

# Spring Botanicals

PAINTING WORKSHOP



INÉS  
BEATRIZ

# General Watercolour Supplies

All you need to get started with watercolour painting are these 6 things:

- **Paintbrush**
  - Round shaped brushes with a good point are the most versatile
  - I recommend a medium sized brush such as size 8 or 10
- **Watercolour Paper**
  - Very Important to get paper that is 180 lb/300 gsm in weight (other papers will not handle water well)
- **Paint\***
- **Water and water container**
  - Having 2 is useful
- **Paper towel**
- **Palette or a space to mix your colours**
  - You can use a ceramic plate, plastic plate, or the lid of a paint set

\*A little more about paint:

Watercolour paints come in pans (think dry circles of colour) or tubes. Either choice is suitable. Paints come in a range of prices due to the quality and concentration of the pigments. Below I've listed some popular starter brands, from the very low prices to middle of the range.

If you choose to get tubes of colour, here are 6 excellent starter colours:

- cadmium red
- permanent rose
- ultramarine blue
- lemon yellow
- burnt sienna
- Payne's grey (or ivory black)

## Places to Shop:

Oomomo (Japanese dollar store)  
Opus Art Supplies  
Deserres

Phoenix Art Workshop  
Michaels  
Online (i.e. Amazon; keep shipping times/delays in mind!)

## Some Paint Brands (from \$ to \$\$\$):

\$ Koh-i-noor Compact Set (pans)  
\$ Crayola Children's set (pans)  
\$ Traditional Chinese Watercolours set(tubes)  
\$\$ Royal Langnickel (tubes)  
\$\$ Yarka set (pans)

\$\$ Art Alternatives (pans)  
\$\$ Grumbacher (individual tubes)  
\$\$ Talens (tubes)  
\$\$\$ Winsor & Newton Cotman (pan set)  
\$\$\$ Sakura Koi (pans or tubes)

# Project Details

We'll be painting two things today following the intro to essential techniques: colourful leaves and poppy flowers. All the techniques and steps we take to paint this project can be applied to any florals and future paintings.

## Specific colours I will be using:

- Cadmium Red and/or Crimson
- Yellow
- Hooker's or Sap Green
- Payne's Gray
- Phthalo Blue (optional)

## Other Supplies:

- Paint brushes
  - I recommend a medium round or mop brush
- Watercolour Paper
- Water container
- Paper towel
- Mixing Palette
- Hair Dryer

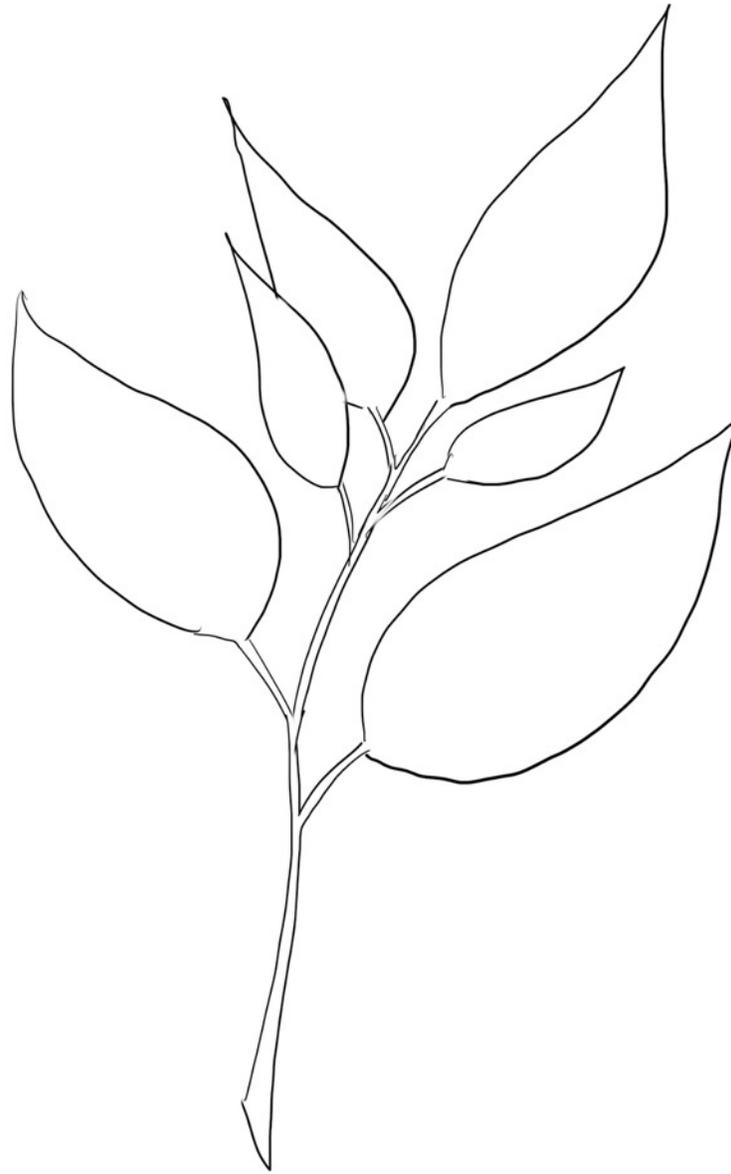
## How to Transfer Your Drawing to Your Watercolour Paper:

1. Print out the sketch
2. On the backside, scribble with a pencil
3. Place your sketch on top of your paper and trace the linework

Your drawing will be light but that's a good thing! You don't want to have dark pencil lines because they will show through your paint.

Scroll on for the line drawings, followed by general watercolour tips and techniques!

# Project 1: Colourful Leaves



Project 2: Spring Poppies



# Basic Colour Theory



PRIMARY COLOURS



RED  
YELLOW  
BLUE



SECONDARY COLOURS



ORANGE  
PURPLE  
GREEN



TERTIARY COLOURS



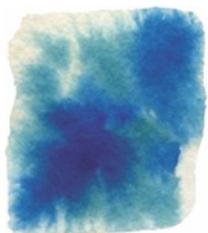
RED-ORANGE  
YELLOW-ORANGE  
RED-PURPLE  
BLUE-PURPLE  
YELLOW-GREEN  
BLUE-GREEN

# Paint Application



WET ON DRY

This method of paint application provides you with the most control. Your paper is dry and your brush is wet, loaded with paint and water.



WET ON WET

Wet on wet is the most unpredictable way of applying the paint to paper. Your paper is pre-wet and your brush is wet, creating unexpected blooms of paint.



DRY BRUSH

With this technique you can create texture by scraping your paint brush across the paper, revealing the tooth. Your paper is dry and your brush is as dry as it can be and still hold paint.

# Colour Value

Colour value – the lightness or darkness of a colour

Since watercolour paints are translucent and cannot really be erased, one should always paint from **light to dark**. It will be easier to add paint rather than remove it. Painting light to dark gives you more control and the ability to plan your approach to your painting.

With watercolours, use water instead of white to change the value of your paint.



# Colour Mixing

There are three main methods of colour mixing:

Mixing on the Palette – this gives you the most even mix and control over the specific hue



Mixing on the Paper – by manipulating the water or allowing colours to bleed



Glazing or Layering – let the previous layer dry completely before proceeding to the next layer



Glazing is also a useful technique for creating depth and luminosity in your subject.

Be patient – this takes some practice.

# Pulse, Pressure, and Stroke

In a single stroke, you can alter the shape of your mark by adjusting the pressure and angle of your brush. With a single round brush, you can make thin, thick and combination strokes.



The more angled your brush is toward the paper/the more pressure you apply, the wider your strokes become.



The more perpendicular your brush is to the paper the thinner the line.



# Mark Making

Straight lines, curves, and “tapping” the brush on the paper at various angles/pressures will create useful shapes that can be your botanical building blocks.

For example:



When you are painting a larger shape than your brush can make in a single stroke, move from one side to the other. Try to avoid outlining it first.

If you do outline, be sure to fill in the shape before those lines dry or it will show.



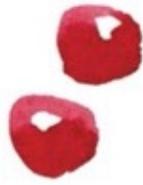
# Plant Shapes and Forms

Combine these brush strokes and shapes to create botanical forms.

Here are some examples that will hopefully inspired. Also, take a look at the plants around you when you need more ideas.



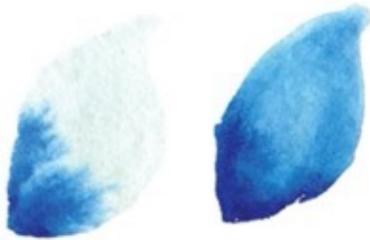
# Adding Texture and Visual Interest to Your Shapes



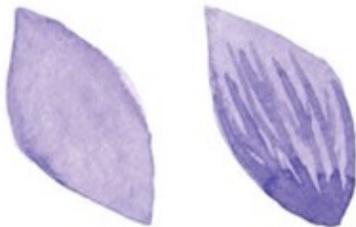
Paint a circle but do not fill in completely. When you leave spots of paper visible, you create a highlight on the berry, making it appear shiny. Allow colour pigments to settle on one side to add variations in value.



Begin with a spot of intense pigment saturation. Add water that touches the pigment and draws out the colour. You can coax the colour and manipulate it with water to achieve the shape you want.



This is the reverse process of the previous example. Begin with painting your shape in water only. Then gather paint in your brush and touch it to the water, in the spot that will be the darkest part of your petal/leaf. Again the paint will move but you can coax the colour with your brush and water to your desired shape/value.



Create details by working in layers. Begin with your desired shape. Let your layer dry and then proceed to add detail in the next layer. This is the glazing process and you can do as many or as few layers as you like. You can change colours and values to your liking.



I combined several of the above processes for this simple floral.

I used at least 2 colours for the petals and left areas blank to create highlights. The petals were wet so the colours could blossom and mix. For the centre, I waited till the flower was mostly dry to layer in the dots. As you can see, the right petal was still a bit wet, causing the black or blossom – a happy accident!

# Composition

Composition is what makes a painting or an image appealing to the eye. When you feel something is “missing” or “not quite right,” typically the composition is not yet balanced. There are many different ways to compose a painting successfully but we are going to focus on 3 things:

**Rule of Odds** – odd numbers can create balance

**Shapes** – small, medium and large shapes add variety

**Colour Harmony** – harmonious colours are ones that “go well” together aesthetically pleasing way. An easy way to create harmony is to limit your palette. These colours can be similar or create contrast.

Let's take a look at this example:



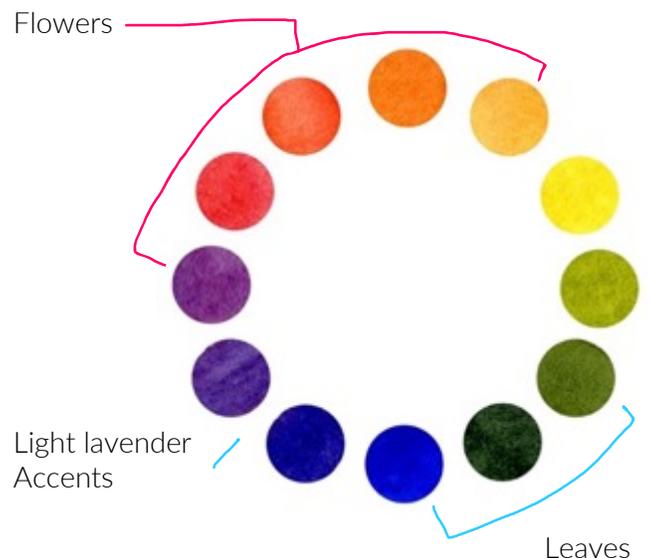
3 main flowers surrounded by filler florals/greenery

3 types of leaves (green arrows)

3 general shapes in varying sizes: the roundness of the flowers and the little accents; the main leaf shape; the long thin accents (blue arrows)

How are these colours harmonious? The main colours of the flowers are close to each other on the colour wheel while the leaves create contrast.

Take a look on the colour wheel to see where my main choices “live”...



# Project 1 - Colourful Leaves



For this project, we will practice the following techniques:

- Wet on wet application
- Mixing colour on the paper
- Creating visual interest using techniques on the page 10

## Step by Step:

1. Choose a limited colour palette. Here I used Payne's grey (the very dark blue/black colour), crimson, light blue, green, and yellow
2. Paint your first leaf with water.
3. While the leaf is wet, add your first colour to the paper, allowing the colour to spread.
4. While the leaf is still wet, you can choose to add another colour. The wetness of the paper will enable your paints to mix and blur.
5. Repeat steps 2 to 4 with each leaf.
6. Paint the stems.

**Tip:** If you want the stems to blur into the leaves, paint the place where they connect while the leaf is still wet.

# Project 2 - Spring Poppies

## Step by Step

### Let's begin with the background

1. Begin with the background. Wet the paper well.
2. Load your brush with paint and add colour to the wet paper. The colour should be very light, or very watered down in order to add hints of colour in the background.
3. Let dry or use a hairdryer to speed this part up!

### On to the flowers

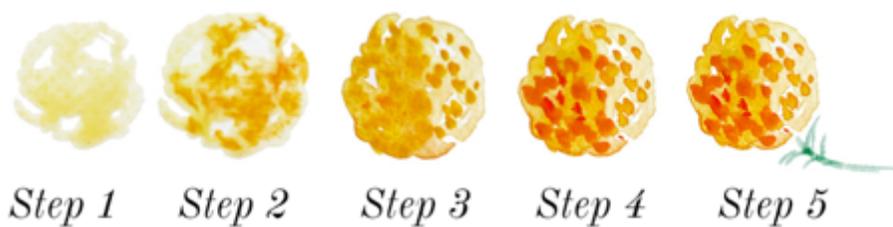
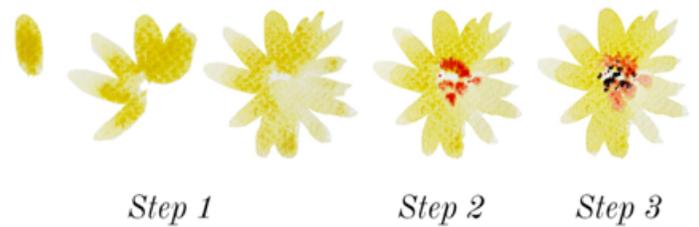
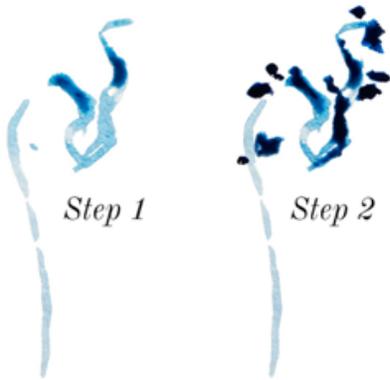
4. Once your paper is dry, time to paint the flowers, petal by petal.
5. Begin by painting a petal shape with water. While the petal is wet, add colour to the outer edges. (purple arrow)
  - a. This will make the outer edges the darkest part and the water let the paint flow towards the centre of the flower.
  - b. You can use more than one colour!
  - c. Repeat for each petal
6. While the petals are damp, dot in some darker paint for the centre - not too much so that it doesn't spread all over the petals!
7. Also while the petals are damp, lightly paint a few lines to create some soft texture
8. Next, paint the stems and leaves. I used more than one colour, allowing the colours to mix on the paper to create more interesting green elements.
9. Once the flowers are dry, add more dark paint in the centre.
10. Once everything is dry, add definition or increase saturation as needed. These additions will count as a separate layer so will not blend unless you coat the area with water first. (example indicated by green arrow)
11. Add splatters for extra fun!

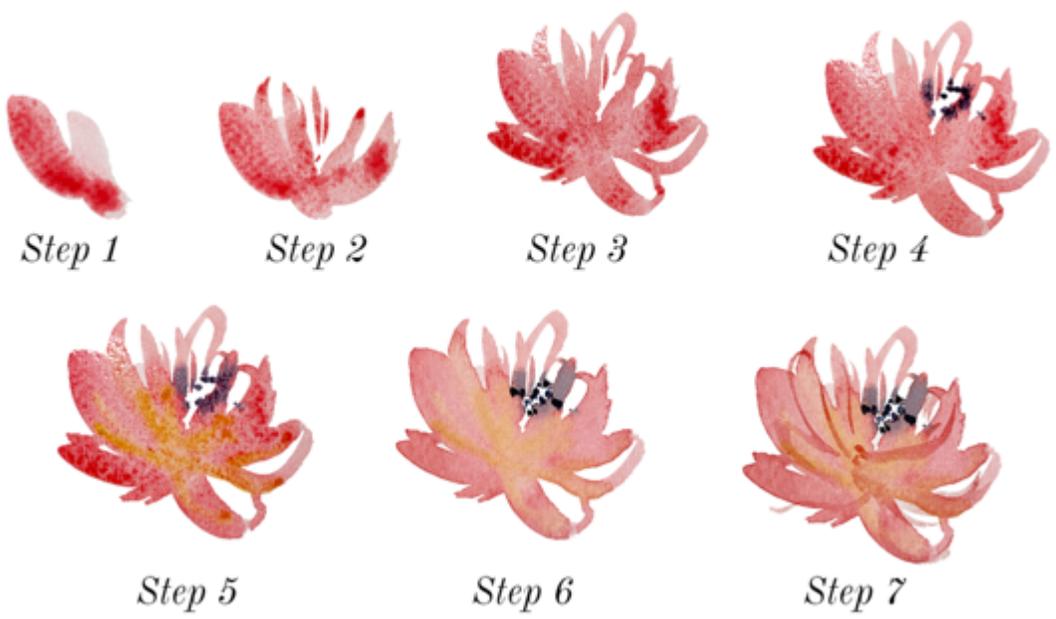
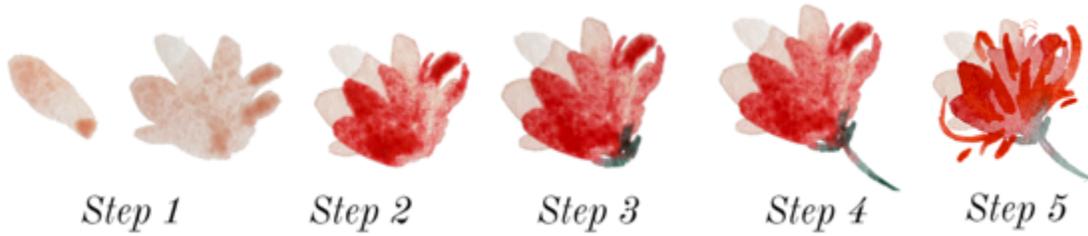


# Bonus: Recipes for Easy Flowers & Accents

Now that you have all the basic techniques of watercolour painting and a tips on how to make marks, here are some step by step processes of different kinds of florals you can use to build an arrangement!

You'll see these examples are loose interpretations of different flowers and botanical elements. While some are not much to look at individually, they come together to create a beautiful image.





Using the techniques, tips and floral “recipes” you have everything in your painting toolbox to continue exploring floral painting and more!

Here are some videos of other florals and bouquets I painted that you can use to continue practicing!

[PAINT WITH ME: Watercolour Daisies | Real Time Paint Along](#)

[Watercolour Florals | Painting Time Lapse](#)

[PAINT WITH ME: Loose Watercolour Peonies in 2 Ways | Real Time Paint Along](#)

*Happy Painting!*