



## Seven Simple Supplies You Need to Get Started in Watercolour

1. **Paper.** You can buy watercolour paper in a wire bound book, a hardcover book, or by the sheet, usually 22" x 30", or 56 x 76 cm. You can cut it into smaller pieces. I recommend getting 40 lb. paper as it buckles less when the water dries than lighter, thinner paper will. If you're planning on starting small, or creating an art journal, you'll want a book format that suits your needs. They come in lots of sizes.
2. **A pencil.** You will most likely want to sketch your subjects before beginning to paint so keep a pencil with your art supplies. My favourite is a 2H in hardness because it shows up lightly on the paper yet is easy to erase. A plain HB schoolhouse pencil works too. With pencils, H indicates hardness, and B indicates boldness. A 7B, for example will give you a soft, broad, dark line, while a 4H is light and the lead is so hard in can inscribe the paper.
3. **Kneaded eraser.** This artist's kneaded eraser is a sketcher's best friend. Unless you have a perfect eye (I wish!), you'll probably want to change your drawing lines sometimes. The kneaded eraser can be formed into any shape you require, and will not damage the paper or leave messy crumbs behind when you use it.
4. **Paints.** You really don't need anything fancy or expensive to get started. Even a child's paint box will do. You can also purchase neat little boxes of paints with small pans of colours already chosen. These are great for getting started and for travelling. Another way you can buy paint is in small tubes of colour in semi-liquid form, rather like toothpaste. Choose the colours you like as those will generally be the ones you will want to paint with the most. You will need an empty palette into which you squeeze your soft paints. Spread them smoothly into the pans and allow them to dry before using otherwise you'll go through a lot of paint.
5. **Brushes.** Natural bristle brushes are lovely to paint with but can be quite costly, particularly if they are sable. If you're just starting out you may want to choose synthetic brushes until you decide how much you want to paint. Start with a Size 4 for fine work, a size 12 for washes on larger areas, and if you plan to paint landscapes, you'll want a flat brush in a larger size, such as 1 inch wide. If you like painting fine details you may also want to get a Size 2. Make sure the brushes come to a sharp point or edge.
6. **Water container.** This can be anything from an tin can to a purchased container. The one I use when I'm painting in my studio is an old sealer jar. If you think you'll be painting while travelling, you may want to consider a collapsible cup, but a paper coffee cup will do. Of course, you'll also need water.
7. **A rag.** You'll need something on which to wipe the excess water from your brushes as you work, when you change colours. Paper towels or napkins will also do the job if you don't want to carry a cloth. My studio rag is a piece of old towel. I use paper napkins when travelling.

These simple tools are all you need to get started in painting watercolours. Happy painting!

Love,  
**Wendy**

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