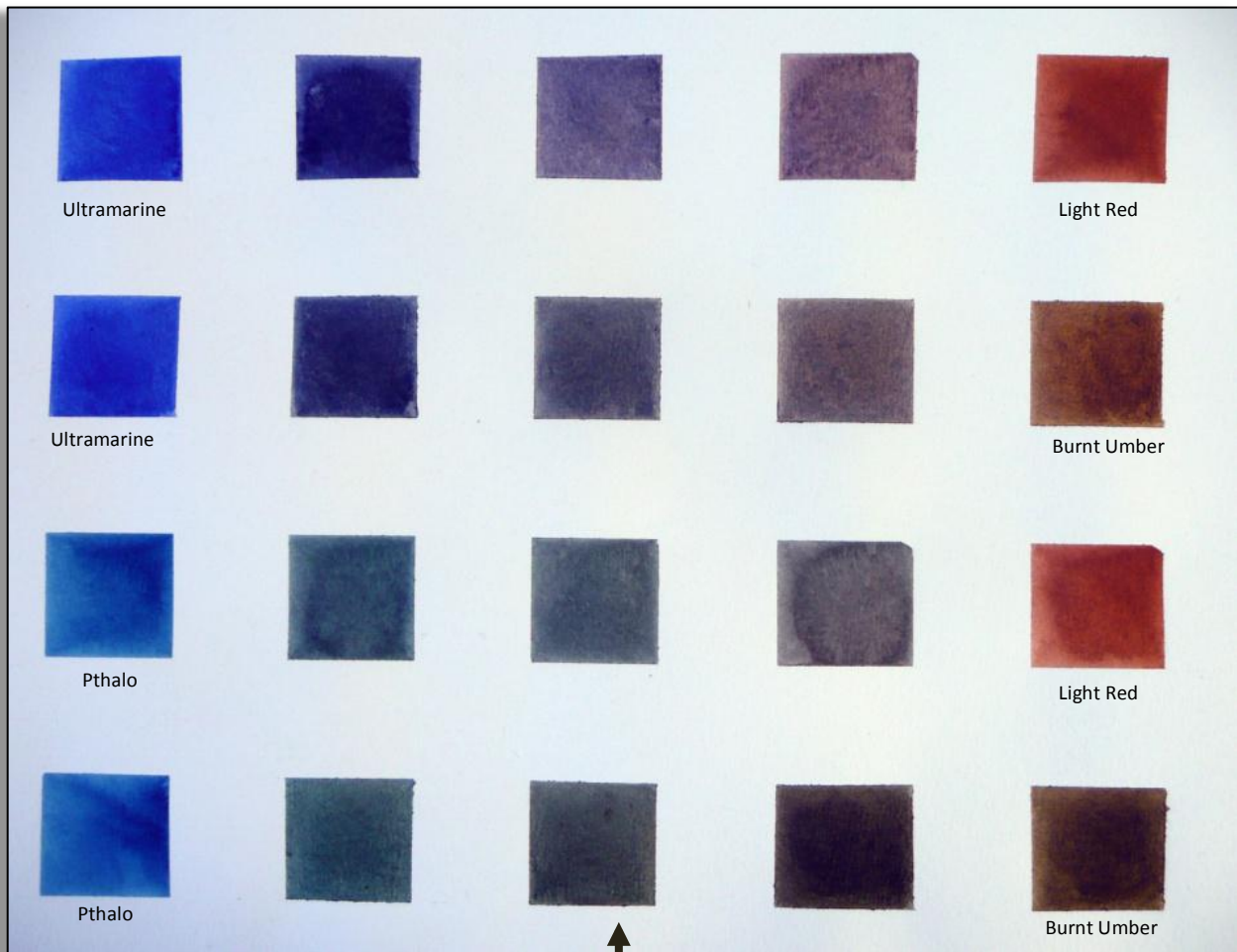
SECTION 4



MIXING GREYS & GREENS

1. Although we often think of landscapes as full of various greens, it's also important that you have available a wide range of greys which you need for rocks, stones, roads, tree trunks, skies and a host of other features. You can purchase various greens and greys in tubes and pans, but this more or less limits you to the colours you buy. You can however save yourself a lot of money and mix a vast range of greens and greys from your other colours. Here's how.

2. Let's look at greys first. One of the ironies of watercolour painting is the newcomer's ability to create a whole variety of grey 'mud' colours they don't want - colours that have been over-mixed or put on at the wrong time which makes your picture look like you've dropped it in the nearest sludge tank. Yet in the right context, these grey colours are exactly what you need for all sorts of situations - rocks, walls, distant mountains and trees - even mud!



3. Look at this simple colour chart using just two blues and two reds/browns. They've been mixed with each other in different proportions to create a range of greys that will cover many situations. I've started with one brushful of blue on the left then added one, then two, then three brushfuls of red/brown, finishing with the neat red/brown on the right. You can easily see how you could vary these mixes much more by adjusting the proportions and/or by making them stronger or more watery. Literally dozens of greys will then emerge.

4. If you go on to use different blues, browns and reds - Cerulean Blue, Cobalt Blue, Raw Umber, Sepia and Cadmium Red for example - then the options are almost limitless. Remember, blue and red don't necessarily make purple. If the red naturally has some yellow in it, such as Cadmium Red, then mixed with say, Pthalo Blue, you will get a definite grey. However, you're then on the way to understanding **how and why** greys are created, which means it's much easier to **avoid** producing them as unwanted mud in your next picture!

5. You can also mix a whole variety of subtle blacks using the same method. Black is, after all, nothing more than a very strong grey! Just make sure you use very strong paint and relatively little water to get the depth of colour you want.

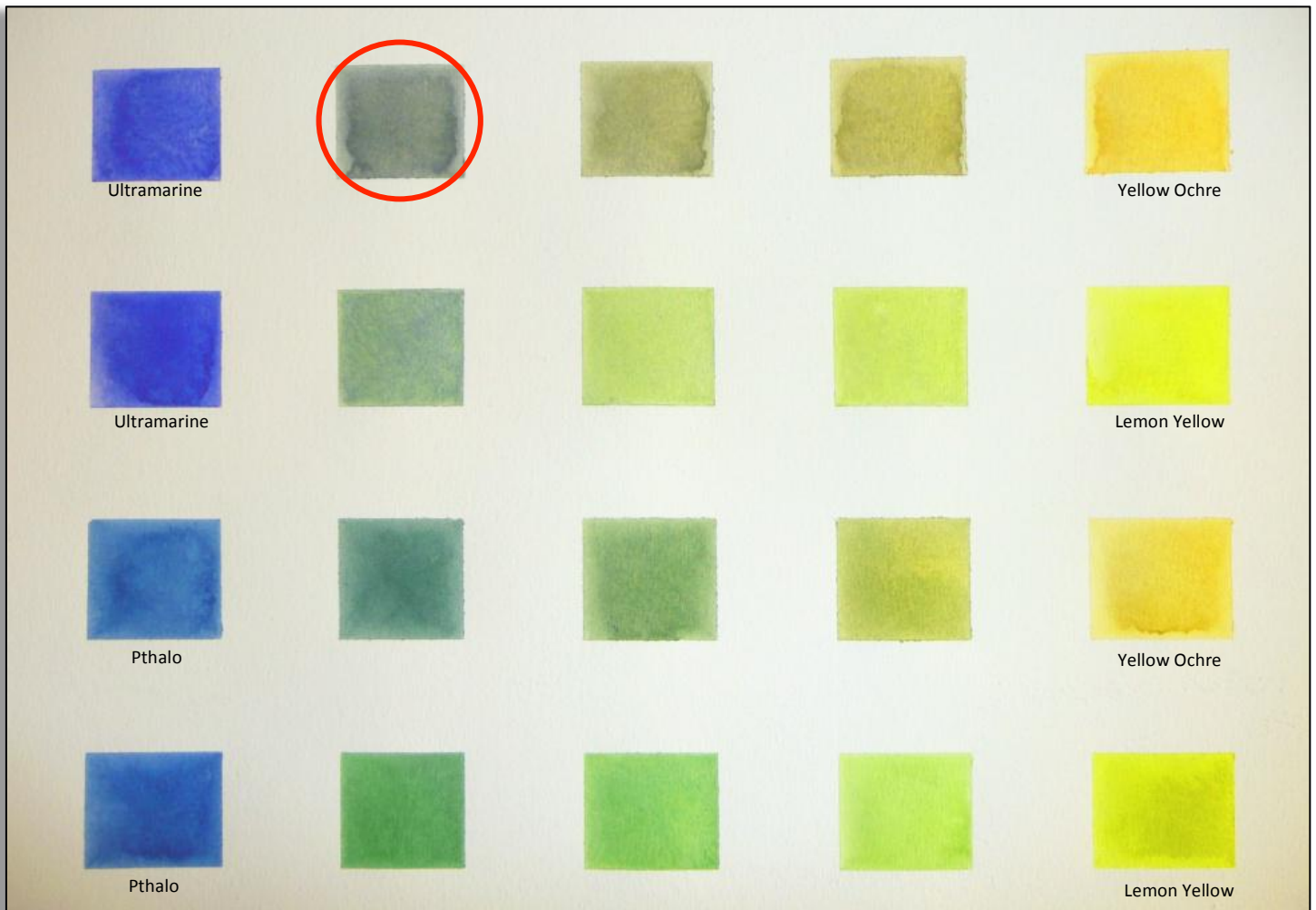
6. In the left hand picture below I've mixed three primary colours - red blue and yellow - with very little water added and you can see that they create an excellent black (more money saved)! These happen to be Ultramarine, Yellow Ochre and Permanent Rose, but you can achieve similar results with virtually any three primaries. Add water and a useful tonal range of that grey appears as in the right hand picture.



7. On the right here, by adjusting the proportion of each of these primaries in turn, you can very easily create a grey/black that's biased towards blue, red or yellow – far more useful and vibrant than most black paint straight out of the tube.



1. Now let's look at greens. With just the two blues and two yellows, a whole range of greens to suit all seasons is available. In the chart below is just a small selection.
2. As with the greys, I've started out on the left with a blue and then added additional brushfuls of yellow until I'm left with the pure yellow on the right.
3. By producing this sort of simple chart and noting how much of each colour you've used, you can always reproduce the same colour on demand.



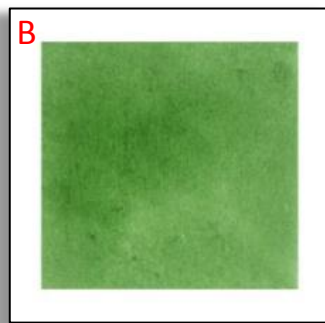
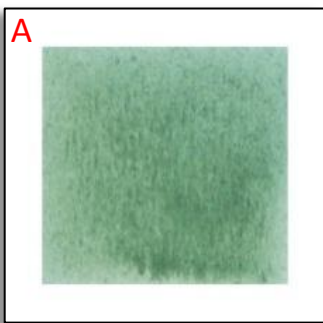
4. And once again, notice how some combinations of blue and yellow produce a grey rather than green. The mix circled on the top line is a case in point. This happens because Ultramarine Blue has a touch of red in its make up, so adding a little Yellow Ochre to it effectively mixes those three primary colours together. And we saw what happens when you mix three primaries on the previous sheet...



5. Now a quick word about Viridian Green, which appears in many starter paint sets. Viridian is a vibrant pre-mixed, blue - green that a lot of people have problems with because it can be so overpowering. There's nothing wrong with it and it's great if you use it for certain types of sea colour or as a mixer with other colours. Personally, I don't recommend it for beginners though because you can mix so many alternative greens the way I've previously described.

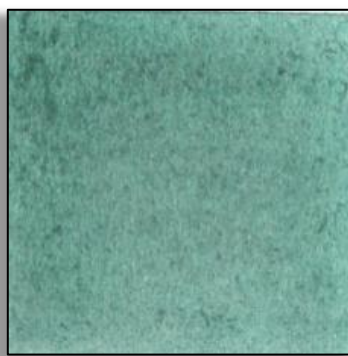
6. If you do use it, try adding another colour to tone it down. In the picture A on the left I've added a little Raw Sienna. Because that has a touch of red in it (the complementary colour of green) it naturally reduces some of the intensity of the pure Viridian colour.

7. If you prefer to use a pre-mixed green as a base for your foliage, try Sap Green (picture B) or Hookers Green. These will provide a good solid 'tree/grass' colour without overpowering the rest of your painting.

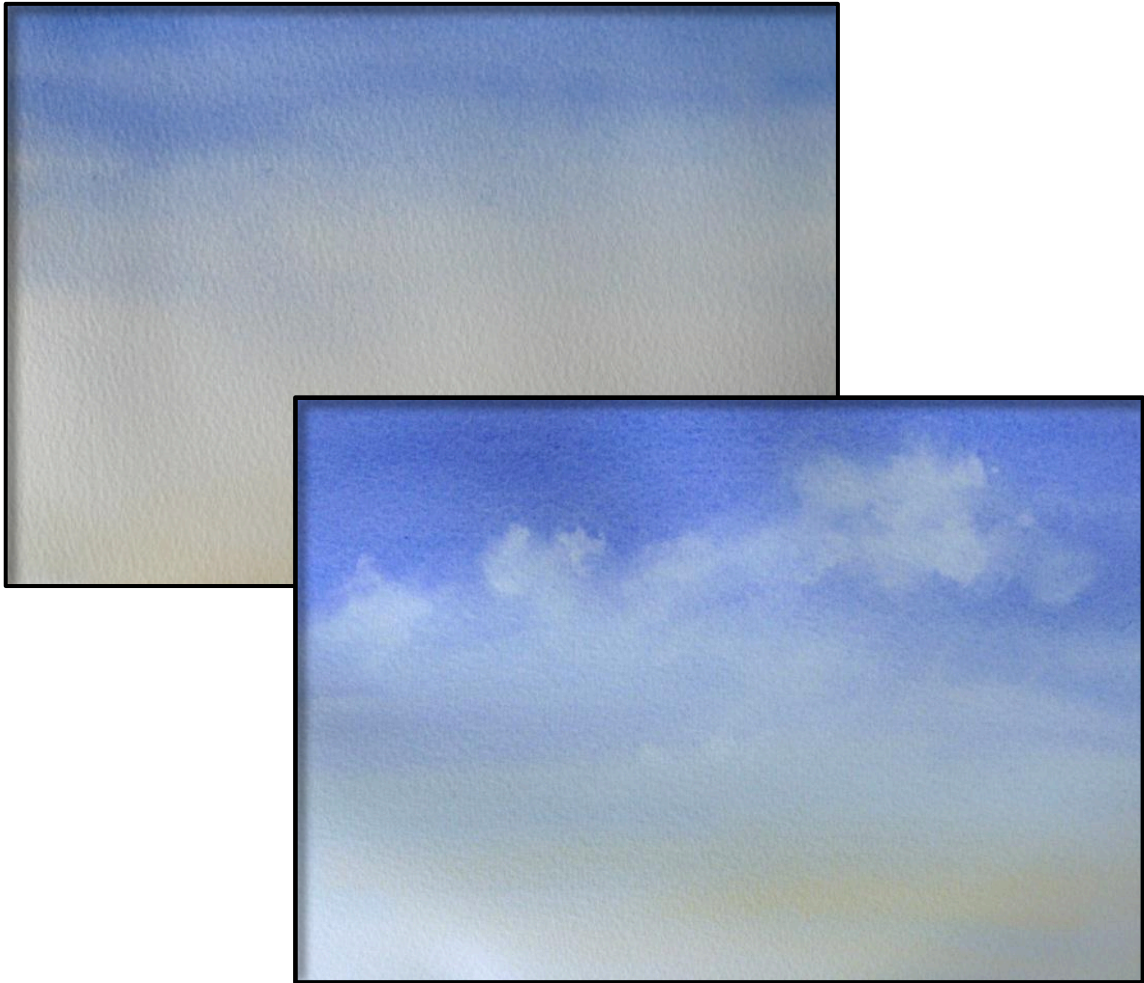


8. Finally, remember, if you want to tone down a colour because it's too bright - in this case Viridian - **don't** use black! Instead, use its complementary colour (for green it's red). Here you can see on the left, a block of un-retouched Viridian. In the centre block I've added a small amount of Cadmium Red and in the right hand block, some more red. If you add enough of the complementary colour you also achieve another range of greys.

9. Using complementary colours like this will generate much more harmony in your paintings and it's a subject we look at in some detail in my [Watercolour Foundation Course](#) on ArtTutor. Once you get used to the concept, you'll wonder how any previous painting succeeded, yet it's so easy to understand once you're aware of it.



Watercolour Secrets
SECTION 5



**PAINTING A SIMPLE,
CLOUDY SKY**

You need:-

- Round Brush No.10
- Ultramarine Blue
- Yellow Ochre (or Raw Sienna)
- Permanent Rose
- Bockingford 140lb (300gsm) Paper
- Kitchen towel
- Drawing Board



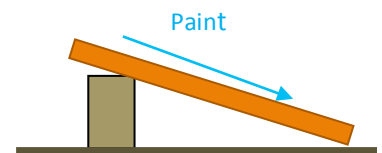
1. Tape your paper to the board and rest the top of the board so it's on a slope. A book or short length of wood about 2" thick (50mm) placed under the board at the top is ideal, as in the diagram below. This makes the water and paint run slowly down the paper, helping you to achieve an even wash for your sky.

2. With your No.10 brush, quickly wet the whole of the paper. It needs to be fairly damp, but not flooded.

3. Any excess water that runs to the bottom of the paper can be lifted off with a clean brush or kitchen towel. You can see from where the flash has reflected that this paper is too wet at present to add any new layers of paint. Leave it for another 60-90 seconds.

EXTRA TIP:

Yellow Ochre and Raw Sienna are very similar. Yellow Ochre is a bit more opaque, while Raw Sienna has just a touch more red in it. Either one is fine to use.



4. With your No.10 brush put some pale streaks of Yellow Ochre (or Raw Sienna) across the bottom of the sky. In a full painting you would have a landscape at the bottom of the page. In that case the yellow ochre streaks would go just above the horizon line.

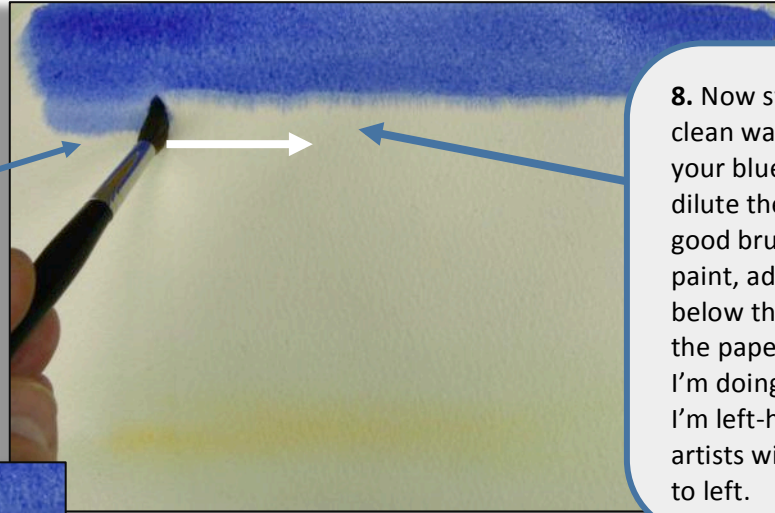
5. These streaks will dry out very pale eventually but give warmth to the sky, especially just above the horizon.



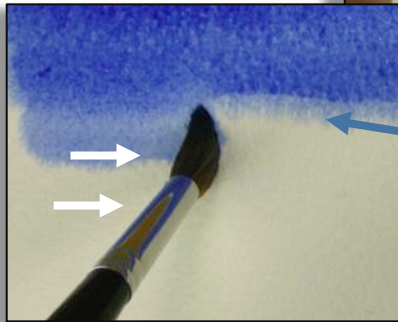
6. The finished sky should take no more than four or five minutes or it will start to dry out while you're in the middle of it and cause you problems.

So let's move quickly onto Stage 2 before your paper *does* dry out!

7. Paint a strong mix of Ultramarine Blue in a horizontal streak right across the top of the damp paper. Do this stronger than you think as it will dry back much lighter – even more so as the paper is already wet.



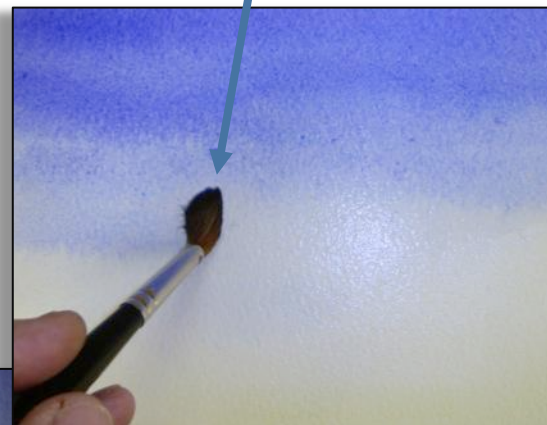
8. Now swill your brush in clean water and put it into your blue paint mix. This will dilute the mix and with a good brush-load of this lighter paint, add a second streak below the first – right across the paper again. I'm doing this left to right as I'm left-handed. Right-handed artists will probably go right to left.



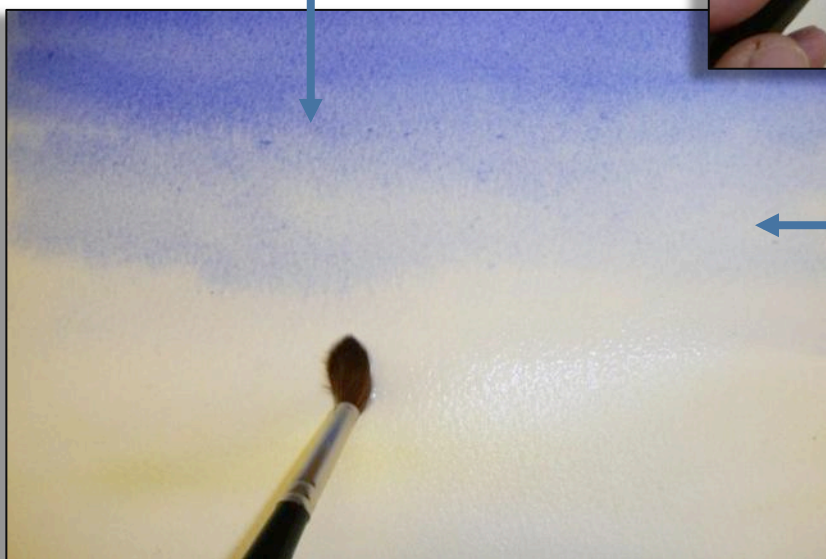
9. Let the brush touch the base of the streak above as you do this and see how it drags the paint from the streak above evenly down the paper...

...and keep repeating this until you're about 2/3 of the way down the paper...

10. You should see the sky lightening steadily as you progress down the page. By the time you're near the Yellow Ochre streaks there should be very little blue paint on your brush – look at this bottom photo to see what I mean. See how the blue at the top has already lightened considerably after a minute or two. Also, notice the silky sheen on the damp paper – not a high gloss which would mean it was still too wet...

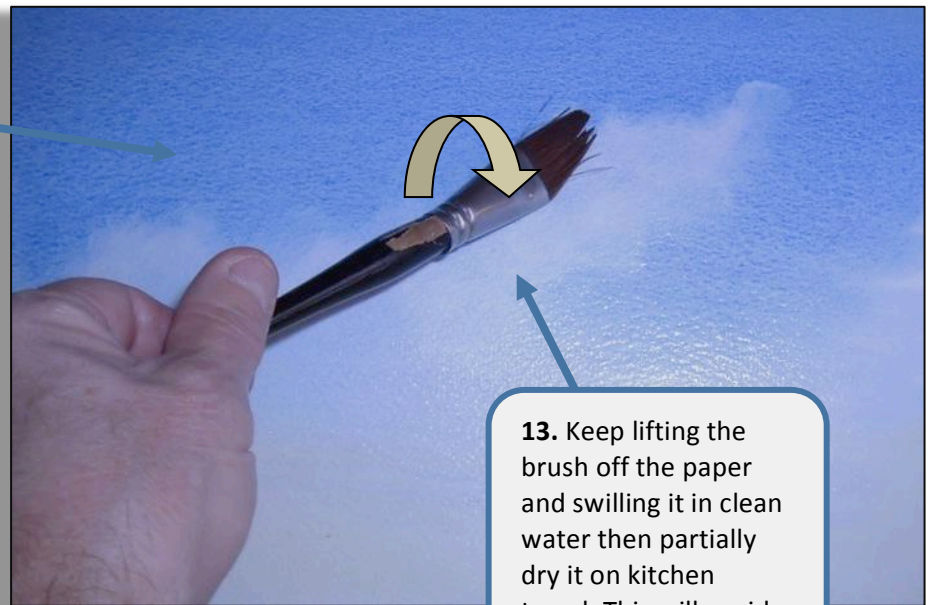


11. You can leave the sky as it is at this point and it will provide a perfect, **cloudless** summer sky if you want it to. However, we're going to take it on a couple of stages further to add some very simple clouds and cloud shadows. So let's move on to the next stage...



12. Now here's the fun bit. Use a *clean, damp* brush, **rolling** it randomly across the top of the sky. Or you can use kitchen towel. Try to have some idea of where you want your clouds, but don't go mad and overdo it!

I've used a flat brush here but it doesn't matter as long as the brush is fairly large. A large round will be just as good. See also how having the strong blue colour to start with allows the white clouds to stand out.

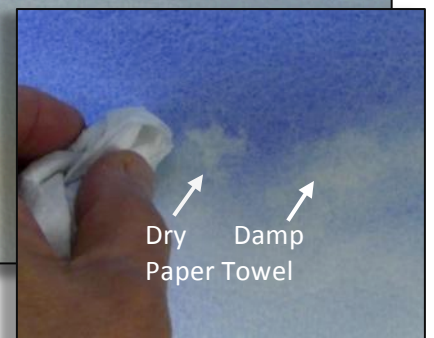


13. Keep lifting the brush off the paper and swilling it in clean water then partially dry it on kitchen towel. This will avoid you putting the blue paint you've just lifted out, back into another part of the sky.

14. Using the kitchen towel as in the bottom photo here will give you a slightly different effect. Dampened paper towel will give a soft cloud edge more like the brush, while a dry towel will give a more sharply defined edge to the cloud. Keep turning the towel to a clean area so you don't put paint back in the sky. Try all these methods to see which works best for you.



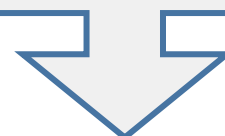
15. Note how I've kept the clouds simple, varied in size and linked together. Do avoid putting several identical, separate clouds of exactly the same shape in the sky. Nothing looks worse than these 'balls of cotton-wool' floating in mid-air.

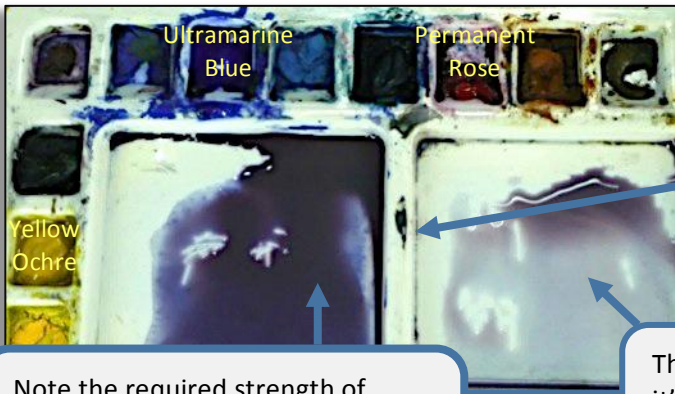


EXTRA TIP:

Always have one cloud as the dominant one with other, smaller clouds as the 'supporting cast'.

Again, you could stop at this point with these gentle, wispy clouds, but let's move on and add some cloud shadows...





16. Mix 50% Ultramarine Blue plus 50% Permanent Rose plus a little Yellow Ochre to grey things down a touch. This makes a great cloud shadow colour. Make it good and strong because the wet paper will dilute it more than you might think...

Note the required strength of paint to make your cloud shadow the right colour when it's dried...

The mix in this well is far too weak, although it's quite close to how the mix on the left should look when it's dried on the paper...

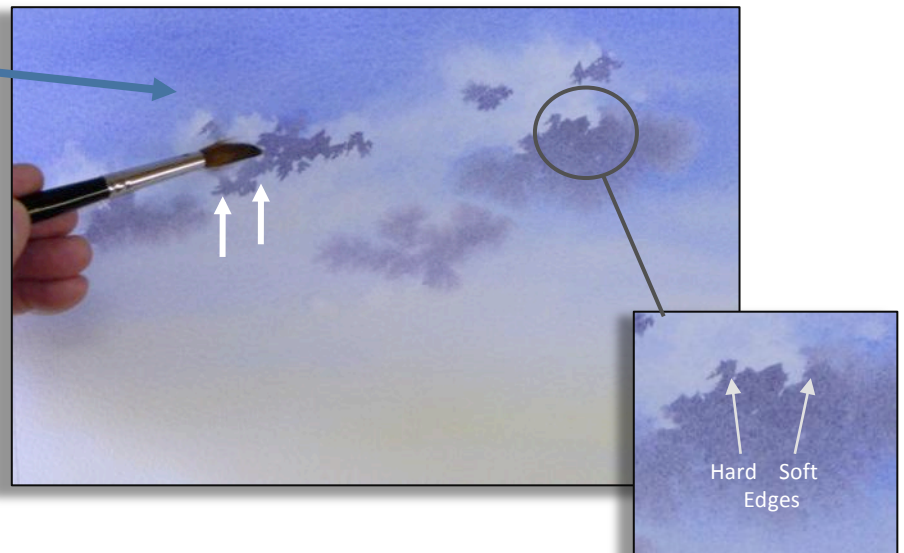
17. Where is the sun coming from? In my picture it's from the top left so I need to paint the shadows on the bottom right of the clouds.



18. By now, the paper should have dried a little so any remaining watery shine has been replaced by a dull sheen. This is the perfect time to add your shadow colour...

19. Dab in the shadow mix bottom right of your clouds. Keep the shapes random. Before these shapes dry, swill out your brush in clean water then partially dry it on kitchen towel so it's just damp.

20. Now drag the clean, damp brush *lightly* over the edges of the cloud shadow, pulling out the colour to almost nothing. This creates random hard and soft-edged effects (also known as 'lost' and 'found' edges) as the brush is dragged into damp and dry areas. Use a *light touch!* With a little practice, you will surprise yourself how easy this becomes.

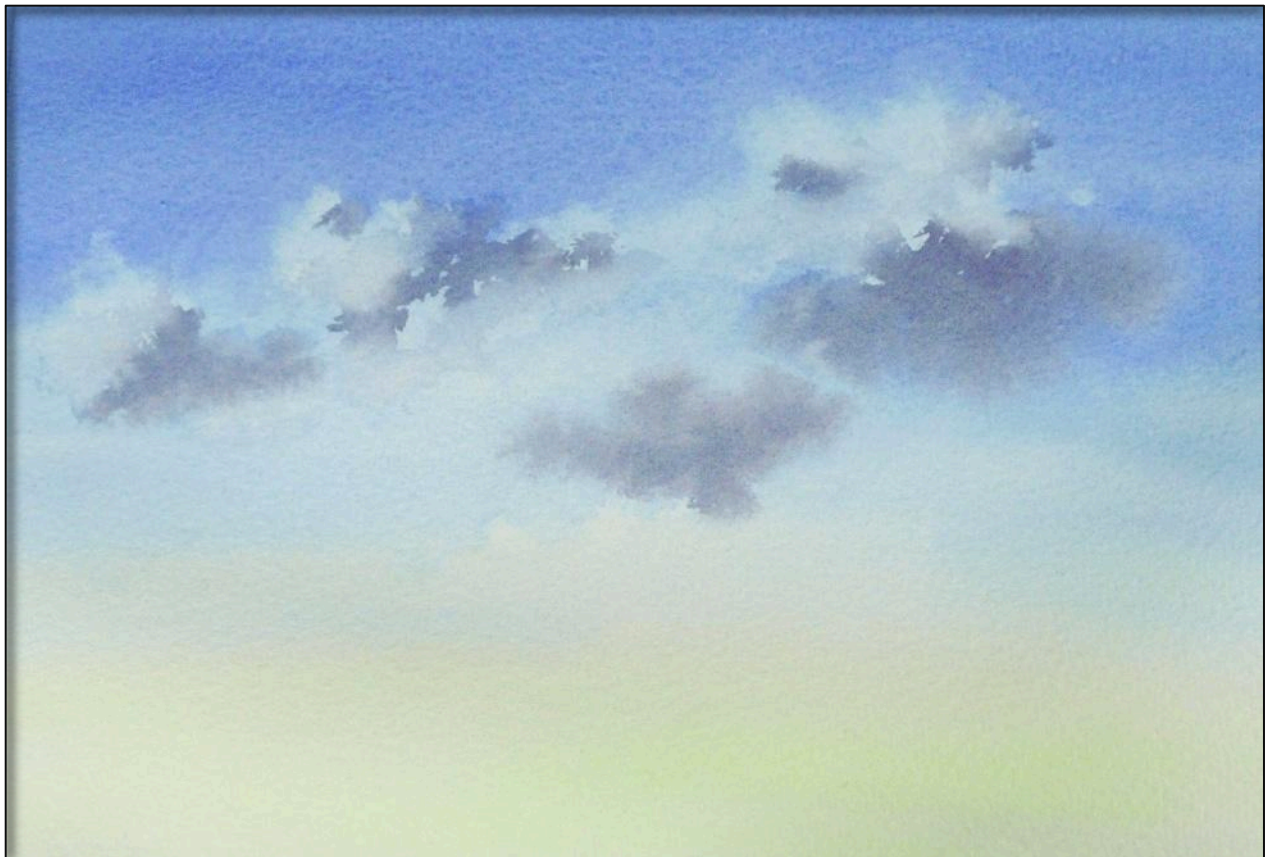


EXTRA TIP:

If the cloud shadow starts to dilute and disappear, don't panic! Let the paper dry to just damp then drop in a stronger touch of the shadow mix. 'Drop in' just means you touch the damp paper lightly and let the paint run off the brush on to it by capillary action.

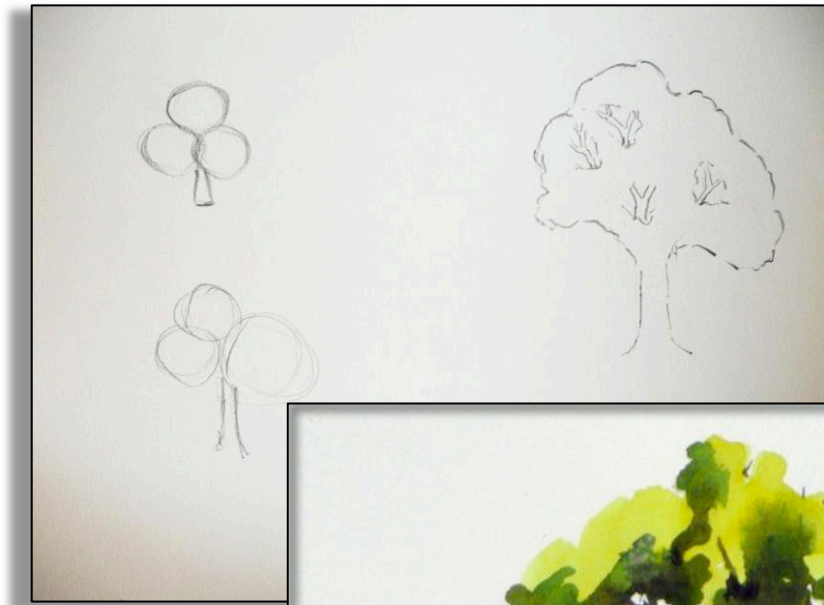
So there we have it **in a few simple steps** – three skies for the price of one! On the left below, we have a clear, cloudless sky, then on the right, a sunny one with wispy clouds. Finally, in the big picture, we've put in those lovely cloud shadows for added interest.

And if you want to see how easy it is to produce many other, different types of sky then you'll find a host of sky tutorials from various artists at www.ArtTutor.com. Believe me, with a little practice, it can take you less time to produce a successful sky than it takes to read through this tutorial. Go on - give it a go and amaze yourself!



Watercolour Secrets

SECTION 6



CREATING BELIEVABLE TREES

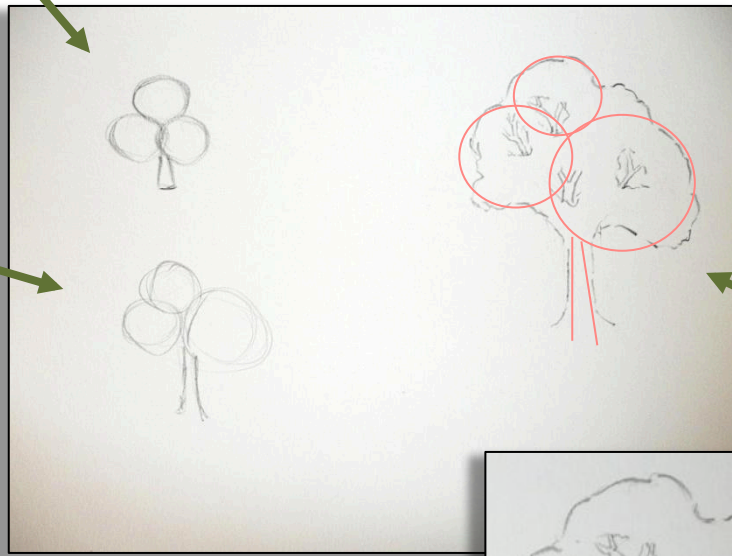
1. Before we get on to painting trees let's see how easy it is to sketch them...

We've all played cards at sometime or other, so use the shape of the Ace of Clubs as a starting point – see how just three circles and a triangle gives you the basis for your tree...



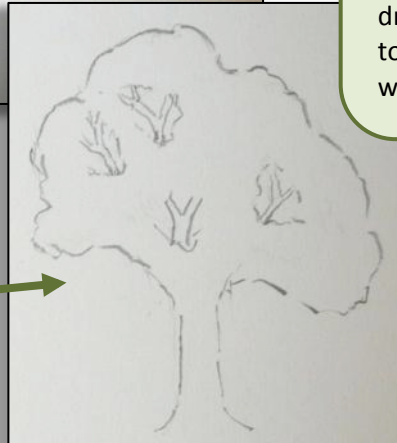
- You Need:-
- Burnt Umber
 - Lemon Yellow
 - Ultramarine Blue
 - No.8 Round Brush
 - Rigger Brush
 - Bockingford 140lb (300gsm) Paper
 - Drawing Board
 - Pencil & Eraser
- Some of the mixes we'll use with these colours are shown here.

2. Now draw the Ace of clubs again, but alter the size and shape of each of the circles, as here. And lengthen the 'trunk' slightly.

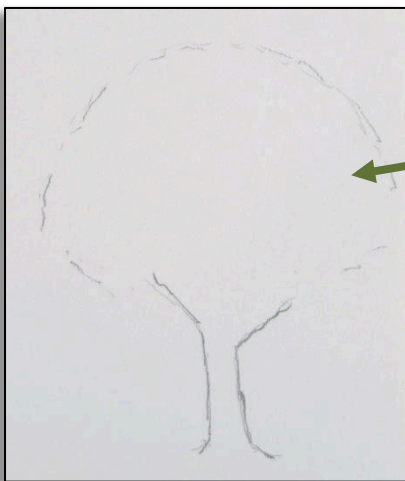


3. I've put some red circles and lines over this sketch to show how simple it is to use them as 'scaffolding' for your tree. It's very easy then to draw a rough outline to get the shape you want...

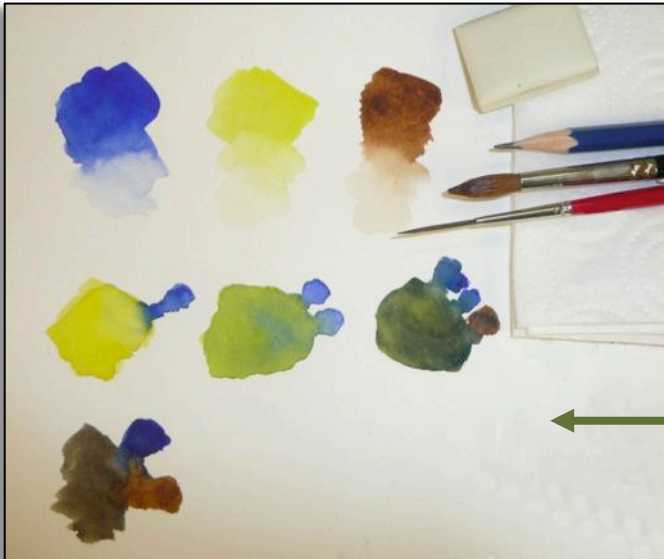
4. Here, I've taken away the circles to leave us with the outline of a believable summer tree. You can easily adjust the shape to make it taller, shorter, fatter or thinner. I've added some simple 'Y' shapes to represent the branches appearing here and there amongst the leaves.



5. To do the same for a bare winter tree is even easier. All you need is to create the trunk and a rough 'canopy' which acts as a guideline where the smaller branches and twigs will finish. When you've added paint to either of these trees, you can rub out the guidelines if you want.



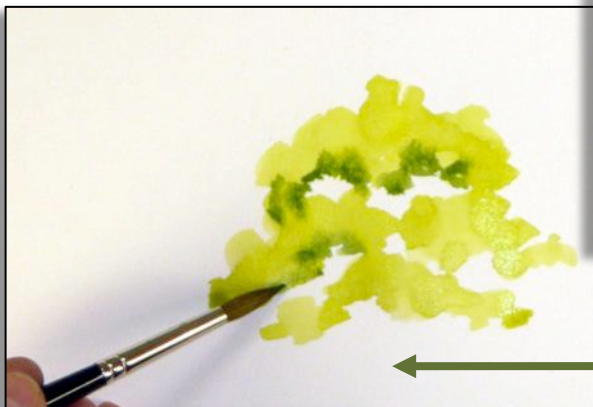
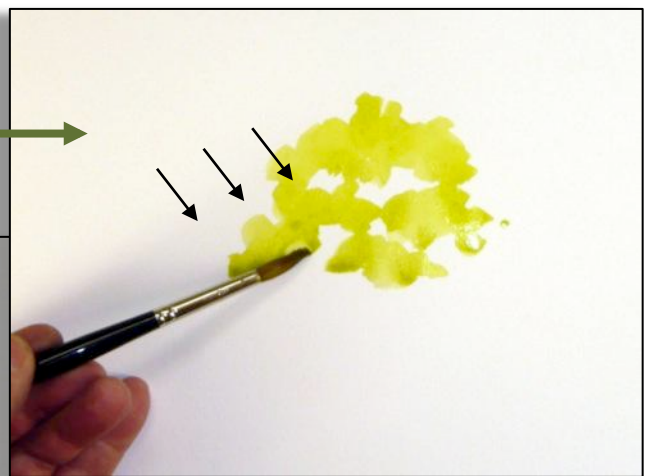
6. Now you know how easy it is to sketch some simple trees, let's move on to the next stage and add paint to bring them to life!



7. Look again at the colours we're using – they work for both the winter and summer trees. The middle row gives us the three shades of green for the summer tree - Lemon Yellow with first one spot of Blue, then two spots and finally two spots of Blue and one of Brown. Below that on the bottom line is an equal mix of Blue and Brown for the trunk and branches.

8. Make your colours about the same strength as the cloud shadow mix in the sky tutorial. Most of the tree will be painted while previous layers are still damp, so make sure you mix all your colours first – and mix more than you think you'll need!

9. With the lightest colour mix, I'm scraping the paint downwards with the side of the brush to create a slightly ragged effect. I'll paint 4 or 5 rough 'banana' shapes to represent the leaf clusters.



10. While the previous layer is still slightly damp, I'm touching in the medium green at the bottom of each leaf cluster to give some shadow. Make this green slightly stronger than the previous coat. See how it gives a nice three dimensional effect. Even at this stage, you can already visualise the tree...



11. With a slightly stronger mix, dab in the darkest colour, again while the previous layers are just a little damp. This will really enhance the 3D effect you're trying to create. Decide where the sun is coming from (in this case, top right) and touch in the dark colour on the opposite side of the tree, underneath and in the centre, which would be the darkest areas...

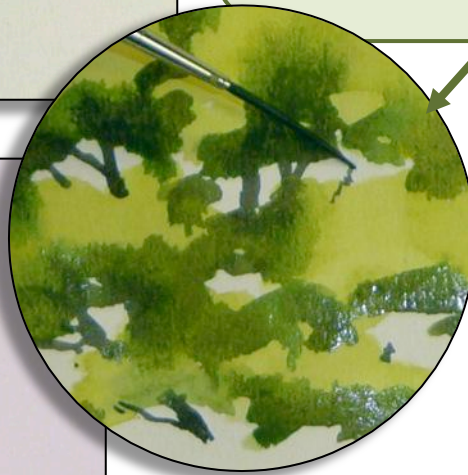
12. Now let's move quickly on to adding the trunk and branches!



13. Use the Rigger for the branches and twigs in the centre of the tree. A strong mix of 50% Blue and 50% Burnt Umber gives a lovely dark grey/brown which will allow us to take some highlights out later.

14. See how simple it is to paint branches in the gaps between the foliage. The still-damp tree colour allows these branches to blend nicely into the leaf clusters.

15. Notice in the close-up below how I'm letting the rigger drag over the paper surface to produce a raggedy line – ideal to represent uneven, thin branches.



4. Now back to the No. 8 Brush for the trunk. Start from the ground and work upwards, as it would grow. If you paint any large branches leaving the trunk just below the bottom of the leaf masses, make sure these roughly line up with the branches in amongst the foliage...

EXTRA TIP:

Observe carefully how wide tree trunks are in relation to the tree size. Invariably they're thicker than you think – remember how much weight they've got to support...!

...Nearly there for the summer tree. Let's go to the next stage to complete it!

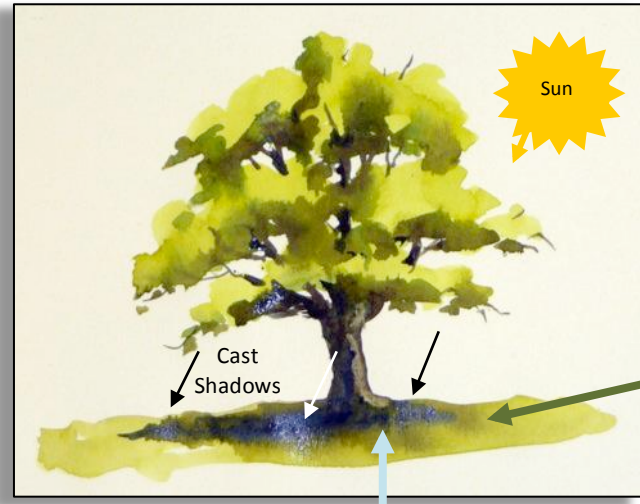


1. Having completed the trunk, but while it's still damp, I've added in a medium mix of green to create the field in which the tree is sitting. This stops the tree looking like it's floating in mid-air.

2. You can see I'm letting the colours blend together here. See how this makes the tree look like it's growing out of the ground instead of just sitting on the top of it.

3. Having let the trunk dry, I've slightly dampened the right side with clean water. Then I've folded a paper towel and with the edge I've dabbed it on the damp area. Or you could use the chisel edge of a small, flat brush

4. This lifts off some of the paint, giving a gentle highlight as if cast by the sun. If you want to, gently blend the light and dark areas with a damp brush for a more gentle transition. I've also done the same on one or two of the larger branches.

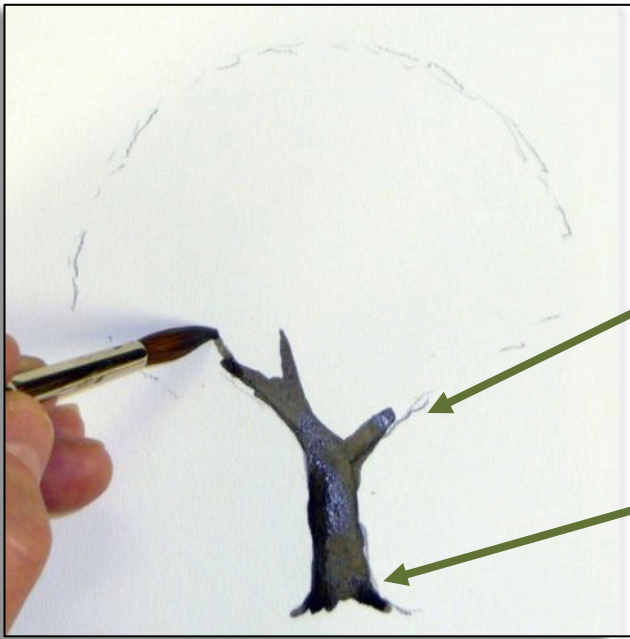


5. As a final touch, I've added some of the dark foliage mix, wet-in-wet, to the ground underneath the tree to create strong shadows. Incidentally, what looks like pale blue is actually the wet paint reflecting the camera flash.

6. As most of this exercise has been done while previous layers were still damp, you can see the importance of mixing plenty of colour before you start to paint...

EXTRA TIP:
When adding ground shadow underneath trees, make sure you put some on the 'sunny' side that will be cast by the branches and foliage on that side of the tree, as well as on the obvious shadow side – in this case, on the left...

Now let's move on to do the same tree but this time, in winter...

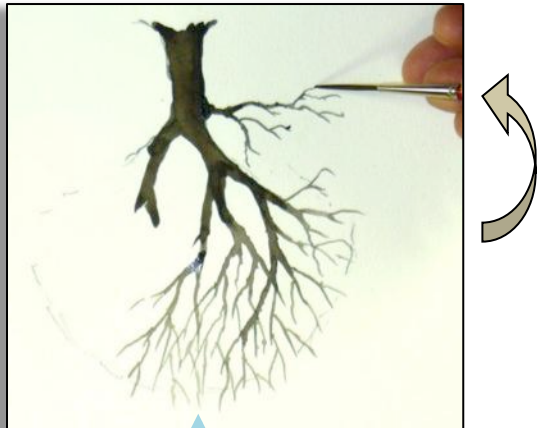
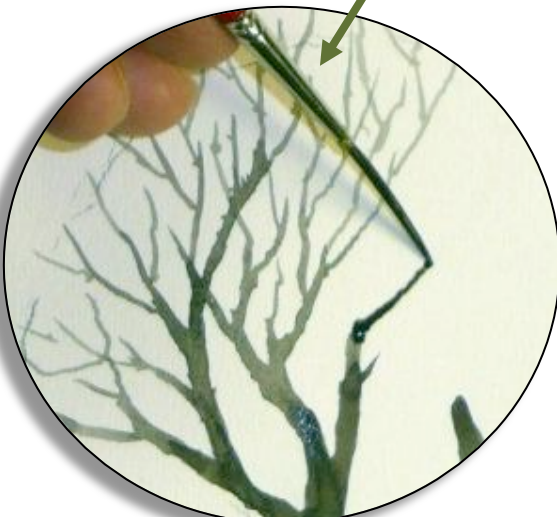


1. The winter tree trunk and thicker, lower limbs are painted in the same colours and in the same way as the summer version, using the No.8 Round Brush. Keep using the No. 8 brush for as long as you can. Move onto the rigger only when you're painting the thinner branches and twigs.

2. Don't forget to paint one or two large roots at the base. These will be blended into the ground colour later, so the tree looks like it's growing out of the ground and not just sitting on top of it.

3. Always start by painting trees from the ground up - the same way they grow. This will ensure that branches naturally become thinner as the brush travels upwards and starts to lift off the paper slightly.

4. You'll also find that as the paint starts to run out, the upper branches will lighten. Then, when you recharge your brush with paint, you'll get a nice mix of light and dark branches in your tree, adding greater interest...



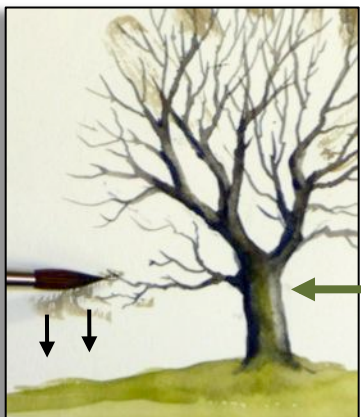
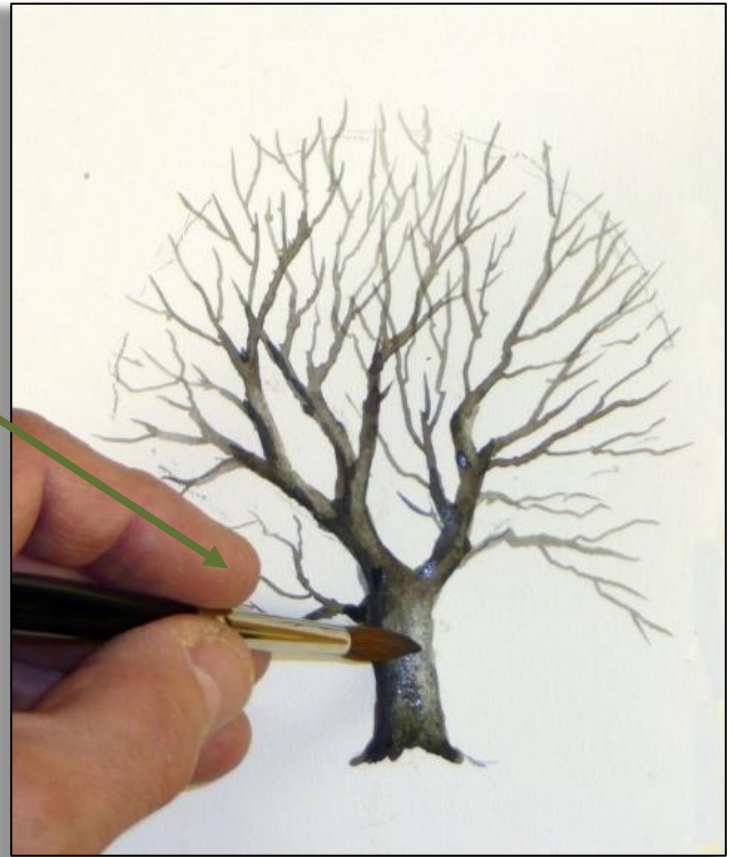
EXTRA TIP:
It's always easier to paint the branches on the same side of the tree as the hand you use to paint. I'm left-handed so branches on the left side of trees are easier for me. If you're right-handed the opposite applies. The answer is simple. Turn your picture upside down when you paint the branches on your 'wrong' side and just paint in your natural direction.

1. As with the summer tree, you can now take out some highlights from the trunk and main branches. In fact this is probably more important on the winter tree as these will be more visible.

2. To create a less defined highlight from a wintry sun scrub the No.8 brush gently to lift out colour from trunk once it's dry. Don't worry if you overdo it, just add some darker paint on the shadow side and it will blend back nicely to give a subtle light and shade.

3. Although it looks like I've added pale blue to the trunk it's actually the reflection of the wet paint. However, you can see how effective a touch of blue can look if you did decide to add it...!

4. In the next picture (below) I've added some of the mid-green from the summer tree for the ground colour, letting the trunk blend into it. I've also put a streak of the same colour on the trunk to create a touch of moss on the bark.



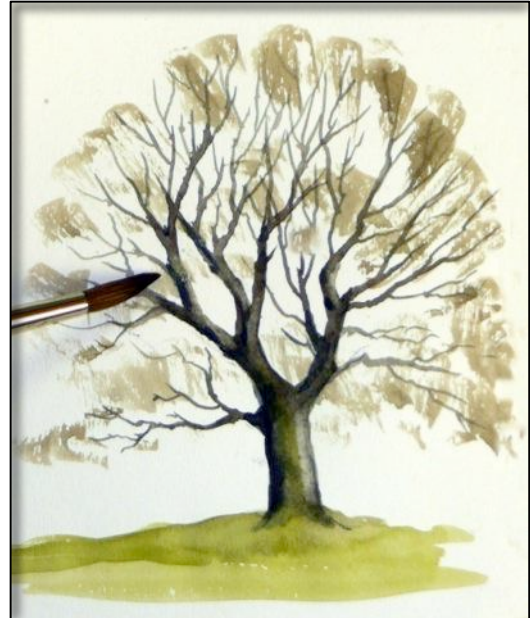
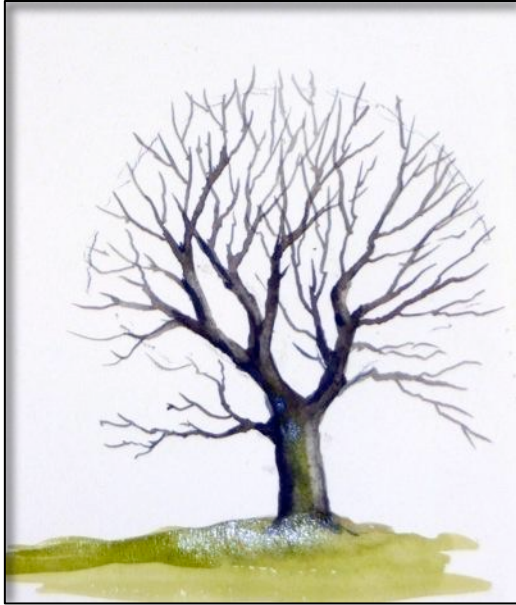
5. You can stop at this stage if you want. If you prefer to add an impression of 'feathery' twigs, use a paler version of the trunk colour, having first partially dried off your brush on some kitchen towel.

6. Simply 'scrape' colour over the tree, using the paper surface to create hit and miss effects.

7. Drag the side of the brush inwards from the edge of the canopy towards the centre of the tree or downwards on a lower protruding branch – and don't forget to add colour in the centre of the tree as well. Remember, it's a three-dimensional object and you would have branches coming towards you.



So there we are – three for the price of one again! First, we have a bare, winter tree. Then, on the right we have the same tree with a canopy of dead leaves. Finally, below, we see one in all its summer glory. Simple to produce, they give immense satisfaction in creating a believable tree, whether it's on its own like these, or part of a full-blown landscape. Go on – give it a go!



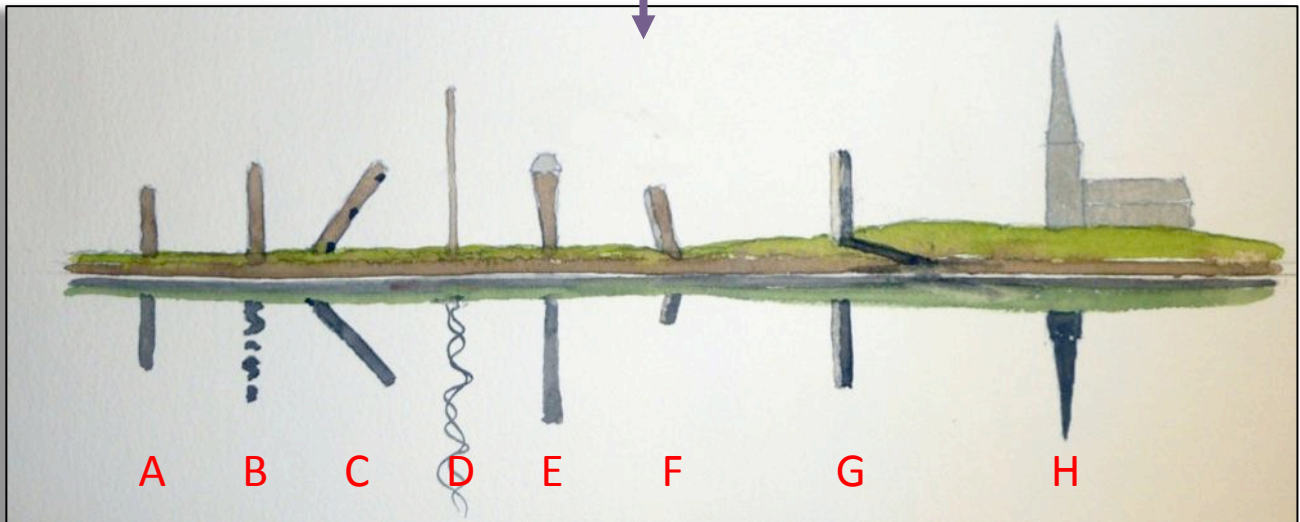
Watercolour Secrets

SECTION 7

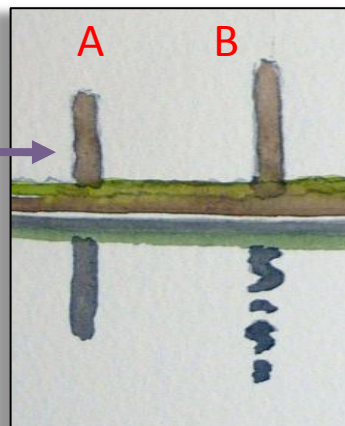


BASIC REFLECTIONS

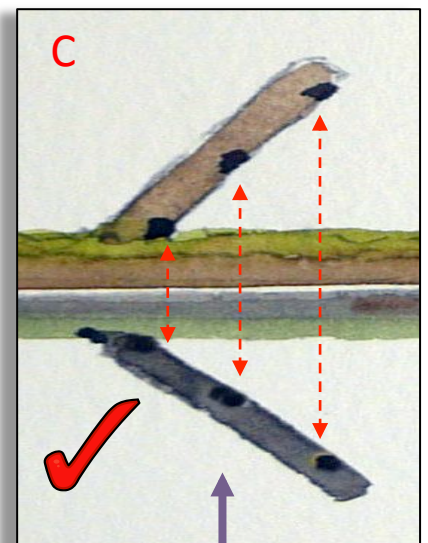
1. Putting reflections in water is really easy once you understand a few general principles. These aren't 'arty' rules like good composition or choosing a focal point, which are often based on opinion, but simple laws of nature about where reflections do - and don't - occur. Look at the little scene below. It's a still from my [Watercolour Course](#) at ArtTutor showing 8 of the most common reflections you'll need to deal with in your landscape painting. Imagine you're sitting in a rowing boat on a lake or very still river so your eye-level is only about the height of the bank. You'll note that I've added the reflection of the river bank to start with. Now let's look at each one in turn.



2. In A and B we have the simplest situation of a post in still water and then in slightly rippled water. Notice two things. The reflections are **always** vertically below the object reflected and the reflection is **always lighter with a dark object and darker than a light object** being reflected. In other words, the tonal contrast (light to dark) of a reflection is always slightly duller than the item it's reflecting.

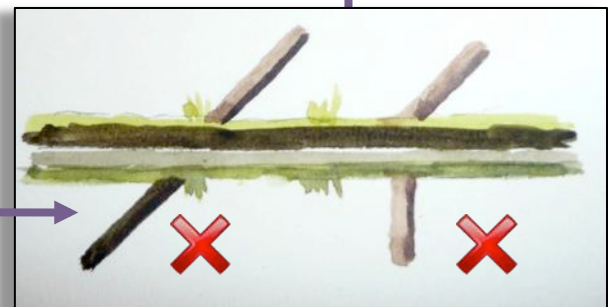


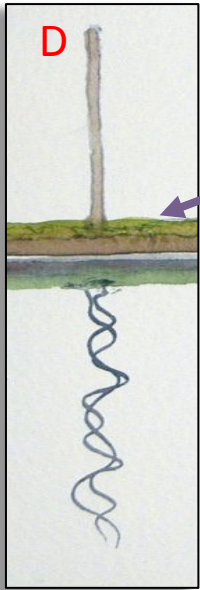
3. I've represented this lesser tonal contrast by making the reflections grey rather than the light brown of the posts themselves.



4. In C (above right) we have the reflection that catches out so many people. Have a look at the sketches lower right to see the placing of two typically incorrect reflections.

5. In sketch C, the reflection is conforming to the 'vertically below' rule. Look at the dotted lines I've added from those three marks on the post. Each one drops vertically to place that part of the reflection in the appropriate position.





1. This is a simple and effective technique in D to represent water that's a bit more ruffled and windblown. It works particularly well using a Rigger brush to create reflections of long, thin stalks and reeds.

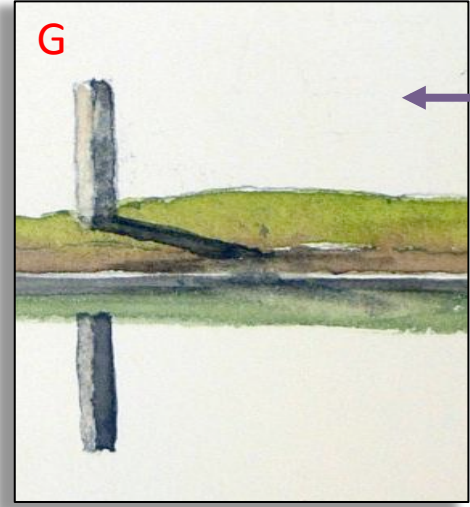
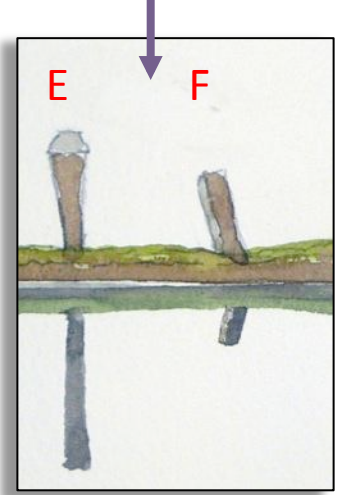
2. All that is necessary is to **quickly and lightly** paint two overlapping wavy lines that *more or less* match. But don't try to get them to match exactly or the effect will look contrived.

3. In the two examples below, we have posts in which E leans towards you and F leans away from you. Remember, your view of all these reflections is from that rowing boat sitting in the water. So what you have now are reflections that are different in length from what you can see of the posts.

4. So with the post that leans towards you over the water (E) you only see a foreshortened view of it, but the **whole length** of its reflection. This happens because from your viewpoint, you see the reflections at a different angle to the actual posts. You are looking slightly upwards at the posts, but slightly downwards at the reflections.

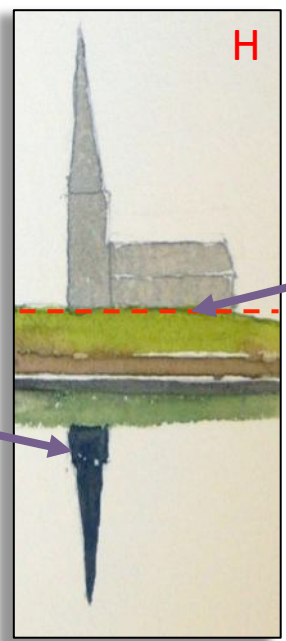
5. With post F, the opposite happens. You can see a fair amount of the post, but because it leans back away from the bank, this time the reflection is much reduced in length.

6. Here's another area which confuses many students. Remember, reflections are always seen vertically below the object being reflected. This never changes. However, a shadow does. It moves and lengthens depending on the position of the sun.



7. So if you have, as in this case, a post near to the water's edge, deal with the shadow in the normal way. You can also have a hint of the shadow falling on the water as well if the shadow is long enough. Then put in your reflection - vertically - as I've already described in the other examples.

8. Finally, when you put in a reflection of an object (in this case a church) which is some distance from the water, how much reflection should show? It's quite simple. You should imagine the reflection starting from the base of the church where it sits on the ground. In this example, it's beyond a rise in the ground perhaps a few hundred yards from the water.



9. I've put a red dotted line from where the church's reflection theoretically starts but of course, from your viewpoint in your 'rowing boat', not much more than the steeple will show up in the water.

10. Finally, have you noticed that **we've effectively created the illusion of water** merely by adding reflections? At no time have we needed to actually paint the water itself...

Watercolour Secrets

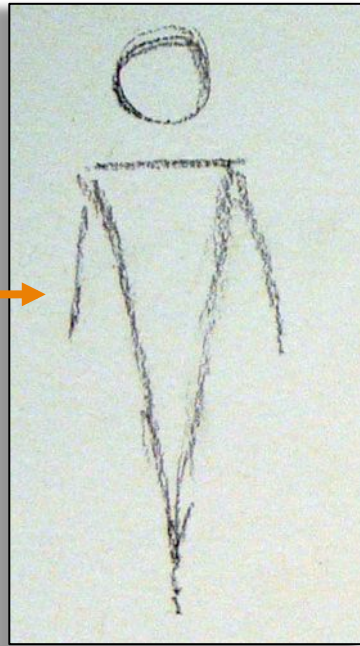
SECTION 8



**ENHANCE YOUR
LANDSCAPES WITH
SIMPLE FIGURES**

1. Let's have a look now at some basic figures, which you'll often need to either 'humanise' or add scale to an otherwise empty landscape.

2. Now then, how difficult is it to draw this triangle and an oval for the body and a head – and then a couple of lines for the arms? Immediately, you have the authentic outline of a figure walking either towards you or away from you. We'll see how easy it is to choose the direction on the next page.

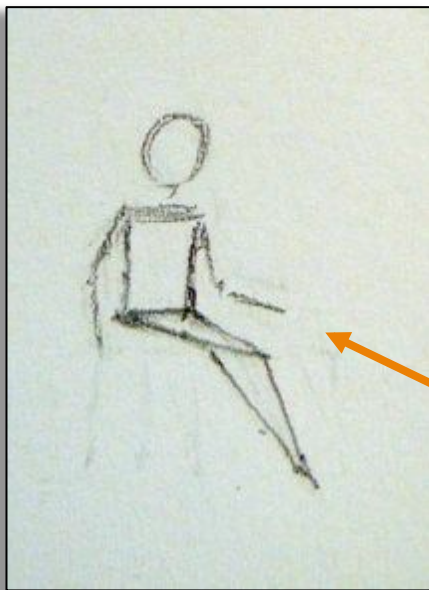
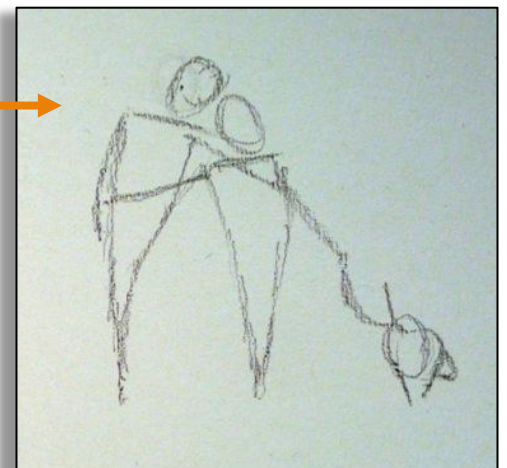


3. Now draw two of exactly the same figures, one slightly smaller, but angled towards each other. We've now got a couple engrossed in conversation.

4. Taking this a stage further, I've bent the triangles together so the couple are arm in arm. See the degree of intimacy this achieves with such a simple adjustment of the lines.

5. I've also added an impression of a little dog with a couple of overlapping ovals, a triangle and some lines for the legs and tail.

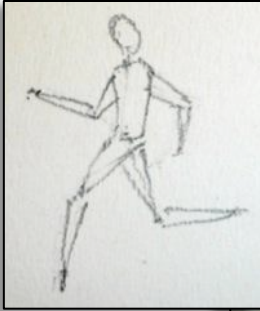
6. See how the gently curved lead tells you that the dog isn't tugging at it, adding to the relaxed, leisurely atmosphere we've created...



7. Here, we've produced a seated figure with no more effort than adding two scalene triangles for the upper and lower parts of the legs. (A scalene triangle is one that has no equal sides or angles. See, you get lots more than just free painting lessons here...!)

8. Note how the head is drawn a little above the body to represent the neck and the elbows almost reach down to the waist when a figure is seated. In general, a good guide to drawing adult figures is to make them about 7 – 8 heads tall. Small children are about 4 – 5 heads tall, while a baby's head is about a quarter of its total size.

9. By the way, if you look closely at this figure, you'll see some ghosted images where I've rubbed out lines drawn in the wrong place. This illustrates perfectly why you're better off drawing this sort of figure on rough paper before transferring it to your watercolour paper...



1. The more 'action' you create in a figure - a man running as in this photo for example - the more likely it is to draw attention to itself in your picture. In that case, it almost certainly needs to be the focal point (or part of it) or it will start to compete for attention with what *actually is* your chosen focal point.



2. A more passive pose such as a couple strolling down a country lane may be a better option if you just want to focus on the landscape scene, where their presence complements, rather than dominates it.

3. You can of course still use them as the focal point by painting them in strong, bright colours.

4. You can see in these painted figures that I've tidied up the basic shapes and drawn more realistic outlines - very simple and exactly the same principles as in the Kangaroo sketches on an earlier page.

5. The direction people are facing is determined simply by a splash of colour for the hair which points the head in the required direction. To reinforce this it's an easy matter to put their clothes on 'the right way round'. The man in the grey suit and the woman in the yellow illustrate this perfectly.

6. Notice also how I've let the woman's top, skirt and legs blend together slightly to create a unity in the figure...



EXTRA TIP:

When you paint figures in a landscape don't put in any facial details, apart from the hair. They're not needed and will make the figure appear too fussy and complicated.

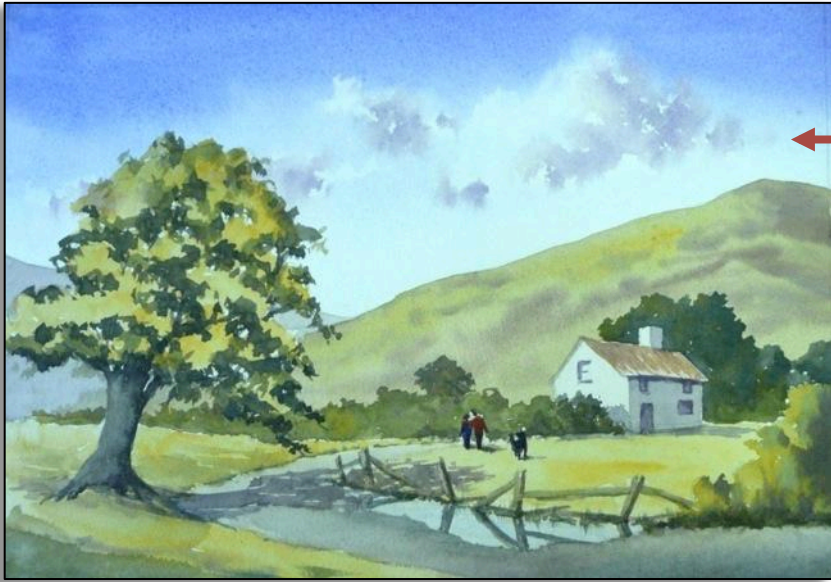
Also, leave out feet wherever possible. Including them always makes them look clumsy and oversized. Instead, let the bottom of the legs melt into the shadow colour. Look at the figures on this page to see what I mean...

Watercolour Secrets

SECTION 9



BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER (Part A)



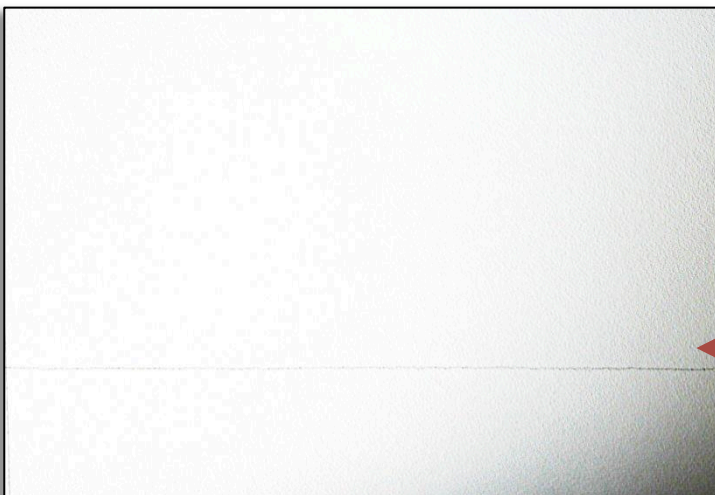
1. Yes, this is what we - **you** - will be painting. If it looks a bit daunting don't worry. It's only composed of the elements that we've covered throughout this short course. I've painted it with just the No.10 Round brush which was a bit of a challenge with some of the smaller details but you'll see from the photos later on that it is possible with a little practice. I've also only used 4 colours to keep things nice and simple!

2. Here's what I used:-

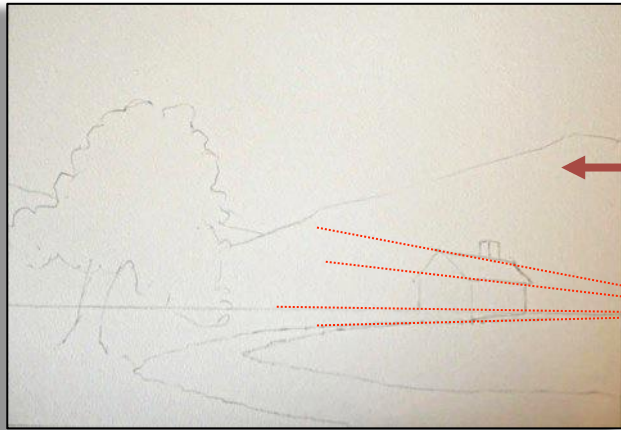
- 140lb Bockingford Watercolour Paper
- No. 10 Round Brush (You could use, say, a No.4 or a No.6 if this makes you feel more comfortable with the smaller details).
- Ultramarine Blue
- Permanent Rose
- Yellow Ochre
- Light Red
- HB Pencil and a Putty Eraser

3. The first thing I did was a 'tonal sketch' (below right). This is only about 3" x 4" and is just a quick, rough sketch of the scene I had in mind. It's so helpful to do this sort of sketch beforehand as it helps you visualise what you want to paint and also if the composition is actually going to look right. Don't worry about detail or quality with this – it's no more than a memory aid to remind you what things should look like in the painting.

4. However, the main benefit is to work out where the lightest lights, darkest darks and the mid-tones will need to go, irrespective of the colours you use. In this case, you can see that underneath the large tree will be quite dark as will the doorway in the house, which forms a natural focal point with the couple walking towards it. See also how the dark trees behind the house help to make it stand out. I've drawn the foreground fence a bit too dark and dominant so I need to remember to tone down its colour in the painting.



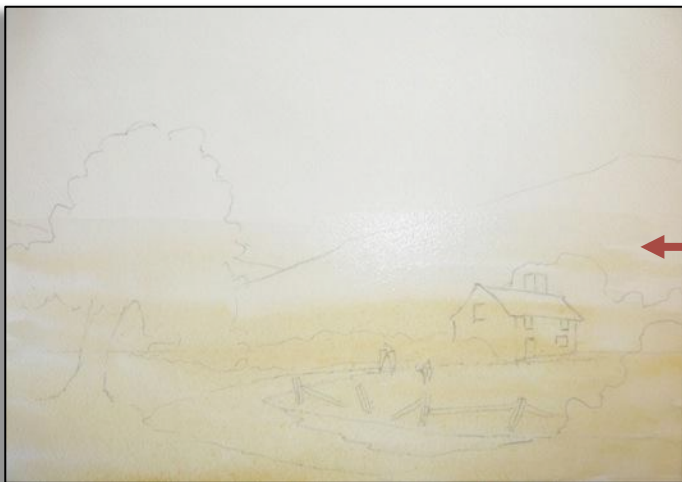
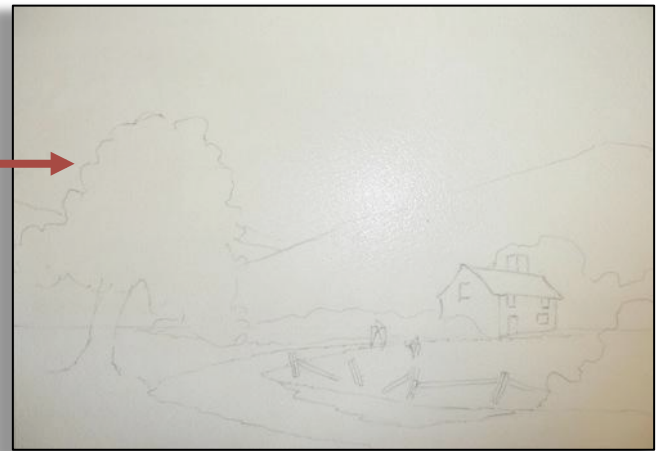
5. I'm going to draw directly onto my watercolour paper, but if you prefer, draw it first on, say, cheap printer paper and then trace it onto the watercolour paper as explained in Section 1. The first thing I've done is to draw a horizon line (eye line) about a quarter of the way up the paper from the base. You'll be rubbing some of this out later so only draw it heavy enough to see it. I've made my drawing heavier than normal so it shows up in the photos.



6. I've drawn two very simple background hills and I've also added the main features including the road, the house and the large tree. The tree is leaning inwards to add interest and help frame the scene on that side.

7. The house is sitting on the horizon line and the road is compressed to emphasise that low viewpoint. Note from the dotted perspective lines I've overlaid on the house that the Vanishing Point where they all theoretically meet can quite easily be off the paper.

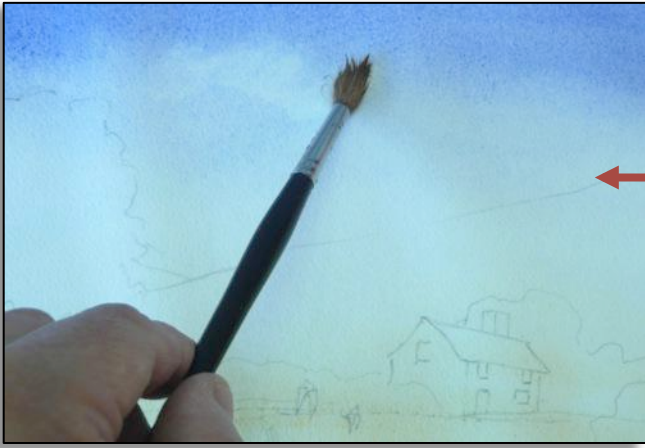
8. The rest of the details have been added and any unwanted parts of the horizon have been rubbed out. Then I've brushed a layer of clean water over the whole picture and let it soak in to a damp stage. You can see the slight highlighted sheen, which tells me it's ready for the next stage - to add the paint!



9. To get warmth and light just above the hills and in the foreground I've streaked across some Yellow Ochre (left), letting the water in the paper dilute it as it goes further up the paper.

10. Below left, I've started on the sky with Ultramarine. I haven't too much sky to play with before I reach the hills, so you can see in the right hand picture that I've lightened it off quite quickly as I go down the paper.

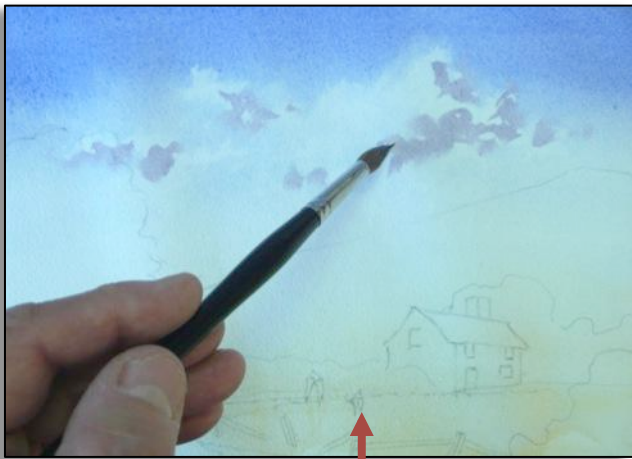




11. Now I'm rolling the semi-dry paintbrush, dampened with clean water and picking up some of the blue pigment as I go along. Remember to wash the brush out frequently as you do this or you'll simply put the blue paint you've picked up back on the paper where it's not wanted.



12. In this shot on the right I've taken a bit more paint out by using a dampened paper towel - actually it was a piece of toilet tissue (clean!) that works just as well as kitchen roll. You can see this gives a nice wispy effect with the variation evident between using the brush and the tissue.



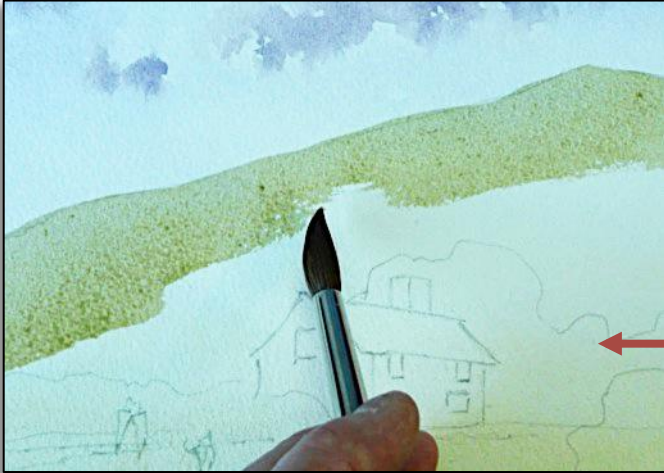
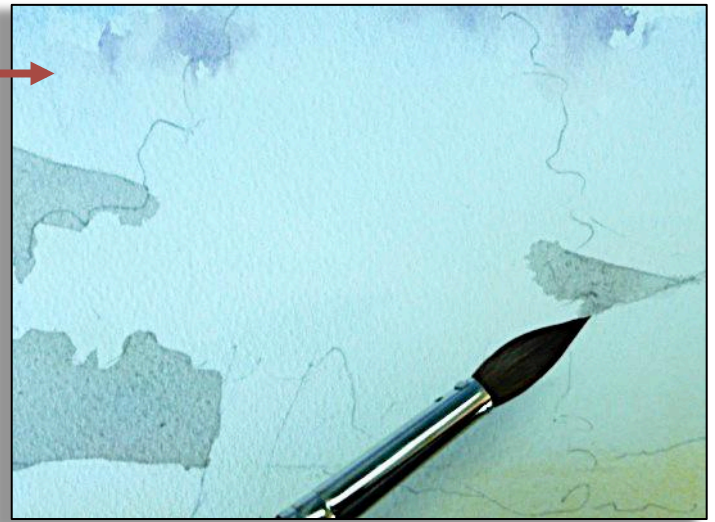
13. I'm touching in (above) some cloud shadows with a medium strength mix of Ultramarine Blue, Permanent Rose and just a hint of Light Red to grey it down slightly. When the white clouds were lifted out with the brush and the tissue, they left a nice variety of damp, dry and semi-dry areas. When the cloud shadow is dabbed in, it forms some nice soft and hard edges – also known as 'lost' and 'found' edges.

14. Above right, I've touched in here and there a slightly stronger mix of Ultramarine. This blends nicely with the previous shadow colour to give a further subtle variation in the clouds. Nevertheless, I've kept the cloud shadow reasonably muted as there's quite a lot of features in the rest of the picture, so I don't want a very busy sky that would compete with them.



15. Now, while the cloud shadow is still slightly moist, with a clean, damp brush (above), I'm blending out some of the unwanted harder edges by very gently scraping the side of the brush upwards. You don't want anything other than a damp brush to do this! Don't overdo this either. Some hard edges are desirable for extra interest.

16. With a light mix of Ultramarine, Permanent Rose and a touch of Yellow Ochre, I've painted in the left hand hill. You can see I'm not worried about going over parts of the tree slightly as this will be hidden when we put on the foliage.



17. With a stronger mix of Yellow Ochre and a touch of Ultramarine (you don't need much or it'll make it too dark) I'm now streaking in the nearer hill. Notice how my brush-strokes are following the line of the hill from top right to bottom left to assist in defining the contours.



18. While this is still damp I've added some streaks of much stronger Yellow Ochre. This may look too bright at the outset but will soon dry back to a more subtle shade. Remember, that the sun is shining on this side of the hill, so this helps to add that sunlit effect. A couple of streaks are fine – don't overdo it!



19. Next, left, I've added more streaks, this time with a strong mix of Ultramarine and Light Red. This gives a lovely purple-grey, which as you can see, quickly blends into the original wash to help create light and dark contours, especially on the top right of the hill, which would be in shadow. Again see how I've followed the line of the hill with the brushstrokes. The hardest part here is to just put in the streaks, then leave things alone and not fiddle!



20. Next, left, we have a very strong mix of Ultramarine and a little Yellow Ochre for the dark trees behind the house. I find it easiest to paint carefully around the outline of the house and the roof and then work away from this to finish with ragged edges at the top of the trees. In the close-up below, I've added another strong mix of neat Yellow Ochre while the tree colour is wet. This gives a bit of variety in the colouring, but don't add too much as we need to retain the dark colour to frame the house.

21. Below, I've added the line of trees to the left of the cottage with the same colours but with more yellow and not quite as strong. I've also put a medium strength mix of Yellow Ochre over the foreground and middle distance fields, once again, dragging the brushstrokes sideways to create a 'flat' effect. Next, a light mix of Ultramarine and Light Red creates the road, avoiding painting the puddle area below the fence.



22. In the picture below right, I've put some darker green (a touch of Ultramarine added) in the left foreground of the picture, using the same techniques as I used on the hill. The same colour has been touched in to define the edge of the road.



23. I've also added a stronger mixture of the road colour in the bottom right hand corner while everything was still damp. This is a very useful technique with landscapes. By darkening the corners slightly, it forces the eye of the viewer into the centre of your picture and the main areas of interest. This general view of the picture illustrates very well how the dark background trees help the focal point of the picture - the house - to really stand out.

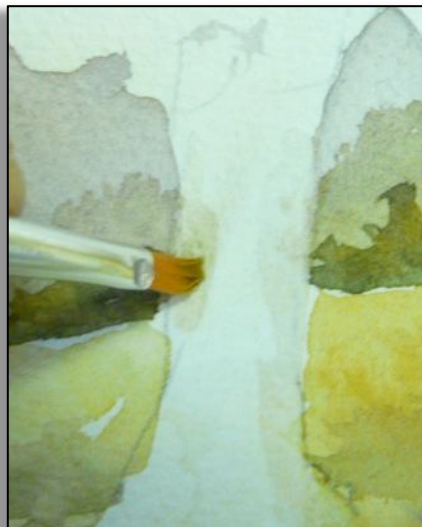




24. The foreground bush is treated in exactly the same way as the other trees and bushes, except that I've used a strong mix of Yellow Ochre as the base colour. See how this contrasts nicely where it meets the background trees. Then while it's still damp, I've added strong touches of neat Ultramarine (left) and mixes of Ultramarine and Light Red (right), streaked here and there to simulate branches and twigs. You don't want anything too detailed here or it will compete for attention with the rest of the picture.



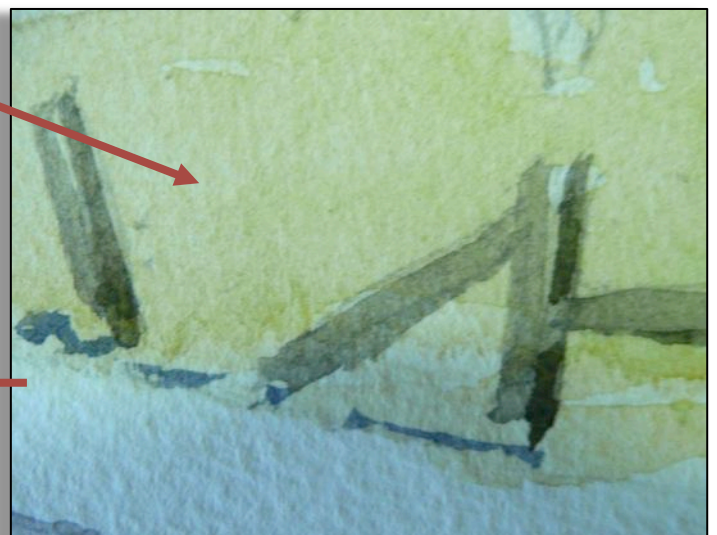
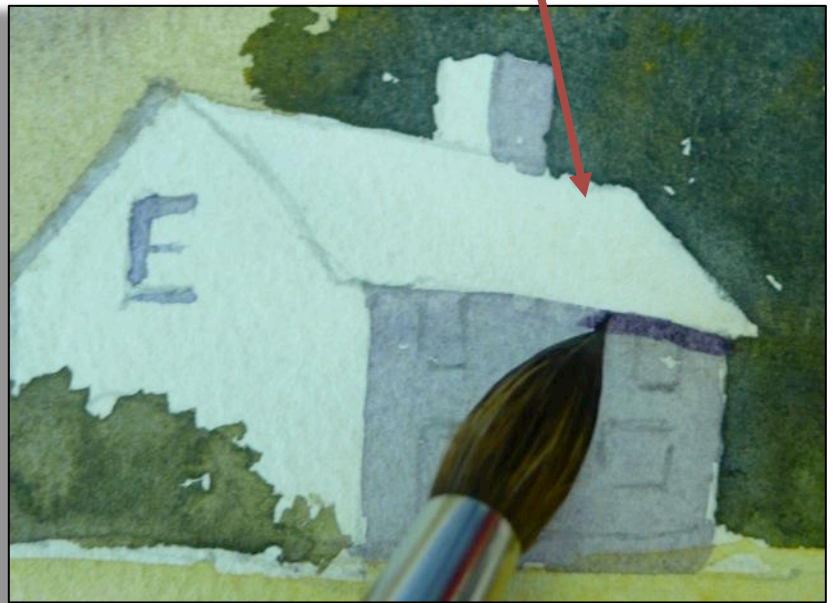
25. The three photos below demonstrate how easy it is to remove small areas of unwanted paint in a picture. In the photo on the left, I've been quite cavalier with the way I've put paint over the trunk as I've been adding the fields and bushes. However, I've used a small, flat brush with clean water (centre) to gently scrub away the offending paint. With a clean tissue, I can now dab out the area (right) so it's almost pristine and I'll let this area dry before I paint the trunk. If I'd accidentally dampened the paper just outside the line of the trunk and then painted it right away the new paint would have bled where I didn't want and I'd have had to do another repair job alongside the tree...

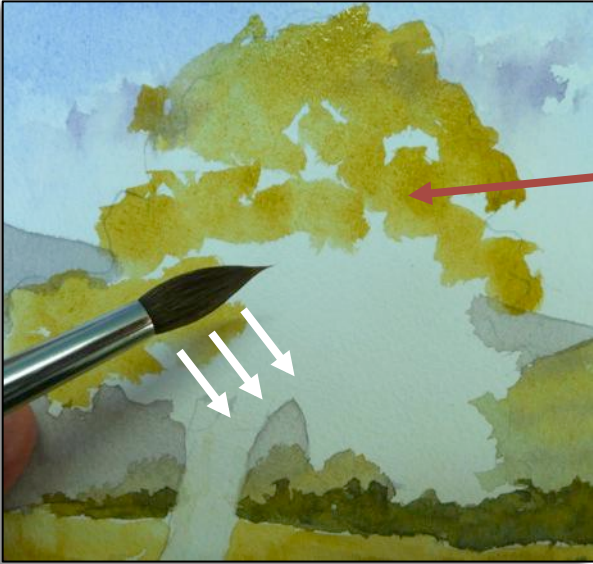




26. A light wash of Ultramarine and Permanent Rose and just a dab of Light Red produce a lovely 'sunny' shadow colour. Here, it's been added to the front of the house. In the picture, below, after it has dried, I've added a line to represent the really dark shadow under the eaves. I'll also put in this colour for the windows and door. Notice how a simple letter 'E' on the side wall of the house gives us the required shadows for that window and window-sill.

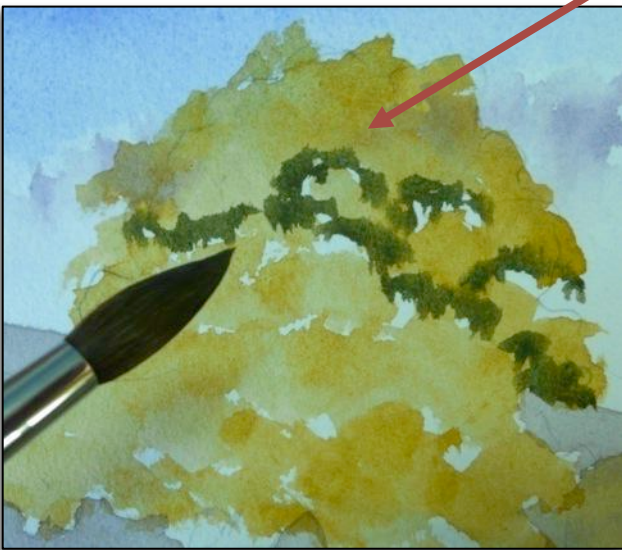
27. In the photo below, the fence has been painted with a pale grey created with Ultramarine and Light Red. By painting separate lines for the two visible faces of the fence posts, see how the thin white line left in between creates a natural highlight. In the lower right close-up, I've waited till the fence colour dries then added the same mix on the shadow sides. The posts have been deliberately placed at random distances and angles to create more interest than a line of 'soldiers'. The broken cross piece immediately below the couple has been intentionally included as this creates a 'way in' for the eye to move across to the figures.



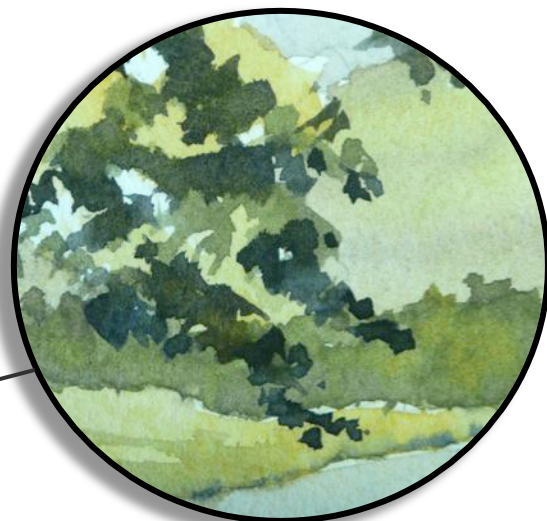
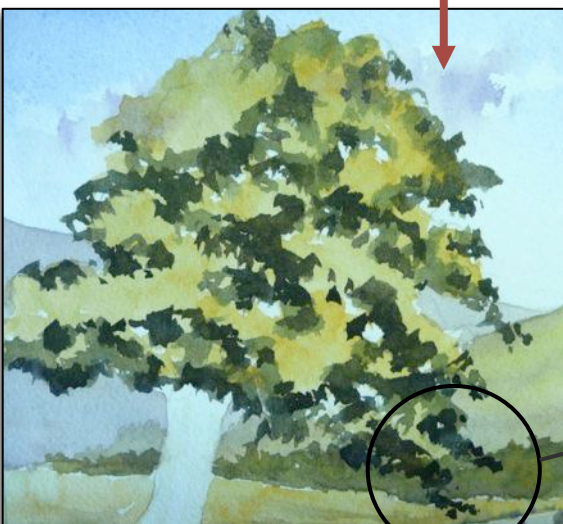


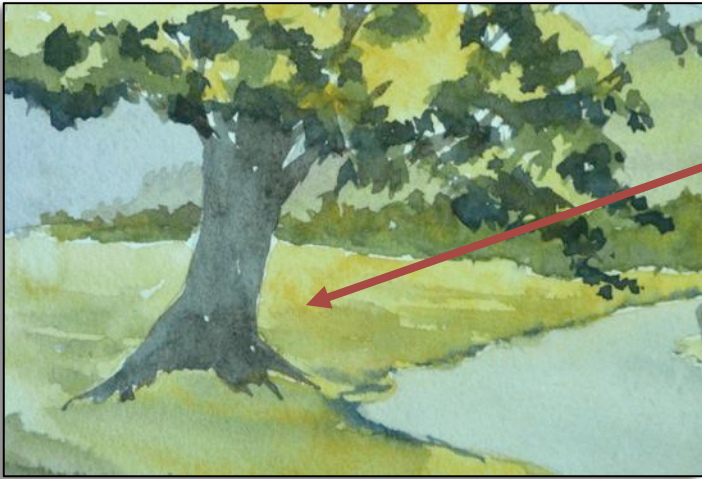
28. We now come on to the large tree where a base coat of Yellow Ochre is scraped on sideways with the brush creating several overlapping banana shapes. You can see I'm only using the pencil outline of the tree foliage as a guideline. I'm not worried about going over it here and there; otherwise I'd get too deliberate and tight in applying the paint.

29. Below left and while the base coat is still damp; I've started to add the mid-tone colour, which is more Yellow Ochre with just a touch of Ultramarine. I'm putting touches of this colour over the top of the unpainted areas I've left in the tree, as this would be where the shadows would appear. Below right, this is what the tree looks like after this second coat. There's less of it on the left hand side, as this will be catching the sun.



30. The darkest coat is now added in the same way as the second, wet-in-wet. The darkest areas of trees tend to be in the centre and underneath where the trunk disappears into the leaves. This mix is Ultramarine and Light Red with just a touch of Yellow Ochre to bring out some green. In the close up below right see how, by adding a few dark leaves across the background fields and trees, it pushes them back into their proper place in the picture.





31. On the left, I've added a pale mix of Ultramarine and Light Red for the grey of the trunk and visible branches, blending it into the still-damp leaves. I've also run in some branches within the leaf clusters as they appear and disappear in the middle of the tree.

32. When the trunk has dried, I've painted a stronger mix of the same colours on the right hand side to represent the shadow. Note that I've also taken this up and underneath the leaves, as this area would not catch the sun either.



33. Before this shadow strip dries I've run a brush with a little clean water down the edge to blend it and create the three-dimensional roundness of the trunk.

34. If you want to, you could also lightly scrub out a lighter strip down the left side of the trunk to further emphasise the sunlight playing on it. This is exactly the same technique as I used to remove unwanted paint in Step 25.

35. I've now added the tree shadow across the road. It's important, once again, to keep the brushstrokes horizontal so the shadow sits flat on the ground. Don't worry about taking it across the fence, as this would be partially shaded by the trees and therefore have a dappled effect.





36. The cottage roof has been streaked downwards with a medium strength Light Red, using a brush dried off slightly on the paper tissue to take out excess paint. This allows me to deliberately create plenty of unpainted streaks to emphasise the sunny day. Following this, in the lower photo, I've done the same with just a tiny streak or two of Ultramarine and let it all blend.



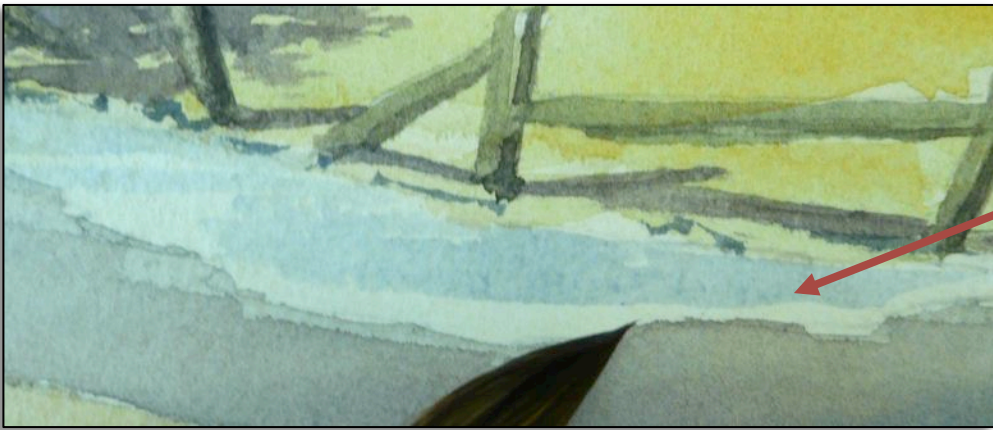
37. The bushes to the left of the cottage have been darkened with Ultramarine and Yellow Ochre and slightly raised. This allows me to put a medium strength mix of the shadow colour on the side wall, emphasising the sunlight on these trees.



38. Not far from the finishing line now. The figures have been painted very simply with touches of Light Red and Ultramarine to create impact as they lead the eye to the focal point. The dark grey trousers on both have been painted with a mix of Blue, Yellow and Red. I was going to paint the lady on the left in a skirt, but the pale colour of her legs wouldn't have shown up against the light grass. The dog was created using the same colours as for the figure's trousers with a lighter area on its left side in the sunlight.



39. When including animals and figures in the middle distance like this, even in a large picture, they're only going to be about 1" tall - probably 1½" maximum, so there's absolutely no need (or room) for detail. This picture we're doing is approximately 14" x 10" and the figures are only about ¾" (18mm) tall. Even in this cruel close-up they look perfectly OK in the context of the picture. Remember what I said about not painting shoes and blending the shadows into the bottom of the legs, as we've done here...



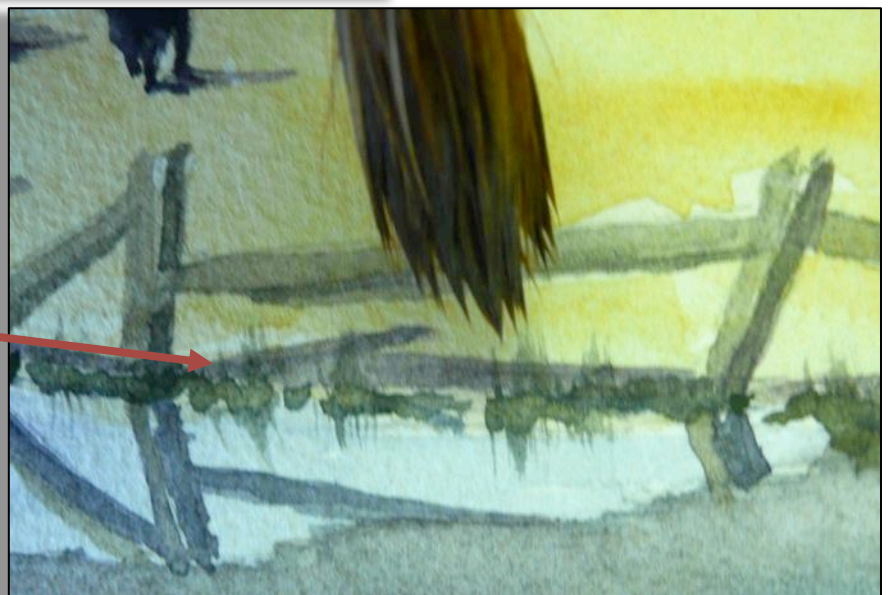
40. With a very pale wash of Ultramarine, I'm putting in the puddle. It's particularly important that the brush strokes are horizontal when you paint water, otherwise it will look as if the water is running downhill.

41. Once this is dry, I've added the reflections. Two things I hope you remember from the tutorial in Section 7. First, note the direction of the reflections, especially where the posts are angled. Second, the dark areas reflect lighter and the light areas reflect darker - or put another way, the tonal contrast is less.

42. I've dabbed in some dark green colour to define where the edge of the road is beyond the puddle, as well as grass that grows around the base of the fence posts. Notice how I've left it as a hit and miss effect. You want this sort of detail to appear random and uncontrived.



43. While it's still wet, I've spread out the hairs on the brush as you can see in the close-up and lightly dragged the green paint upwards to simulate grass. Don't forget to drag the paint downwards as well to create the reflections. In fact, if you have a puddle and can't 'engineer' an item above it to be reflected, using short, grassy tufts like these is an excellent way to confirm that the viewer is looking at water. Note also from the photo above that the figures and dog don't have a reflection as they're too far beyond the puddle.



44. Right, we're done - except for one more thing.... Walk away from the picture and leave it for an hour or two. When you return you will invariably see little details you've missed or feel need adjustment. I noticed a couple of the shadows needed strengthening very slightly as did one or two branches in the big tree. However, this is a danger period as you can, through over-enthusiasm, start fiddling and spoil the final painting. Once you start **looking** for things to change, instead of them jumping out at you, then that's the time to really stop and sign it. I always feel that signing a painting is a way of telling me that it's finished and I'm not allowed to add any more. Incidentally, don't overlook the signature in your composition. Your signature in the bottom right or left corner may well help to add balance to a picture that lacks some sort of detail in this area.



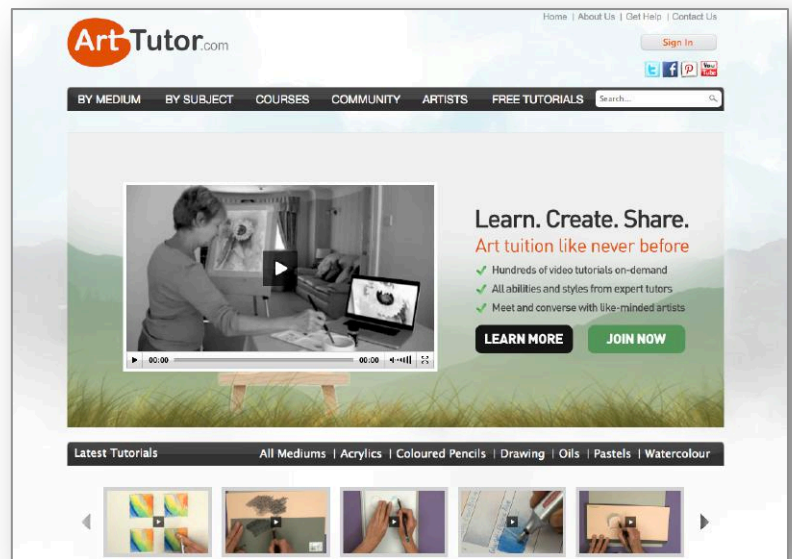
Well there we are - the finished picture. Although it's taken 44 steps, they've all been fairly small and gentle ones to navigate. Everything has been based on what we've looked at in the previous 8 Sections and it just shows how perfectly possible it is to create your own minor masterpiece. The way ahead now is clear. More practice and enthusiasm = more success, which = the desire to keep at it. All the time you will be improving without realising it, so my final piece of advice in this short course is not to throw away any of your early works or perceived disasters. Look at them in a few weeks or a few months and you'll be heartened by the progress you've made.

I hope this short course will help you develop your watercolour landscapes and you find it as enjoyable to follow, as it has been to produce. Remember practice as often as you can and you **will** make progress. Happy painting!

ABOUT ARTTUTOR.COM

ArtTutor.com was built on the back of my passion to help more people take more enjoyment and more satisfaction from art...

It gives you 24/7 access to hundreds of TV-quality video tutorials from more than 35 professional art instructors. We cover everything from watercolour landscapes to pastel portraits... and we add new lessons every single week.



What else will find at ArtTutor.com?

STEP-BY-STEP PAINTING FOUNDATION COURSES

Comprehensive video courses that cover all the fundamental techniques in watercolour, acrylics, pastel, oils, coloured pencil and drawing.

SUPER-FRIENDLY MEMBERS-ONLY FORUM

Where you can post your artwork for critiques from other members or ask your art-related questions.

A PLACE TO STORE & SHARE YOUR ARTWORK

Our members-only gallery system allows you to easily add your artwork to ArtTutor, where other members can 'like' it and offer helpful feedback.

MONTHLY PAINTING CHALLENGES WITH PRIZES

A range of challenges to choose from so that all tastes are catered for... and with prizes that are definitely worth winning!

My goal is to make ArtTutor.com the best place for anyone looking to improve their artistic skills and get much more enjoyment from the wonderful past-time of painting and drawing. We'd love to see you there!

Bola Davies

ARTTUTOR COURSES

ArtTutor.com is home to hundreds of DVD-quality video lessons across a range of subject matter and styles. We also have a growing number of [courses and series](#) that can be accessed by all members 24/7...

Our courses don't run to a fixed schedule – all the lessons are there permanently for you to dip in and out of whenever it's convenient. Here are a few that might be of interest you...

Watercolour Courses

- Bob Davies' Watercolour Foundation Course
- Siân Dudley's Progressive Watercolour Florals
- Rob Dudley's Watercolour Landscapes
- Joanne Thomas' Expressive Watercolour Landscapes
- Granville D. Clarke's Dynamic Watercolour Skies
- Frank Halliday's Round The World In Watercolours
- Glynis Barnes-Mellish's Watercolour Portraits



Acrylics Courses

- Bob Davies' Acrylic Foundation Course
- Will Kemp's Beginner's Guide To Acrylic Still Life & Landscapes
- Marion Dutton's Acrylic Flowers & Birds



Oils Courses

- Bob Davies' Oils Foundation Course
- Gill Adlington's Wet-In-Wet Oils For Complete Beginners
- Roy Munday's Still Life Tonal Values



Drawing Courses

- Bob Davies' Drawing Foundation Course
- Jane Lazenby's Figure Drawing & Life Drawing Course
- Carole Massey's Portrait Drawing Course



Pastels Courses

- Michael Howley's Pastels Foundation Course
- Rebecca De Medonça's Advanced Pastel Figures
- Cath Inglis' British Wildlife In Pastels

Coloured Pencil Courses

- Jane Lazenby's Coloured Pencil Foundation Course
- Steve Ormerod's Coloured Pencil Workshops
- Jane Lazenby's Coloured Pencil Animals



Why not [join us](#) and start a painting and drawing course today?

REVIEWS FROM ARTTUTOR MEMBERS

We asked all our members for a fair and honest appraisal of how they feel about ArtTutor... and then posted every single response (good and bad) [here on the website](#). They are **100% unedited**.

As of writing, there are more than 150 appraisals, 3 of which you could consider negative. Here's a small selection from leisure artists like you:

Eleanor - Elsdon, UK



Everyone's kind and also constructively critical and helpful. The tutors, too, act as community and respect everyone else by not skipping ahead in their videos, and not therefore missing out the very bit we needed to know, which is what happens so often online, and some of them even find time to pop in and answer queries and comment on our work.

The core organising group is imaginative and responsive and endlessly innovative. What more could we ask? We just need to bring our brushes, pastels and pencils and have a go – and the great thing is, no one is too novice to be accepted. You can't put a price on that.

Margaret, Queensland, Australia.



ArtTutor is simply EXCELLENT! All lessons are easy to follow and are inspirational. I, personally, find them a great resource to improving my painting. Since being a member I have painted quite a few paintings and won some prizes in our Annual Show.

I recommend ArtTutor wholeheartedly to beginners and anyone interested in painting whatever medium you wish to follow, be it watercolours, acrylics, oils, coloured pencils, drawing pencils, etc.,

I love to paint both acrylics and watercolours. I paint mainly from photos and mainly landscapes. I think Art Tutor offers brilliant courses for all artists. I love the idea that I can try all mediums if I wish with instruction from qualified artists.

Give it a go, I say. You will not be disappointed.

Yael Shany



This is my honest truth: I love ArtTutor for many reasons I am not so sure be able to mention them all. But some of them are; I truly love the instructors. They are friendly, natural and humble yet extremely good artists and very stimulating to follow as instructors. They give a good feeling "if I can do it, you can do it too" kind of feeling.

The site encourages participation by simplifying the web features for the members. Something in this site so valuable to us artists in its simplicity and friendliness.

Unfortunately - careful this site is addictive. Once I started it became my comfort zone:>>)