

Brush Care

There are a few key things in brush care that are very important:

1. Keep them clean. After each day's use, wash them in warm water using a soap especially designed for brush maintenance. I prefer Escoda's bar of soap that contains olive oil. You can get it from Cheap Joe. It replaces the natural oils in the brushes as you clean them. Never use dish washing or hand washing soap since they are designed to take out all the oils. You will be surprised at how much paint is left in the brushes. That may cause you to wash them more often and to be rinse them out more thoroughly every time you use them.
2. Dry them thoroughly after washing them, preferably with the points down. I have a cord in my studio area with some alligator clips tied to it. I clip the brushes to the line overnight.
3. Never let them stand in any container with their bristles down.

Good brushes will last a long time. However, their points wear off before the full life of the brush is finished. As the points wear off of my brushes I retire them from the detail work and use them for washes or other not-so-detailed work.

Three books about watercolor pigment colors:

The Watercolor Painter's Pocket Palette

Author: Moira Clinch

Publisher: North Light Books

Published price \$27.95. I bought it for \$17.95

Color Mixing Recipes for Watercolor

William Powell

Walter Foster

\$9.95

Transparent Watercolor Wheel

Jim Kosvanec

Watson Gupstill

\$29.95, less from Amazon

Pricing your paintings

Here's the formula that I recommend:

First, multiply the painting's width by its length to arrive at the total size, in square inches. Then multiply that number by a set dollar amount that's appropriate for your reputation. I currently use \$6 per square inch for oil paintings. Then calculate your cost of canvas and framing, and then double that number. For example: A 16"-x-20" oil-on-linen landscape painting: $16" \times 20" = 320$ square inches

I price my oil paintings at \$6 per square inch. $320 \times 6 = \$1,920.00$, and I round this down to \$1,900. My frame, canvas and materials cost me \$150.00 (I buy framing wholesale). I double this cost so that I'll get it all back when the painting sells at the gallery. Otherwise, I'm subsidizing the collector by giving him or her the frame for free. $\$150 \times 2 = \300

Then I put it all together: $\$1,900 + \$300 = \$2,200$ (the retail price). When the painting sells from a gallery, my cut after the 50 percent commission is paid comes to \$950 for the painting and \$150 for the framing, for a total of \$1,100.

For much larger pieces, I'll bring the price per square inch down a notch ... maybe a dollar or two lower so that I don't price my work beyond what my reputation can sustain. Alternately, for smaller works, I'll increase the dollar per square inch because small works take almost as much effort as larger works, and I need to be compensated for my expertise, even when the work is miniature.

Daniel Smith Masking Fluid

This is the best masking product that I have found so far.

I have used it on a number of paper surfaces. It works very well.

Like any masking fluid, it should be removed as soon as possible. I have left it on Arches Cold-press paper for several weeks with no problem. However, on Fabriano's soft-press paper I try to schedule my painting so that it is not on longer than a day or two. If it is left for a week or so it tends to take some of the tooth off the paper. But, that paper surface is a special case.

I usually cut the tip of the bottle off at an angle and sometime use it that way, especially when I have a large area to cover.

The Daniel smith staff recommends that you just use the force of gravity to let the fluid flow from the bottle.

As you can see, the bottle comes with a number of applicators that you can trim to whatever shape you want. I have found that I squeeze the bottle when I am applying it and that forces the small clear applicator off the bottle. Therefore:

I use the Masque Pen applicator. It fits securely to the fluid bottle and produces a very narrow line or small dots. The only caution is that it needs to be cleaned immediately after use, even if you are going to use it again in a few minutes. The fluid solidifies pretty quickly and can clog the pen. I force a lot of water through it and then blow water through it until the water coming through runs clear, like we used to clean Rapiograph pens.

A rubber cement remover works well to remove the dried fluid.

Watercolor How-To Books

This is a list of books that provide basic techniques for watercolor. The price listed here is the publisher's list price. Most books can be purchased for substantially less at web sites such as Amazon or as used books through such web sites as Alibris.com.

Building Brilliant Watercolors – Judy D. Treman
North Light Books - \$27.99

Painting in Watercolor – Jenny Rodwell
Studio Vista - Beginner's Guide Series - \$17.95

Blue and Yellow Don't Make Green – Michael Wilcox
North Light Books - \$27.99

No More Wishy-Washy Watercolor – Margaret M. Martin
North Light Books - \$27.99

Classic Techniques for Watercolor Landscapes – Ray Campbell Smith
David and Charles - \$24.99

DK Art School: An Introduction to Watercolor – Ray Smith
DK Publishing - \$10.00, paperbound

DK Art School: Watercolor Still Life – Elizabeth Jane Lloyd
DK Publishing - \$10.00, Paperbound

Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Watercolor – Marian Appelof
Watson-Guptill - \$29.95

The Sierra Club Guide to Sketching in Nature – Cathy Johnson
Sierra Club Books - \$20.00

If you just want to see what is being done today in great watercolors there are two series of books that are worth exploring.

Splash - Numbers 1 through 12
North Light - \$32.00

The Best of Watercolor - Numbers 1 and 2
Quarry Books - \$24.99

Sources on the web

Art Supplies

www.cheapjoe.com

Watercolor Organizations and a generally terrific site about watercolor

<http://watercolor-online.com/Organizations/Organizations.html>

A good source for frames

www.amerianframe.com

A source for envelopes in many sizes and colors

www.papergoods.com

A great source for out-of-print books, especially art books

www.amazon.com

Inexpensive, high quality printing – postcards, flyers. Etc.

www.flyerfaucet.com

500 postcards, color both sides, \$115

Archival storage supplies, such as the clear plastic sleeves in which I keep my paintings

www.archivalsupplies.com

Info about digital cameras, printers with links to retailers with pricing

www.cnet.com

Digital Slides 35mm

www.gammatech.com Charlie Dodge, Proprietor

History of Still Life Painting

www.artlex.com/artlex/s/still-life.html

www.lauringallery.com