

## Watercolours ~ Colour Mixing - 1

Mixing colours is really a personal thing and every artist has their own favourites. I personally use 'artist' quality paints, although they are more expensive than the student variety they are normally far more consistent and they are more light fast. Below are some suggestions for mixing.

- Skies** For the 'blue' areas either French Ultramarine (warm) or Cobalt blue (cold), occasionally I add Prussian blue to the mix for a stormy sky. Always weaken the wash towards the horizon, by adding more water. Evening effects can be achieved by running in a little Alizarin Crimson.
- Clouds** Use a mix of Cobalt and Raw Umber for a cool grey or substitute raw umber for Burnt Umber for a warmer grey, to change the greys and get a greater variety within the clouds add a tiny tinge of Sienna or Crimson.
- Far Distance** Mix a bluey grey as above, remembering that the cooler the colour the further it will recede, control the tone by adding more water.
- Distant Mountains** Mix a bluey grey as above, add Raw Sienna for a green/grey, to warm it up add crimson.
- Closer Mountains/Hills** Use a mix of French Ultra and Burnt Sienna, add a little Yellow Ochre to 'green' the hill sides and/or Burnt Sienna or Crimson.
- Grass (near)** It is useful to add a pale crimson wash before adding Primary/Lemon Yellow and Cobalt or Ultramarine will give a bright green suitable for new grass, add Yellow Ochre and/or Sienna for a richer tone.
- Cadmium yellow or Gamboge and Ultramarine for a warm green, for warmer still add Burnt Sienna.
- For grass that has been mown or is wind or frost burnt use Raw Sienna or Yellow Ochre, add Burnt Sienna and/or Crimson for warmth. For a green tinge add a little of the blue.
- Grass (distance)** Mix the colours as above and add a tinge of the sky colour blue. Reduce the intensity by adding more water.
- Grass (Shadow)** Use the same colours but add Burnt Umber to make warm shadows, for cool shadows add Raw Umber, use less water for a stronger colour.
- Tree Colours** It is important not to use exactly the same colour for foliage as you have done for grass if you do the trees will just blend in so adjust your

green mixes with Burnt Umber or Burnt Sienna for dark foliage. For a very dark green try using a mixture of Indigo and Sepia.

For Autumn colours use mixtures based on Raw & Burnt Umbers for foliage in shadows with Raw and Burnt Sienna for lighter leaves. Add stronger yellows and/or reds as required.

Alizarin Crimson added to any of the greens will also darken and grey them, this can be useful for tree trunks and branches.

Cadmium Yellow with French Ultramarine and a touch of Burnt Umber is useful for evergreen shrubs and for real darks try a mixture of indigo and sepia.

- Shadows Shadows vary considerably they can be cool or warm, textured or smooth, they will always reflect the colours they are near, sometimes they are very dark others will be just suggested. Mix a good dark grey using either French Ultramarine and Burnt Sienna or Cobalt and Burnt Umber warming it if necessary with Crimson or Alizarin. Then weaken with water as required.
- Roads, Paths & Tracks Mix what you think is the correct colour then carefully check, as they usually have a smooth surface they are usually lighter in tone than you expect.
- Fences When they are in full sun they are usually much lighter in tone than expected, the colour is usually a silver grey or silver fawn.
- Stone Walls  
Yorkshire stone ~ mixes of umbers, siennas with Prussian Blue  
Sandstone ~ mixes of umbers, siennas, with tinges of red and blues  
Limestone ~ mix grey/blue as above  
Cotswold ~ raw sienna with a touch of one of the umbers and a tinge of crimson  
Glaze or splatter green lichens once the wash is dry and remember to add really dark areas around the stone for dry stone walls, sepia and indigo or prussian will give a good dark for this.
- Beaches Mixes of siennas with a touch of the umbers, for mudflats use umber with a touch of Ultramarine or the blue you used in the sky.