

Bell Ringer 2/2/15

↳ What *is* Watercolor?

Watercolor Painting



Watercolor Introduction

Known traditionally as Aquarelle in France, Watercolour in England, Watercolor in America.

Pigment is suspended in Gum Arabic and then applied to paper in combination with water.

Watercolor is a transparent painting, where the white of the paper furnishes the lights and no white pigment is used.



Importance of Watercolor

Modern watercolor paints are now as durable and colorful as oil or acrylic paints, and the recent renewed interest in drawing and multimedia art has also stimulated demand for fine works in watercolor .

Watercolor is no longer a fragile medium. The pigments are colorfast, and the papers and boards are acid-free.





Materials - Paints

Commercial watercolor paints come in two grades: "Artist" and "Student."



"Transparent" colors do not have titanium dioxide or most of the earth pigments, which are very opaque.



Watercolors appear more vivid than acrylics or oils because the pigments are laid down in a more pure form with fewer fillers (such as kaolin) obscuring the pigment colors.



Modern commercial watercolor paints are available in two forms: tubes or pans.

Materials - Brushes

☞ A brush consists of three parts:



1. The tuft is a bundle of animal hairs or synthetic fibers tied tightly together at the base.

2. The ferrule is a metal sleeve that surrounds the tuft, protects the glue joint between the tuft and the handle from water.

3. The handle which is typically shorter in a watercolor brush than in an oil painting brush, and also has a distinct shape, widest just behind the ferrule and tapering to the tip.

Materials - Brushes

Round
Pointed



Round



Oval



Bamboo



Round*



Round



Flat



Bright



Round**



Rounds – Good for lines, contours, and details.

Flats – Good for washes.

Materials - Paper

There are three primary components which impact the look and feel of watercolor paper:

1. How the paper is treated, (surface)
2. The weight of the paper,
3. How the paper is processed after manufacture.



WATERCOLOR PAPER GUIDE

Choosing the right watercolor paper is just as important as choosing suitable paints or a brush. Paper can make or break your painting, therefore paying enough attention to its choice is inevitable.

Here are some criteria to consider.

surface

Machine-made watercolor papers come in three surfaces:

- rough**
has a very coarse, rough surface and highest tooth of all watercolor papers. It gives the greatest texture to watercolor washes as the pigment settles into the hollows of the paper. Running your brush lightly over parts of the picture creates interesting effects of accidental highlights. It is very suitable for expressive techniques and bold styles.
- cold-pressed (NOT)**
moderately textured paper, generally considered the easiest to use. The tooth of the texture takes broad washes very well and allows for the slight irregularities and graining in washes that many artists find desirable. This paper type is the best choice if you are starting to learn watercolor technique.
- hot-pressed (HOT)**
very smooth paper with nearly no tooth. It is very suitable for painters, who like detail, designers and illustrators who require flat artwork for reproduction. Paints dry very quickly on it, which is ideal for large, even washes of color. This type of paper is, however, quite expensive, which is another reason not to recommend it to the beginners.

weight

The thickness of watercolor paper is indicated by its weight, measured either in grams per square metre (metric) or pounds per ream (lb). The importance of weight in the choice of paper has mostly to do with the amount of warping that happens when the water or wet paint is applied to the paper. Heavier paper is more resistant to warping and is able to take heavier washes without curling.

standard weights:

200 gms / 90 lb	most likely to buckle up when painted on - stretching before use is recommended
300 gms / 140 lb	most commonly used paper type. It may or may not buckle, depending on the amount of water used
620 gms / 300 lb	less likely to buckle up at all

Artist's choice often relies on the price of paper, in this case thicker paper is usually more expensive. Generally, paper weighting less than 356 gms (260 lb) should be stretched before use.

stretching the paper

Stretching the paper maintains a flat sheet when using large quantities of water. All weights of paper will benefit from stretching, as once stretched, you are free to use as much water as you wish. Stretching works by soaking the paper to expand the fibres and taping it flat to dry flat. More water will not be able to cockle the paper.

Soak the paper completely (always use cold water):

200 gms / 90 lb	for 3 mins
300 gms / 140 lb	for 8 mins
620 gms / 300 lb	for 20 mins

Don't keep the paper in the water for longer than recommended. Drain the paper of excess water. Use brown gum strips (not masking tape) to tape edges along with complete length and keep the board flat to dry (alternative method is stapling the paper to the board). This way you will get a flat paper to paint on, once a painting is finished and dried, cut it off the board.

Stretching takes some time and preparation. If you decide not to stretch the paper before use, you can keep it taped to your board while working and remove it only when dry. This method is practical and quick but doesn't guarantee you a completely flat painting. You can also buy a pre-stretched paper in blocks, once you finish, remove the painting with a palette knife.

acid free papers are pH neutral, which is essential for the long term stability of the paper: they will yellow less in time.

watercolor papers are usually white, but it not need to be. A variety of cool and warm tints is available.

The HOT, NOT & rough textures vary in density and pattern from brand to brand. Personal experience with different brands of paper is something you will obtain by testing them yourself. My suggestion is to paint on a couple of them simultaneously so you can be sure of the difference.

I use and have tested about 4 brands of watercolor paper so far (Fabriano, Canson, W&N and Holbein), usually 200 gms / 140 lb HOT. I also use several techniques 230 gms paper made in Czech Republic for portrait painting. I had a VERY bad experience with Holbein watercolor paper and would not recommend it.

Materials - Paper

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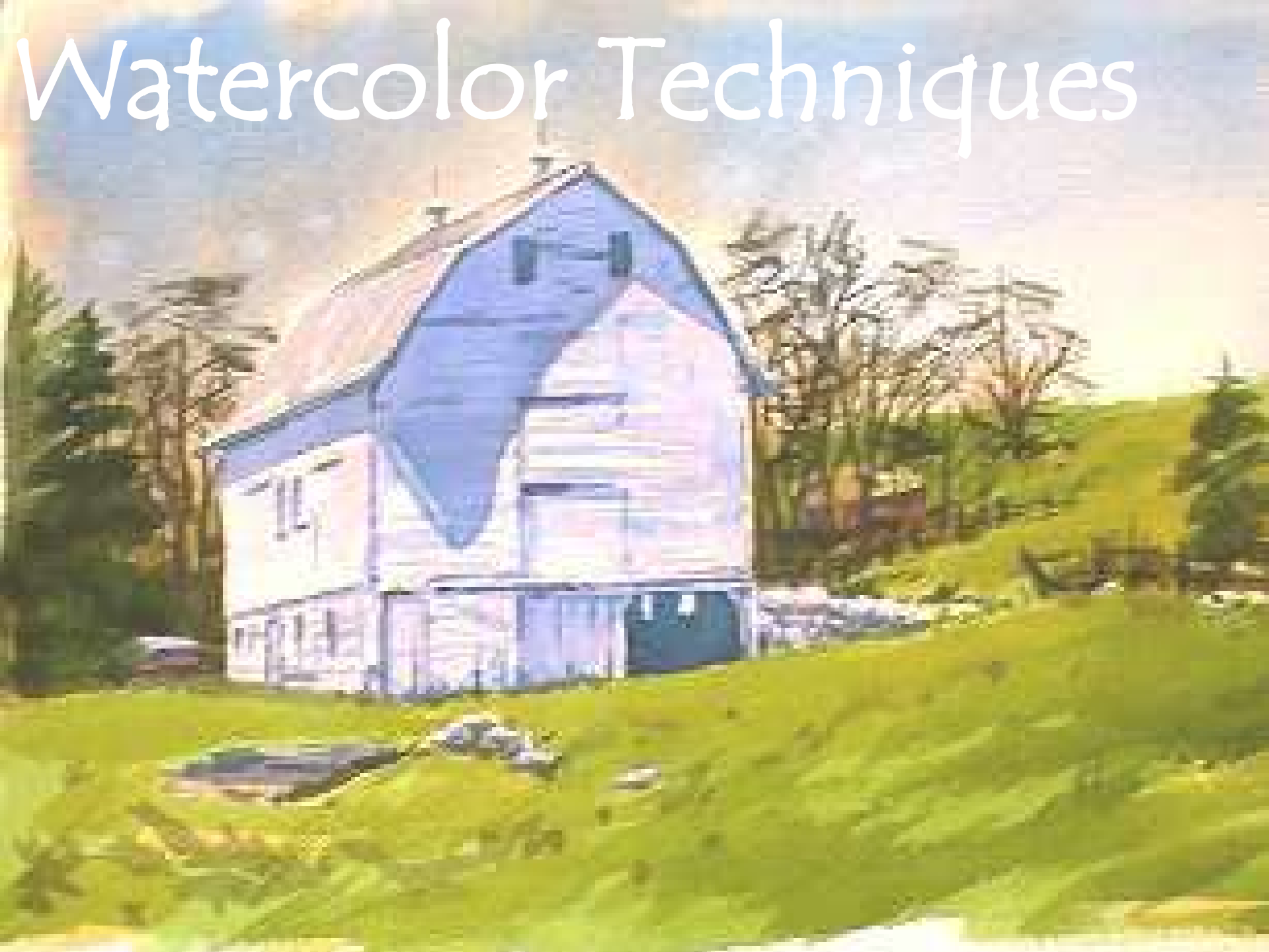
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Watercolor Techniques

Watercolor Techniques

Alcohol - Drops of alcohol added to wet paint dries quicker than the surrounding paint to create a unique texture.



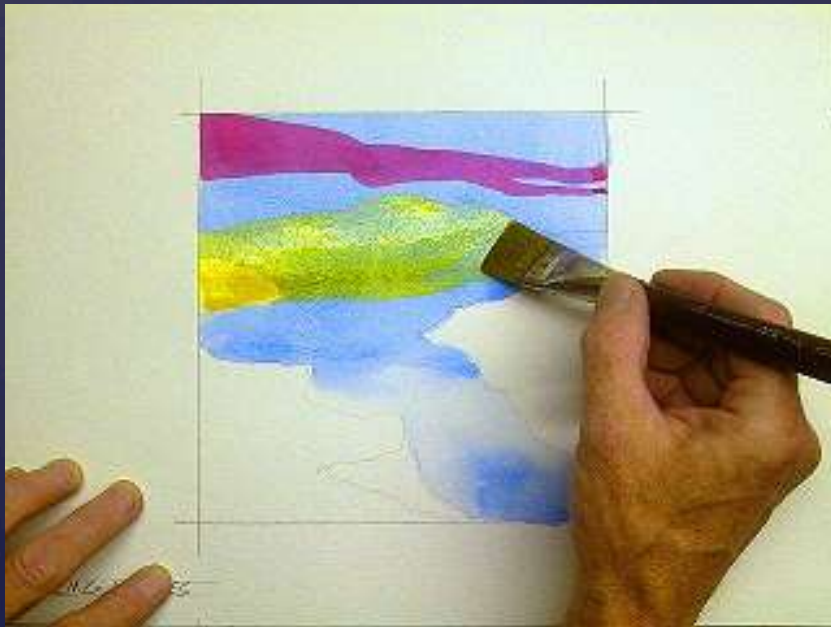
Watercolor Techniques

Dry Brush – Brush loaded with paint onto dry paper.



Watercolor Techniques

Glazing - Glazes are easy to accomplish using a little patience between steps. You must let each wash dry completely before applying the next transparent layer of pigment.



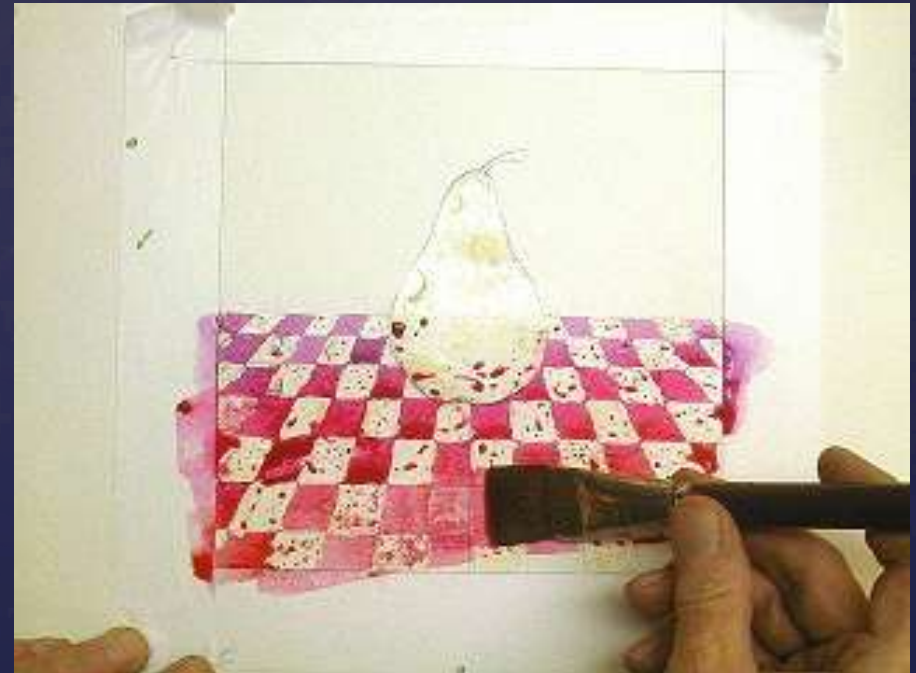
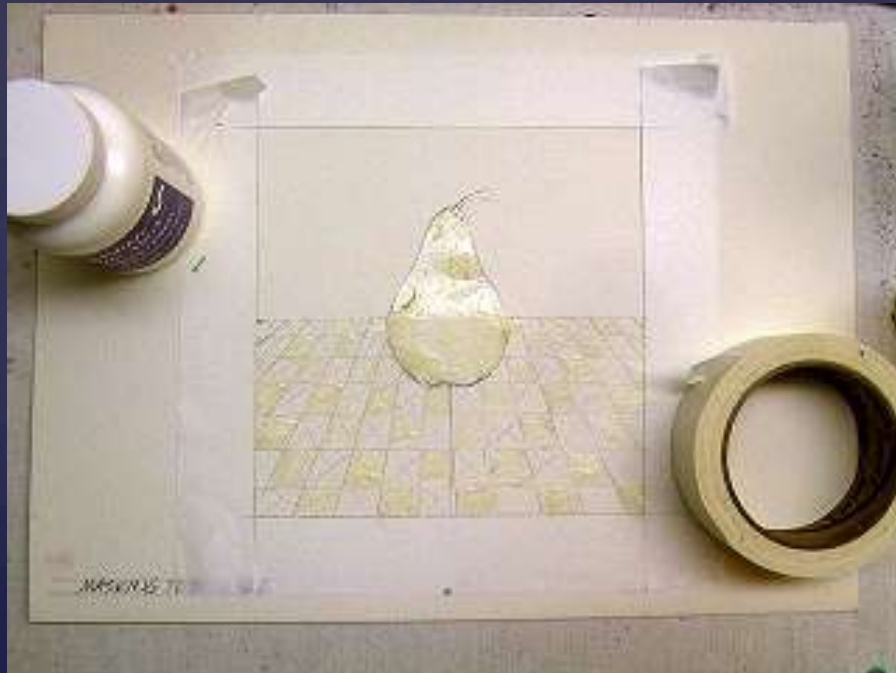
Watercolor Techniques

Lifting—Removing paint from the paper using a sponge or a soft paper towel.



Watercolor Techniques

Masking—Cover areas to preserve the white of the paper. You can use tape or masking fluid.



Watercolor Techniques

Plastic Wrap – Plastic wrap is applied to wet paint and then removed after drying to create a textured look.



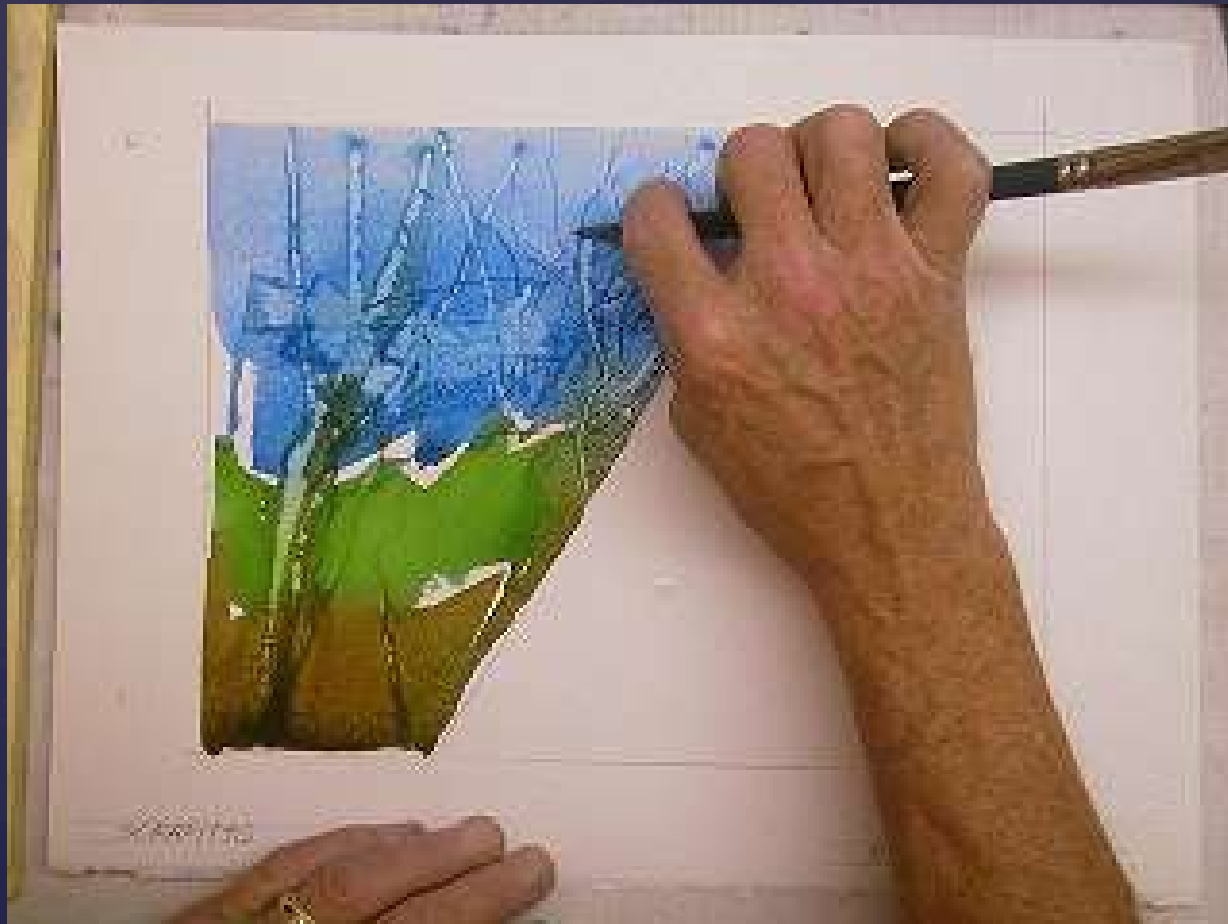
Watercolor Techniques

Salt—Apply salt to wet paint areas of painting to create a speckled texture.



Watercolor Techniques

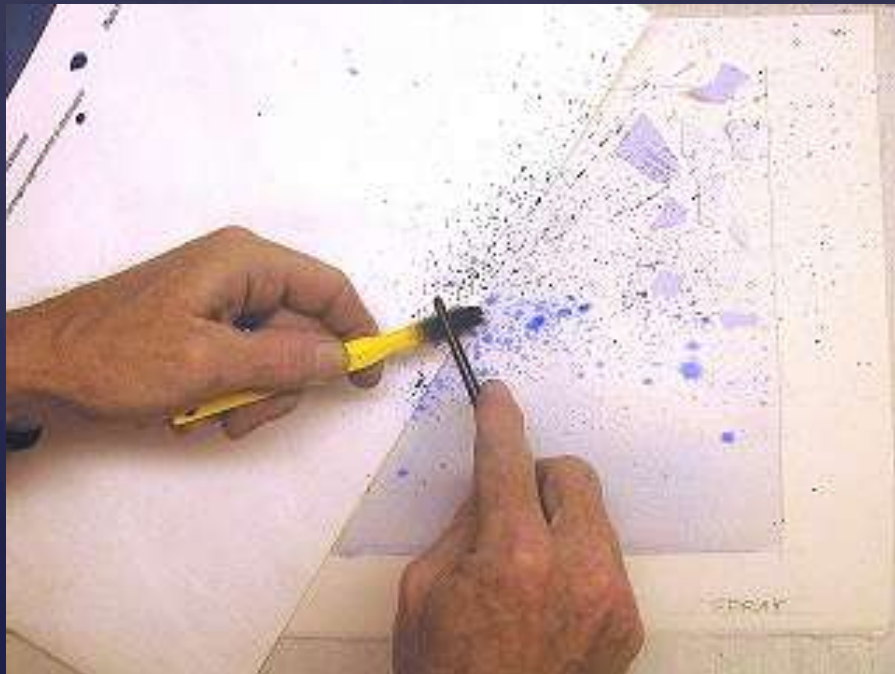
Scratching – Scratch into wet paper to create texture.



Watercolor Techniques

Splattering—The flicking of paint onto the paper.

Stamping—Dabbing the paint onto the paper with a sponge.



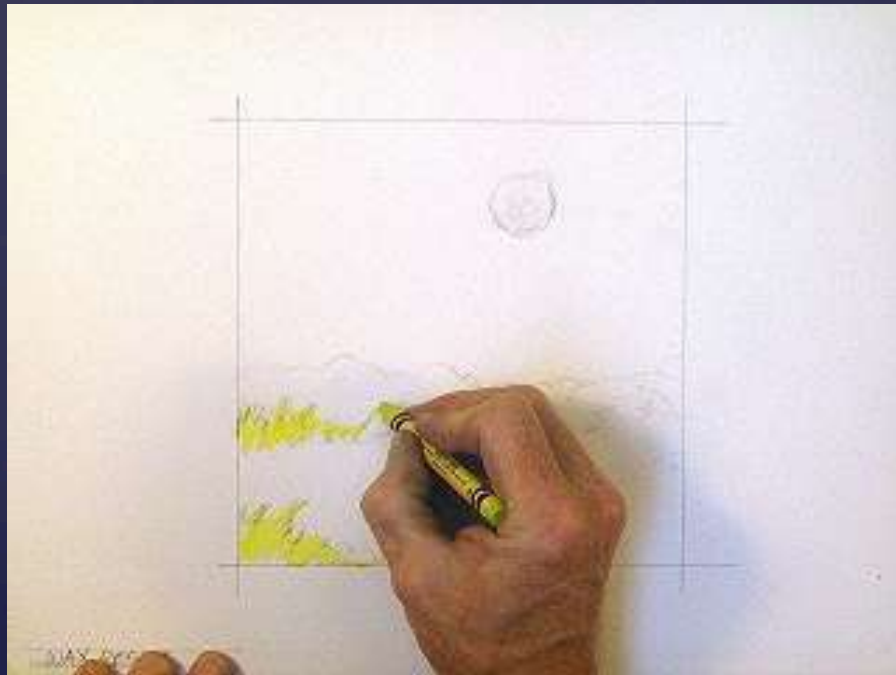
Watercolor Techniques

Tissue Paper – Tissue paper is applied to wet paint and then removed to create a textured look.



Watercolor Techniques

Wax Resist—Wax is applied to areas you want the watercolor pigment to repel the surface.



Watercolor Techniques

Wet-in-wet—a process of adding paint into a wet area that already has been pre-wet with clean water.

