

# WATERCOLOR BASICS

A collection of watercolor supplies is arranged on a white surface. In the background, a blue watercolor palette with various colored pans is visible. In the foreground, several tubes of watercolor paint are scattered. One tube is yellow and labeled 'PREMIUM WATERCOLOR', '20 LEMON YELLOW HUE', '21ml / 0.71 fl. oz.', and 'Art 14738-2'. Another tube is purple and labeled 'PREMIUM WATERCOLOR', 'VIOLET', and 'Art 14738-2'. A third tube is blue and labeled 'PREMIUM WATERCOLOR', 'COBALT BLUE', and 'Art 14738-2'. A fourth tube is green and labeled 'PREMIUM WATERCOLOR', 'LIME GREEN', and 'Art 14738-2'. A paintbrush with a wooden handle and a fan-shaped head is also visible. To the right, a piece of paper shows a watercolor wash in shades of purple and pink.

Learn to paint with watercolors—  
we've got the basics right here.

## Watercolor Basics

{CREATIVE INSPIRATIONS *free* FROM HOBBY LOBBY®}

# BRUSHES

Both synthetic and natural brushes work well with watercolors—and synthetics won't break the bank if you're just starting out. The round brush shape is an extremely versatile option, as it can achieve thin lines and washes (large areas of color). Grab a few round brushes or a set intended for watercolor/ acrylic.



# PAPER

Stick with watercolor papers—they're designed to withstand water without warping or buckling. Cold-press is the most common choice, as it's extra toothy (rougher in texture and more absorbent). And hot-press paper is a smoother option—it can be great for crisp lines. Just be sure to look for a paper that's at least 140 lb.

HOT-PRESS

COLD-PRESS

# PAINTS

Watercolors are famous for their dreamy washes and blended colors. Paints typically come in two forms: individual tubes or pans (like the sets from childhood). While tubes offer more moisture off the bat, watercolor pans make it easy to access and transport multiple colors. **Tip:** Our semi-moist pans are a nice compromise. (Not shown)



# TIPS FOR STARTING OUT

Read these before tackling your first masterpiece.

**Learning value:** To get a feel for how to control color intensity (or value), play around with the water-to-paint ratio by painting several shades of the same color in various saturations. (a)

**Mixing colors:** When mixing colors, stick with complementary colors to avoid muddy browns and grays. (b)

**Dried-out paints:** If the paints on your palette dry out, don't stress—you can always rehydrate them with a bit of water.

**Staying clean:** Don't forget to dump your water often (you don't want dirty water muddying your work!) and thoroughly rinse your brush after each color.

**White space:** Before you paint, decide if your finished product will have highlights or white space. If so, skip over those areas—it's much harder to add white space with watercolor than it is to leave it. (c)

**Detail work:** Start large and save the details for the end. This helps your proportions stay accurate.



## EXTRA SUPPLIES

Keep these things on hand to paint like the pros.

- **container** – for water
- **palette** – for mixing colors
- **paper towel or rag** – for blotting wet brushes