

## WATERCOLOR - TECHNIQUE

### Washes

The most basic watercolor technique is the flat wash. It is produced by first wetting the area of paper to be covered by the wash, then mixing sufficient pigment to easily fill the entire area. The pigment is applied to a sloping surface in slightly overlapping horizontal bands from the top down. Once complete the wash should be left to dry and even itself out - don't be tempted to work back into a drying wash, the results are usually disastrous!

A variation on the basic wash is the graded wash. This technique requires the pigment to be diluted slightly with more water for each horizontal stroke. The result is a wash that fades out gradually and evenly



Graded wash through the sky

### Glazing

Glazing is a similar watercolor technique to a wash, but uses a thin, transparent pigment applied over dry existing washes. Its purpose is to adjust the color and tone of the underlying wash. Non staining, transparent pigments such as Rose Madder (or Permanent Rose), Cobalt Blue and Auroline are ideal for glazing as they can be applied layer after layer to achieve the desired effect. Be sure each layer is thoroughly dry before applying the next.



A cool Gray glaze pushes back the end of the buildings

### Wet in Wet

Wet in wet is simply the process of applying pigment to wet paper. The results vary from soft undefined shapes to slightly blurred marks, depending on how wet the paper is. The wet in wet technique can be applied over existing washes provided they are thoroughly dry. Simply wet the paper with a large brush and paint into the dampness. The soft marks made by painting wet in wet are great for subtle background regions of your painting.



Wet in wet push the bushes into the distance.

### Dry Brush

Dry brush is the almost the opposite watercolor technique to wet in wet. Here a brush loaded with pigment (and not too much water) is dragged over completely dry paper. The marks produced by this technique are very crisp and hard edged. They will tend to come forward in your painting and so are best applied around the centre of interest



Dry brush gives crisp, sharp details

### Lifting Off

Most watercolor pigment can be dissolved and lifted off after it has dried. Staining colors such as Phthalo or Prussian Blue, Alizarin, Windsor Red, Yellow or Blue are difficult to remove and are best avoided for this technique. The process for lifting off is simple - wet the area to be removed with a brush and clean water then blot the pigment away with a tissue. Using strips of paper to mask areas of pigment will produce interesting hard edged lines and shapes



The foreground shadow was lifted off so as not to draw too much attention

### Dropping in Color

This technique is simply the process of introducing a color to a wet region of the painting and allowing it to blend bleed and feather without interruption. The result is sometimes unpredictable but yields interesting and vibrant color gradations that cant be achieved by mixing the pigment on the palette.



The soft Burnt Sienna suggestion of a bush was dropped in while this area was still very wet