

Watercolor Techniques

1. **SOFT EDGE:** Using 2 colors, create a soft edge. Wet your brush. 2 different bands of color put down so that they barely touch. The colors will merge-creating a soft edge.
2. **CRISP EDGE:** On a dry sheet of watercolor paper, lay down 2 different strips of color that do not touch, creating a crisp/clean edge.
3. **WET ON WET/FREE EDGE:** with a clean brush, lay down clean water on the sheet of paper. Then, lay down 2 different bands of color with a small gap between them. Watch how they bleed together!
4. **FLAT WASH:** Continuous tone/value. Build up 3 levels of value (of 1 color only) by overlapping washes of the same color. Wait for each wash to dry completely.
5. **GRADATED WASH:** Tilt your page about 30 degrees. Lay down a band of pure color, dip your paint brush in water quickly and lay down another brushstroke, repeat. Color should gradually go from a dark value with a lot of pigment, down to a light value that has more water and less pigment. A gradual wash of color. Only one color.
6. **VARIAGATED WASH:** Using 3 colors, lay down a band of one color then dip your brush in water and lay down another wash of the 1st color. With a clean brush, lay down a band of the 2nd color, blending gradually from the 1st. Repeat with a wash of a 3rd color. The colors should gradually blend together.
7. **CREATE VALUE/ DILUTE WITH WATER:** Lay down a band of pure color, dip your brush in water and lay down another band of the same color but diluted. Dip your brush in water again and lay down a 3rd band. Notice the changes in value of 1 color when the pigment is diluted with water. Creates depth!
8. **PAINTING WET ON WET SURFACE (1 COLOR):** Using a clean brush, lay an even wash of clean water on your sheet of paper. While the paper is still wet, paint something using 1 color. Notice the soft edges and free forms this creates.
9. **PAINTING WET ON WET SURFACE (2 COLORS):** Using a clean brush, lay an even wash of clean water on your sheet of paper. While the paper is still wet, paint something using 2 different colors. Notice the soft edges and free forms this creates.
10. **WET IN WET:** Lay down a wash of 1 color. While the paint is still wet, paint something on top using a 2nd color.
11. **WET ON DRY:** Lay down a wash of 1 color and let dry completely. When the wash is dry, paint something on top using a 2nd color. Notice the crisp edges vs. the soft edges from technique #10
12. **WATERDROP:** Lay down a wash of 1 color, Let dry a little bit. Before it is completely dry, drop a few water drops on the wash and see what happens.
13. **LIFTING:** Lay down a wash of 1 or 2 colors. While still wet, blot the surface with tissue, or paper towels, or a sponge. Create interesting visual textures and values!
14. **SALT:** Lay down a wash of 1 or 2 colors. While it is still wet, pour some grains of salt on the wash. Let dry, then brush the salt off. The salt soaks up the water and pigment and makes interesting visual texture.
15. **VARIETY OF BRUSHSTROKES:** Experiment with your brushes and make a variety of different brushstrokes, Thick, thin, spotted, wet, dry, wavy, etc.
16. **WAX RESIST:** Using a WHITE crayon on white paper, draw something on a clean, dry sheet of paper. Lay down watercolor. Wax areas will resist the water and your design will show through.
17. **SPATTERING:** Lay down a wash of 1 or 2 colors. Let dry. With a dry toothbrush or paintbrush, get a different color and run your finger over the bristles towards the paper to spatter the paint. Control the area with masking, or hold a piece of paper over the area to be protected, or masked. Great for creating texture.
18. **MASKING:** Using masking tape or fluid, mask off an area you want to leave white (to be protected from paint). Paint the area you want painted and let dry completely. Remove the mask. (Creates clean, crisp edges and controlled designs/ stained glass effect)
19. **ALCOHOLDRIP:** Lay down a wash or variegated wash of color. While the paint is still wet, carefully drip a small amount of rubbing alcohol into the paint.
20. **PLASTIC WRAP:** Lay down a wash or variegated wash of color. While it is still wet, lay down wrinkled plastic wrap into the paint. Carefully peel away to reveal texture.