

Terms and Techniques

After working on consistencies and water control, now it's time to work on applying those consistencies to various application techniques. Here are some techniques and terms in watercolor painting.

Terms related to brush use:

- **Thirsty brush** - A damp brush with moisture removed. A thirsty brush is used to pick up beads and excess paint and water. One can also use paper towel or sponge.
- **Damp brush** - A brush with a little more water in it than a thirsty brush. How's that for a definition!
- **Wet brush** - A brush that's been dipped in water and skimmed on the edge of the water container a few times.
- **Loaded brush** - A brush holding the maximum amount of pigment and/or water without dripping.

Basic techniques of paint application:

- **Wet on dry** - Applying a brush loaded with pigment and water to a dry surface.
- **Wet on wet** - Applying a brush loaded with pigment and water to a wet surface.
- **Dry on wet** - Applying a damp brush with (butter) pigment to a wet surface.

Types of Washes

- **Flat Wash** - An area of evenly distributed color and water.
- **Graded Wash** - A wash applied dark to light or light to dark across an area. They can be one color or multicolored graded washes.
- **Charging** - Applying a pigment into a water or color wash. This overlaps with mixing on paper.
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Washes can be applied in many ways. Usually a combination of techniques are utilized in the making of a painting.

Types of mixing

- On the palette
- On the paper
- Overlapping transparent layers
- On the brush

Paint characteristics

- **Opaque** - The pigment is dense, not allowing light to penetrate it to the surface of the paper and reflect back to your eye.
- **Semi-opaque** - Pigment is less dense allowing some light to penetrate to the paper.
- **Transparent** - The pigment particles allow light to pass through to the paper and reflect back to you eye. It's what gives watercolor its luminous quality. Transparent colors seem to glow.
- **Staining** - Pigments that that are so fine and dye-like that they penetrate the paper fibers are staining. Staining colors are difficult to remove from the paper.
- **Granulating or sedimentary**- Pigments that are granular are composed of large particles. These particles settle into the paper wells making reticulating patterns and textures.