

**Wet on Wet** is good for blending colours, like in the Mango. By putting water on the paper first and then adding the colour on it can give a subtle almost mottled effect. You have less control but edges of different colours are less harsh. If paint runs too much you can always use tissue to blot it off but it will knock the colour back to a very pale shade as you are taking pigment off the paper. You can also add more water on top to blend further.

**Wet on Dry** gives more control so is handier for definition and bolder areas of colour. With Wet on Dry you can still do a wash over the top when it is fully dry or you can underpaint (where you have chosen a colour to harmonise your page - more on that later).

Most people use a mixture of these 2 techniques in their work to create a dynamic image thinking about tonality and planes of colour - even brush marks depending.

## TOP TIPS FOR WATERCOLOUR

- enjoy the process, it's all a learning curve
- be patient, wait for layers to dry
- if you make a "mistake" go with it, embrace the imperfections!
- learn when to stop, which is an art in itself
- working from light to dark (usually)
- change your water often, leaving it too long can leave you with murky marks on your work

## Watercolour Techniques



Wet on Wet

"Go with the flow!"

putting water on page then adding watercolour



Wet on Dry

- more control

loading brush with watercolour to add direct to page

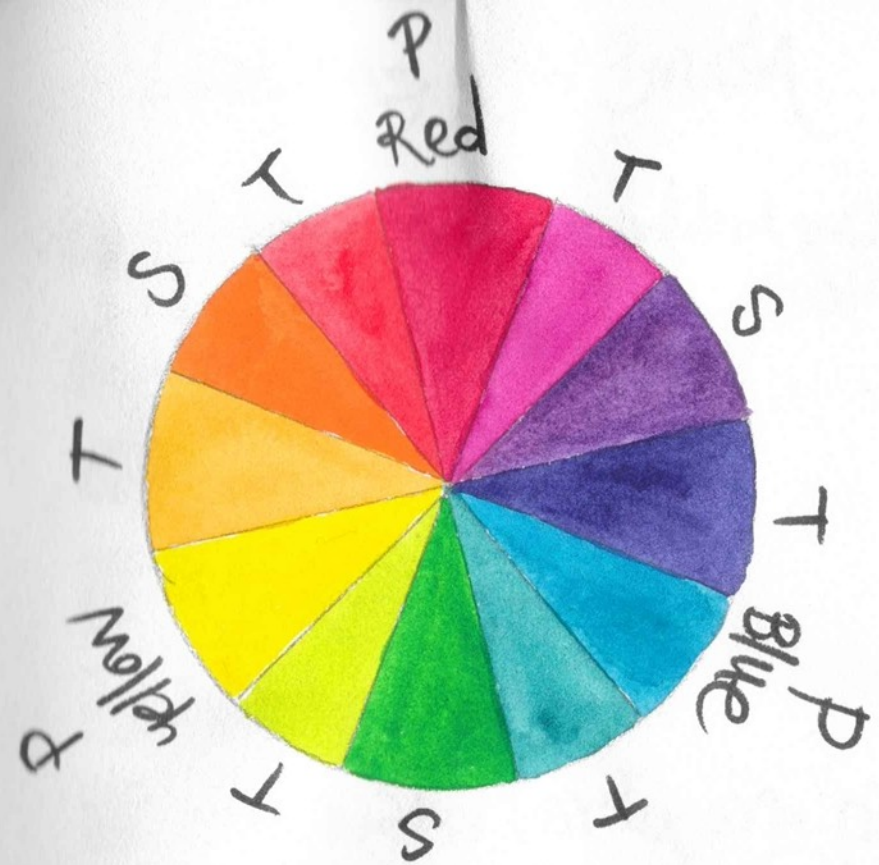
**Colour Wheel** understanding colour and how different colours relate to each other is helpful to inform the colour choices we might use - for harmonising our palette, shadows or even highlights. Or simply just thinking how the colours will look near each other.

**Primary Colours** are colours that can't be mixed from other colours. They are red, yellow and blue - thought of as the foundation for creating other colours.

**Secondary Colours** are the colours created from mixing the primary colours together;  
Red + Yellow = Orange  
Yellow + Blue = Green  
Blue + Red = Purple







**Tertiary Colours** are the colours made from mixing the primary and secondary colours that are next to each other; red-orange, yellow-orange, yellow-green, blue-violet, and red-violet - they are also known as intermediate colours.

**Complementary Colours** are colours directly opposite each other on the colour wheel; when placed next to each other they give the strongest contrast. The pair is usually one "cool" colour and one "warm" colour.



P = Primary S = Secondary  
T = Tertiary

complementary colours

		Red vs. Green
		orange vs. Blue
		Yellow vs. Purple

Colour Wheel

(opposites)



**Loading your Brush** this is how you get the paint on your brush. Watercolour can come in different forms - we generally use the solid form which is set in a pan, you can also get watercolour in tubes which is concentrated and still needs watering down but slightly differently.

Some people use a water bottle to spray the palette before use, we don't, but everyone will have slightly different ways of doing things - see what works for you!









For this guide we've based it on round head brushes to paint - using a round brush dipping it in water you can go straight on to the colour or you can use the brush to drop some water in to the pan to create a small puddle.

We twirl our brush on the pan or puddle to load pigment on to the brush, the more you rub the brush in the pigment the darker the colour will be.

You can add water on to the paper after or you can dip your brush back in to the water, the more you move it the more the pigment will come off - so be mindful of that.

When painting you can keep diluting the colour to get different shades as set out on the page like so.

## Loading your Brush

-  wet brush but no added water after
-  dipped after loading
-  dipped again
-  and again
-  keeping dipping
-  more water barely any pigment
-  dipped again
-  barely visible colour

Varying the amount of pigment on your brush as well as the amount of water changes the saturation of colour



**Watercolour Washes** this is a great way to cover large sections, as a background changing tonality or even a gradient or to create a dynamic areas of interest with multiple colours.

**Gradient Wash** this is a fantastic way to create a colour fade or creating a more interesting skyline/ background to give the focal image a depth - depending how you use it, we started heavily loading a round brush to get the darkest colour and then kept adding water. You can use a wide flat brush to go over this to blend it more seamlessly. But if you only have a round brush this is fine - they are very versatile! We started it by doing wet on dry - putting the paint on dry paper and then blending with the water after.

**Variegated Wash** this is a multicolour blend where we use "wet on wet", preparing the paper by brushing water over it, we did this with a round brush but if you have a wide flat brush that also works well so you can do it faster. Then loading the round brush and dotting colour on and letting it naturally "bleed" into the paper. You can add more colour and more water, you can even drop water on to give it a more mottled blend. This is a great way to create a vibrant background around a centred solitary figure - rather than just being framed by white. Just depends on the aesthetic you are after!

# Watercolour Washes

Wet on Dry ↓



Gradient Wash ↓

start saturated  
add more  
water as you  
move down

Variegated Wash ↓

2 or more  
colours together

wet on wet →





Use of colour can be done in a variety of ways, pure colour, colour mixing, harmonising your palette by choosing a unifying colour to mix through your colours and underpainting to name a few. For this we are looking at "Pure Colour" & "Colour Mixing".

**Pure Colour** this is where we use the colour as is from the paint palette, we used 2 browns and a black to create the bear. Watering down or loading pigment up to create different values of colour. Painting the bear in this way we worked from light to dark - starting with the reddy/brown, then adding the darker brown once dry to add more depth/shading to the bear. Finalising details with the black - our darkest colour.

**Colour Mixing** this is creating the brown of the bear with his highlights and shading using the primary colours layered to create the bear with a slightly more subtle interest to it and almost a sense of soft lighting on him. This is the reverse of the pure colour bear as we start with the darkest colour and work to the lightest. We created the outline and patches of shading slightly in the blue. Waited for the blue to dry and then went in with the red - whilst the red was still a bit wet we added in patches of the yellow.

With both of these methods you can always go back in with a colour already used - you don't have to follow guides to the letter - sometimes it is good to explore what works for you!

## Pure Colour vs. Colour Mixing



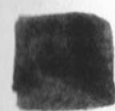
Blue 1st



Red 2nd



Yellow 3rd



3rd



2nd



1st

No Mixing



Shading can create depth in your work, giving items a weight and grounding in the image rather than a flat 2D depiction, ultimately it depends what you are creating - there isn't a "right or wrong" in this!

Choice of colour for shading can have an impact on the overall image, giving it cool or warm tones, or a subtlety or harshness depending on what you want to achieve.

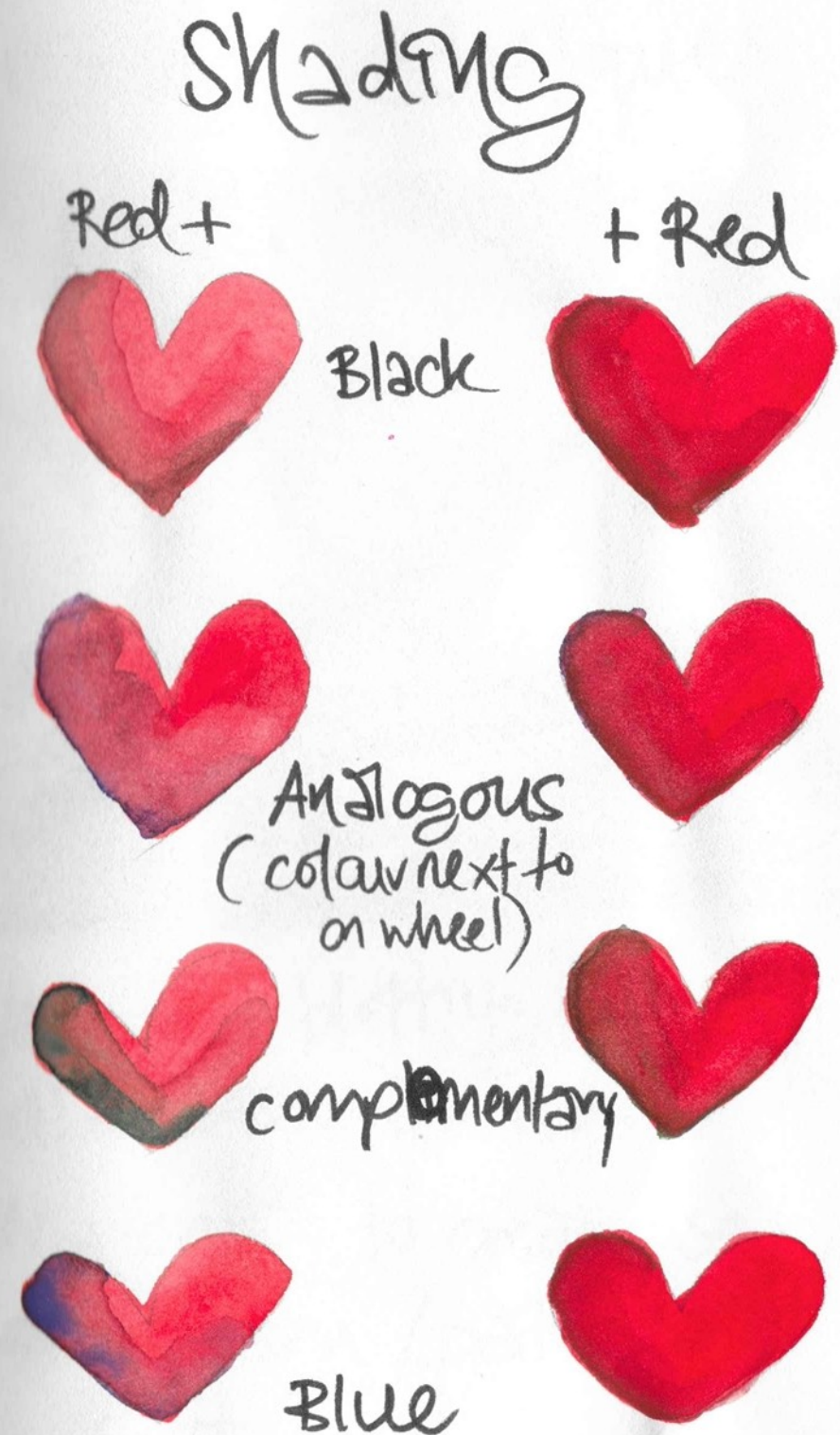
On the page we have shown the colour on top on the left column and then on the right column the red being applied one the top to harmonise the hearts.

**Black** this is a go to for most but in reality it can be too harsh, shadows in real life are very rarely black - doesn't mean you can use it but it is worth exploring options.

**Analogous** this is the colour next to the object's colour on the wheel - so in this case purple is the analogous for red.

**Complementary** this is the colour that is opposite on the colour wheel, green is the complementary colour for red.

**Blue** this is instead of black, whilst it is still a dark colour it is less harsh than black so can work well as a colour for shading - see what works for you.





## Mixing Techniques

Many artworks created using watercolour will feature a variety of different techniques to create depth or texture in the image. For this simple boat scene there's multiple techniques in play.

To create the sky is a simple **wash** as it is a large area, so you want it to be kind of seamless, water dropped on parts for added interest. Kitchen roll put on to the wet paint to **blot** it and remove paint to form clouds.

The boat was drawn out first of all so we didn't go over the sails with the wash, to create the sea we used a **dry brush**. **Dry brushing** is where you barely wet the brush, just enough to be able to transfer pigment on to it, but not enough for the paintbrush to glide. The lack of water will create this dragged effect with patches of the pure paper coming through. This is a great way to create texture and works well to replicate waves - emulating foam or even patches of sun being reflected off the water.

The boat is just a super simple representation done when it was all dry using wet on dry with no particular concentration on shading or definition. More just using the most simple shapes to think how to translate the picture to still being a readable image.

## Mixing Techniques



- wash plus blotting with kitchen roll to create clouds
- dry brush to create sea and foam / patches of light



## Underpainting

Underpainting can be a way to harmonise your colours, with acrylic paint you might mix one colour through all your colours to tie them together because acrylic doesn't dry as fast and is opaque (generally). With watercolour you can paint a colour as a background or as a base on an object to build up on - watercolour is translucent (unless you mix white into it or other mediums).

The left hand side is just painted directly on to white paper which makes the colours more vibrant and bold, perhaps less realistic because of the saturation.

The right hand side is painted over a yellow to harmonise as a background (after it dried), imagining the lighting of the room and how a room the colours in the room would go across all items in the room.

This is a very simplified depiction of underpainting - you can use this concept to play around with how you create your artwork. You can use one colour for the whole image, or if using multiple subject matters within the artwork underpainting each one to be sympathetic to the colour that it is.

This can create an overall depth to the work which adds a richness to the image.



Underpainting