



Deb Watson - Brushes and More

Brushes are not the only way you can apply paint to paper, but we'll start with traditional brushes first

SOFT – that's the important word for putting watercolor down smoothly. The softer the brush, the lighter your touch, the less the paint gets pounded down into the paper and the more the paint can move and flow and make those beautiful mixes.

Putting Paint On – Brush Types

- Silver Black Velvet
- Sceptre Gold II
- Hake Brush

My favorite brush brand (because it's soft and has a good point) is **Silver Black Velvet**. I use the ¾" Oval (3009S), Size 10(Round), size 6(round) and size 1 3007S Script liner for tiny branches or lines. For large washes, I use a hake brush, usually 2", but up to a 4" on big pieces. Another type of brush that is slightly more stiff than the black velvet that I can use for painting and lifting is the Sceptre Gold II 101 in size 6. With watercolor, if a brush has a good point, you can use a larger brush for small work, which gives you better results than a smaller brush.

Taking Paint Off – Brushes and more

- Sceptre Gold II
- Level Lifter (Cheap Joe)
- Mr. Clean's Magic Eraser
- Toothbrush
- Razor Blade

I try to avoid creating areas that need lifted or softened, but with watercolor you'll need to soften some areas or lift them at some point. Be gentle – don't ruin your paper.



Other ways to apply paint – (limited only to your imagination)

- Misting spray bottle – to keep large washes nicely damp and workable, or move color around, or soften edges, or you can put paint in them and spray it on.
- Toothbrush – for spattering paint on wet or dry areas or to flip water on wet areas to create texture or spatter on masking.
- Sponges – natural sponges can be used to softly wipe off paint, wet paper, apply paint or masking, especially good with trees.

Artist Deb Watson Tips

Masking or Saving White Paper

- Liquid masking, available in many brands and colors. I use Pebeo drawing gum as it can be thinned with water. The white is impossible to see on white paper. Liquid masking will lift your pencil drawing. Masking tends to dry out in the bottle – turn the bottle upside down after you've used it and it will seal itself and not dry out.
- Masking tape – can be used to mask area, but be careful if the paper has had any water or paint on it, your wash may creep underneath the tape. Good for straight edges.
- Glad's Press and Seal & Film Frisket – good for large areas you want to mask, but paint may creep underneath. You can apply press and seal or frisket to the largest areas and paint liquid masking around the edges.

Saving your whites can often be avoided if you can lift out small shapes after the big washes are in. Lifting out your whites with a stencil and Mr. Clean's Magic Eraser gives you softer edges and usually a better effect.

Texture Effects

- Salt – any kind of salt applied to a damp area may cause a texture to appear. This will affect the pH of your paper. I spray my painting with a neutralizing spray when I use salt, but this probably won't negate the damaging effects of salt completely.

Below shows the big wash I started with and salted to create a blotchy effect that looks like trees. After that was dry, I layered more color on top, and more salt.

