Watercolor for the Absolute Beginner

Matthew Palmer

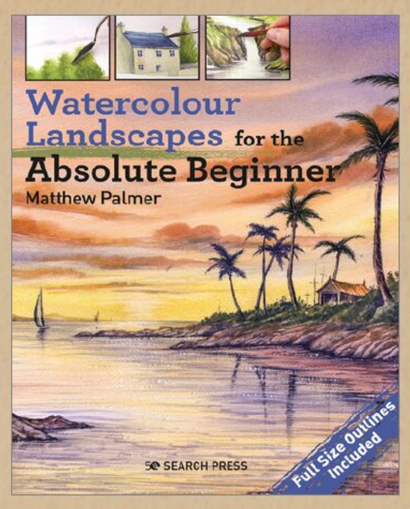




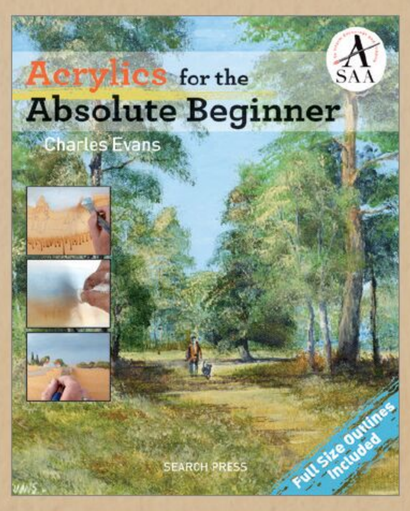


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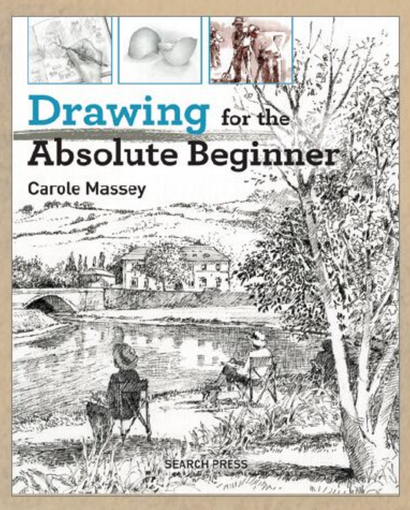
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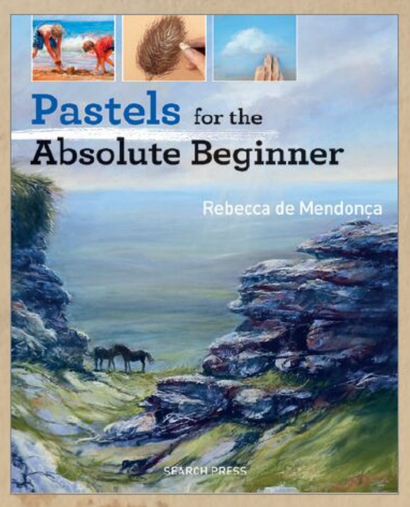
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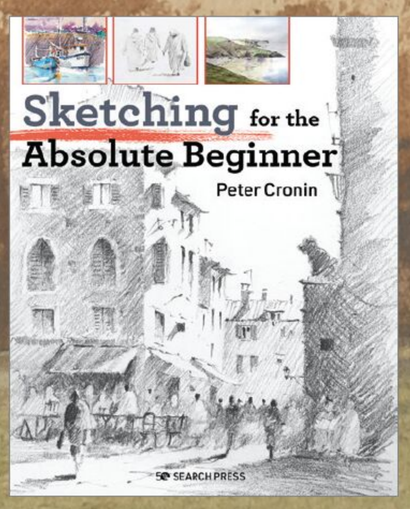
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Matthew Palmer is a renowned demonstrator of watercolor painting, and his classes are particularly popular with beginners. He has been painting seriously for over twenty years and specializes in landscapes, still life, and animals. He has his own studio at his home in Derbyshire, UK, and teaches hundreds of people each week, as well as running watercolor workshops and vacations. He has many personal exhibitions, participates in several art shows each year, and appears regularly on television as well as on his own internet-based art show on www.watercolour.tv



Watercolour for the Absolute Beginner



Dedication

I would like to dedicate this book to my mother and father, Ken and Alice. For their love, support and encouragement.



Watercolour for the Absolute Beginner

MATTHEW PALMER



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You are invited to visit the author's website: www.watercolour.tv

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A big thank you to Richard and Jean and all the team at the SAA, for their massive support and guidance.
And finally a big thank you to all at Search Press, especially Roz, Sophie, Caroline and Martin without whom this book would not have happened.





Above

Old Broken Gate

This wonderful little scene just goes to show you can make a painting from almost anything, anywhere.

Page 1

Village in Snow

The step-by-step project for this painting is shown on pages 82–89.

Pages 2–3

Lakeside Houses

The step-by-step project for this painting is shown on pages 94–101.

Opposite

Chatsworth in Snow

The snow in this tranquil painting was painted by using a pale blue to create shape and form.

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Introduction

I began painting at a very young age. Art was always in my blood and it was a subject I always understood. I could see perspective and how buildings all have the same basic structure, and I could see the shadows in a tree. It was this early artistic flair that really helped me along the path to being a professional artist. I have always thought that children's minds are like sponges; they absorb information with an almost photographic memory, and because I spent time drawing and sketching objects like trees, I really captured these in my mind. A big thank you to my parents, as they bought me my first watercolour set at the age of ten. From then on, I taught myself to paint in watercolour, by trial and error. I just kept trying and trying, until I got it right.

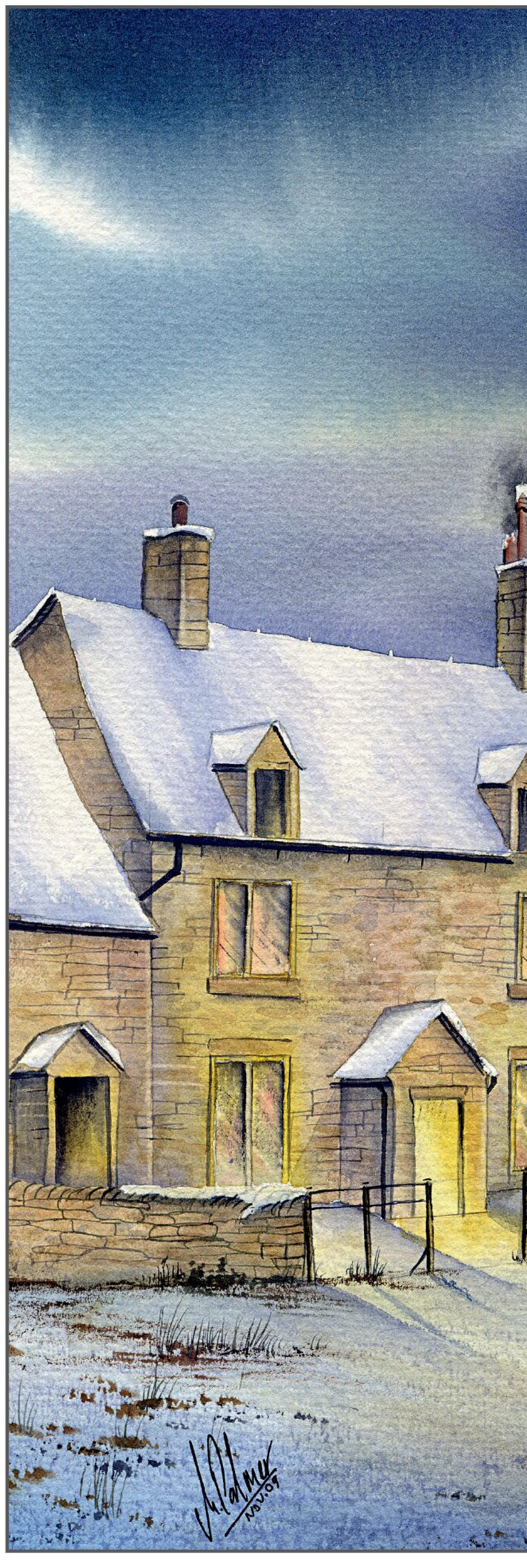
I soon developed my own style, which has a good balance of looseness with detail where is counts, drawing the eye to the painting's focal point. I love to paint landscapes and seascapes, and painting from life is what I really enjoy. Watercolour is very easy to travel with; all you need are a few brushes, paints, a piece of watercolour paper and a bit of inspiration. Another favourite subject of mine is animals; capturing the detail in the hair is wonderful. I also enjoy painting close-up studies of old gates and cottage doorways. My painting has evolved over the years and it still does; I think in every painting you learn something new.

I started teaching groups and giving demonstrations in 1997, with weekly classes in my village, Langwith in Derbyshire. This led to more classes and workshop days up and down the UK, and painting holidays soon followed. Before I knew it, I was teaching over 200 artists per week.

The Society for All Artists approached me and soon had me filming watercolour DVDs and working on my first TV show: *Paint Along with Matthew Palmer*. We produced two successful series of this, and now I present *A Splash of Paint* on the Painting and Drawing Channel (from the Society for All Artists).

This book is a collection of my many years' experience of painting and teaching. It contains all the helpful tips and tricks that I have picked up over the years and is ideal for beginners to watercolour and those who wish to improve.

The first half of the book works as a watercolour companion, ideal to keep at your side while painting, as it features all the essentials you need to start out on your watercolour journey, or revisit the basics. Here



you will find all you need to know about materials, translating a scene on to a piece of watercolour paper, with perspective and composition simply explained; moving on to light and shade, mixing colours, painting skies, figures, trees and water.

The second section is a complete watercolour course, with six simple exercises to follow and paint for yourself, followed by six full watercolour paintings, demonstrated step-by-step. Each of these paintings has its own outline for you to transfer on to watercolour paper and try again and again.

It has been a great journey writing this book. I hope it gives you the confidence to get started or develop your skills in watercolour painting.

On a Moonlit Night

This is one of my favourite paintings. I love the atmosphere and the use of light against dark tones.



Materials

There are a huge amount of watercolour materials out there. It can be baffling at first and artists who are just starting out tend to buy everything, so they end up with way too many brushes and paints, and paper that is just not right.

It is always tempting to buy at the lowest price, but sometimes this can be false economy. A low cost sheet of watercolour paper may go wavy and the paint can dry too fast, so you end up starting the painting again. A good sheet of 100% cotton paper stays wet for long periods, absorbs the paints and will stay flat. This is true with paints and brushes as well. I always tell beginners, 'Buy the best materials you can afford when starting out, as you will save money in the long run, and the item not to compromise on is the paper.'

Here is my recommended watercolour equipment list, as used throughout this book.

Paints

Watercolour paint comes in two forms: pans (little square blocks of hard paint) and tubes of soft watercolour paint. I prefer the tube colour and would recommend them to any artist, as you can control the strength of paint. All you need to do is squirt a blob of paint into a small area of a mixing palette, and simply lift and mix with your brush. Even when a blob of paint from a tube dries, you can still use it, just by adding water.

My selection of colours is shown here. Some of the colours are from my own Matthew Palmer Natural Collection, available from the Society for All Artists, but you can use your own alternatives.



Brushes

Its easy to buy too many brushes, but over time you will tend to use only a few. Watercolour brushes come in different qualities and shapes. The quality is categorised by the type of hair used.

Kolinsky sable The highest quality brush, made from 100% natural hair. The hair is naturally hollow, which means it holds lots of paint and water. The hair is taken from the tail of a species of weasel. This brush has great water holding capacity, with strong hair and a very pointed tip, but it is expensive.

Pure sable Sometimes called red sable; a slightly lower quality version of the Kolinsky sable, taken from a different family of weasel. It has good water holding capacity, has a good pointed tip and is slightly less expensive than a Kolinsky sable. However, it is still quite expensive and not as hard-wearing as Kolinsky sable or synthetic brushes.

Synthetic A man-made hair, designed to replicate the natural sable hairs. This type of brush is very robust, and will last a long lime, maintaining the important pointed tip. Synthetic brushes are low in price, but will not hold as much water as sable.

Sable and synthetic mixture This is my preferred choice of brush quality, as the natural sable hair holds lots of water and the synthetic hair maintains the point. Because synthetic hair is more robust than sable, the brush tends to last longer. This makes a nice combination of water holding capacity with the robustness of synthetic hair, and these brushes are fairly priced. They will not hold as much paint or water as a sable, but more than fully synthetic brushes.

The brushes I use are shown here.

Size 6 round; I call this brush the 'worker' as I use it all the time. It is great for small areas and has a good point.

Size 12 round; a medium wash brush for medium areas and smaller skies.

12mm (½in) flat brush; good for flat areas and for lifting out (see page 33).

Size 20 round; perfect for skies and large areas.

Size 8 round; great for medium areas and for the walls of buildings.

Size 2 rigger or liner; great for fine detail like branches.

My large, medium and small tree and texture brushes. These are specially designed to make painting leaves easier. They are also great for different textured effects like markings on a stone wall. The brush is made from a natural hair mix, allowing the brush to open up (see the stippling technique on page 42). The angled tip gives artists a natural painting angle, as well as a longer side to the brush, letting you paint natural-looking grasses. These brushes are not essential, but will help you.

Paper

Watercolour paper is a special absorbent paper, designed to hold the paint and keep the lines smooth. You should always go for the best you can afford. I hear all the time, 'I'll use low-cost paper to practise on, and do my best work on the good stuff!' Really you should be practising on the 'good stuff' as you will learn how the paper behaves and how long it takes to dry. Most importantly, you will get used to it.

Watercolour paper comes in different weights, sizes, surfaces and qualities.

The thicker the paper or the heavier its weight, the flatter it will remain when water is applied. Very thin, lightweight paper will buckle when wet. I recommend using **300gsm (140lb) paper**, as this is a good heavy weight and paints sit well on it. If you prefer, you could go up to **425gsm (200lb) paper**. If you use a paper that is too heavy, you will find it quite hard to paint on, as the paper absorbs all the paint.

Traditionally, watercolour paper comes in 'imperial sizes', although watercolour pads and blocks are available in sizes such as A4, A3 and A2 as well. A **full imperial** sheet is 56 x 76cm (22 x 30in). **Half imperial** is 38 x 56cm (15 x 22in); a very popular size with professionals and demonstrators. **Quarter imperial** is 28 x 38cm (11 x 15in). This is the most common size, used by artists all over the world, and the size I recommend.

Watercolour paper is divided into three paper surfaces, **Rough**, **Hot Pressed** and **Cold Pressed** (or **Not**). Rough is a highly textured paper, great for achieving high levels of texture in your painting, such as in a sandy beach or a dry stone wall. The divots or wells in the paper are quite deep, so your brush will skim over these, leaving a dry, textured effect. Fine detail can be hard to achieve on this paper. Hot Pressed or smooth paper is called hot pressed because the heat smooths out the surface, giving a paper with virtually no texture. This is widely used for botanical painting, as it is good for fine detail. I find this paper too smooth for most of my painting, as it makes the painting of texture difficult, but it is similar to sketching paper, so is great for pencil and wash painting. Cold Pressed or Not surface paper is my personal favourite and I recommend it for watercolour painting. It is a medium surface, allowing both detail and texture, and is very popular to work on. It is called Not because it is not hot pressed. The cold press leaves a lovely texture, great for giving a nice dry brush effect.

There are two different qualities of watercolour paper, **wood-based** and **cotton-based**. Wood-based papers do not say 'wood' anywhere on the packaging, but if it does not say 'cotton' or 'rag', then you can be pretty sure it is wood-based. This paper tends to be the less expensive, and is made from wood plup, the same as normal paper. It is inexpensive and paint can easily be washed off if a mistake is made. However, paint dries quickly, the paper tends to buckle more than cotton-based paper and paint is not absorbed into the paper, so you get lots of paint runs.

I recommend cotton-based paper, also known as 100% cotton or rag paper. It is much softer than wood papers and will stay wet for long periods. The paper is much less likely to buckle, and if it does, it will flatten once dry. Paint is absorbed into the paper, preventing it from running. It is slightly more expensive than wood-based papers.

You can purchase watercolour paper in **loose sheets**, which need to be attached to a board with a good quality masking tape, to prevents buckling. Alternatively, you can buy a **watercolour block**, pre-attached to a board on all sides, so there is no need to tape it down. Once the painting is complete, use a blunt object like a credit card to separate the sheet of paper.

Q: Do I need to stretch paper?

A: Stretching watercolour paper is not necessary; I have not stretched a sheet of paper for many years! It is done to keep the paper flat. You submerge it in water, then attach it to a board with a water-based gum tape. This keeps the paper stretched flat as it dries. However, if you use a good quality, heavyweight cotton paper, you should not need to do this.



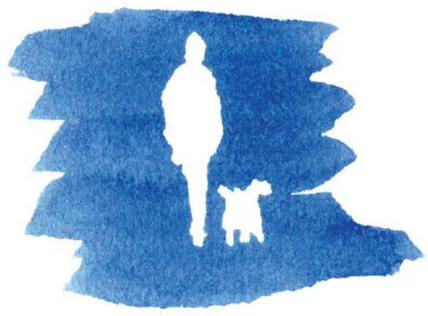
Other materials

Masking tape Used to attach your paper to a board on all four sides, and for various masking effects such as masking the horizon.

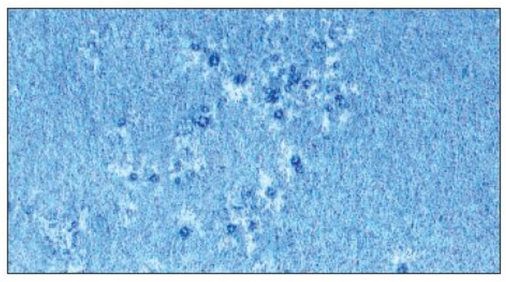
Water pot Anything from a jam jar to a professional water pot will be fine. It is a good idea to have two of these while painting: one for clean water and one for dirty.

Mixing palette A good quality plastic or porcelain palette is best. Try to find one with small areas into which you can squeeze out your paints, allowing you to lift and mix the watercolour.

Masking fluid Liquid latex solution that allows you to protect any areas of white; for instance a person walking against a dark background (see right). It is a good idea to use older brushes or special masking fluid brushes, as it can ruin your brushes. Soap acts as a good barrier: apply it to the brush before use and wash the masking fluid out straight away afterwards.



Salt This works well with watercolour; it can be sprinkled on your wet paint to give a snowflake-style textured effect (see right). Add only a few grains to wet paint and allow two to three minutes for the effect to take place. Brush the salt off when the paint is dry.



Pencil I recommend an HB or 2B pencil for your watercolour pre-drawing, as the leads are not too hard, so will not scar your paper and can easily be erased.

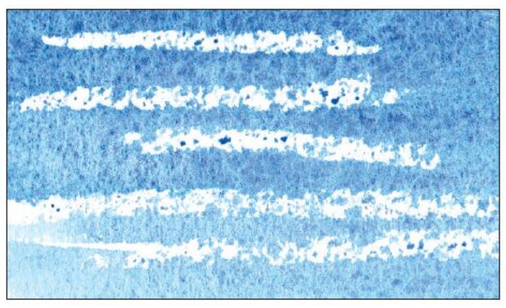
Putty eraser We all make mistakes, don't we? These erasers are made from a soft, malleable rubber and you can shape them to a fine point if required.

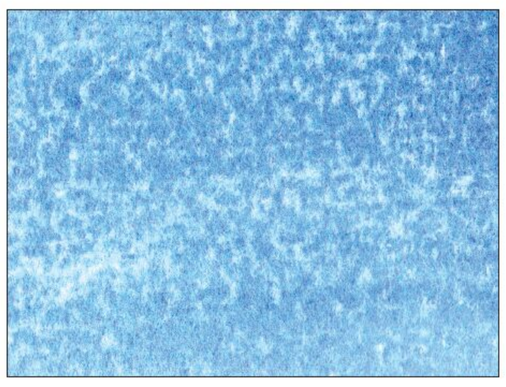
Clockwise from top left: water pots, masking tape, hairdryer, kitchen paper, masking fluid, paper for a paper mask, sandpaper, a wax candle, waterproof pen, craft knife, pencil, masking fluid brushes, soap, putty eraser and palette.

Craft knife This is not only good for sharpening your pencil; it is also a great tool for creating special effects. You can scratch out areas of dry paint to give the effect of sparkle on the sea, or a distant silver birch tree.

Waterproof and **fade-proof pen** Great for signing your finished masterpiece.

Wax candle Another special effect tool, great for giving light and adding a few waves to the sea, or the wonderful texture of tree bark.





Sandpaper This is great for creating texture. Rub it gently over the dry paint. Use a fine grain to give wonderful texture to a mountainside or a grassy meadow.

Kitchen paper or **tissue** This is the artist's best friend! It is essential for dabbing excess paint from your brush and for lifting out colour from wet paint, for instance to create clouds.

A **hairdryer** can be used to speed up the drying process.



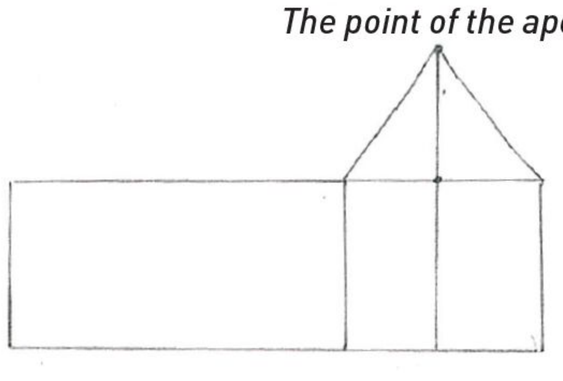
Easy drawing for painting

Drawing a simple building

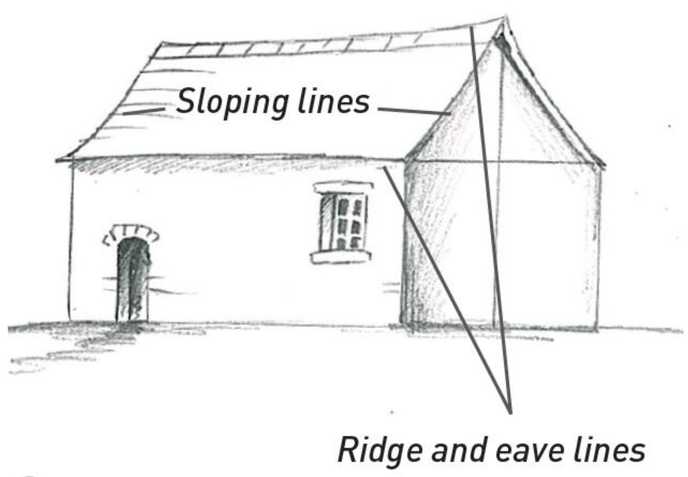
Some people worry about drawing buildings, so here is an easy way. Most buildings are basically the same shape, just with different features like windows and chimneys.



1 Start off with three vertical lines for the three visible corners of the building.



2 The point of the apex is always central. Use a guideline to help you find it. Draw a horizontal line across the gable end, measure and mark its centre and draw a vertical guideline down through the mark.

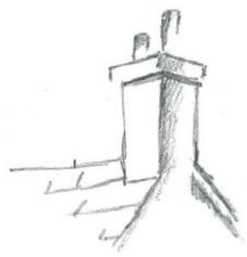


3 The sloping lines of the roof must always be parallel, and so must the ridge and eave lines.

Drawing chimneys



1 Draw a simple arrow pointing upwards.



2 Add detail as shown.

Drawing a figure walking



1 Draw in a stick figure. Cross the legs to imply the walking motion.



2 Fill out the body.

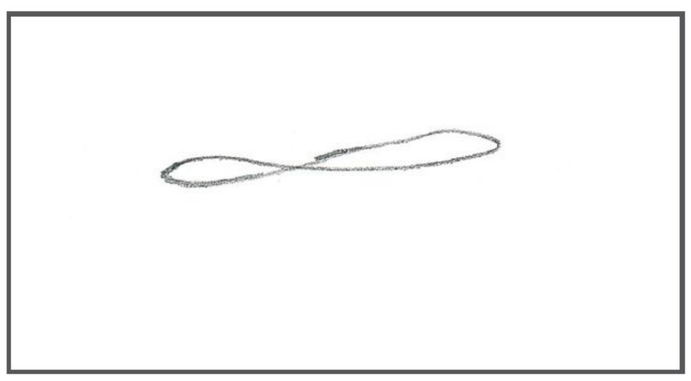


3 Add a little detail and shading as shown.

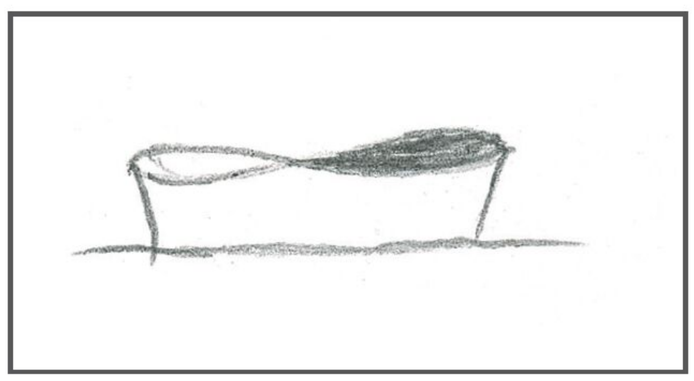
Drawing a boat

This is another subject that people think is very difficult. Here is how to keep it simple.

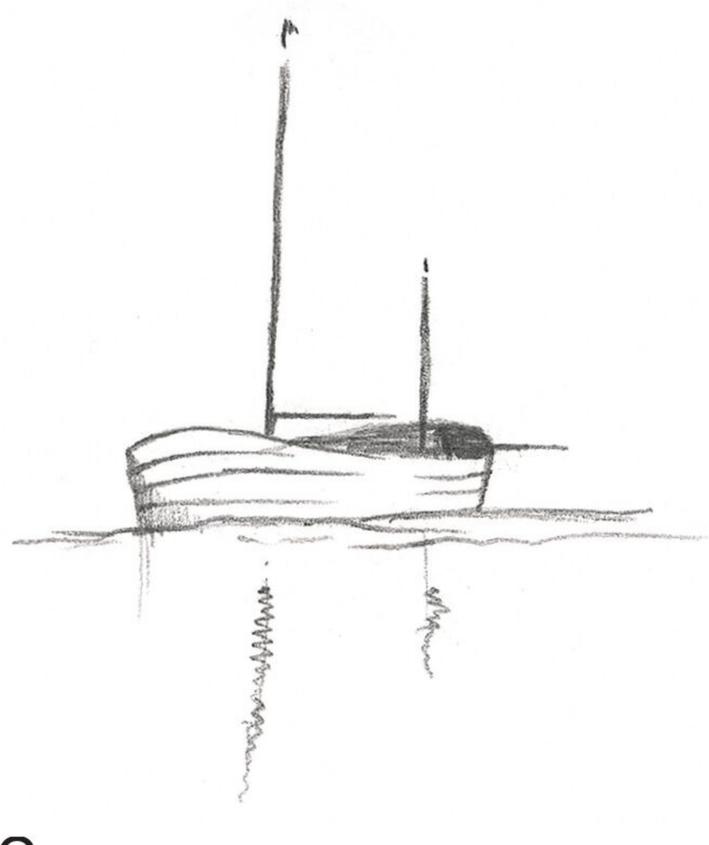
A boat on your eye level



1 Start by drawing a figure of eight.



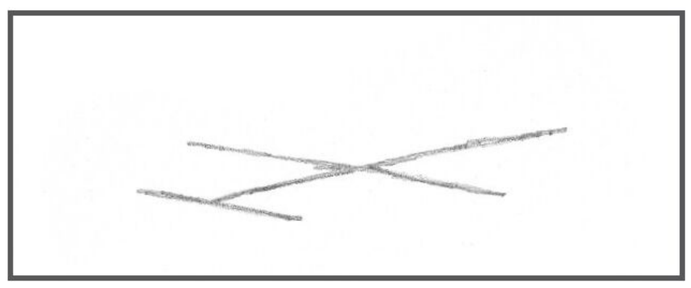
2 Add the edges of the boat and the waterline. Decide which end is the front or bow, coming towards you. Shade the other end of the boat where you can see inside.



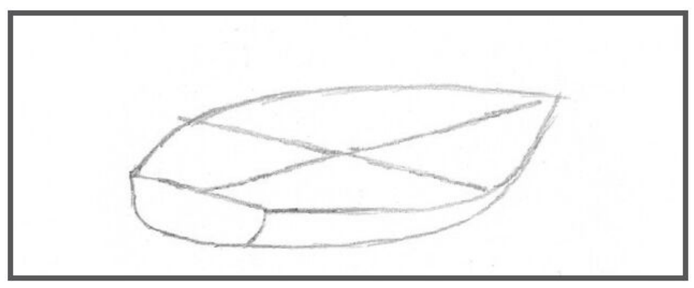
3 Add detail such as planking, masts, ripples in the water and reflections.

A boat below your eye level

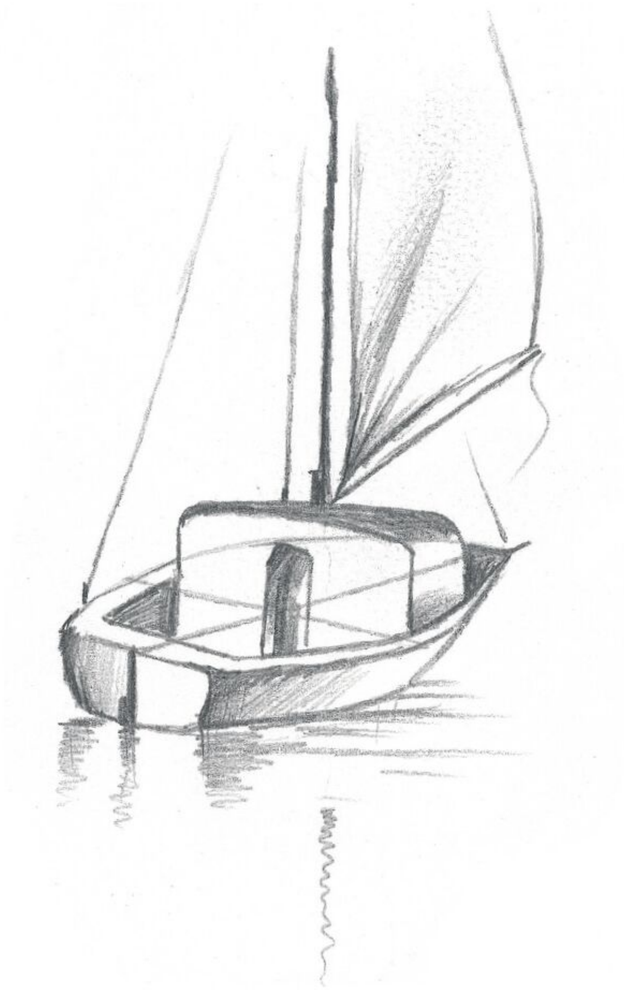
If you are looking down on a boat, you will see the tip of the bow.



1 Sketch in a central line or line of symmetry down the length of the boat (note that the drawing is not symmetrical from this angle). Add a line crossing it to show the widest part, and a line for the stern.



2 Add the hull and base of the boat to complete the basic outline.



3 Once you have the basic shape, you can add the cabin, shading and any other detail.

Drawing basic animals

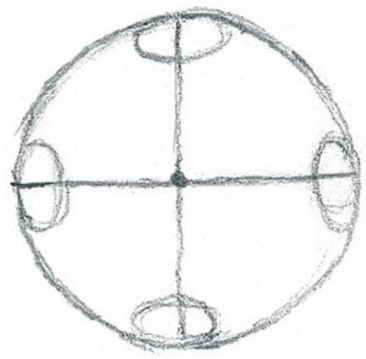


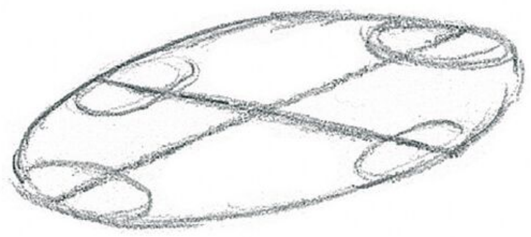
A simple 'M' shape can be turned into a dog (above left) or a cat (above right). The dog has a longer head.

Drawing circles and ellipses

Many objects feature circles and ellipses, from a flower pot to a wine bottle. Using my cross method makes the task of drawing them easy.

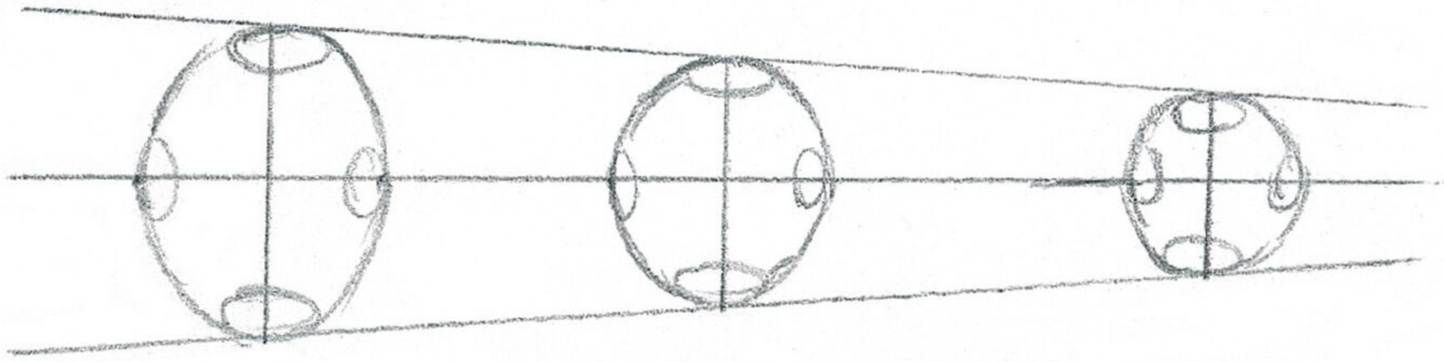
Draw a cross. This will give you the lines of symmetry of the circle and four points which will be on its edge. Both lines should be the same length for a perfect circle Add ellipses at the four points. This will help to make the circle look smooth. Now you can draw in the circle with the help of the lines and ellipses you have drawn.





An ellipse is a circle shown at an angle, and we use the same principle as for the circle. Draw the symmetry lines, which will be at an angle, and add the small ellipses at the four points.

Train wheels



Draw a central horizontal guideline followed by sloping, receding top and bottom lines. Now you can draw perfect circles going off into perspective, just like train wheels. The horizontal line becomes one of the lines of symmetry for all the circles.

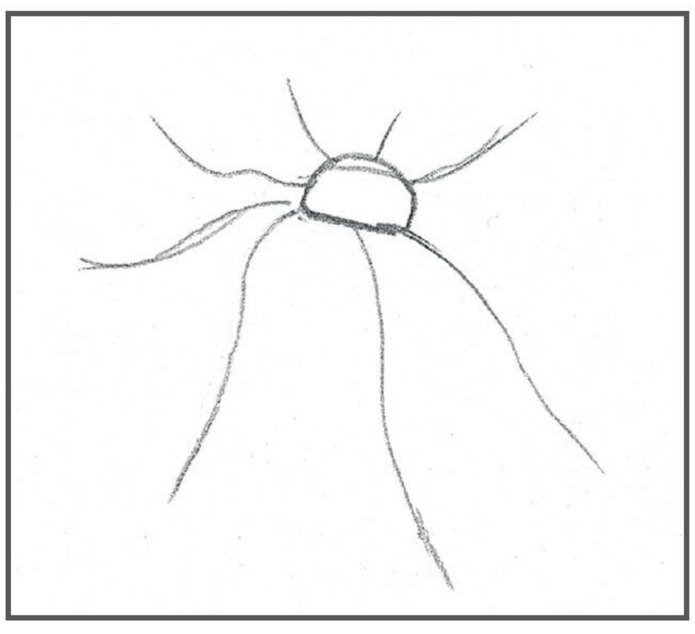
A vase



The ellipses here give the vase its curved form. Since we are looking at the vase straight on, the line of symmetry is like a mirror and the picture on either side of it is symmetrical.

Drawing a flower

Many flowers have a centre and the petals have a central line which can help you to draw them with confidence.



1 First draw the centre and the central lines of the petals.



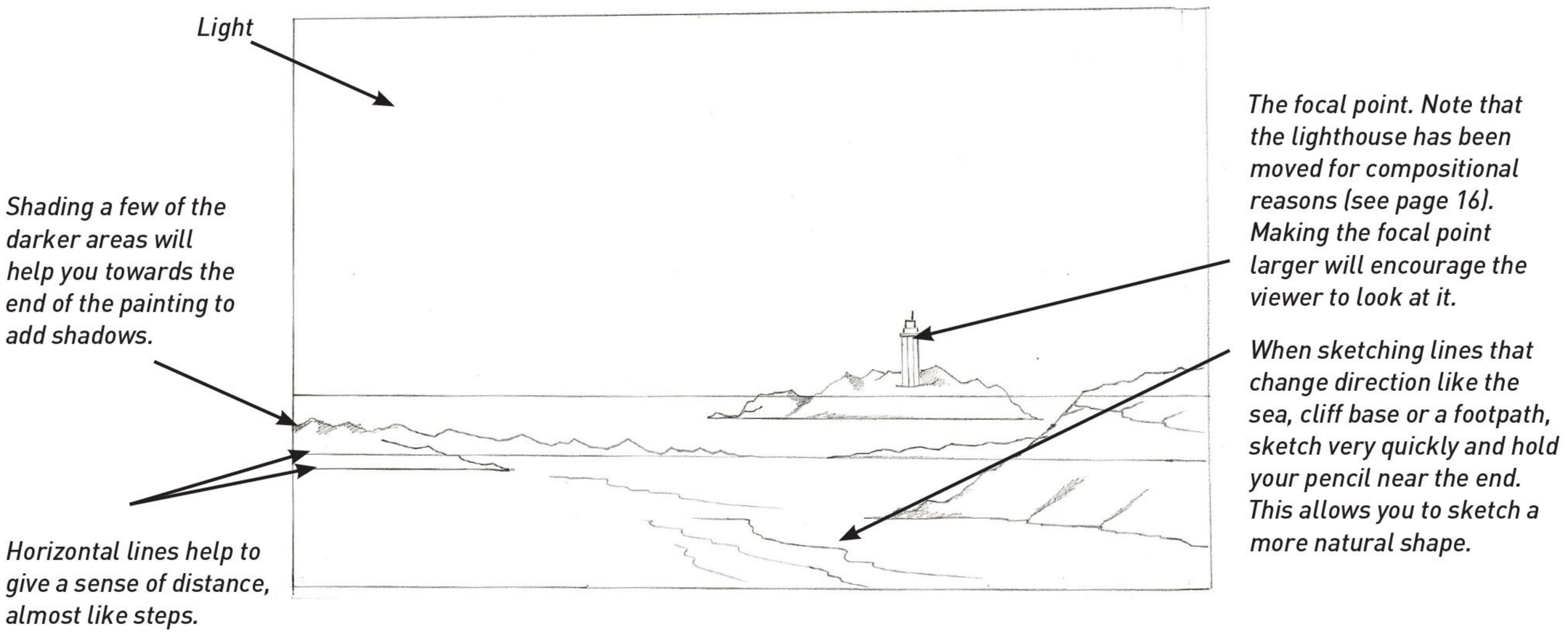
2 Add the edges of the petals, the stem and some shading and detail.

Drawing and painting from photographs

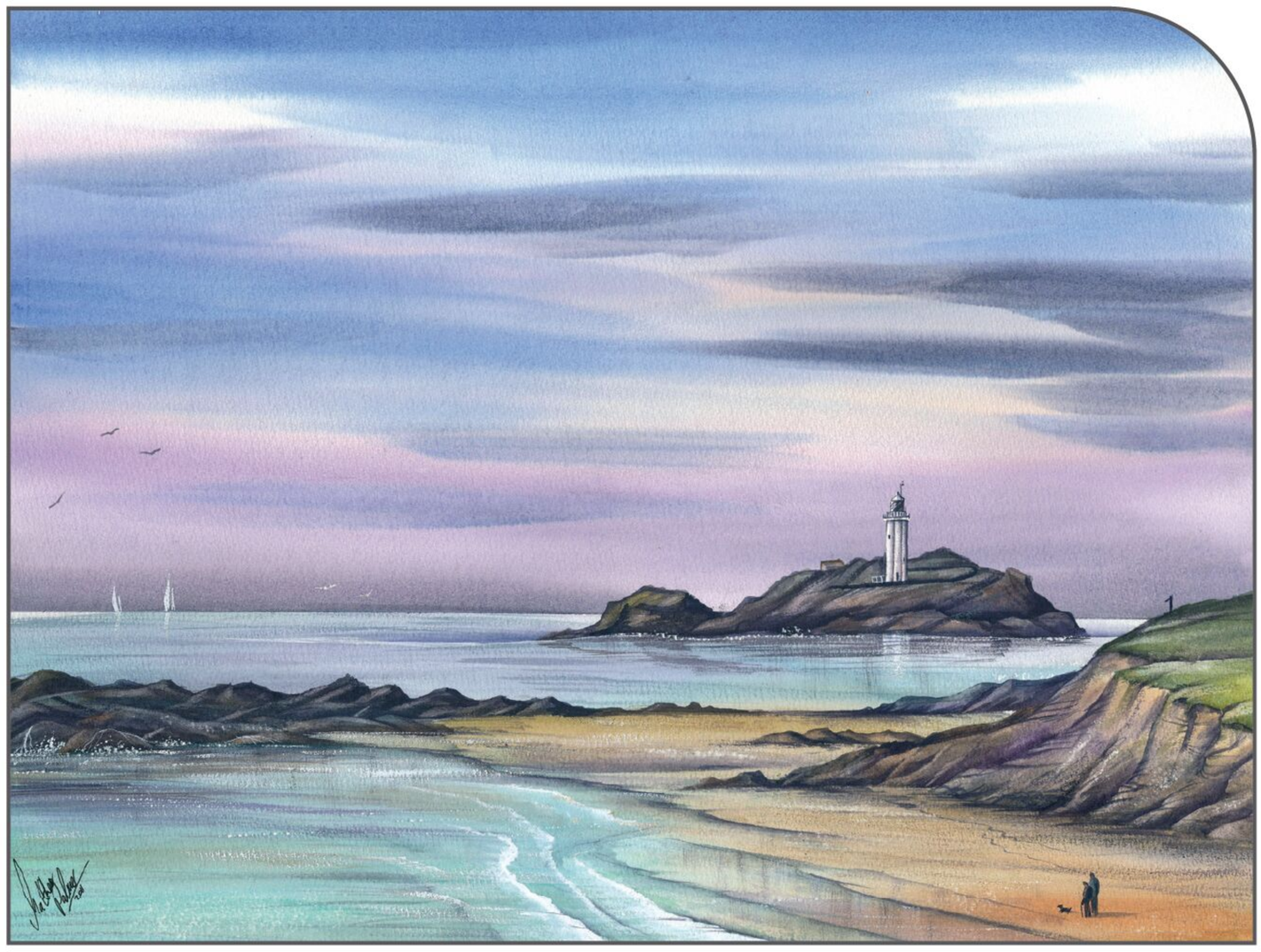


I often paint from one of my photographs. When taking a photograph, people use the viewfinder as a framing tool, so they are already thinking about the composition of the picture (see page 16), and this is also very important to a painting.

- You can adapt the photograph and use artistic license to move or tweak things in your sketch; for instance you could reduce the size of a tree or lose a telegraph pole. Do not remove or change any of the main features too much, however.
- Simplify the drawing. Only a basic outline is required. Let the paintbrush add the detail later.
- Indicate where the sun is shining from with an arrow to remind you later when painting.
- Don't be afraid to use a ruler for the horizon and buildings, or an eraser for mistakes.
- Use a 2B pencil; this is not too hard and will not scratch the paper. I use a clutch pencil as it is always nice and sharp.
- Don't worry about pencil showing through your finished painting. This is part of watercolour and can make the painting look crisper.



The finished painting.

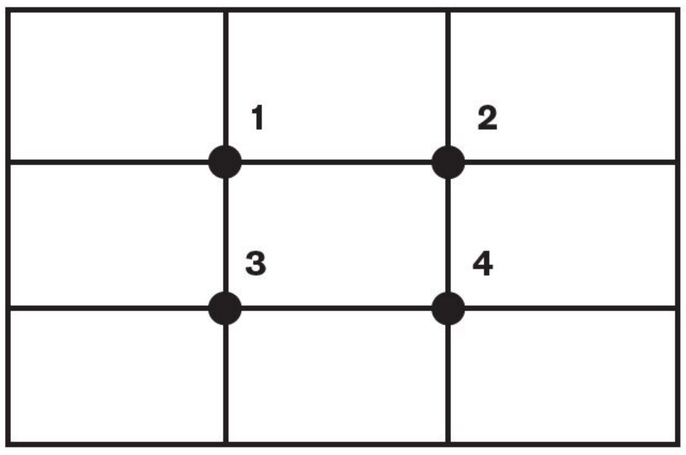


Composition

Composition is placing or arranging objects in a painting or photograph so that they look right. There are various rules to help you that I will go on to explain, but the result for the viewer is a sense of rightness and harmony that is hard to define. Bad composition, by contrast, can really throw a scene off, and the viewer just feels that something is not right.

The rule of thirds

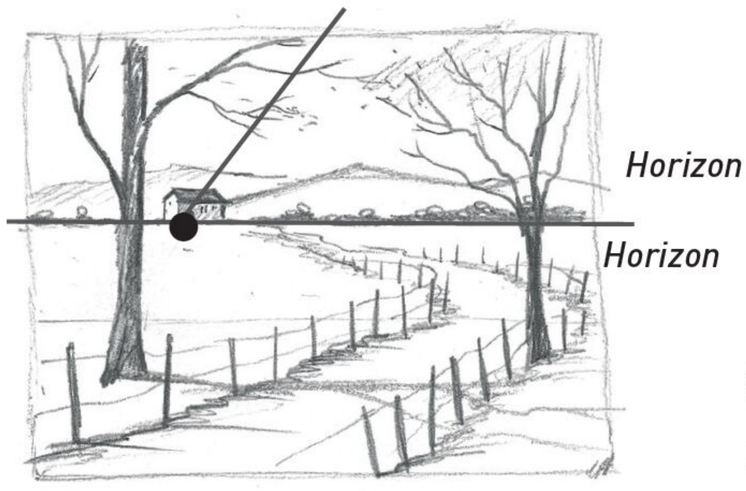
This grid shows the rule of thirds; a simple way of achieving a pleasing composition. The grid works by placing the focal point of your scene (the area you want the viewer to look at) on one of the four points marked. You should place your horizon on one of the two lines going across the middle of the grid. Of course this grid works in the same way for portait-shaped paintings; just rotate it ninety degrees.



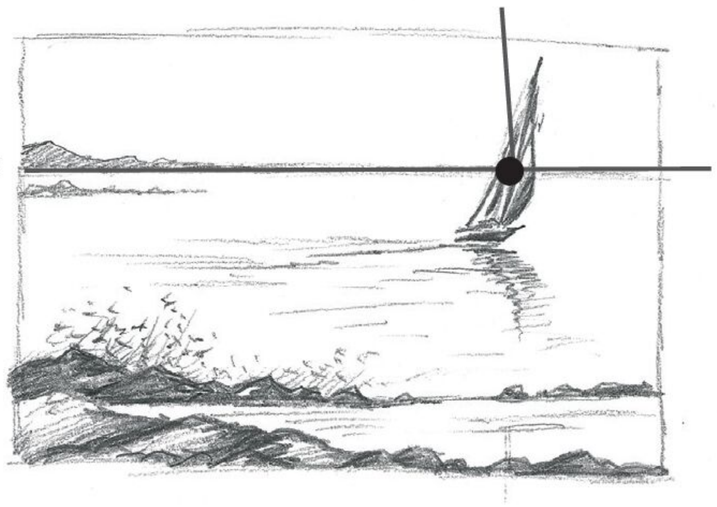


Bad composition. You should never put the focal point in the centre of a scene.

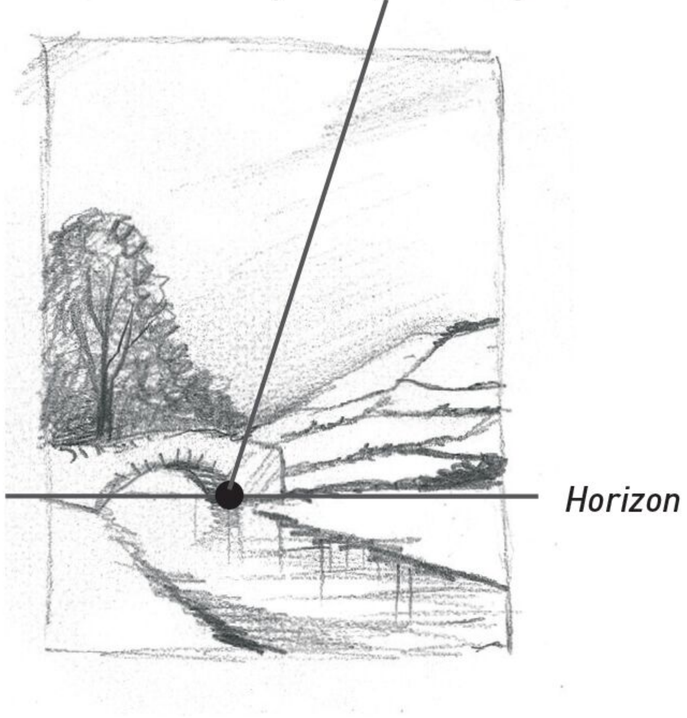
Focal point 1, the building



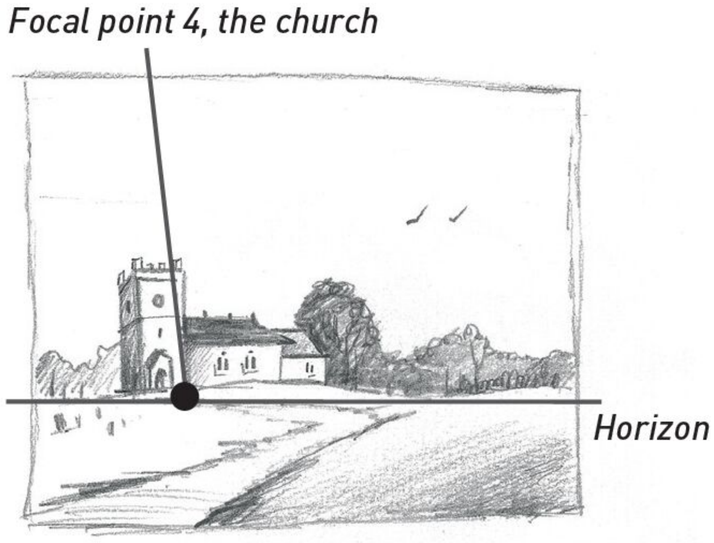
Focal point 2, the boat



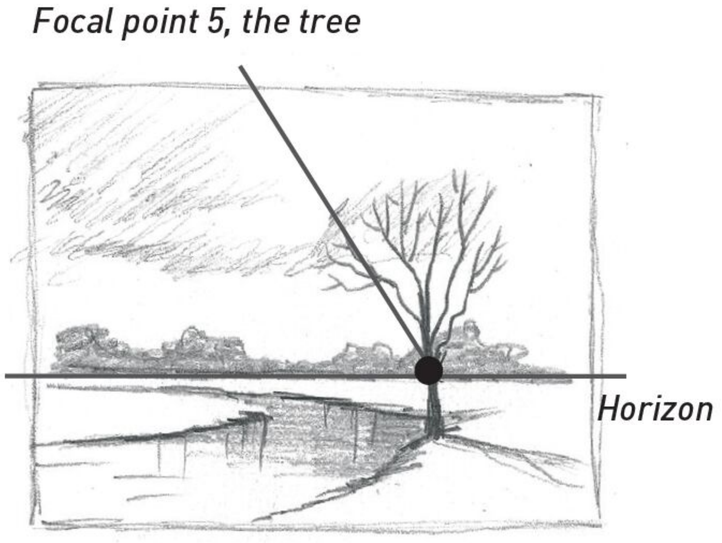
Focal point 3, the bridge and tree



Focal point 4, the church



Focal point 5, the tree



Leading the viewer in

It is good to have something in a painting to lead the viewer into the scene, such as a road, footpath or river, as shown in most of the paintings above.

Tip

If you struggle to choose a scene, especially when painting outside, make a picture finder. Cut a rectangle out of a piece of card and use four pieces of string for the grid lines. Simply tape the string to the edges.

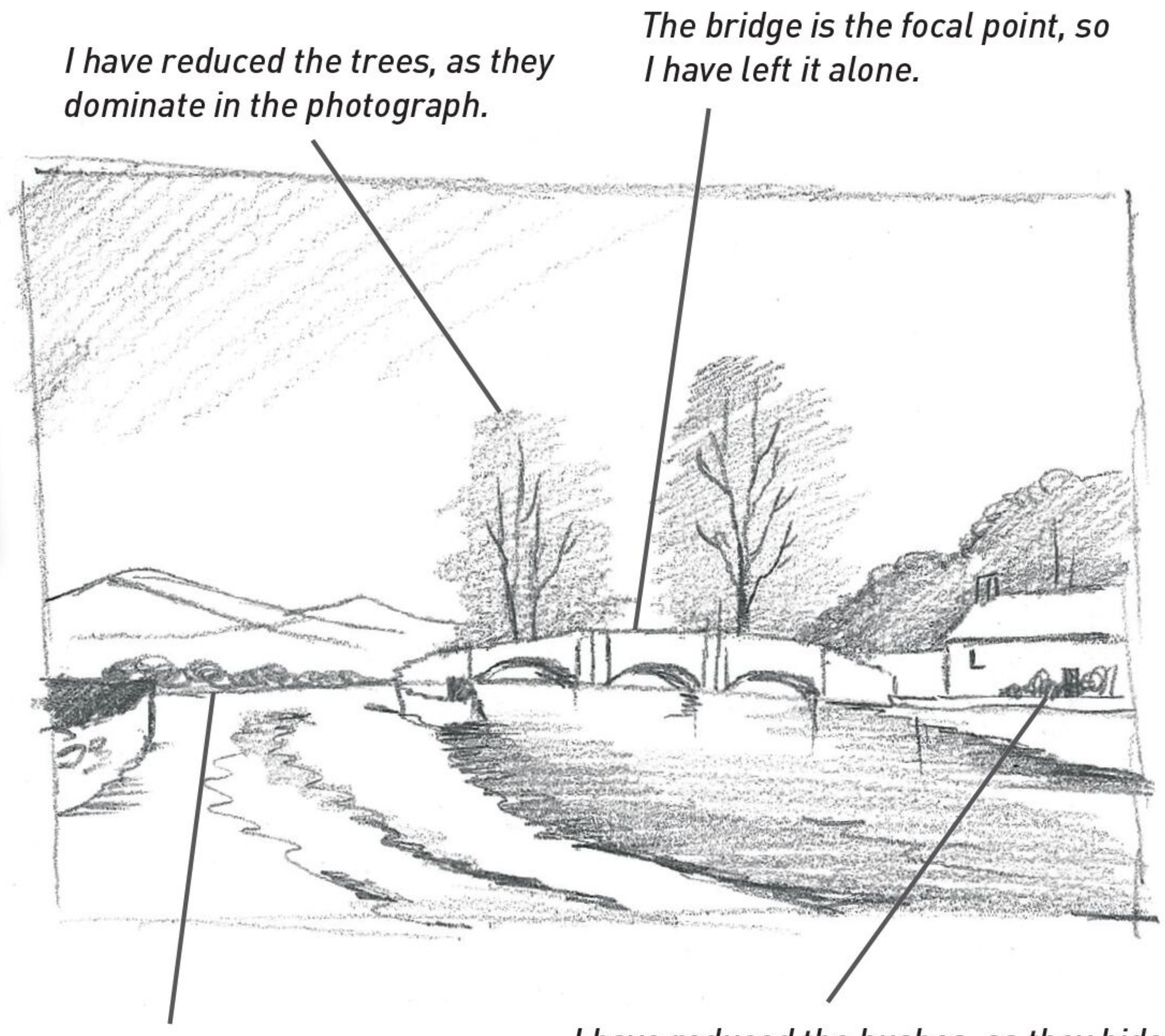
Artistic license

Artistic license is the artist's best friend. It allows us to rearrange the scene to improve the composition. This is fine as long as you don't change or move things too much. It is a good idea to keep the main focal point roughly where it is, but you can move or reduce the size of the odd tree, or add a path.



- Whether you are working from life or from a photograph, it is a good idea to do a quick sketch first, as this helps you to get a sense of the composition.

- You can of course change factors other than the composition. I have changed a sunny day to a snowy sunset scene!



The finished painting.



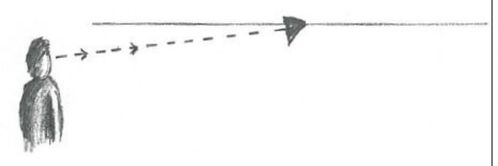
Easy perspective

A basic knowledge of perspective is very useful. Some of my students struggle to see the angles they need to draw, and learning a few rules of perspective will help with this. I don't draw all my scenes using perspective, but I understand the logic, and this helps.

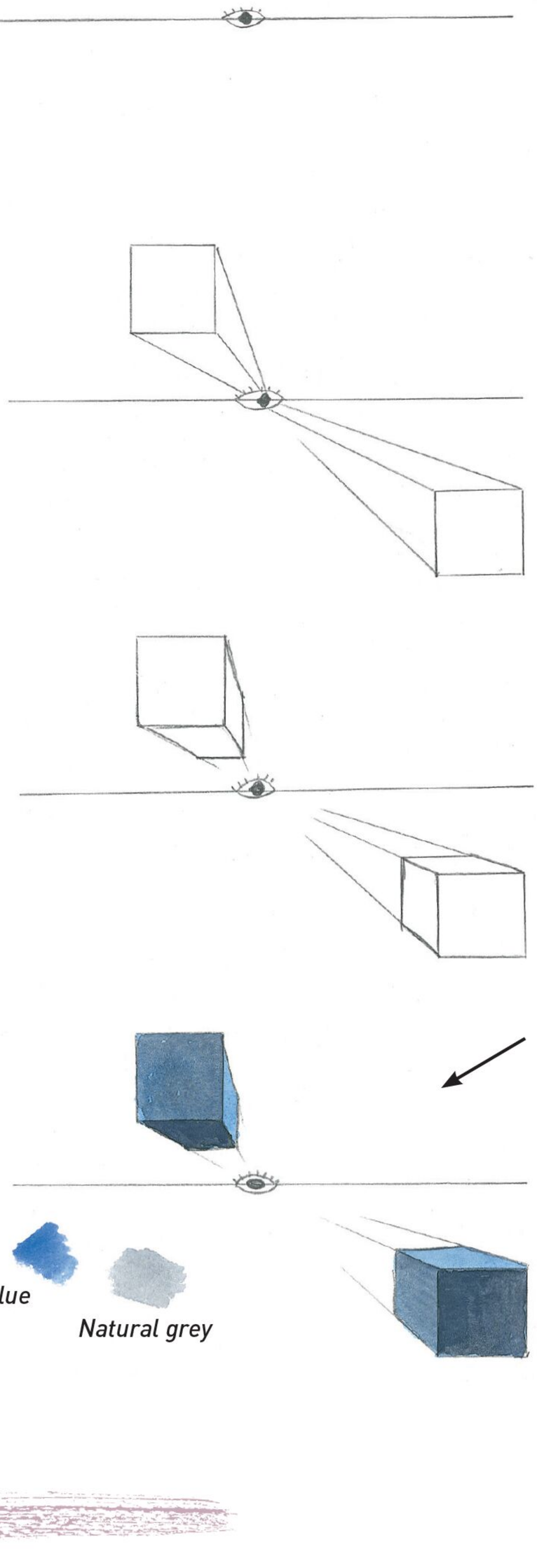
Single point perspective

Linear perspective shows that the lines of three-dimensional objects slope as they get further away from the viewer, and the various lines, if extended, will all meet at a point called the vanishing point. Single-point perspective uses only one vanishing point and is a great way to learn the basics of perspective. Follow this simple exercise.

The horizon line



The horizon line or eye level is simply an imaginary line that is level with your eye. It depends on your height and whether you are standing up or sitting down.



1 Begin by sketching in the horizon line, or your eye level. In the centre add the vanishing point (the point at which all the receding lines meet).

2 Now add two boxes by drawing two simple squares, one above the horizon line and one below. Use a ruler to draw faint guide lines from the corners of the squares to meet at the vanishing point.

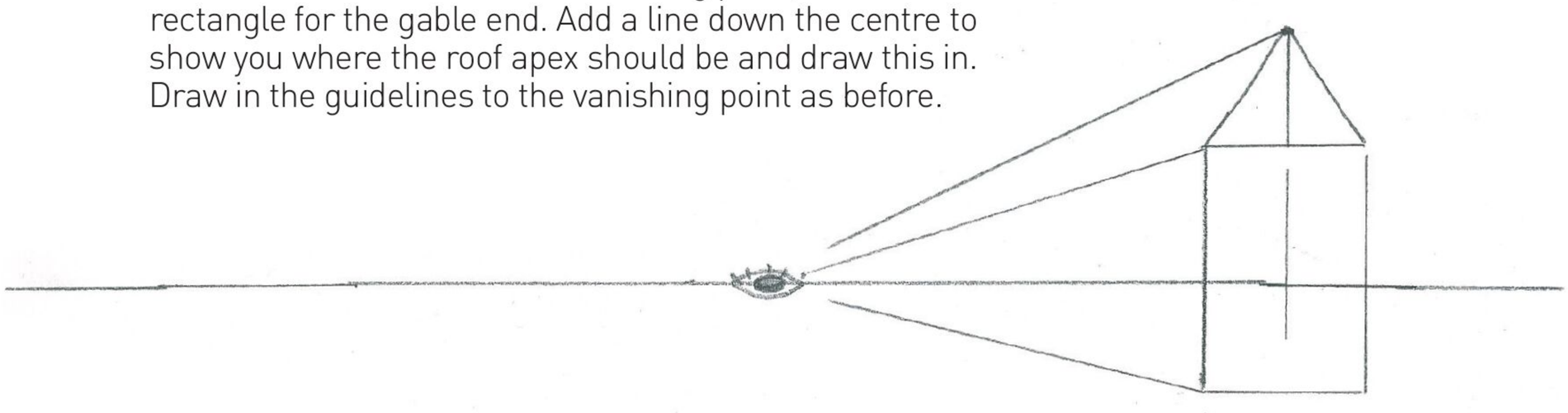
3 Match the sides of the squares with parallel lines suggesting the further edges of the boxes. These lines should stay within the guide lines. You now have two three-dimensional boxes.

4 To finish the exercise, paint the boxes. I have added the sun direction to help show which side of the box should be light. Add a pale base colour of blue over the whole box. Once this is dry, paint the two darker sides using natural grey. Once this is dry, use the same grey but darker to paint the darkest face of the box.

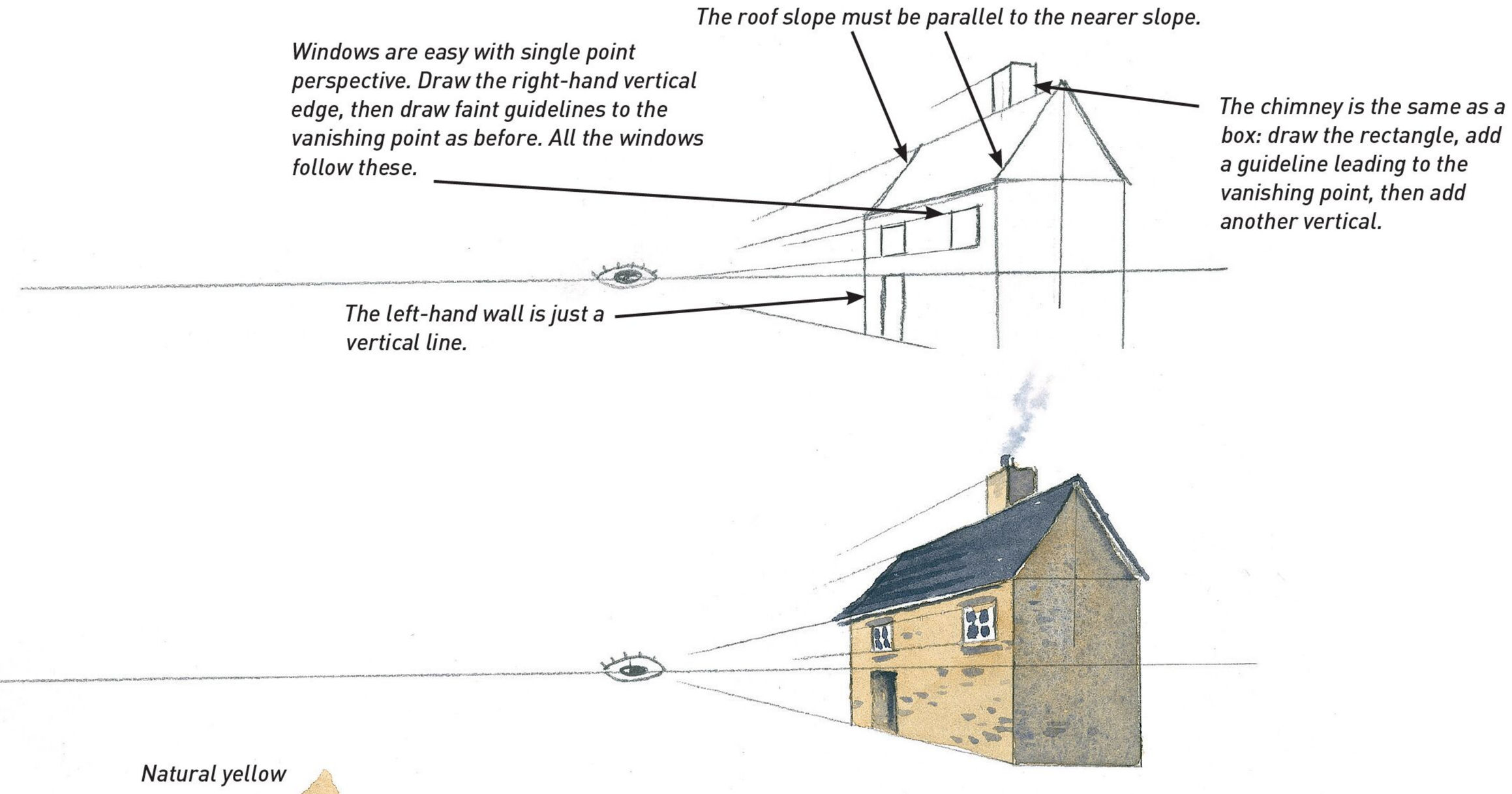
Drawing a simple house

Have a go at drawing a house using single point perspective.

1 Draw the horizon line and vanishing point, then draw a rectangle for the gable end. Add a line down the centre to show you where the roof apex should be and draw this in. Draw in the guidelines to the vanishing point as before.



2 Add the windows, door and chimney as shown.

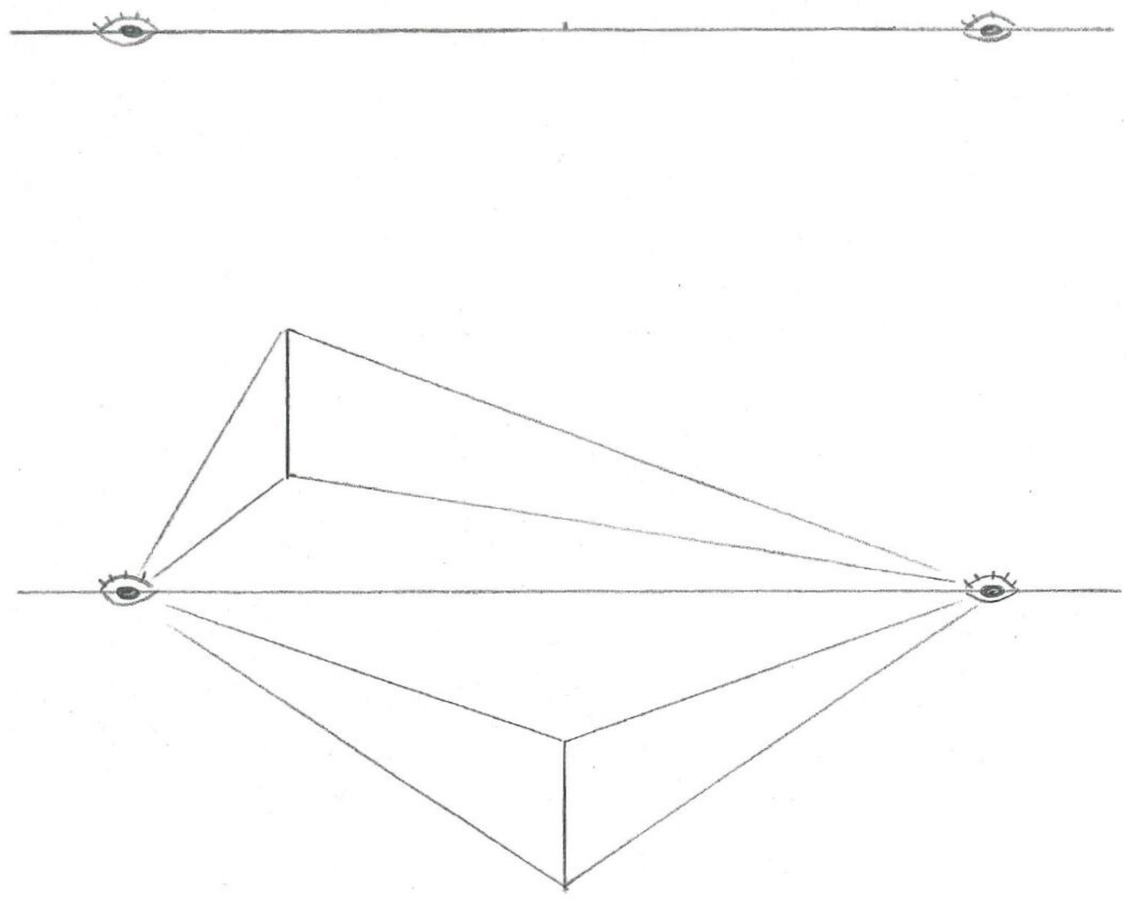




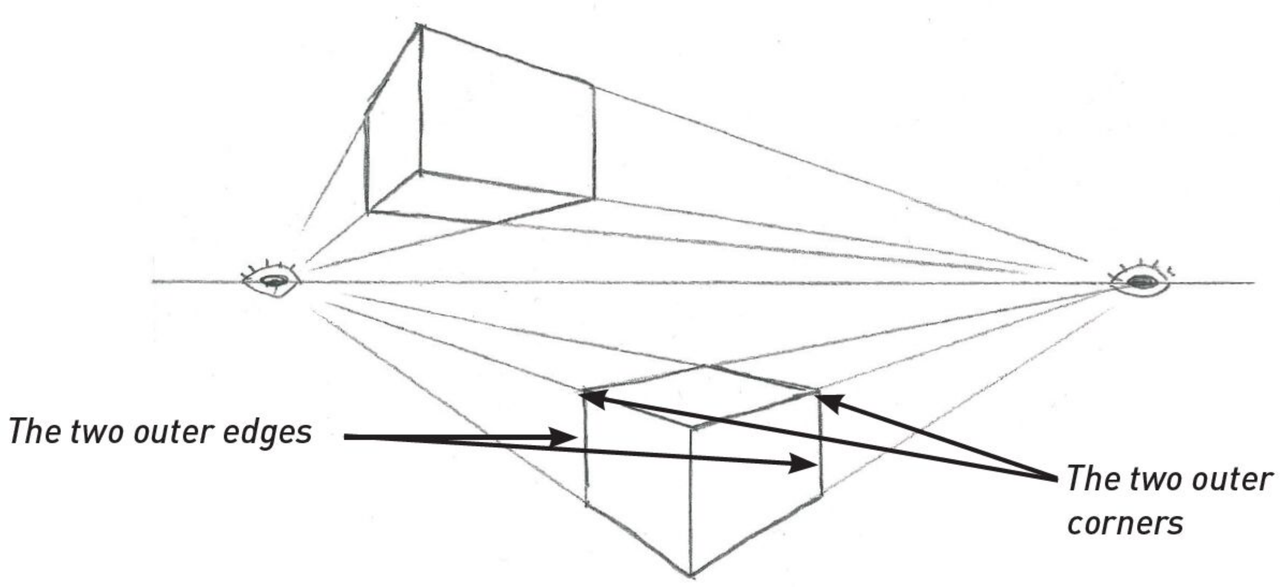
3 Paint the house, using the sun arrow to show you where the light and shade should be. Paint a pale base wash of a stone colour such as natural yellow, leaving the windows white. Once this is dry, paint the gable end and the shaded part of the chimney with a transparent layer of natural grey (see page 31). Add details of stones with the same mix. Use a stronger mix of natural grey to paint the roof, window panes, shadow in the doorway and details such as the chimney pot and guttering.

Two-point perspective

Two-point perspective is a more realistic way of capturing angles, as it gives you the correct angles on both sides of the object. This is the method I use all the time. Once you get to grips with perspective in this way, it starts to come naturally to you as you sketch. Again, I don't draw all my scenes using this method, but I understand the logic, and this really helps.

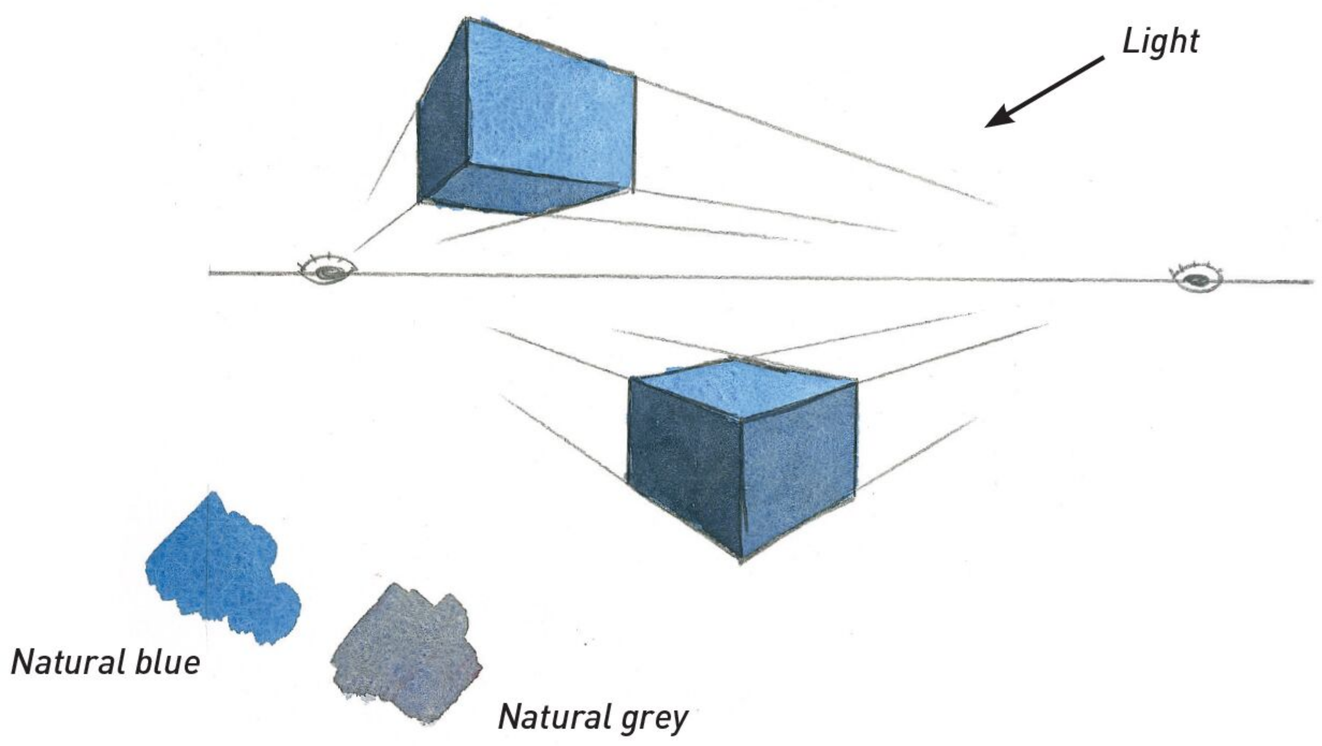


1 Start with the horizon line as before, but this time add a vanishing point at either end.



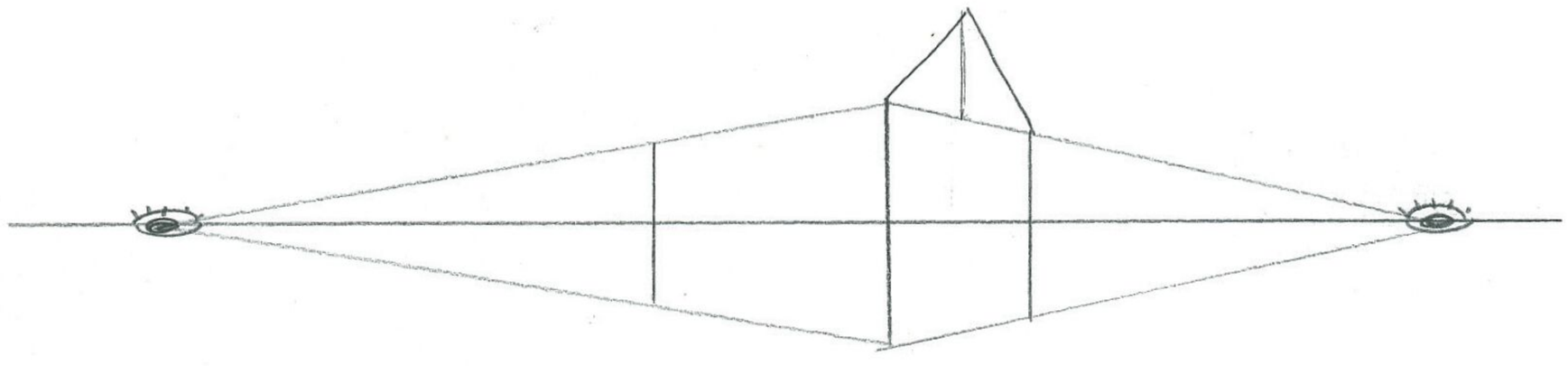
2 As before, draw one box above and one below the horizon line. In two-point perspective, you only need to draw the central line of the box, then draw faint guidelines to both vanishing points.

3 Put in the outer edges of the box by placing two vertical lines within the guidelines leading to each vanishing point. Draw two further guidelines from the outer corners of the box to the vanishing points as shown.

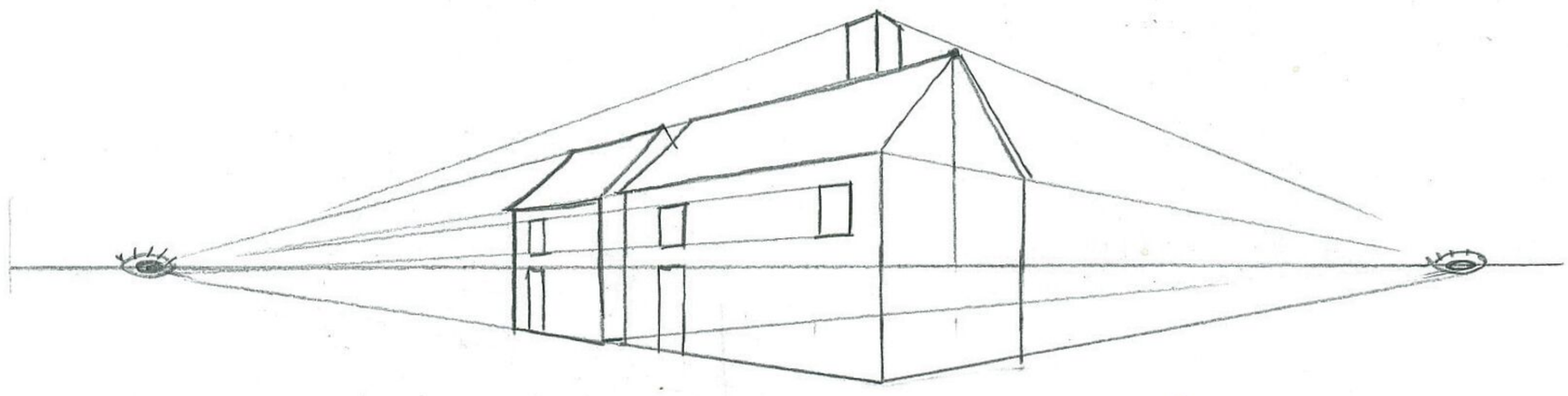


4 Paint the boxes exactly as before, with a base layer of blue and a transparent layer of natural grey shadow added once this has dried. Finally add the darkest face with a stronger grey mix.

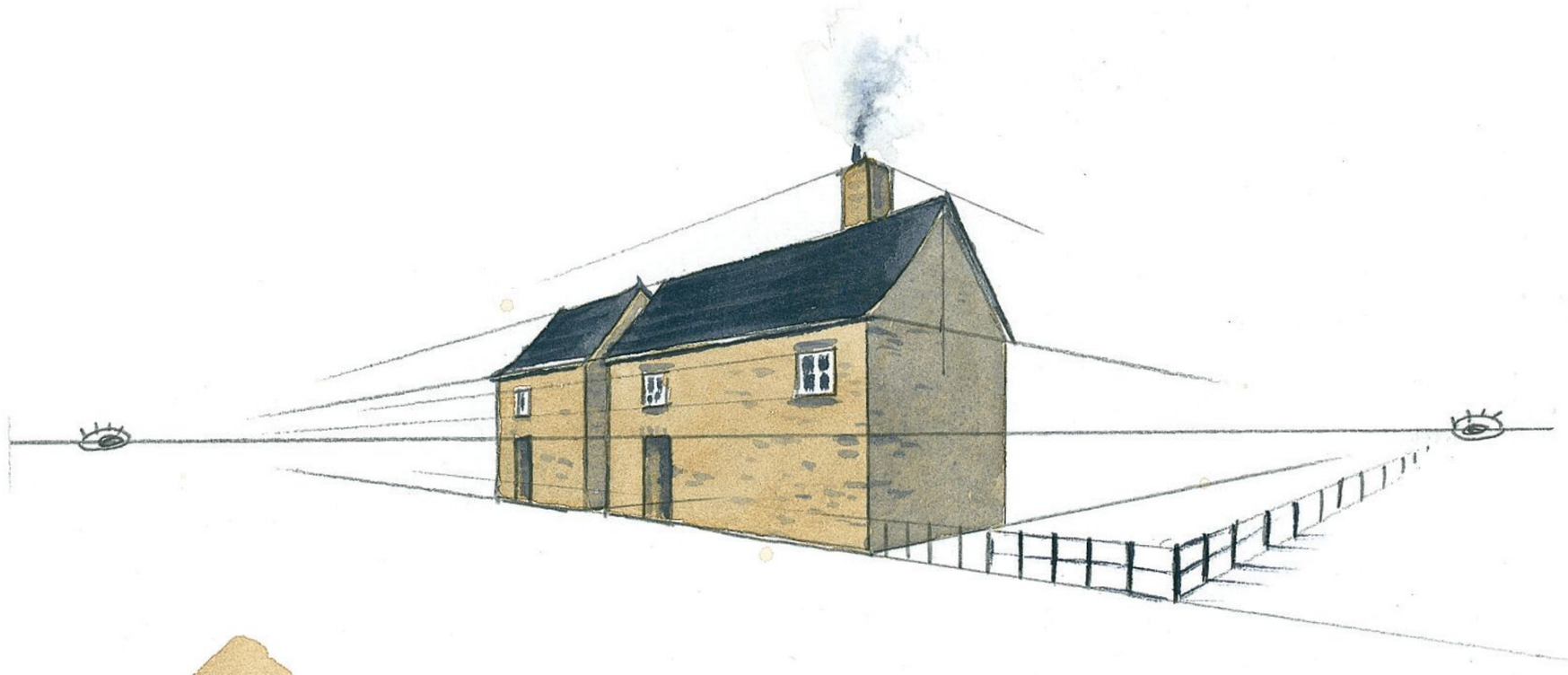
Drawing a simple house in two-point perspective



1 Draw the horizon line and the two vanishing points. Draw the middle line of the house that is nearest the viewer, then add the faint guidelines leading to the vanishing points. You can now use these to draw the outer vertical lines and the apex of the roof.



2 Add details. Draw the first vertical line of a window and add guidelines going to the left-hand vanishing point to help you complete this and the other windows. Add a chimney using guidelines leading to both vanishing points. Draw in a second building.





3 Paint the houses in the same way as for the single-point perspective house, using natural yellow and two shades of natural grey. Add a fence using the two vanishing points to help with the perspective. Again, start with the corner fence post in the centre.

Light & shade

Every watercolour painting is made up of light and shade, or highlights and shadows. Every object has a shadow, from flower petals to tree trunks, and without them, a painting would appear flat and lifeless. Where there is dark, there is light, so adding an accurate shadow to a scene makes highlights instantly appear.

Around forty to sixty per cent of every painting is grey, or shadow colour, so it is very important to get this grey right. A common mistake is to use Payne's gray, which is too harsh and dark, as it contains black pigment. This means that the colour will not be transparent, and will leap off the paper, whereas a good shadow colour should fall back and suggest recession.

Most established artists have developed their own shadow mix over the years. I learned early on to mix mine from the primary colours blue, red and yellow. Mixing these colours in the correct proportions will give you a perfect, transparent shadow grey. This is called a key colour; the colour that holds the scene together and is key to the painting. See my natural grey mix, above right.

- Have a go at drawing and painting this white cottage. Leaving the cottage white is a good way of seeing how shadows work, as you transform flat white paper into a three-dimensional object.

Mixing a shadow grey

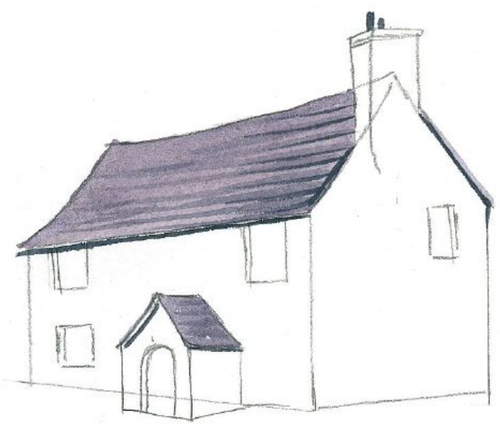


60% French ultramarine + 10% alizarin crimson + 30% yellow ochre = my natural grey.

Blending away

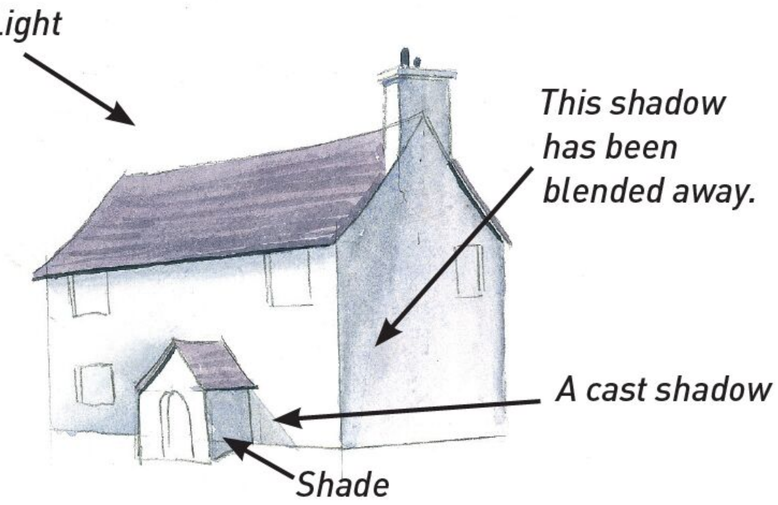


An extremely common technique in watercolour. Start with a wide line, as it is easier to blend away. Clean the brush, dab off the excess water on kitchen paper, then gently blend the paint away, moving it downwards and fading it away to nothing. This can be tricky, so practise.



1 Use a slate colour, shadow grey with a little extra alizarin crimson, to paint the roof, apex side and porch roof. Allow to dry and use a stronger version of the same colour to indicate slates.

The areas where the sun direction arrow points will be light and the areas the sun cannot reach will be in shadow.



2 Use my natural grey to add the shaded areas, keeping the colour pale and watery. Use the blending away technique (see above, right) to soften away some of the shadows, for a more natural look.

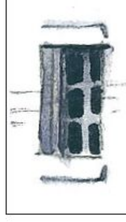
Painting windows



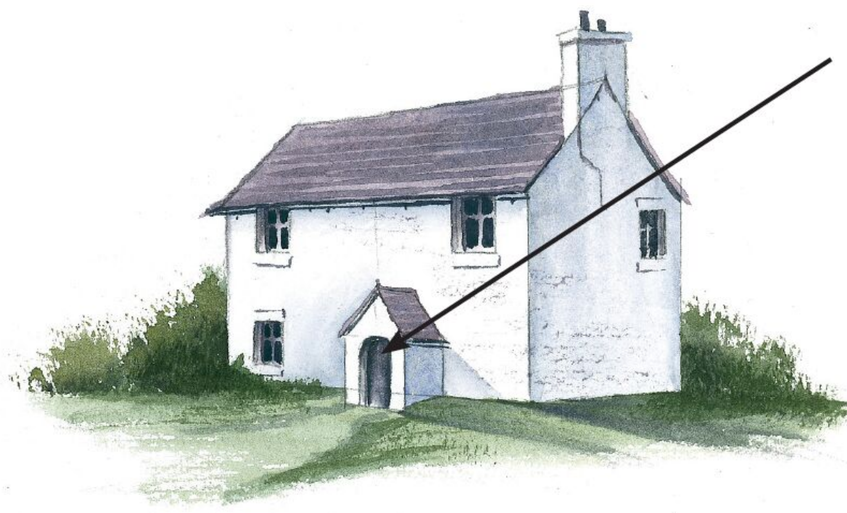
- *Paint the top and left-hand edges with pale natural grey, then blend away into the shape.*



- *Once this is dry, use a stronger mix of natural grey to paint the edges of the recess and blend away.*



- *Once dry, use a still stronger mix of natural grey to paint window panes and details.*



To paint the open door:

- *Paint the top and right edge with strong natural grey and connect with a curve.*



- *Blend away into the door shape. Allow to dry.*



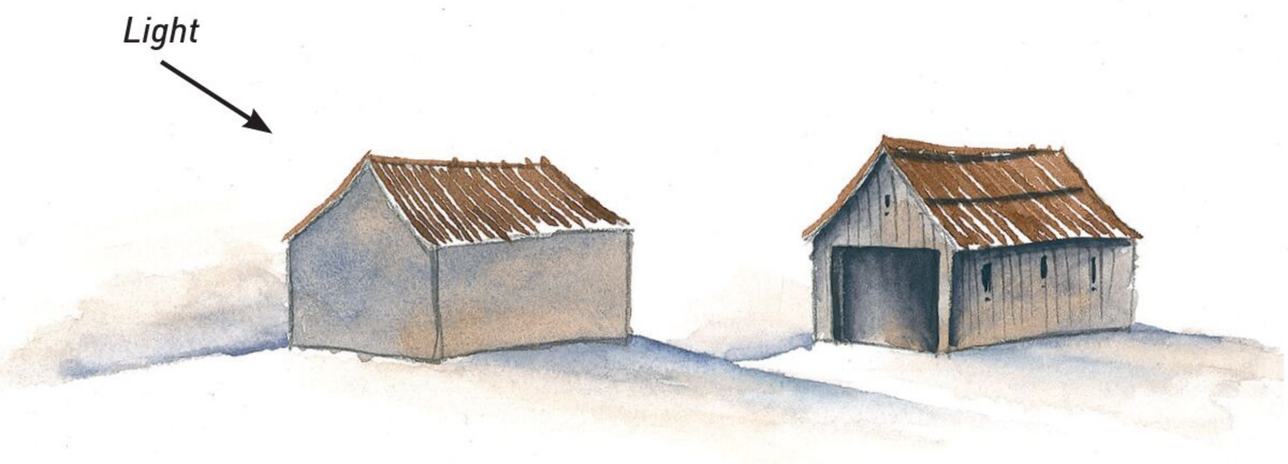
- *Paint the edge of the recess with darker paint and blend away to the right. Add detail.*



3 Add detail and some landscape using a rigger brush. Paint bushes beside the cottage to make it stand out, using a dark green mixed from 50% natural blue and 50% aureolin, with natural grey added.

Creating tonal contrast

Adding tonal contrast between the light and shade in your paintings will really bring them to life, giving objects three dimensions and helping the composition by making the more contrasting areas of the scene stand out.



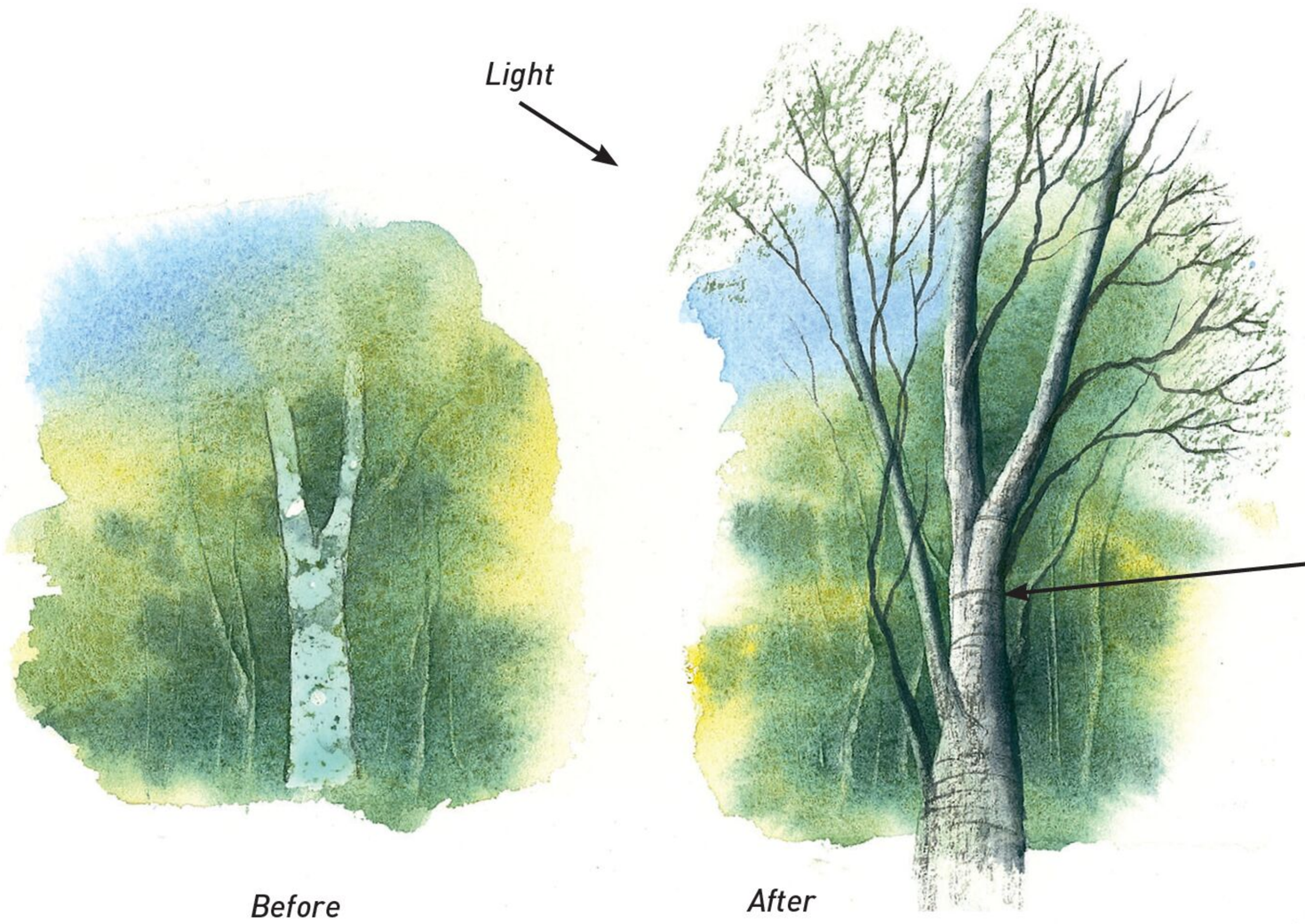
Before *After*

Adding tonal contrast to this barn has made it more three-dimensional, realistic and striking.



Before *After*

The shadow added to this vase has given it three dimensions. Since my natural grey is transparent, it has allowed the crimson base colour to shine through.



Before *After*

- These silver birches show how light and shade can make a difference to a slightly more developed scene. The dark background colours and the shadows on the trunks really make the lighter parts of the tree stand out.

Snow shadows

The only time to alter the shadow mix is for a snow scene, where a slightly cooler colour works better.



90% French ultramarine + 10% alizarin crimson = natural snow shadow colour



Cast shadows

Cast shadows give shape to a landscape, ground an object in a scene and also create contrast and atmosphere in a landscape.



- Long shadows work best in landscapes, and these appear in the early morning or evening, so make sure you suit the sky to these times, painting warm colours for sunrise or sunset.
- Faintly sketch in the cast shadows before painting them. I have seen many beginners paint them at the wrong angle after completing the rest of the painting.
- Use a pale, watery colour since you can darken it later if it is too light, but it is much harder to lighten a shadow that is too dark.
- Clean your brush, then dab off the excess paint on kitchen paper and use it to blend away the ends of the cast shadows.

Using colour tones to create depth

A colour tone is a mix of grey with a colour. Cool greys tend to recede in a painting, while warm greys stand forwards, creating the impression of depth.

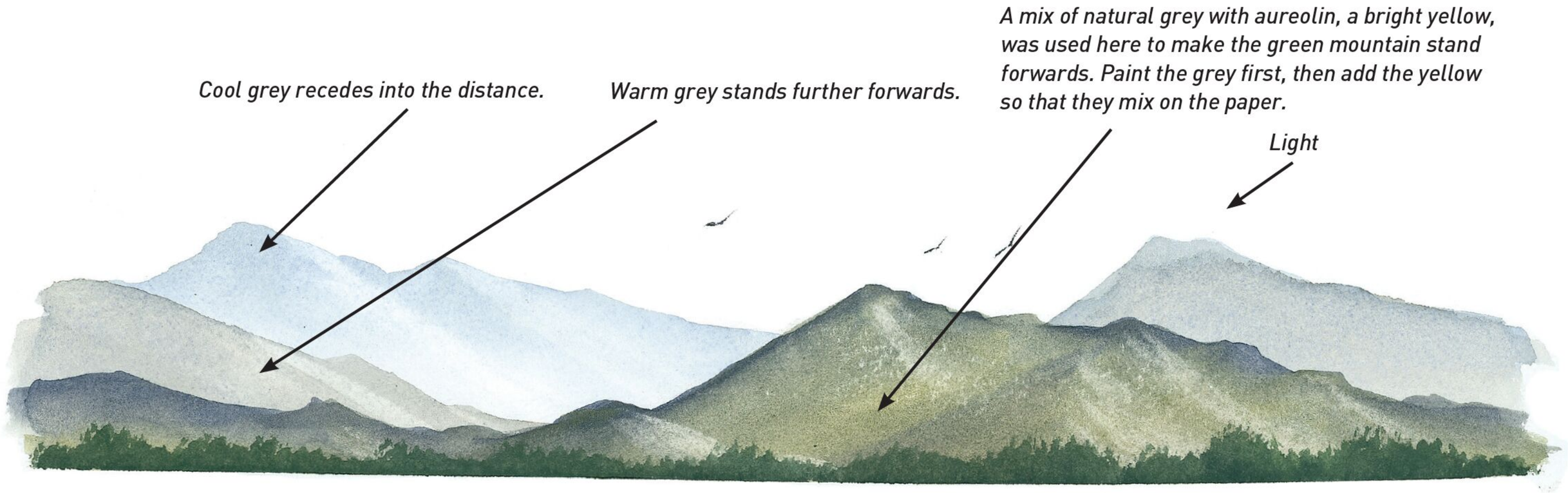
Mixing colour tones



90% natural grey + 10% French ultramarine = cool grey

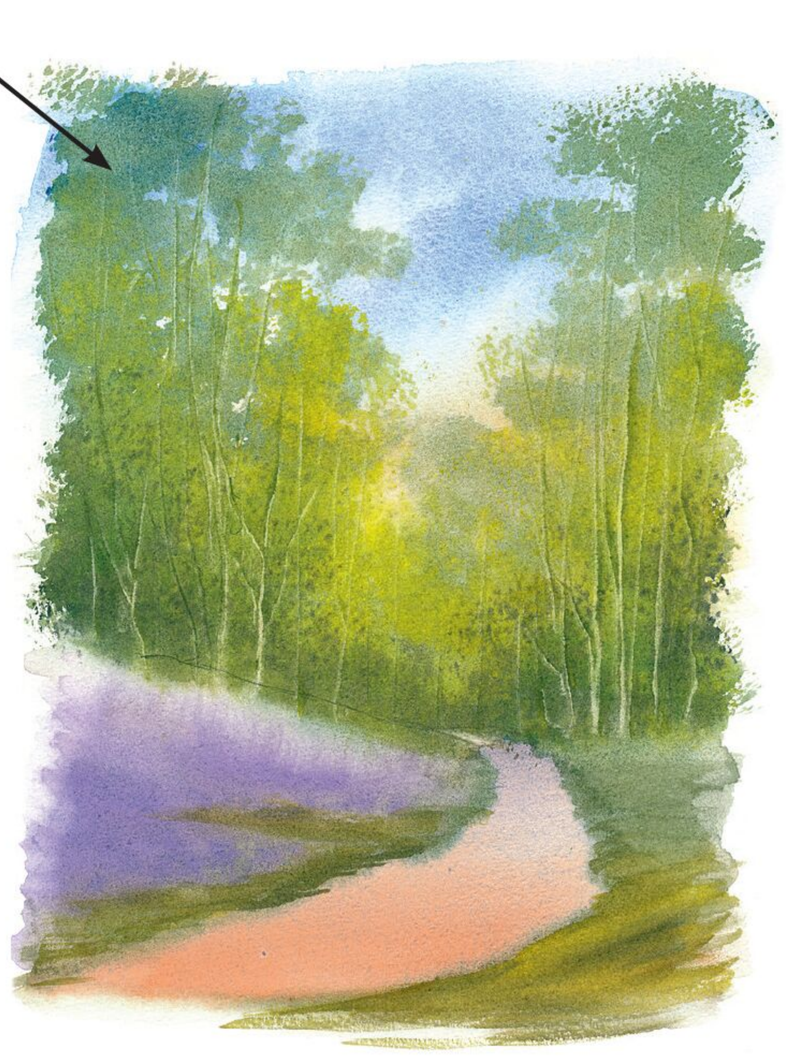


90% natural grey + 10% yellow ochre = warm grey



An exercise in light and shade

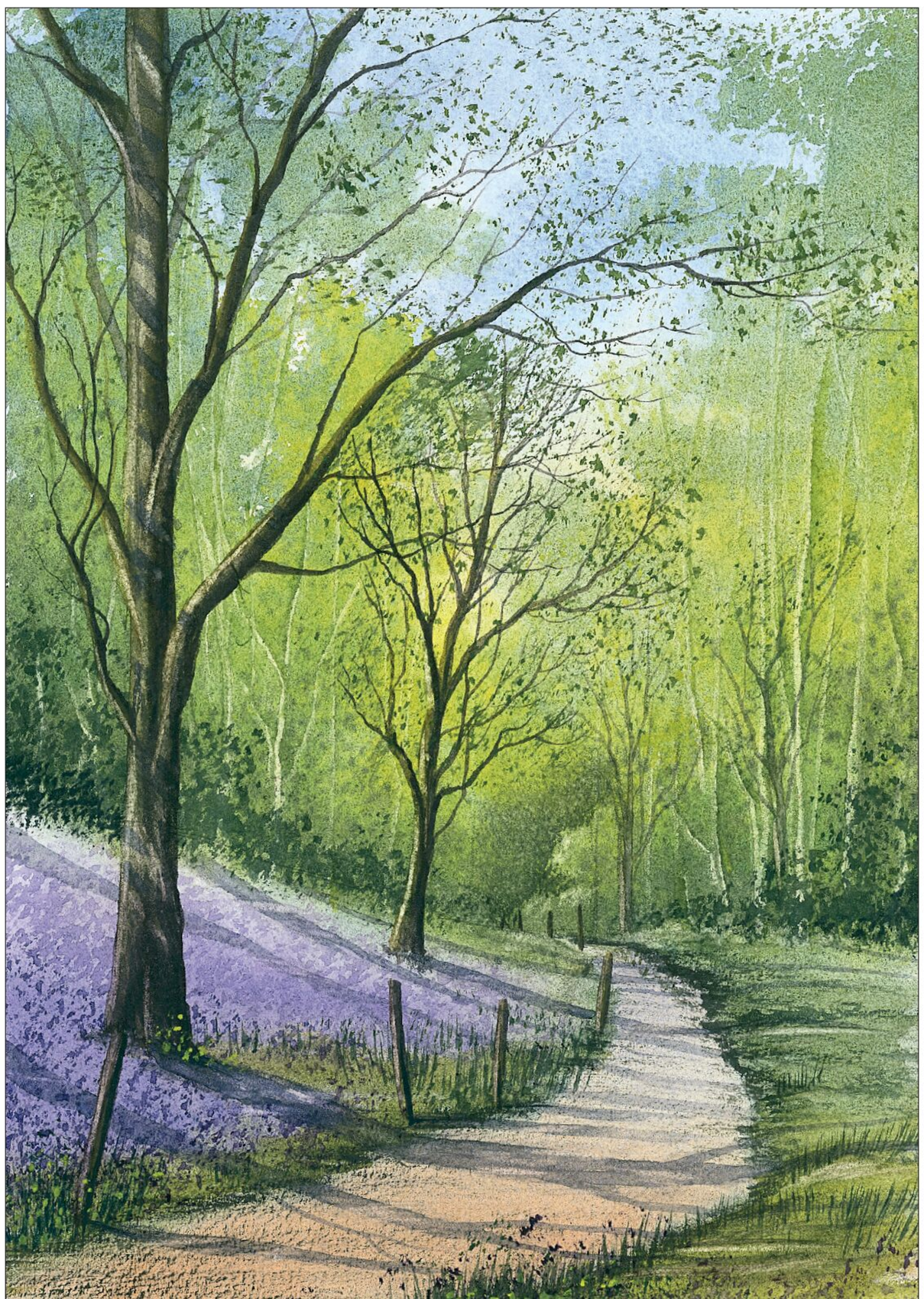
The following exercise shows how light and shade are developed in a scene to create impact.



The first stage has all the main colours blocked in but without much tonal detail being added. The distant tree trunks were scratched out with a fingernail just before the background wash dried.

The second stage shows the main trees added with strong natural grey for the shaded right-hand sides and pale burnt sienna for the sunlit sides. The posts were added in the same way. Bushes and foliage texture were stippled on with a tree and texture brush and green mixed with natural grey. The same mix was used to flick up grasses at the base of the trees and the edge of the path. Dappled shade was added to the foreground tree with natural grey. The light and shade of the painting has sharpened up the scene, created contrast and improved composition.





At the final stage, the cast shadows were added with a pale natural grey, following the contours of the ground. Any shadows that look a little harsh can be blended away with a damp brush. The cast shadows indicate the direction of the light, add more contrast and add to the sense of bright sunshine streaming through the trees. I also lifted out (see page 33) some highlights to bring forward the large tree on the left.

Colour

Choosing and mixing colours can seem like a minefield. There is a huge range available, and when you begin to paint, you tend to buy them all, as I did. However, over time you realise that only a few colours are needed. If you use fewer colours and mix them, the finished painting looks so much better, as the colours work together and create a harmonious scene. This was an important lesson for me in my early days of painting, and over the years I have taught colour mixing techniques to thousands of artists. The colour mixes on the following pages will help you on your painting journey, and it is a good idea to keep this section handy when painting to help you get the right colours.

Q: How much water do I put in my palette before I add the paint?

A: I am asked this all the time. Just add one brushful of water, then mix the colour. Then if you need to make the mix paler, add more water, and if you need the mix to be thicker, add more paint.

Primary colours

The three main colours you will find yourself using and mixing will be red, blue and yellow. These are the primary colours, and you can mix any colour you like from variations of these three, apart from a pure black or white. In watercolour we don't use white to lighten a colour; instead we add water, which allows more of the white paper to show through (see right). Black should never be used as it is too dark, so we use a natural grey instead.

Adding water to French ultramarine to lighten it

Left to right: 80% paint to 20% water; 50% paint to 50% water; and 20% paint to 80% water.





I use my own natural blue, which is a brighter and more accurate alternative to French ultramarine for skies.

I recommend having one blue in your range of primary colours, but two different reds and yellows. This is to create a variety of mixes: for instance, yellow ochre mixes with blue to make a dark green, but if you want a bright green, you will need aureolin. Below are my two sets of recommended primary colours.



French ultramarine



Alizarin crimson

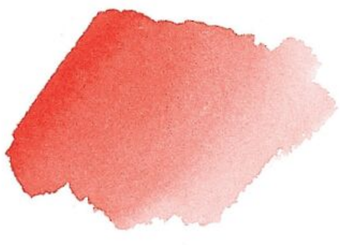


Yellow ochre

Primary set 1



French ultramarine



Cadmium red

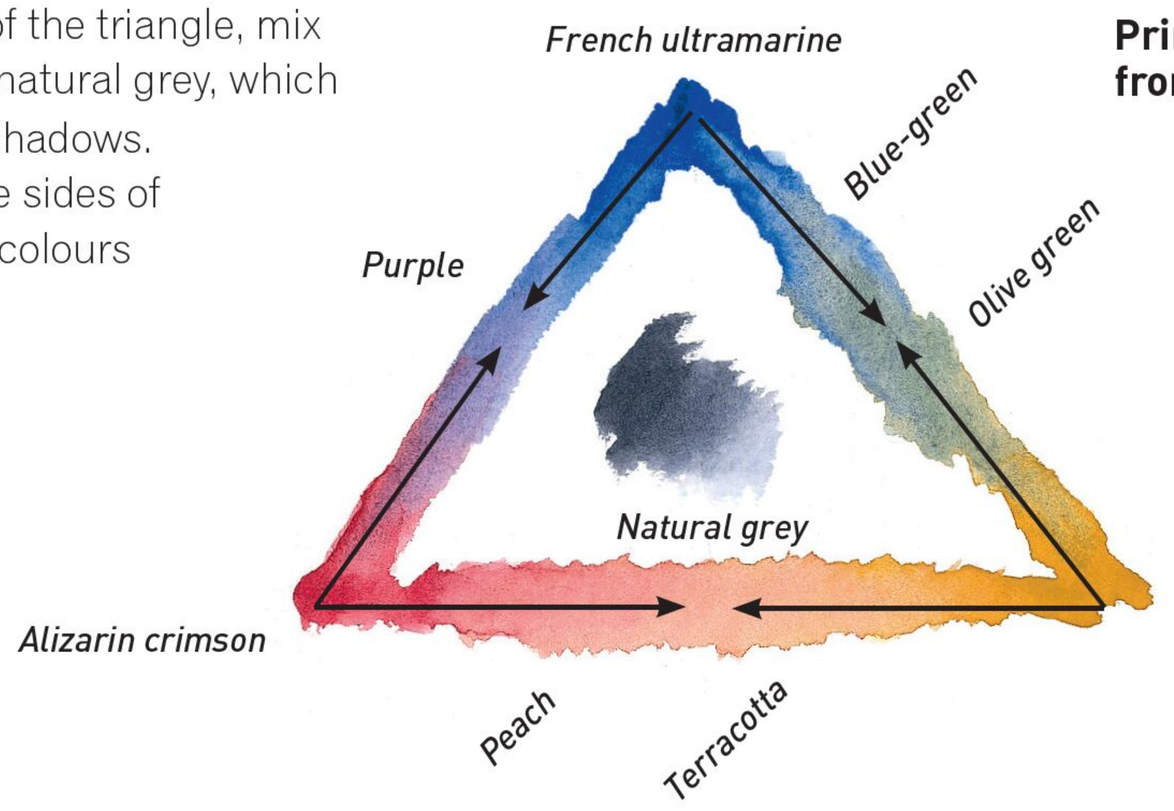


Aureolin (or cadmium yellow)

Primary set 2

Primary colour triangle

To understand how primary colours mix and the colours they create, it is a good idea to paint a primary colour triangle. Simply add a touch of each primary colour to create the three points of the triangle, for instance, in this first example, French ultramarine, yellow ochre and alizarin crimson. Then, using a clean, damp brush, drag each colour along the sides to the other points until they blend and mix. In the centre of the triangle, mix all three primaries to make a natural grey, which is vital, as it can be used for shadows. You can make notes along the sides of the triangle to identify which colours you have created. You will be amazed at the range of colours you can mix from just the basic three.



Primary colour triangle from primary set 1

Try the following mixes from the first set of primary colours:



50% French ultramarine + 50% alizarin crimson = purple



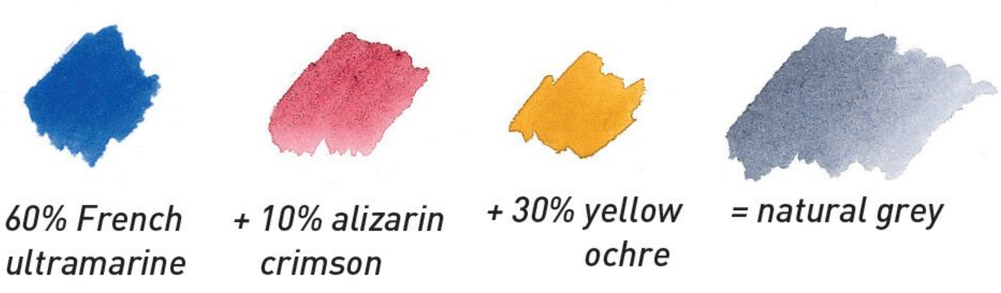
70% yellow ochre + 30% alizarin crimson = light skin colour (mixed with lots of water)



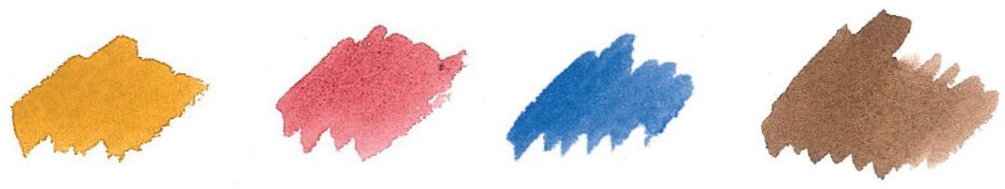
50% French ultramarine + 50% yellow ochre = olive green



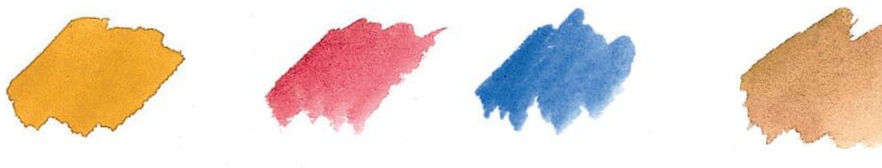
70% yellow ochre + 30% alizarin crimson = terracotta (mixed with less water)



60% French ultramarine + 10% alizarin crimson + 30% yellow ochre = natural grey



50% yellow ochre + 30% alizarin crimson + 20% French ultramarine = brown



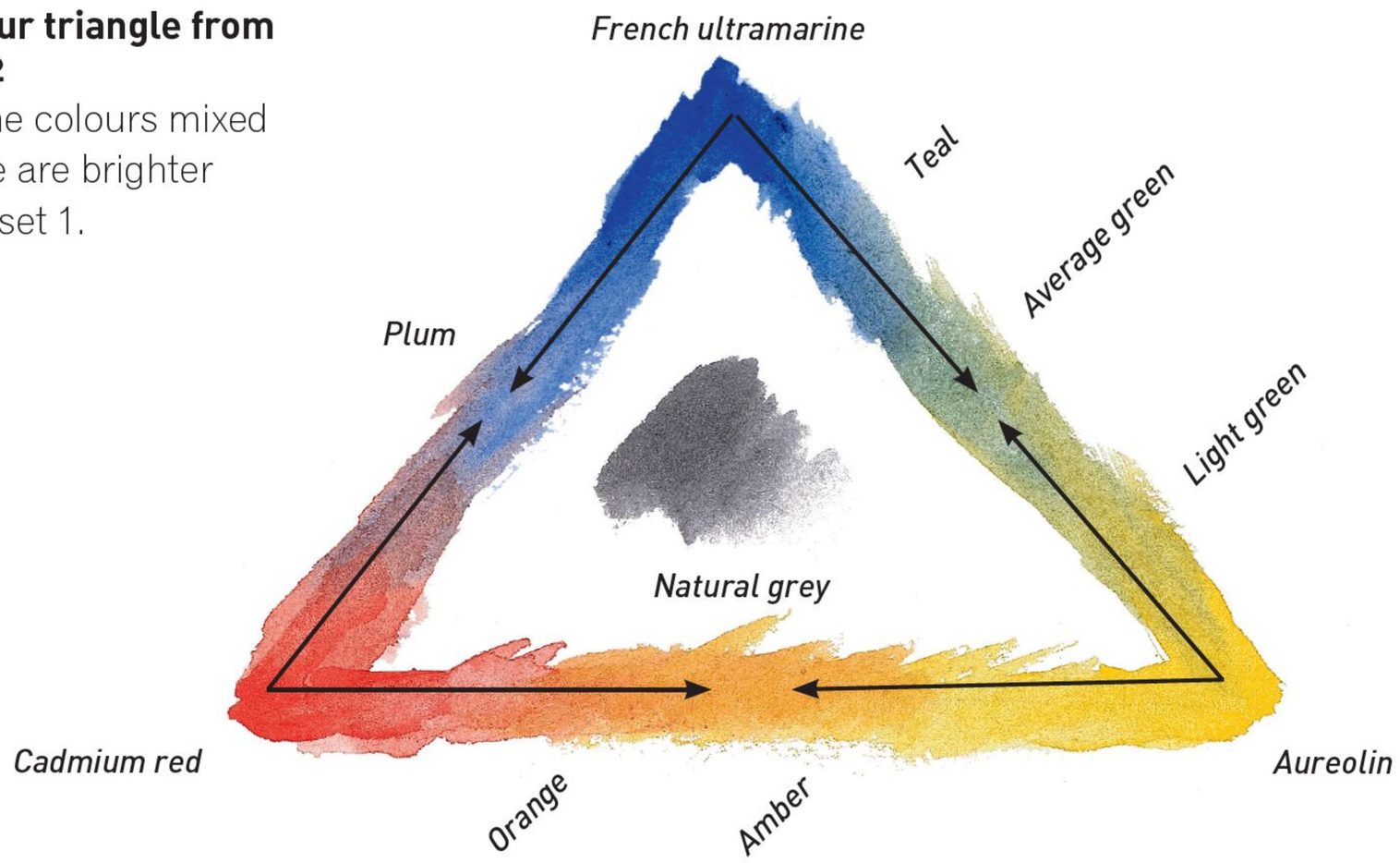
80% yellow ochre + 10% alizarin crimson + 10% French ulramarine = natural yellow



90% French ultramarine + 10% alizarin crimson = lilac, or a snow shadow colour

Primary colour triangle from primary set 2

Notice how the colours mixed by these three are brighter than primary set 1.



Try the following mixes from primary set 2:



70% French ultramarine



+ 50% cadmium red



= plum



70% aureolin



+ 30% French ultramarine



= average green



50% French ultramarine



+ 50% aureolin



= dark green



70% aureolin



+ 30% cadmium red



= orange



50% aureolin



+ 30% cadmium red



+ 20% French ultramarine



= house brick colour



60% French ultramarine



+ 10% cadmium red



+ 30% aureolin



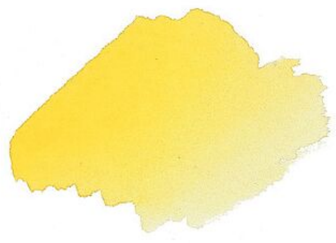
= natural grey

Additional colours

Although the primary colours already shown will mix most of the colours I need, there are some that cannot be obtained in this way, so I use a few additional colours.



Burnt sienna; one of the most useful colours. Great for autumn shades.



Lemon yellow; an opaque, vivid yellow; great for bright greens or to wash over a dark tree or grassy area.



Viridian hue; a vivid green. I use it in tiny amounts, and never on its own.



Prussian blue; a great dark blue for night-time skies.



Intense violet or dioxazine violet; vivid purples that work well in sunset skies.

Try the following mixes from these additional colours:



80% intense violet



+ 20% French ultramarine



= bluebell colour



50% burnt sienna



+ 50% aureolin



= golden autumn foliage colour



60% French ultramarine



+ 40% viridian hue



= turquoise sea colour



50% Prussian blue



+ 50% burnt sienna



= fir tree green



70% lemon yellow



+ 30% French ultramarine



= bright green

Watercolour techniques

Graduated wash

This technique is great for skies and most paintings feature some kind of graduated wash. Is is colour laid on the paper and changed as you go along.

- To achieve a smooth blend of colour, keep each paint the same consistency, with the same ratio of water to paint.
- Work with a loaded brush, which makes the paint run more smoothly.
- Practise the technique to keep the blend between colours smooth.
- Start your second colour by overlapping the previous one.

1 Apply the blue in horizontal brush strokes, moving down each time to apply another stroke, until the colour is two to three lines deep.

2 Clean your brush before applying the second colour. Start the next colour slightly overlapping the previous one, as this will drag down the first colour and start the blending process.

3 Repeat step 2 for the third colour.

4 Clean your brush well, dab the excess water off on paper tissue and lightly blend away, moving down with each horizontal stroke.



French ultramarine

Alizarin crimson

Yellow ochre

Water to blend away

What are graduated washes good for?

Graduated washes can be used for distant mountains, sunset skies, shadows or different shades of green in a meadow.

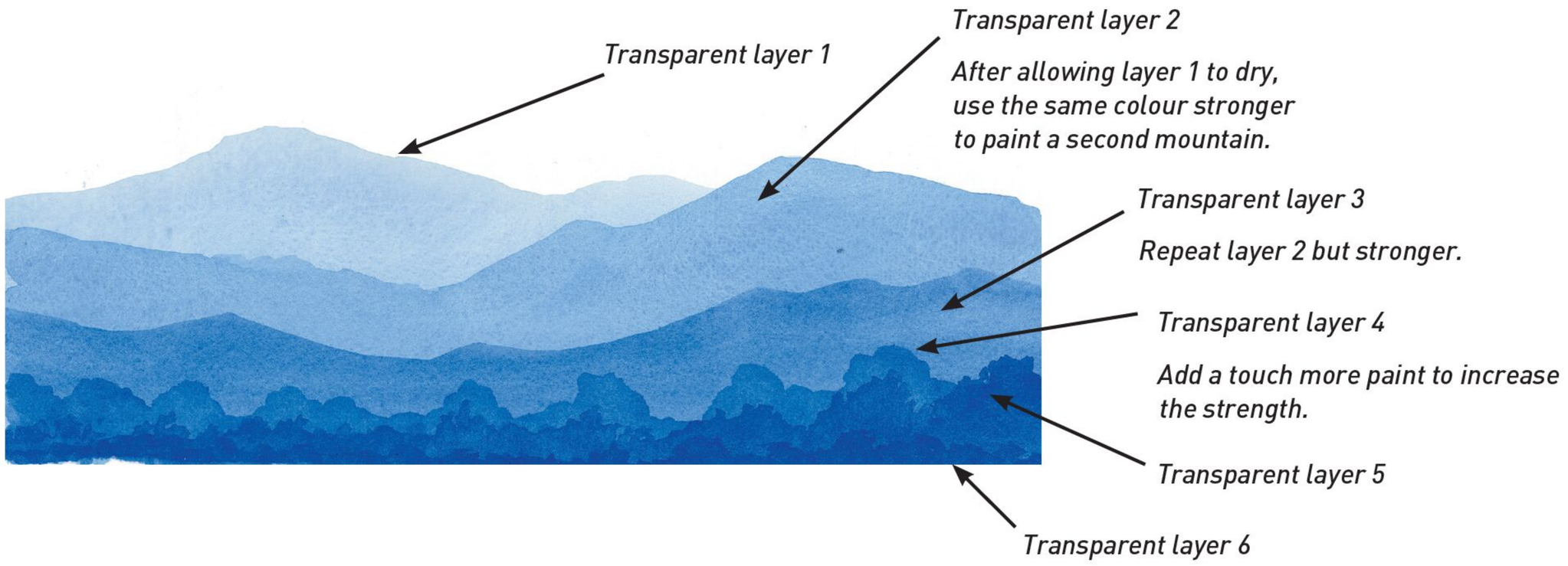


This painting shows a graduated wash in the sky. I then painted the distant mountains with natural grey and used a damp brush to blend them away, creating a misty mountain feel.

Transparent layers

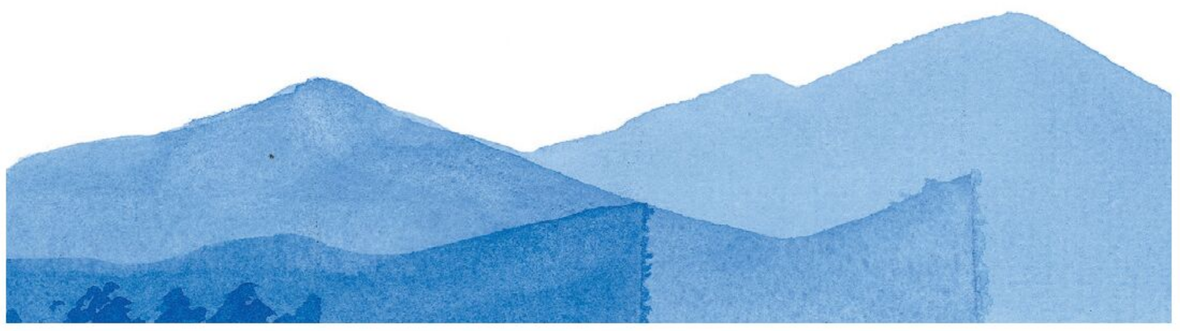
This technique is unique to watercolour and it is great for giving depth and building different tones.

- The more water you add to your colour, the more white paper shows though, making the colour lighter.
- Working with transparent layers creates depth because the lighter the colour, the further away it appears.
- Use lots of water and allow one stage to dry before applying the next.



Cross section

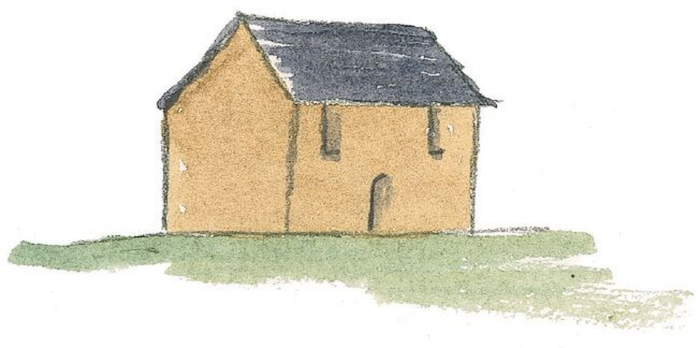
This shows how the paint gets a shade darker with each wash.



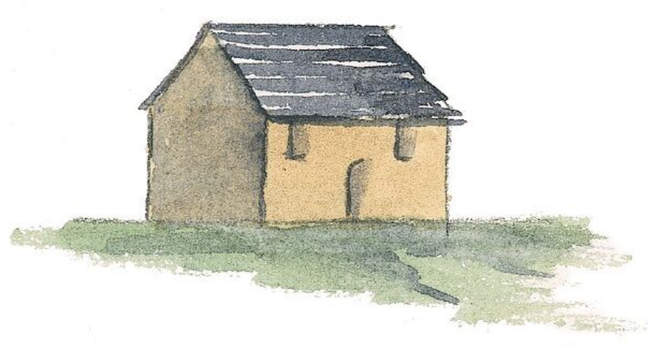
What are transparent layers good for?

Almost every painting features this technique, from distant mountains to shadows on a building and from movement in water to light and dark shades on a flower.

A transparent layer of grey has been painted over the gable end of the building on the right. See how it brings the scene to life and gives it three dimensions.



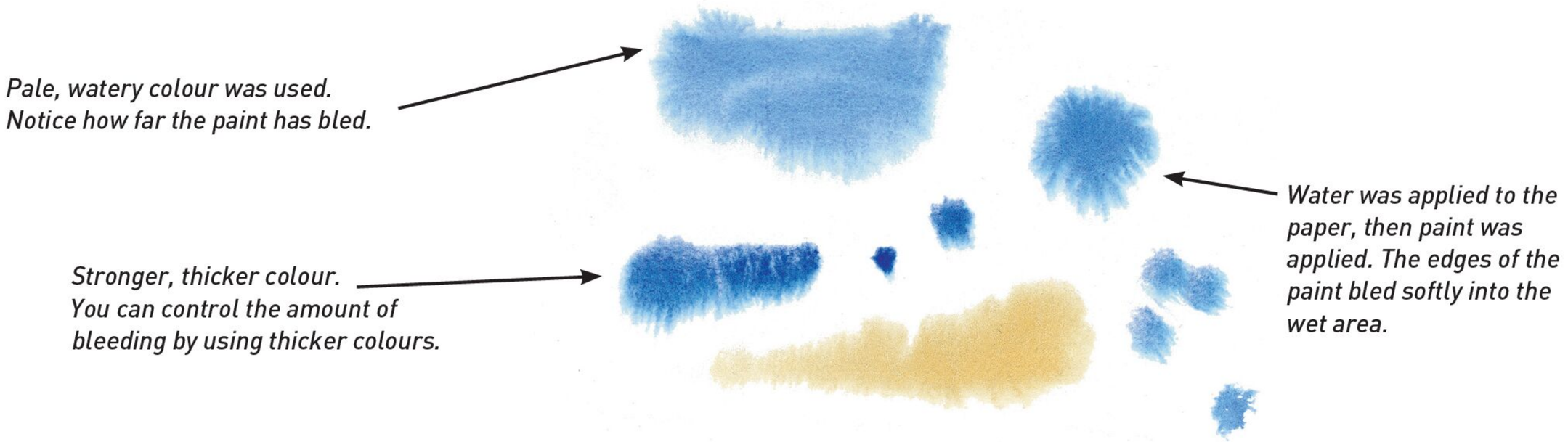
Before



After

Wet into wet

An essential part of watercolour painting, the wet into wet technique is simply adding paint to a wet or already painted but still wet area. This creates a soft, bleeding effect. The end result can be a distant or out of focus feel. Almost all the skies I paint are wet into wet. All the colours mix together and give a softness that is unique to watercolour.



Pale, watery colour was used. Notice how far the paint has bled.

Stronger, thicker colour. You can control the amount of bleeding by using thicker colours.

Water was applied to the paper, then paint was applied. The edges of the paint bled softly into the wet area.

What is wet into wet good for?

- Skies
- Dark clouds
- Distant, out of focus trees
- The background of a flower painting



Don't get wet into wet mixed up with a 'cauliflower'. This is when wet baint bleeds back into a damp area, and it is normally classed as a mistake.



Wet into wet has been used to paint the distant trees. Once dry, the darker trees are painted over the top. this gives a wonderful depth of field.

A wet into wet sky

Almost all my skies are wet into wet.

1. After mixing my colours, which you must do first, I simply wet the paper.

2. I painted the background sky first, with a graduated wash (see page 30). I applied pale yellow ochre at the bottom, then alizarin crimson, and finally a mixed deep purple at the top.

3. Using natural grey and a smaller brush, I picked up a little paint and gently 'twisted in' the clouds. I used a stronger colour for the lower cloud.

Transparent layers (see page 31). These mountains were applied after the wet into wet sky had dried.



Lifting out

This is a technique I use all the time. It brings flat objects to life and gives them three dimensions.

- Use a flat or chisel brush. Dampen it and gently wipe off the excess water with your fingers, sharpening the flat edge as you do so. Brush over the area to be lightened two or three times, then dab the area with kitchen paper to lift off the paint.
- If you make a mistake, allow the area to dry then put the paint back in again using the surrounding colour.
- Practise and experiment, as some colours lift off more easily than others. Strong, dark colours are easier to lift out than lighter, paler colours.
- The paper you use also affects how well paints lift out. I prefer 100% cotton papers, as with wood-based papers, too much paint can be lifted out.



Light

The flat brush was used to lift out the lighter sides of the rocks.



Before

After

The flat brush was used to lift out the horizontal ripples, creating the textured water surface.



Before

Light



Lifting out the light side of the posts has given them three dimensions.

After

Lifting out in action

In this painting I used a flat brush to lift out all the highlights on the distant cliff, foreground rocks and foreground cliff.

Graduated sky wash (see page 30).

Light

Adding a darker shadow next to the highlight really brings the rocks to life, giving three dimensions.

Dry brush

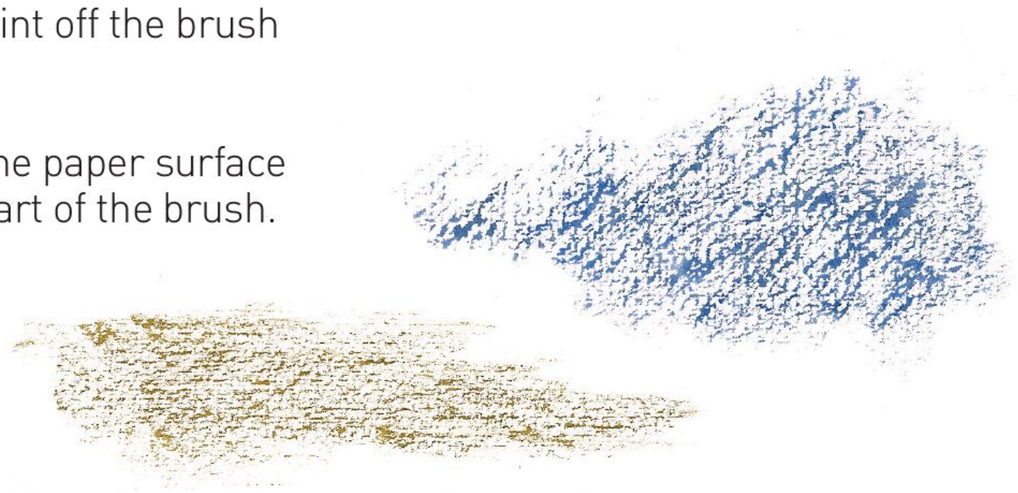
All my paintings feature the dry brush technique. It is a great way of giving texture to an area.

- Different papers create different dry brush effects. A Not or Rough surface works best.
- Practise the technique as it is more effective with little pressure applied to the paper. Lightly skim the surface, using the side of the brush.

1 Load your brush with paint.

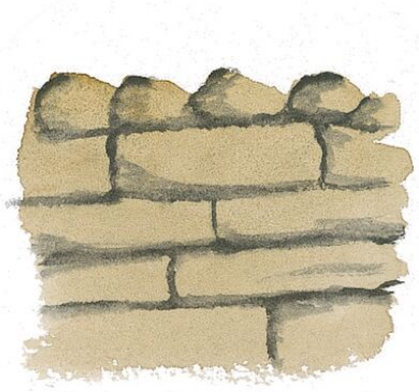
2 Dab some of the paint off the brush on to kitchen paper.

3 Apply the paint to the paper surface using the side or flat part of the brush.



What is dry brush good for?

- Texture on a wall.
- Texture on tree bark.
- Texture in an area of grass.
- Sparkle on water.



Before



After

The dry brush technique makes the second wall look more natural. Grey and brown paint were applied using the technique to add texture.

The dry brush technique in action

I used the dry brush techique over the bark of the foreground tree, with a dark brown mix, and over the path using grey. It was also used for the grass beneath the trees with burnt sienna, and finally I added some dry brush foliage using a dark green over the tips of the branches.



Masking fluid

This is a vital part of watercolour painting. It is a liquid latex solution that dries to a hard rubber. Masking fluid allows you to protect areas of a painting that you want to keep white, or lighter than the background. Watercolour artists tend not to use white paint, so it is the white of the paper that gives you the lighter shades.

- Use a coloured masking fluid, as the colourless ones are hard to see.
- To protect your brushes, coat the damp hairs with normal household soap before dipping them in masking fluid. This acts as a barrier.
- Work for only one or two minutes before washing the masking fluid off your brush and starting again.
- Avoid leaving masking fluid on the paper for long periods, as it may not remain removable.
- Avoid using masking fluid on hot, sunny days, as the high temperature can bake the fluid on.

Applying masking fluid

1 Give the bottle a shake, but gently so as not to create air bubbles.

2 Use older, used brushes as masking fluid can damage the bristles. Special masking fluid brushes are also available.

3 Paint the masking fluid on the desired areas and allow it to dry naturally.

4 Wash your brush thoroughly straight after use, and paint for no more than one minute before washing the brush and starting again.

5 Paint the background, allow to dry and then remove the masking fluid by rubbing with your finger.



1. Masking fluid was applied to the figure and posts, then allowed to dry.

2. The background was painted wet into wet (see page 32) and allowed to dry.



3. I removed the masking fluid by rubbing with my finger.

4. I completed the scene by painting the figure in a bright alizarin crimson mix and used a dark grey for the trousers and post shadows.

Masking fluid in action

This painting shows masking fluid used to protect the lighthouse, the small building, the seagulls, the reflection of the lighthouse and the splashes around the rocks.



Painting skies

Skies are an essential part of landscape painting and watercolour is ideal for them, because of the soft effects created by mixing wet paint on wet paper. Remember these points to make sky painting easier:

- Stick to the same watercolour paper, as you will get used to how it reacts with the paint and how long it takes to dry.
- Work fast, as the paper will dry within five to six minutes. The best skies are the ones you paint quickly.
- Don't go back into the sky to add more paint when you have almost finished, as you will lose the smoothness and cause strange marks or 'cauliflowers'.

A clear blue sky

A simple classic sky, used on many of my watercolour paintings. Notice the warm colour at the base; this helps the sky fall back into the distance.



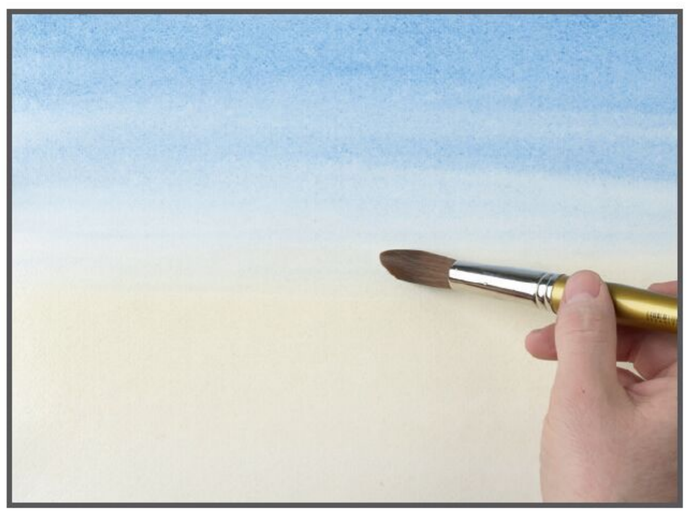
1 Prepare your colour mixes first: a very pale natural yellow, 10% paint to 90% water, and a natural blue, 30% paint to 70% water. Use the size 20 brush to apply clean water on the lower half of the paper, then paint horizontal strokes of the pale natural yellow at the bottom of the sky.



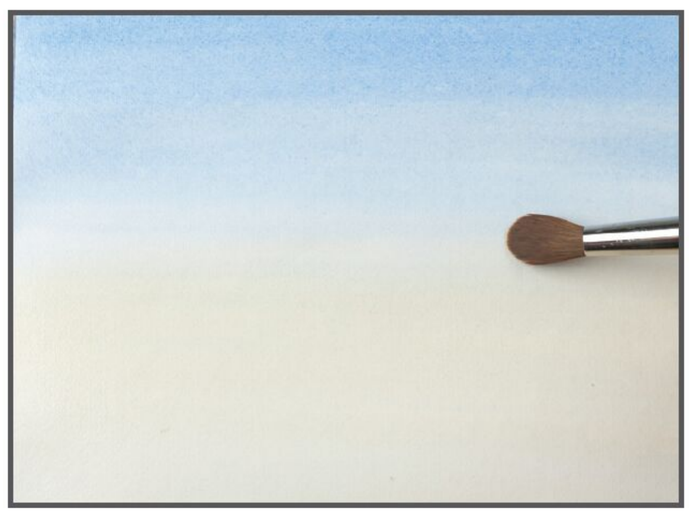
2 Clean the brush, blot it on kitchen paper and paint strokes across at the bottom of the pale yellow area to blend it away downwards.



3 Working from the top, paint horizontal strokes of the natural blue mix.



4 Continue downwards, fading the natural blue into the pale yellow as you go.



5 Clean and blot the brush again, squeeze it to flatten the bristles and blend together any unwanted lines with horizontal brush strokes.



The finished sky.

A cloudy sky

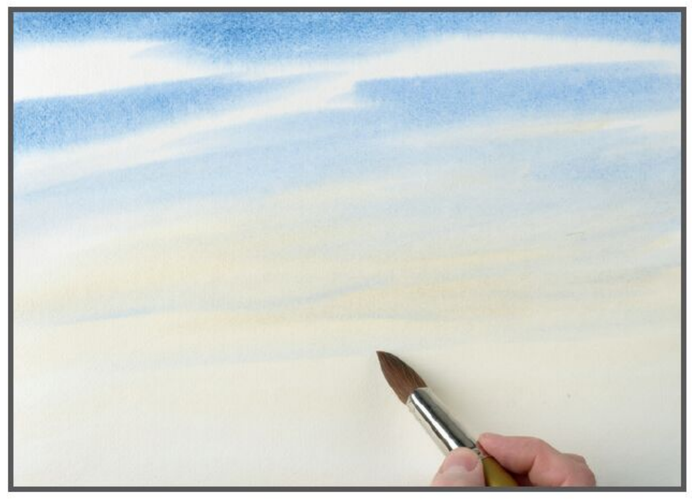
This technique makes painting a cloudy sky simple. The trick is to wet the paper first and work quickly when applying the initial washes. This will give you time to lift out the clouds by rolling with a twist of kitchen paper.



1 Mix pale natural yellow, natural blue and natural grey. Wet the whole paper with the size 20 round brush. Paint on a pale mix of natural yellow with horizontal brush strokes at the bottom, then upward sweeps higher up. Blend the yellow away at the bottom with a clean, damp brush.



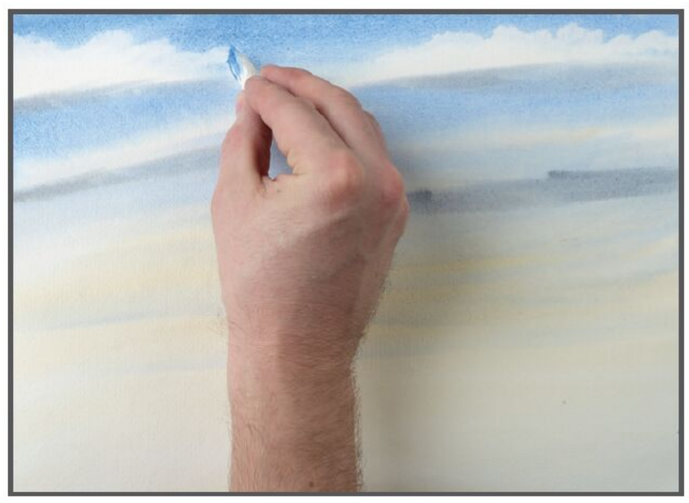
2 Paint strokes of stronger natural blue across the top of the sky, leaving white patches for cloud.



3 Blend the blue away down into the yellow with horizontal strokes of a damp brush.



4 While the painting is wet, paint nautral grey under the cloud patches to create the shadowed parts.



5 Twist a piece of kitchen paper and roll it over the top parts of the clouds to lift out colour and create the top edges.



6 While the painting is still damp, use a clean twist of kitchen paper to wipe the grey at the bottom of the clouds upwards, fading off any sharp edges for a more natural, cloudy look.



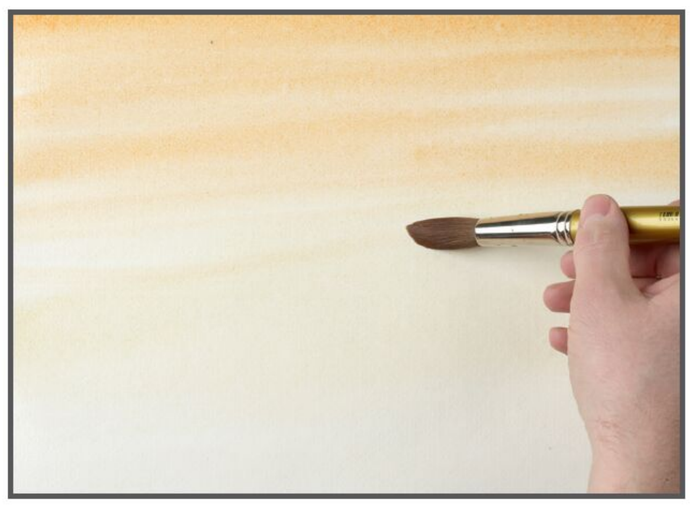
The finished sky.

A stormy sky

Stormy skies are wonderful for atmospheric landscapes. Try changing the background colour to give different moods.



1 Make mixes of very pale natural yellow, pale burnt sienna and strong natural grey. Wet the paper with the size 20 brush. Paint natural yellow at the bottom of the sky.



2 Paint burnt sienna in horizontal strokes across the top of the sky and blend it into the yellow with a damp brush.



3 Working wet into wet, paint strong natural grey clouds. It helps to have less paint on your brush, so lightly dab some off on kitchen paper. Print the brush shape and twist and roll it to create the cloud shapes.



4 Clean the brush, squeeze most of the water out and use it to blend the clouds away downwards with diagonal strokes.



5 Paint more clouds in front of the first with stronger natural grey.



6 Clean and squeeze dry the brush and feather these clouds diagonally, creating a rain-like effect.

The finished sky. If the painting is too dry at step 7, don't worry, as it also works without highlights.

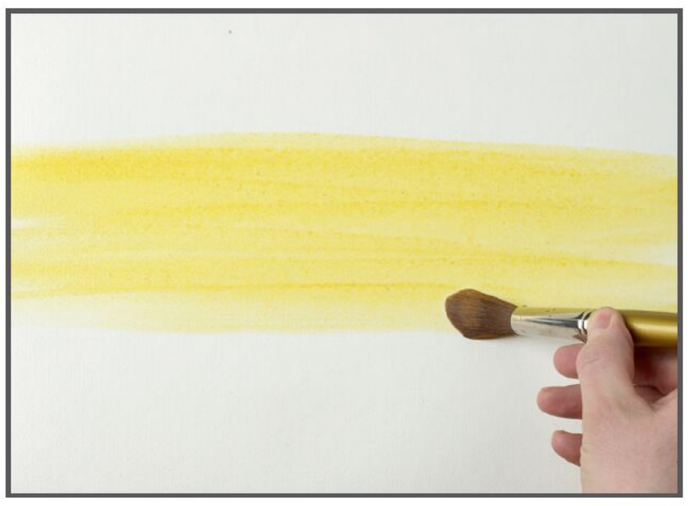


7 Using a tiny twist of kitchen paper, lift out highlights on top of the cloud formations. Keep changing to a clean piece of kitchen paper.

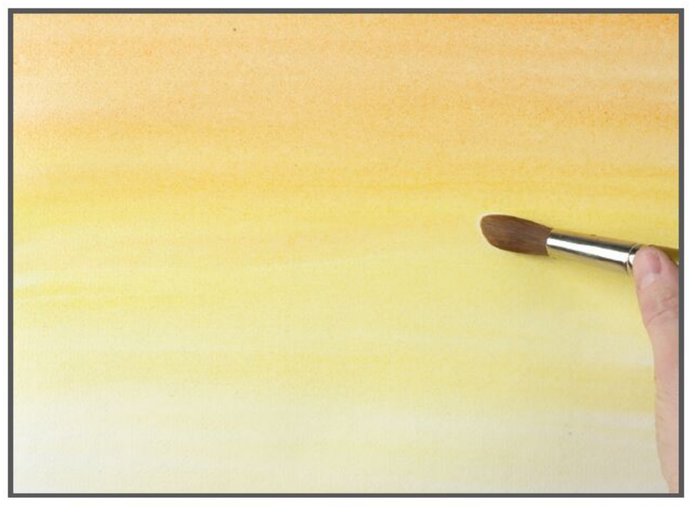


Sunset

I love painting sunsets. This technique is very straightforward, and can give a lovely mood to your paintings.



1 Wrap a small coin in kitchen paper. Make mixes of burnt sienna, 50:50 paint to water, stronger aureolin, pale alizarin crimson and 50:50 natural grey. Wet the paper and use the size 20 brush to paint aureolin across the middle of the sky. Blend it away downwards with a clean, damp brush.



2 Paint horizontal strokes of burnt sienna at the top of the painting and blend it down into the aureolin.



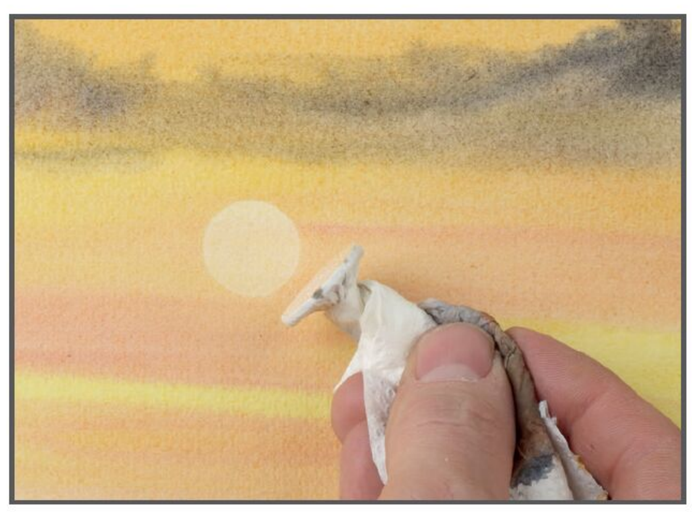
3 Paint steaks of alizarin crimson across the middle of the sky, then paint streaks of cloud using natural grey, all while the painting is wet.



4 Twist and roll the brush on the page to paint fluffier cloud shapes with natural grey.



5 Clean the brush, squeeze it flat and use it to blend and feather the lower edges of the grey clouds downwards.



6 While the painting is still damp, press the wrapped coin on to the paper and lift out a circle for the sun.

The finished sky.



7 Use a tiny twist of kitchen paper to lit out highlights in the fluffy clouds around the sun.



Painting trees

Winter tree

Snowy winter scenes are among my favourite subjects. I love the way in which the use of shadows can tranform a white sheet of paper into a three-dimensional painting. Good winter trees are therefore essential.

- The first thing to practise is the shape and structure of a winter tree. Remember the 'thick to thin rule'; that a winter tree goes from thick at its base to thin at its top and outer edges. It helps if you paint the tree in the direction in which it grows: from the ground up.

- Mix colours as follows:

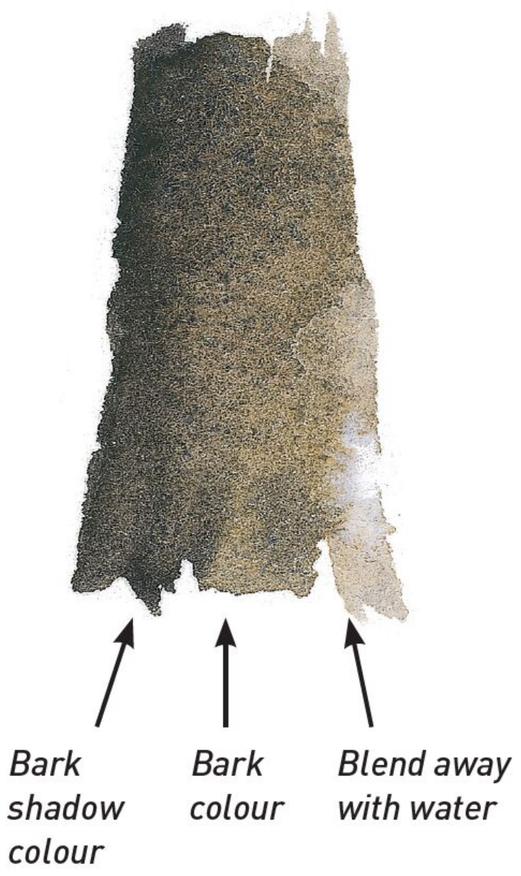


Bark colour: 40% natural grey + 60% natural yellow

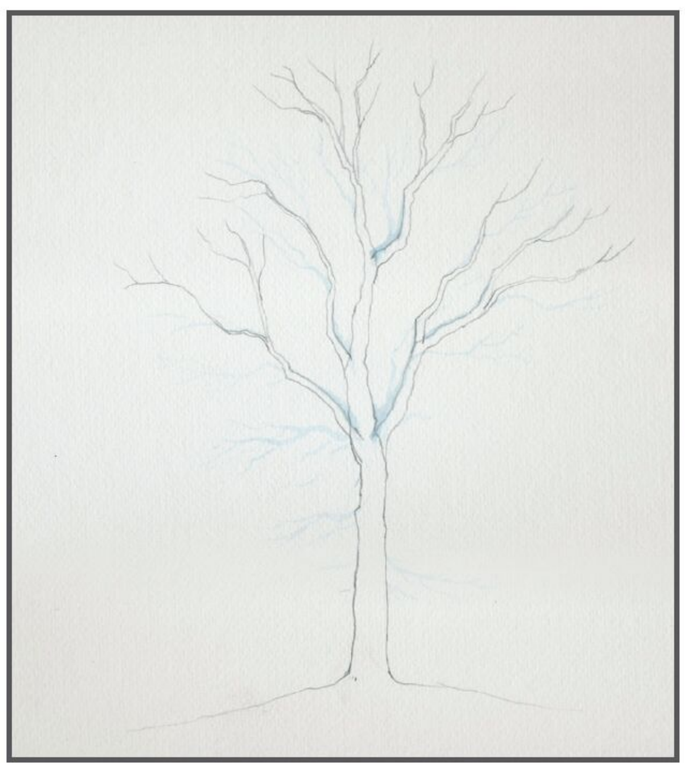


Bark shadow colour: 70% natural grey + 30% burnt sienna

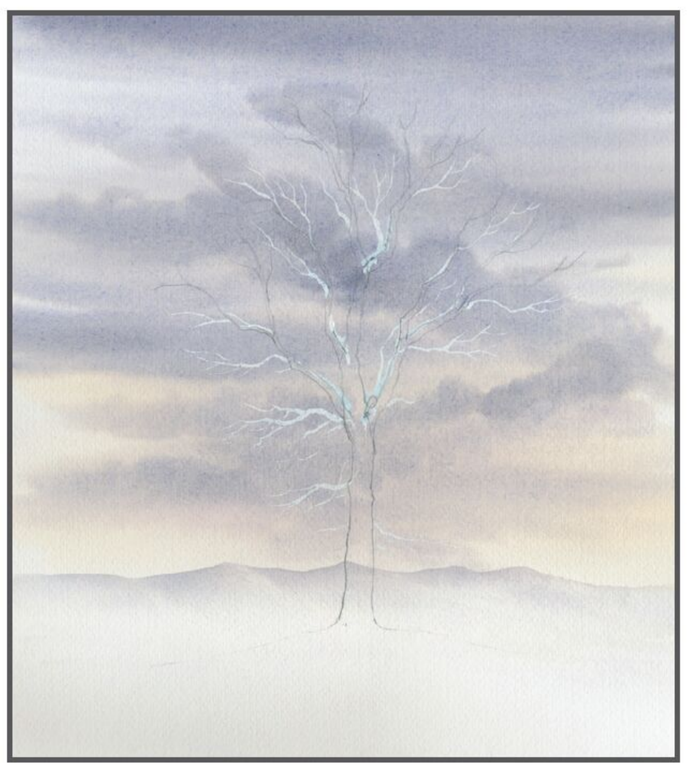
- Paint the trunk as follows (right), working in thirds:



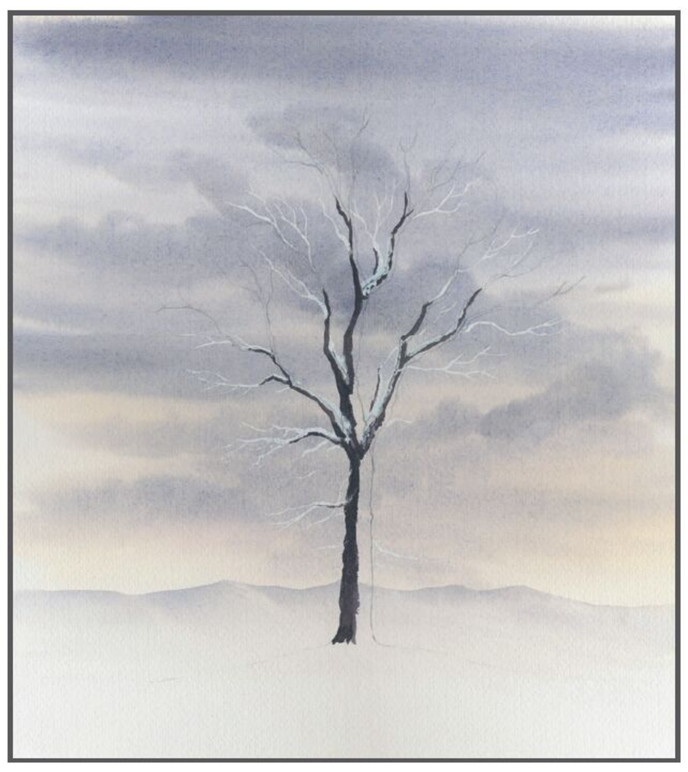
Painting the tree



1



2 Paint a wet into wet background with a large size 20 round brush and a pale, watery mix of yellow ochre, followed by a slightly stronger mix of natural grey. Once this is dry, use a smaller size 6 brush to paint a pale background hill in natural grey. With a damp brush, blend the hill away downwards. Allow to dry.



3 Begin the tree by painting its shaded left-hand side using the bark shadow colour. Paint as the tree grows, from the ground up, making the branches go from thick to thin.



The finished scene.

4 Using the lighter bark colour, paint the sunlit side. On the wider part of the tree, use a damp brush to blend the colour off to the right-hand side. Extend the branches right out to form smaller branches and twigs, changing to the rigger brush when necessary. When the tree painting is dry, rub off the masking fluid.

Tip

To paint the fine ends of twigs, gradually lift and flick the rigger off the paper, or gently rub your finger over the tips to fade them.

Tip

Use the bark shadow colour to give the impression of branches growing from the front of the tree, and the paler colour for branches growing from the far side of the tree.

Add fine twigwork with a rusty brown mixed from 70% burnt sienna and 30% natural grey. Use a size 6 brush and the dry brush technique.

Use a stippling technique to paint the leftover brown leaves with burnt sienna and natural grey. Use either a tree and texture brush or a size 6 brush with the bristles splayed out.

Paint a cast shadow using the snow shadow colour: 90% French ultramarine with 10% alizarin crimson. Create a distant effect with the same mix.

Add extra form and texture to the trunk by lifting out paint using a damp flat brush. Lighten the branches where they meet the trunk to create a three-dimensional effect.

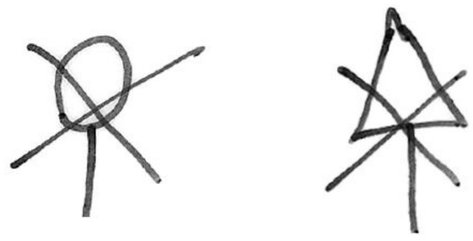
Paint the posts using the bark shadow colour on the left and the lighter bark colour on the right.

Use the dry brush technique with bark colour to suggest earth showing through the snow.

Summer tree

When I started painting in watercolour, I really struggled with summer trees, so I went through a stage of painting nothing but summer scenes, and developed my own technique. Over the years, this has evolved. Look at summer trees and note the shadow areas, and the way the darkest parts almost form bands across the tree. These are the 'in' parts of the tree. Note also that you can see the branches over these areas.

- The first thing to practise is the shape. Avoid lollipops or triangular Christmas tree shapes.



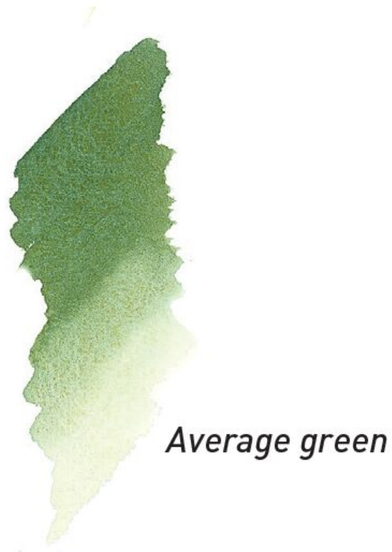
A good summer tree shape to aim for is almost oval, with a few lumps on the side.



- I always start with a basic sketch of the height and shape, which I draw in a zigzag style to create the 'ins' and 'outs' of the tree.



- Mix your greens. I have my own greens, including average green, which you can mix from 70% aureolin and 30% French ultramarine. You will also need a bright green, which is 70% lemon yellow and 30% French ultramarine. Finally for the darkest shades of the tree you need a shadow green mixed from 70% aureolin and 30% natural grey.



Average green



Bright green

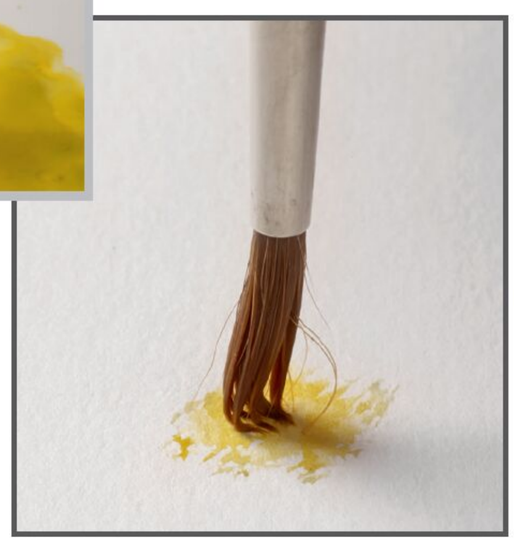


Shadow green

- First practise the stippling technique to achieve a leafy effect. Gently stipple a size 6 brush in the palette to splay the bristles a little, allowing you to paint several leaves in one go. I use my tree and texture brushes which are specifically made for this purpose. Pick up only a little paint on the brush and stipple on to the paper with light pressure.



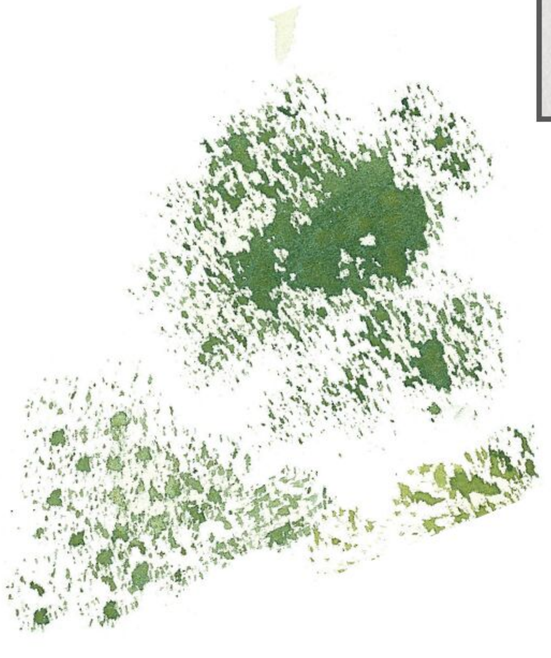
Stippling with the size 6 round brush.





Stippling with my tree and texture brush.





Painting the tree

I have started this mini scene with a wet into wet sky. Begin painting your trees while the sky is still wet.



1 Paint a few distant trees across the horizon using the stippling technique and bright green. You can use a size 6 round brush for this with the bristles splayed a little. I used my medium tree and texture brush. The light here is coming from the right, so add shadow to the left-hand sides and undersides of the trees by stippling natural grey on to the green background. While the paint is damp, scratch out trunks and branches with your fingernail.



2 Sketch in the basic tree shape with a zigzag pattern. Gently stipple in the main shape of the tree with average green. I used my medium tree and texture brush. Paint the centre of the tree as a solid shape and paint open foliage texture, using gentle pressure, at the edges.



3 Add some light and shadow to make the light areas stand forwards and the darker areas recede, creating a three-dimensional effect. I used a small tree and texture brush to stipple on a thick, strong mix of bright green for highlights and a strong mix of shadow green for the shadow. Keep in mind where the tree shape goes in and out, and make it lighter where it comes out and catches the light.

4 To create really bright, effective highlights, lift out colour next to the darkest shadowed areas. Use a damp size 6 brush and swirl the point over the paint to lift it off, then dab with a tissue if necessary. To give a speckled, highlighted leaf effect, use a clean, damp tree and texture brush and stipple this over the tree, then dab with a tissue.

To finish the tree, add the trunk, branches and some detail. A good colour mix for these is 70% natural grey and 70% burnt sienna. To make the trunk appear round, paint the shadowed side with this colour, and then halfway round, clean your brush and blend in a pale burnt sienna wash, mixing the colours on the paper. Change to a rigger to paint the fine branches, painting them in the direction in which they grow, from thick to thin. Note that the branches and trunk only show in the dark areas. Paint a grassy bank, a fence and natural grey shadows to finish.

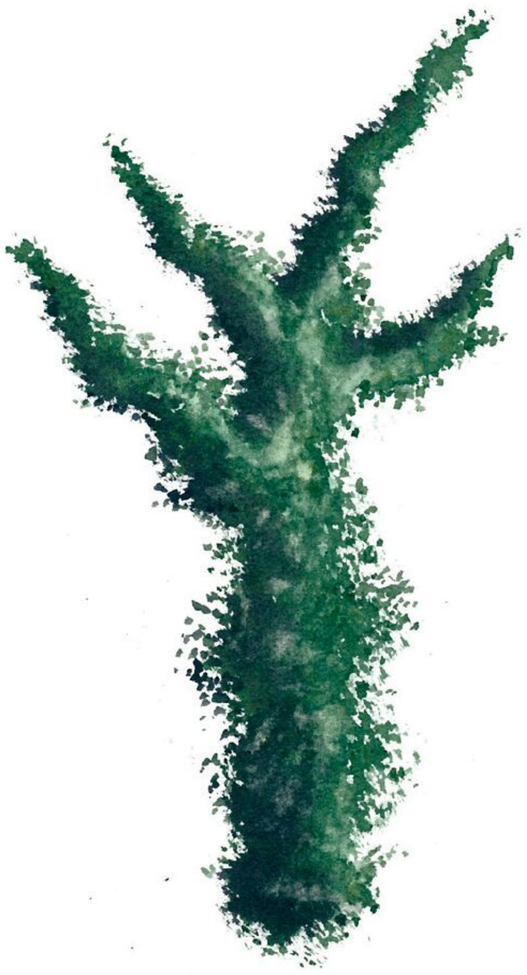


Spring tree

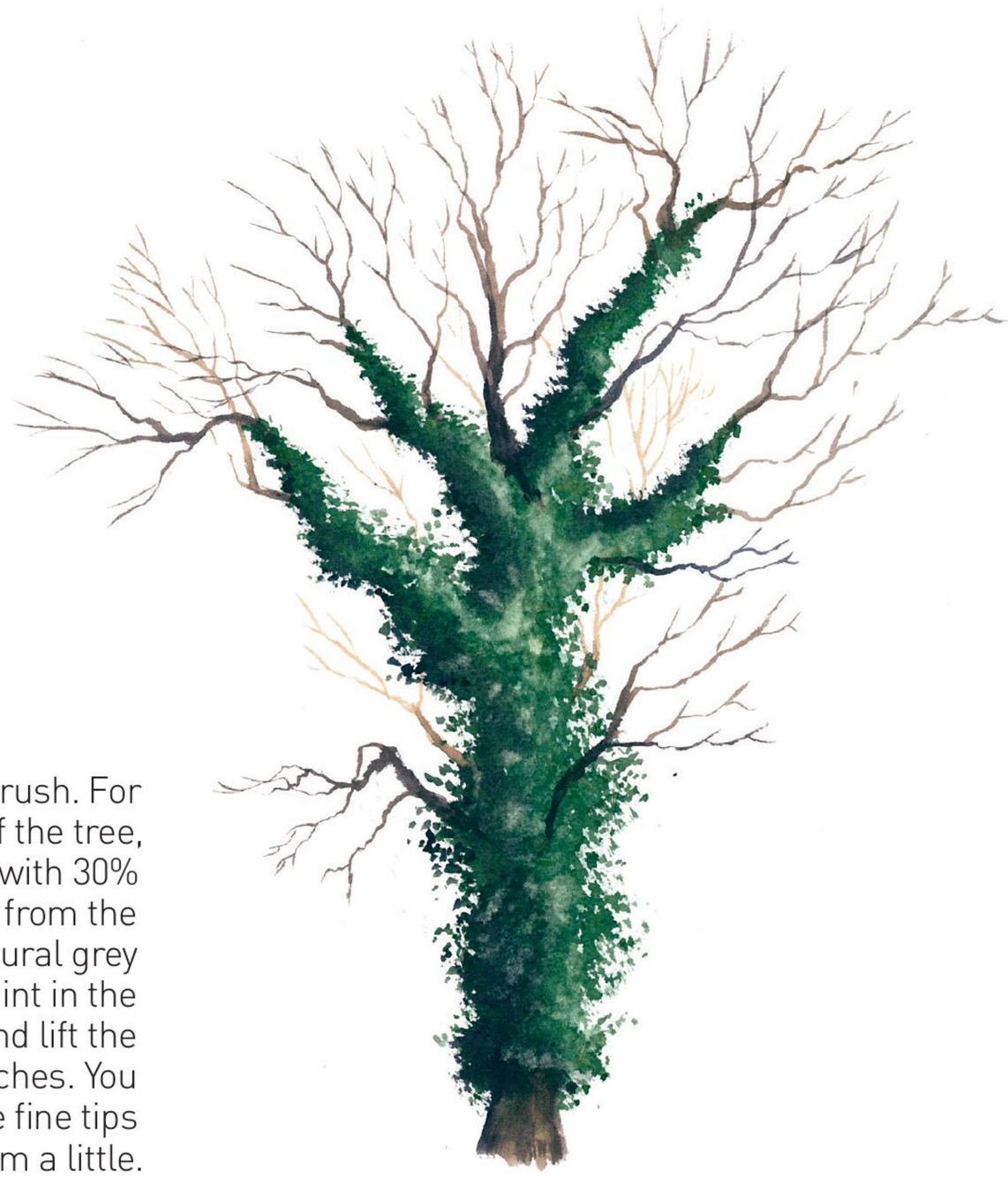
Spring trees are more open and have fewer leaves and more branches on show. What really makes a spring tree is the bright green foliage colour, so use the bright green mix of 70% lemon yellow and 30% French ultramarine.



1 Start by using the stippling technique to paint the ivy-coloured trunk. Use either a size 6 round brush or a medium tree and texture brush, and stipple on the trunk and the lower parts of the branches with average green. Remember the thick to thin rule, starting thicker at the base of the trunk and working up and out to thinner ends. Shade the left-hand side with a strong mix of shadow green. Allow to dry.

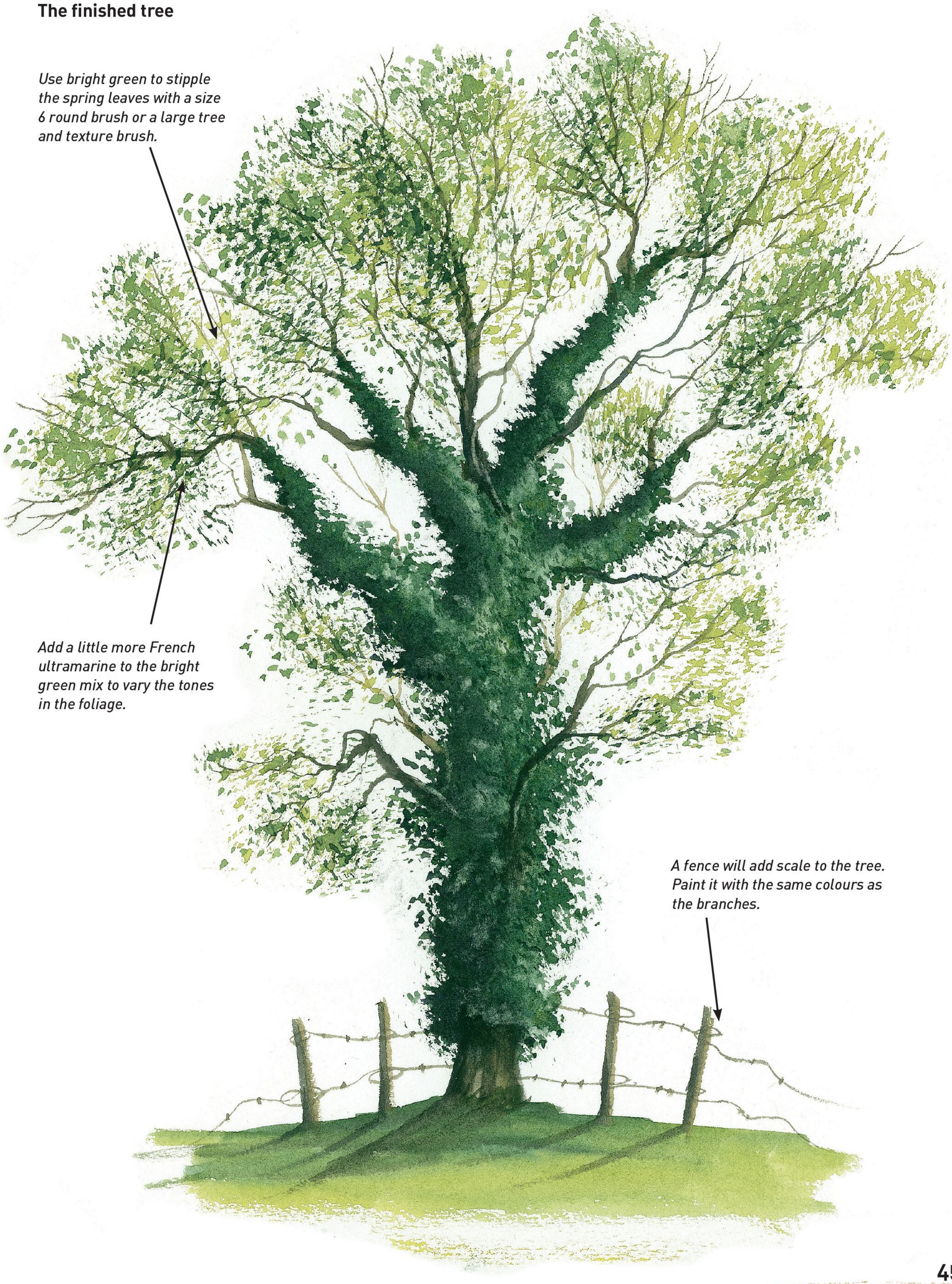


2 Lift out highlights from the ivy. Take a size 6 round brush, wet then dab it so that it is damp. Swirl the tip of the brush in the dried paint, then use a tissue to dab off colour. Try not to swirl too much in one area. If you take off too much paint, use a damp brush to gently pull in the surrounding colour.



3 Paint fine branches using a rigger brush. For distant branches, growing from the back of the tree, use a 70% yellow ochre or natural yellow with 30% natural grey. For closer branches, growing from the front, use the bark shadow colour: 70% natural grey with 30% yellow ochre or natural yellow. Paint in the direction the tree grows, from thick to thin, and lift the brush off the paper for the tips of the branches. You can then use your finger to gently rub over the fine tips to fade them a little.

The finished tree



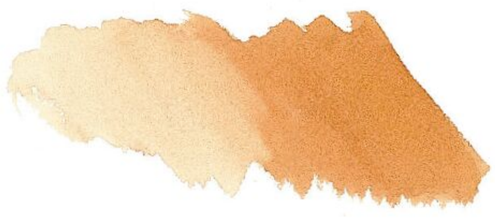
Autumn tree

Everyone loves a good autumn scene, and of course it is the trees that really make it special. There is a risk of ending up with muddy colours when mixing colours for autumn trees if you are not careful.

- Mix perfect autumn shades as follows:



Golden autumn: 50% aureolin + 50% burnt sienna

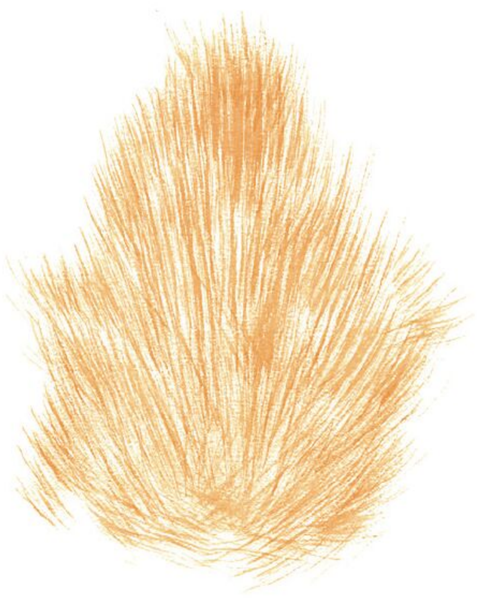


Golden autumn light: 80% aureolin + 20% burnt sienna

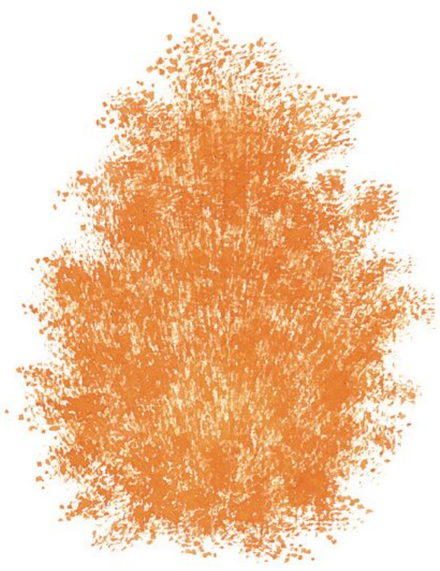


Autumn shadow colour: 50% aureolin + 25% burnt sienna + 25% French ultramarine

- The technique for painting an autumn tree is very similar to the summer tree on pages 42–43. The main difference is that an autumn tree has a softness and a warm glow about it that we associate with the season.



1 Paint a soft, feather-like shape for the tree using the golden autumn light colour. Use very little paint on either a size 6 round brush with the bristles splayed out, or a tree and texture brush. Lightly stroke the tip of the brush on the paper.



2 Use the golden autumn colour to suggest the foliage on top of the shape. Think about the shape of the tree and the 'ins and outs' you want to create.



3 Change to the autumn shadow colour to stipple in the shaded areas. Paint these over the 'in' areas of the tree shape, leaving the foliage of the 'out' areas lighter.

4 Gently lift out a few highlights with the size 6 brush, particularly next to the shadow areas. Take a damp brush and swirl the tip over the area you want to lighten. Dab the area with tissue to remove more paint.



The finished tree

To finish the tree, add the trunk and a few fine branches as shown.

Use the rigger to paint fine branches with a strong mix of natural grey and burnt sienna. Paint thick to thin and make sure they appear to come from the main trunk.

Paint the trunk using a size 6 round brush. Paint from the bottom upwards, from thick to thin, and make sure that higher up it only appears in the 'in' parts of the tree shape.

Lift out highlights to add form and texture to the trunk using a damp flat brush.

Once the foliage painting has dried, lift out a few highlights using a damp size 6 brush, using a swirling motion with the tip of the brush.

You can add a fence and gate to give a sense of scale.

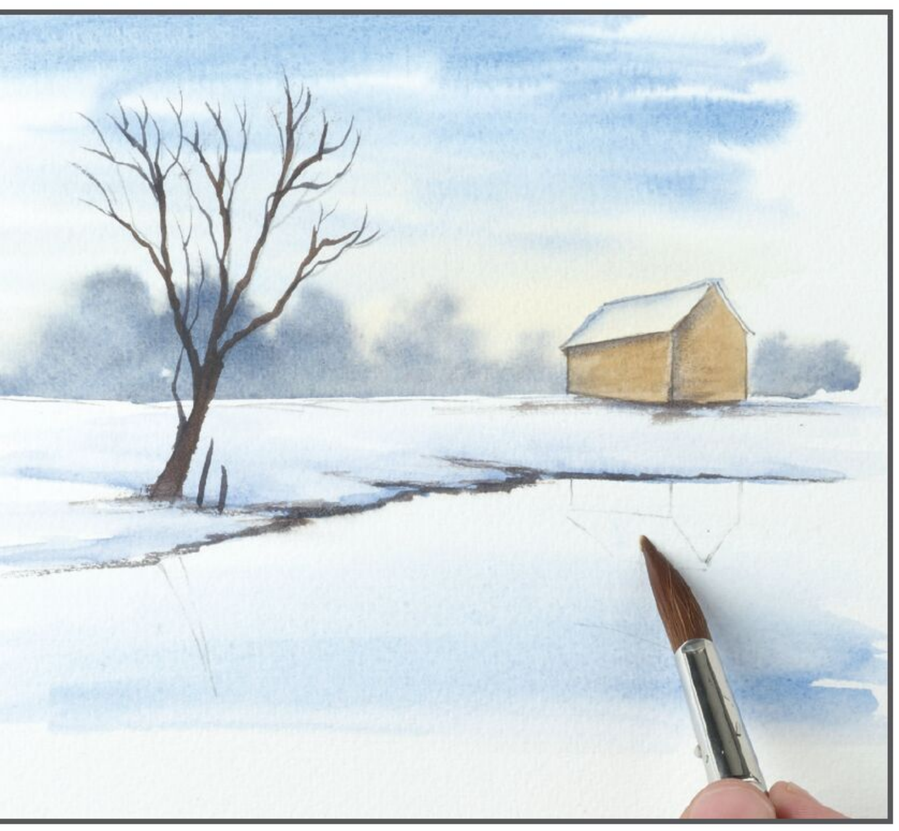
Painting water

It is essential to learn how to paint water for landscapes and seascapes. Water is clear, so it is the reflections that make water in paintings, whether it is just a simple sky refected or trees or buildings.

The basic rule for painting water is to paint vertical or downward reflections, then paint horizontal ripples over the top of these. Make sure the ripple lines are perfectly horizontal, otherwise the water looks as though it is lying downhill – and of course water always lies flat.

Wet on dry reflections

This is a simple but effective way to paint reflections. It is good for almost mirror-like reflections, as you can control the amount of movement by going from loose ripples to tight, detailed ones.



1 Start by drawing in the scene and the reflection, which should be a mirror image of the objects to be reflected. To make sure the size is right, measure the height of the object, and use this measurement to draw in the reflection, going down from the bottom of the object.

Wet the water area with a size 12 brush and clean water. Paint horizontal strokes across the bottom of the water area with natural blue. Blend these away upwards with a clean, damp brush.



2 Drop in strong natural grey at the water's edge and blend this horizonally away into the water with a dry brush. Dry the painting.





3 Mix natural grey with burnt sienna and paint short horizontal strokes for the tree and post reflections, making sure they lean in the opposite way from the objects themselves. Paint the barn reflection in the same way with natural yellow, adding natural grey to reflect the darker parts.



4 Paint a pale mix of natural blue for the reflection of the barn roof and blend away the edges with a clean, damp brush.



The finished scene with wet on dry reflections.

Wet into wet reflections

This is my favourite technique for painting reflections. The end result is a soft, effective reflection. The trick is to use the same colours you used in the landscape and work with a dry brush, with just a little bit of paint on it. This controls the spread of paint on the wet paper.

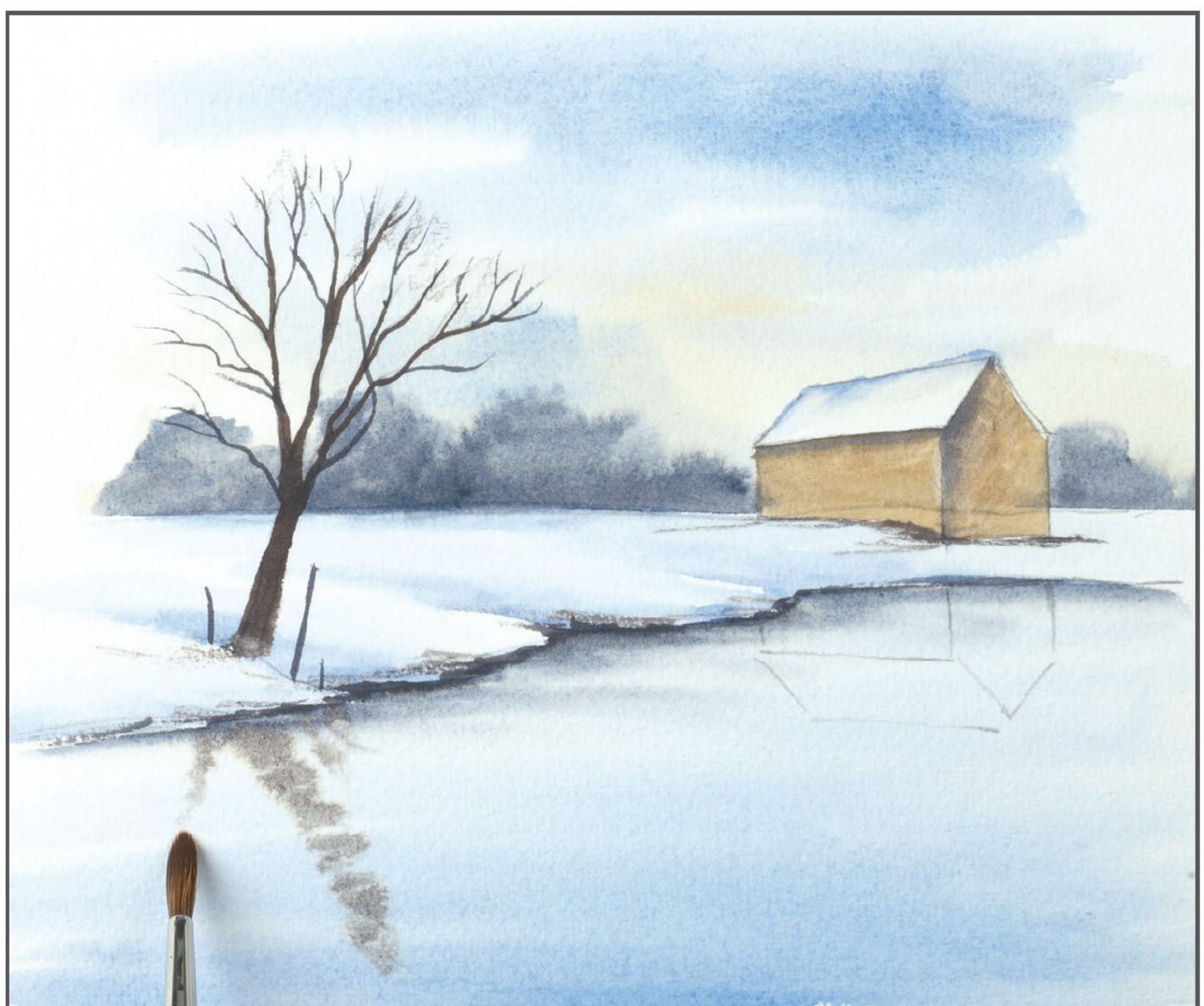


1 Start by drawing in the scene and the reflections, which should be a mirror image of the objects to be reflected. Measure the height of the object, and use this measurement to draw in the reflection, going down from the bottom of the object.

Wet the water area with a size 12 brush and clean water. Paint natural blue a third of the way up the area in horizontal strokes. Blend it away upwards with a damp brush.



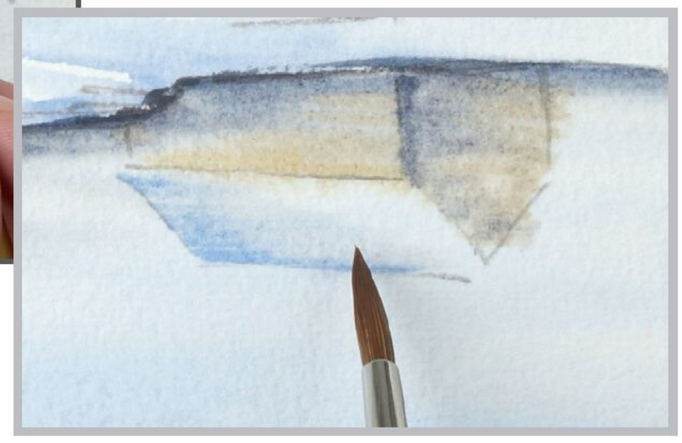
2 Working into the wet background, use a size 6 brush and natural grey to paint the water's edge, then blend this away outwards horizontally with a clean, damp brush.



3 While the background is still wet, paint the tree reflection with horizontal strokes, allowing the water to spread and soften in the paint. Paint the post reflections in the same way.



4 Still working into the wet background, paint the barn reflection with natural yellow and drop in natural grey for the shadowed parts. Clean the brush, squeeze it flat and use it to feather off the edges of the shadows. Add the reflection of the barn roof in the same way, with pale natural blue.





The finished scene with wet into wet reflections.

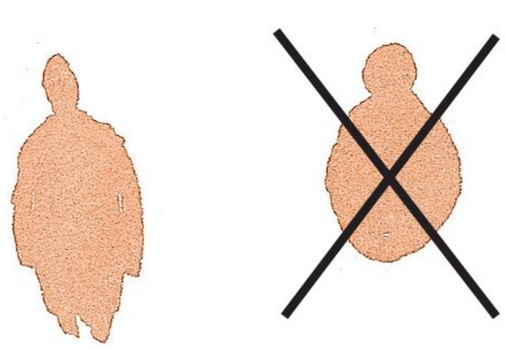
Painting figures

People can really give life to a painting, as well as scale. I usually paint figures walking into a scene. This is great for composition as they will lead the viewer into the painting. It is well worth practising painting figures. Here are a few examples.

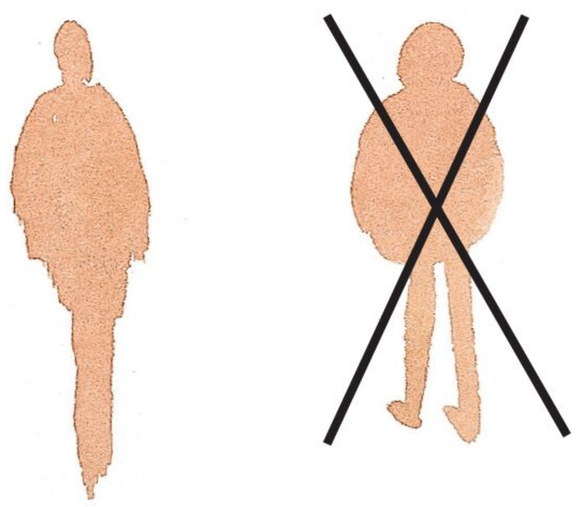
Painting a basic figure



1 Paint the person naked first, as this makes it much easier to get the shape right. Choose a skin tone from the opposite page. Paint an oval for the head. Do not paint a round shape.



2 Paint a larger oval for the body, starting to give a vague impression of the arms. Once again, do not paint a round shape.



3 Add the legs as a tapered shape. Do not add feet, as this will look strange when the figure is seen from this distance, and do not leave a space between the legs.



4 When the skin colour is dry, add a sweater or jacket. Paint this as a base coat, allow it to dry, then add natural grey shadow. Shade under each arm to separate the arms from the body, then use a clean, damp brush to blend the shadow away into the body and arms. Darken one shoulder to give form to the figure, and blend the shadow away as before.



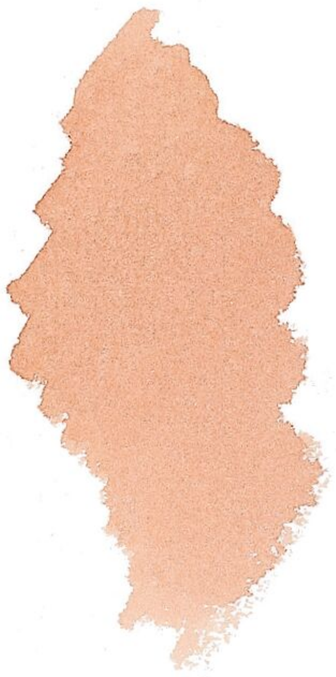
5 Choose a hair colour and paint your figure's hair. At this point you decide which way the figure is facing. I usually make then face into the scene to help with composition.



6 Paint the trousers with a strong mix of natural grey. Leave a small space between the trouser legs lower down. Use a damp brush to blend the legs away into the ground, then add a cast shadow with natural grey and blend that away with a damp brush.

Mixing skin tones

Use the following mixes to create your figures' skin.



Light skin tone: 70% yellow ochre + 30% alizarin crimson.



Medium skin tone: 70% yellow ochre + 20% alizarin crimson + 10% burnt sienna.



Dark skin tone: 70% yellow ochre + 20% alizarin crimson + 10% French ultramarine.

Mixing hair colours

Use the following mixes to create your figures' hair.



Ginger: 70% burnt sienna + 30% yellow ochre.



Blond: natural yellow or 90% yellow ochre +10% natural grey.



Dark brown: 50% burnt sienna + 50% natural grey.



Brown: 70% burnt sienna + 30% natural grey.



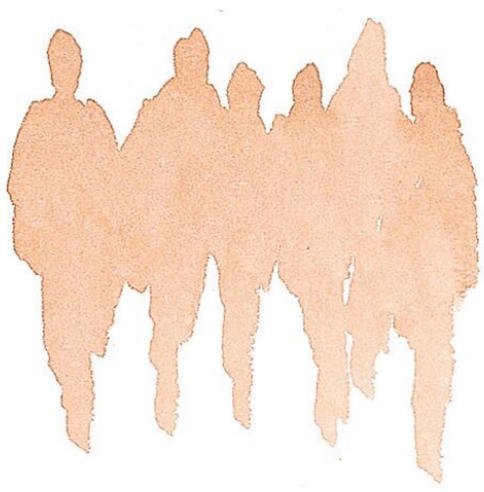
Black: 90% natural grey + 10% burnt sienna.

Exercises

Try these exercises to brush up your figure painting.

Painting a group of figures

To paint a distant group, use similar techniques to those used for a basic figure, shown on page 52.





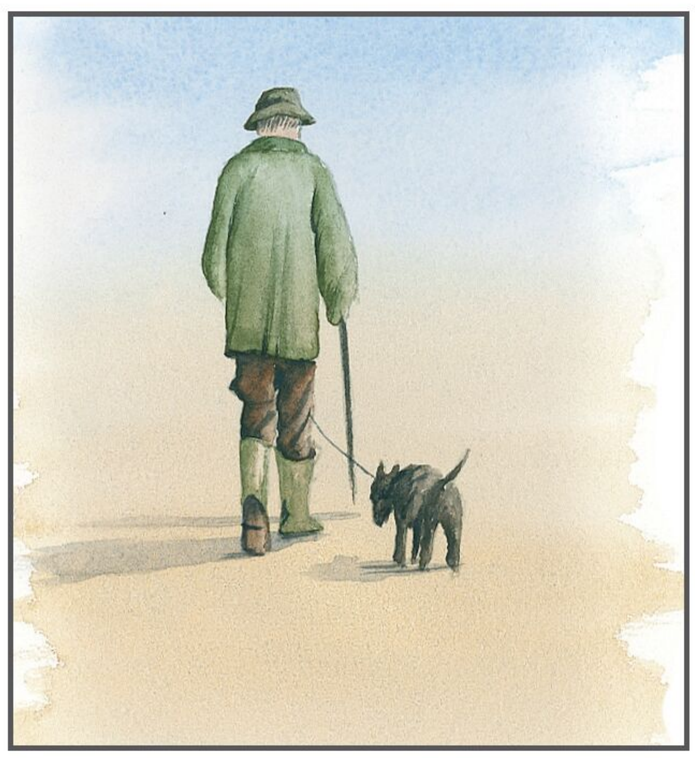
1 Loosely paint the group, using the skin tone first and blocking in ovals for heads. Paint oval bodies, suggesting the shape of the arms. Add legs tapering downwards, again avoiding painting feet or separating the legs.

2 Paint the hair and the clothes as on page 52. Add shadows on the figures and cast shadows using natural grey, and blend these away with a damp brush.

Man walking a dog







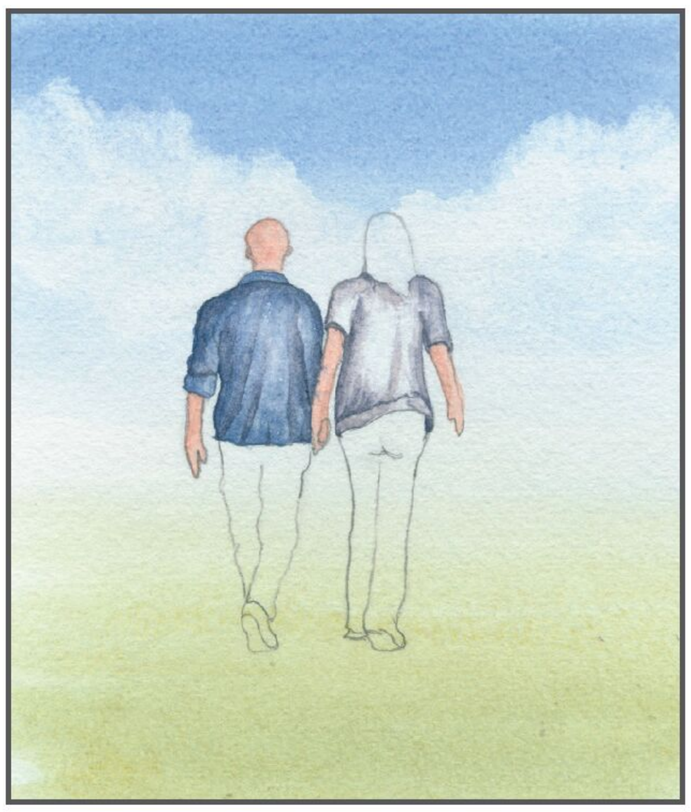
1 Sketch the figure and dog (which should start as an 'M' shape as shown on page 13), then paint the sky using pale blue. I used my natural blue, but you can use French ultramarine. Use a size 12 round brush and blend the sky down into a pale yellow ochre using a graduated wash technique (see page 30).

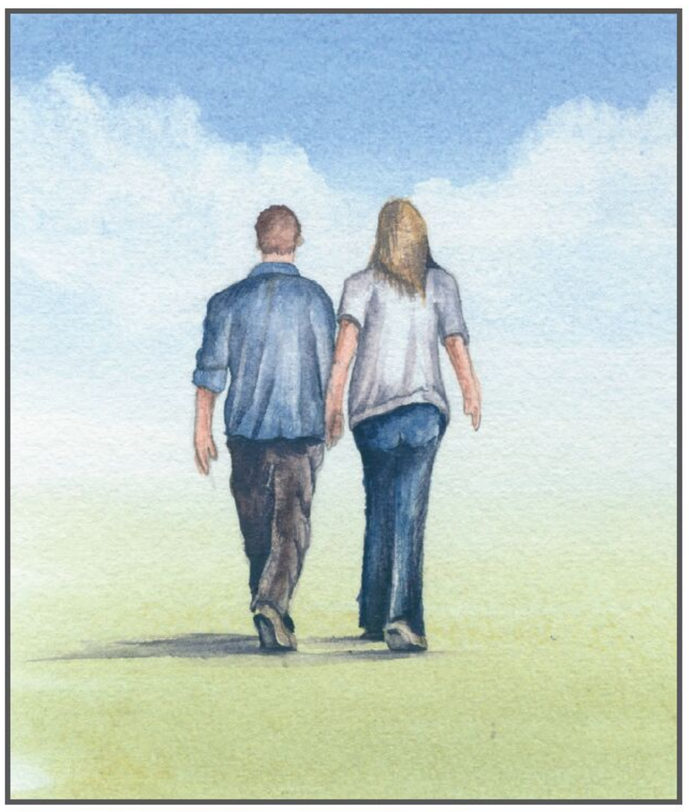
2 Mix a pale mix of aureolin with the sky blue and paint the bottom of the jacket using a size 6 brush, then blend upwards to create a highlight using a damp brush. Paint the hat and boots with the same mix, and the head with the light skin tone. Add creases and shadows on the boots and either side of the hat using natural grey.

3 Paint the trousers, boot soles and walking stick with 50% burnt sienna + 50% natural grey. Raise one foot to show the sole as this suggests the walking motion. Add creases and shadows to the trousers with natural grey, especially under the jacket to show that it is hanging over the trousers. Paint the dog using natural grey and a little burnt sienna.

Couple walking







1 Sketch in the figures, then paint the background with the size 12 round brush and natural blue blended into average green (70% aureolin + 30% natural blue). Use rolled up tissue to dab out clouds and wipe away the background colour from the girl's shirt.

2 Paint the girl's shirt in natural grey, using the size 6 brush, adding shaded areas then blending them away with a damp brush. Paint the boy's shirt with natural blue or French ultramarine. When this is dry, paint a few creases using a stronger mix of the same colour. Paint the skin tones.

3 Paint the girl's jeans with the blue of the boy's shirt and a touch of natural grey. Add shadows using natural grey. Paint the boy's trousers with 70% natural grey + 30% burnt sienna. Choose hair colours and add these. Raise one foot on each figure to show the sole, to create the walking movement, and lift out colour from the lower leg using a damp brush and a tissue (see page 33).

Figure with an umbrella







1 Sketch the figure, then wet the paper with a size 12 round brush and paint in the background using natural grey. When this is still just damp, use a stronger mix of natural grey to paint a few diagonal brush strokes, creating the rain effect.

2 Paint the umbrella using the size 6 brush and natural blue or French ultramarine. When dry, paint the individual sections of the umbrella using a stronger mix of the blue. Paint the left-hand side of each section, then use a clean, damp brush to blend this away to the right.

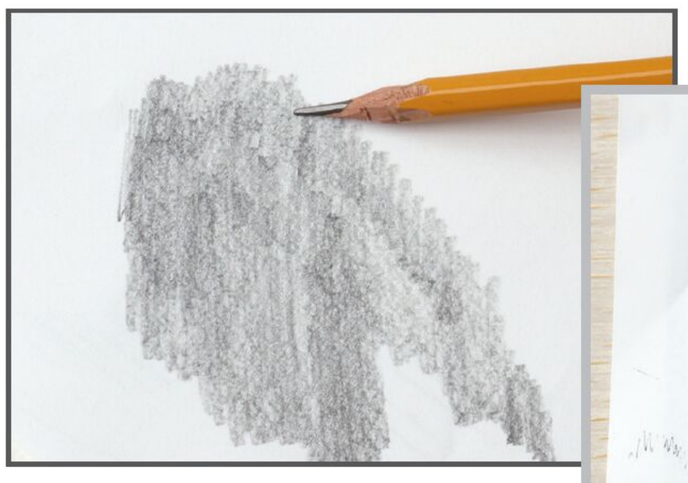
3 Paint the jacket with 50% natural grey + 50% burnt sienna. Paint natural grey shadow under the umbrella to create depth. Paint the trousers with 50% natural blue + 50% natural grey. Add shadows on the left-hand side. Add rain splashes with a rigger and natural grey. Paint the reflection wet into wet using the clothes colours. Add a few horizontal lines once dry to create the path surface.

Your first watercolour

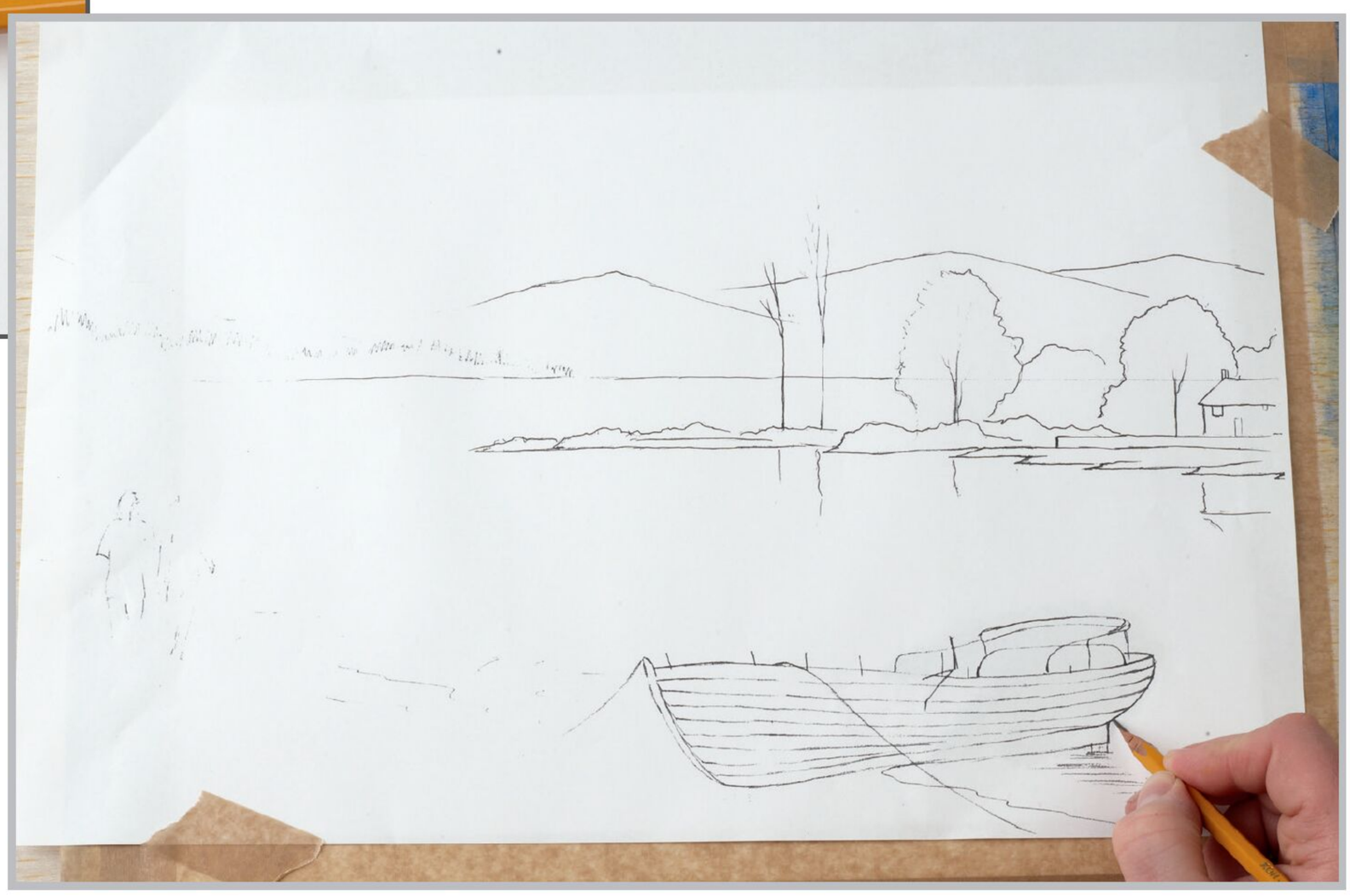
Transferring the outline

When you are drawing for a painting, only the basic outline is required. The outline drawings for all the exercises and step-by-step projects in this book are provided. You can transfer the outline to your watercolour paper by using a soft pencil to scribble over the back of the outline. Then trace on to your watercolour paper. It is also a good idea to reinforce the outline once it is on your watercolour paper, as your brush may wash off some of the pencil when you begin to paint.

Tracing the design



1 Scribble over the back of the outline paper with a soft 2B pencil. Turn the paper over and tape it down over your watercolour paper. Draw over all the lines with a hard pencil.

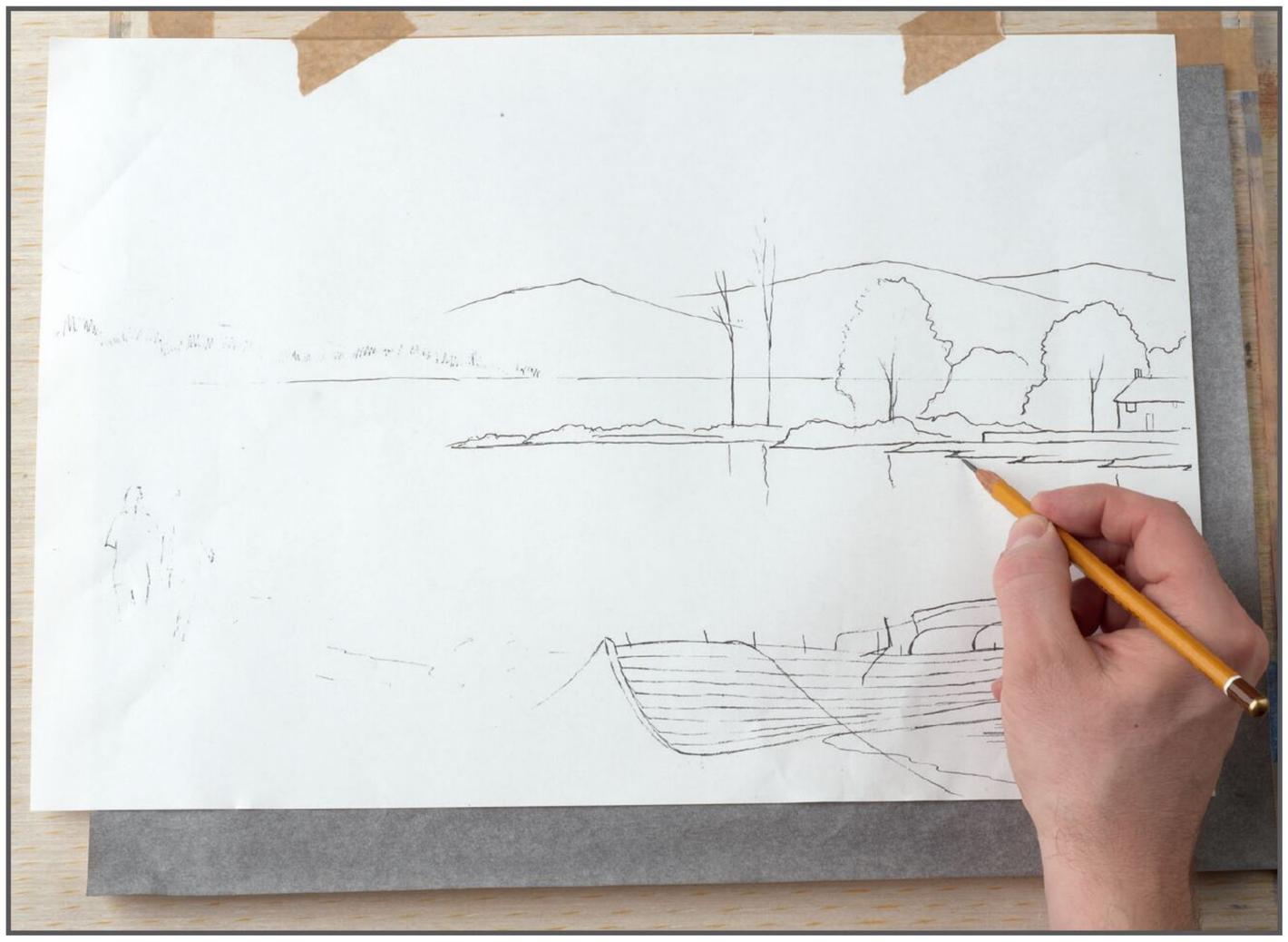




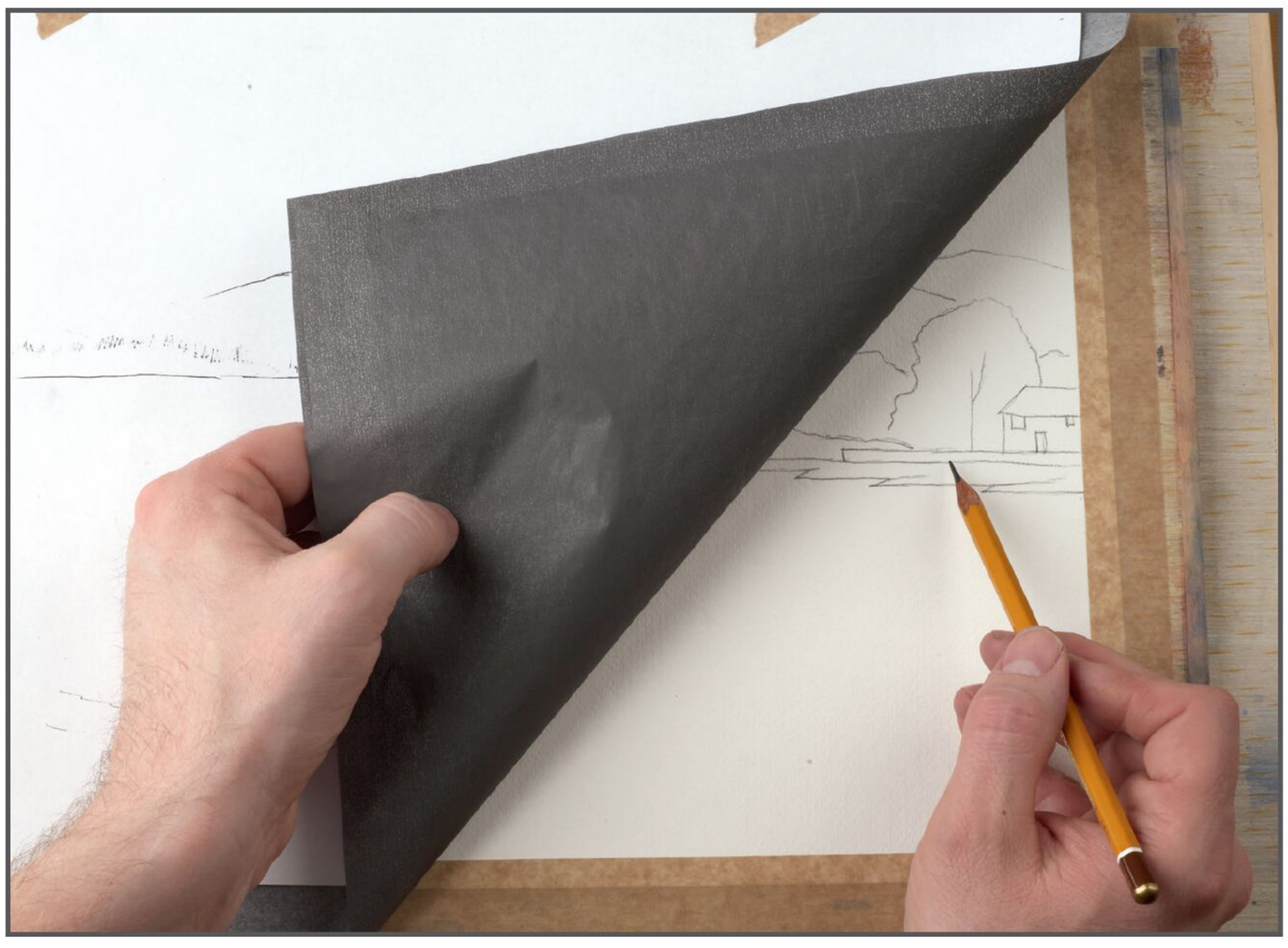
2 Lift up the outline to reveal the drawing transferred on to the watercolour paper ready for painting. You may need to reinforce some of the lines with a pencil directly on the watercolour paper.

Using tracedown paper

Tracedown paper is like carbon paper, but with graphite (the same mineral used to make pencils). You simply lay the dark side on your paper, put the outline over the top and then use a pencil or dried-out ballpoint pen to trace over the lines. Avoid putting too much pressure on the tracedown paper, either with your hand or the pencil, as this can scar or dirty your watercolour paper. It is a good idea to reinforce the outline once it is on the paper, as your brush may wash off some of the pencil when you begin to paint. The image transferred in this way can be erased, as with a normal pencil drawing.



1 Tape your watercolour paper to a painting board, then place tracedown paper on top. Tape your outline on top of this. Go over the lines with a hard pencil. Do not press too hard, or you can scar the paper. Be careful not to press with the heel of your hand, as this can leave a mark as well.



2 Lift the outline and tracedown paper to reveal the drawing transferred on to the watercolour paper. You may need to go over some of the lines with a pencil, as your brush may wash off some of the graphite when you start to paint.

Exercise

You are now ready to start on your first watercolour painting. This is a great scene to start with, as it will let you practise a sky, mountains and trees, and it demonstrates how simple it is to create the effect of recession or distance using transparent layers of watercolour. It is a quick painting, so you can use the outline to practise the scene again and again. Try painting it with the different skies from pages 36–38.

You will need

300gsm (140lb) 100% cotton Not watercolour paper; pencil; kitchen paper; coin; water pots; hairdryer

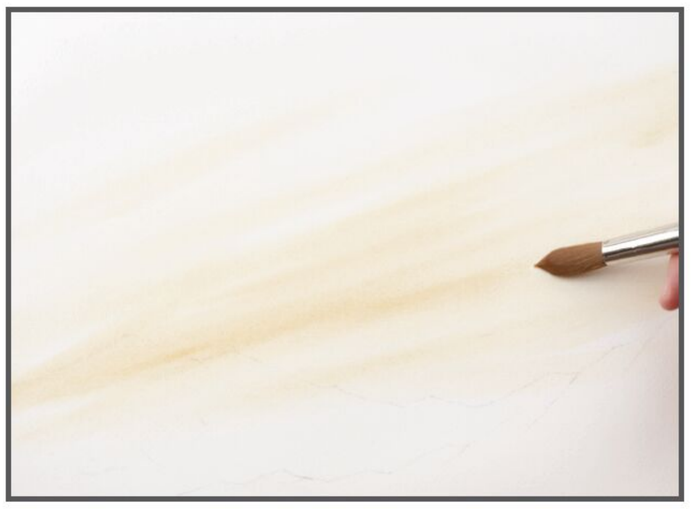
Colours: natural yellow, natural blue, natural grey

Brushes: size 20 round, large tree and texture brush

Outline 1



1 Transfer the drawing from the outline on to your watercolour paper. Tape the paper to a painting board on all four sides. Before starting to paint, mix your washes: natural blue with plenty of water and natural yellow. Wet the paper with any wash brush size 12 or over (I have used a size 20) and clean water. Move your head around to check that you have not left any gaps.



2 Use the size 20 brush to paint streaks diagonally across the sky, going over the tops of the hills and leaving some white. Continue painting while the paper is wet; this is known as the wet into wet technique.



3 Clean the brush well, digging down to the bottom of the water pot. Paint natural blue at the top corner, across the top, and move down in horizontal strokes, then begin to make the strokes diagonal like the natural yellow. Leave bits of white. Where the blue blends with the natural yellow wet into wet, it will create a grey.



4 Wrap a coin in kitchen paper and stamp it on to the wet sky to lift out a sun shape. Do not add any paint to the sky from now on or you will spoil its freshness; however, further lifting out techniques can be used all the while it is still damp.



5 Twist a piece of kitchen paper and roll it on the sky area to lift out clouds, moving it regularly to find a clean bit. Roll rather than dabbing. Pinch the kitchen paper together and drag down the bottoms of the clouds to create natural shadows. Allow to dry or use a hairdryer.



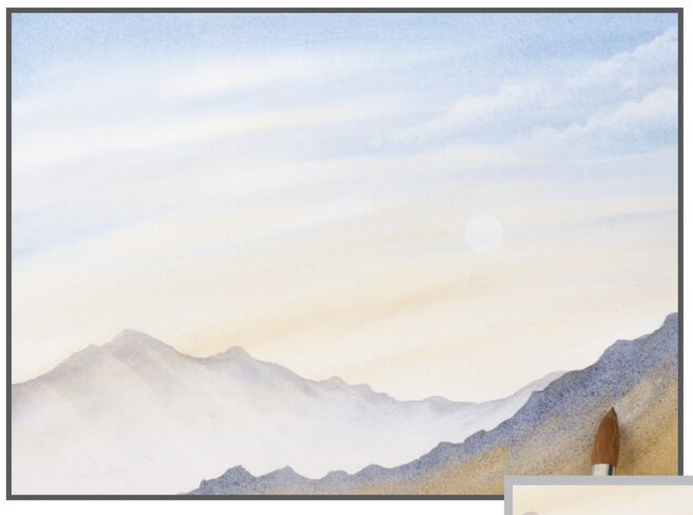
6 Mix natural grey with lots of water. Use the point of the size 20 brush to paint the furthest mountains. Nudge and wobble the brush to create the peaks. Paint a band around 2.5cm (1in) wide. Clean the brush, dab it on kitchen paper so that it is damp and drag the paint down to blend it away at the bottom.



7 Clean the brush, dab it on kitchen paper and squash the end to a spade shape between your fingers. Use the side of the brush to lift out some colour, suggesting highlights and form on the mountains. Dry the painting.

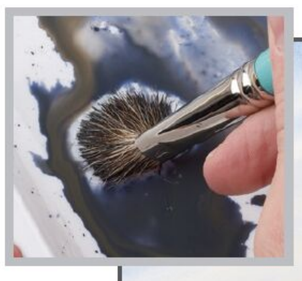


8 Mix a darker natural grey, twice as strong as before, and a stronger natural yellow. Paint the peaks and tops of the nearer mountains as before.





9 Clean the brush, pick up natural yellow and paint it below the grey, then drag the grey down to blend it in. Wash the brush, dab it on kitchen paper, squeeze it between your fingers and use the side to lift off colour for highlights.





10 Take the large tree and texture brush and squash it into the strong natural grey mix in the palette to spread the bristles. Gently stipple foliage at the bottom of the painting, using the angled flat of the brush, with the writing facing upwards.

The finished painting.



Windmill

Now we are moving on to a more complete painting. Try this atmospheric scene featuring a sky, trees and lots of strong shadow work. I always give my students one really important piece of advice: 'Always see a painting through to the end, as not every stage is going to work or look right. It's those last few brush strokes that make the painting.'

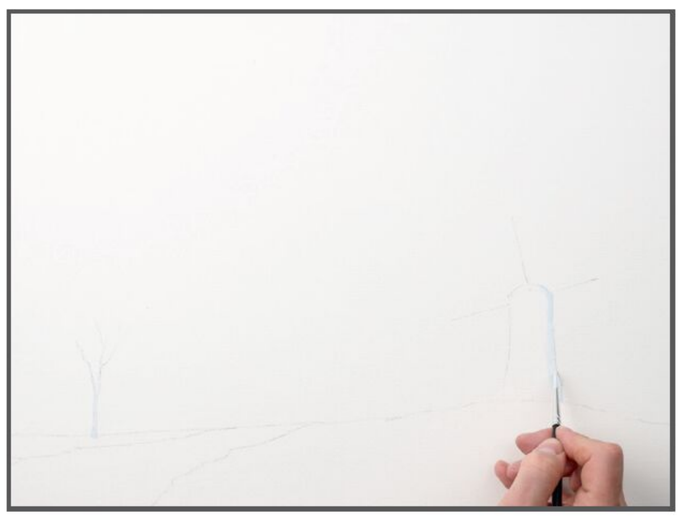
You will need

300gsm (140lb), 100% cotton Not watercolour paper; pencil; kitchen paper; water pots; masking fluid and masking fluid brushes; soap; masking tape; hairdryer

Colours: natural yellow, burnt sienna, natural grey, aureolin, natural blue

Brushes: size 20 round, large tree and texture brush, medium tree and texture brush, size 6 round, size 2 rigger, 12mm (½in) flat

Outline 2



1 Transfer the scene on to watercolour paper and attach to your painting board. Dampen the masking fluid brush and coat it with soap, then use it to mask the right-hand side of the windmill and the main tree trunk. Allow to dry.



2 Take a strip of masking tape and take the stickiness off against your hands and clothes. Hold it with two fingers and stick it below the shaped horizon line, walking your fingers along the edge to get the shape. Make it flat below the windmill.



3 Make a mix of burnt sienna with lots of water, a very pale mix of natural yellow with 90% water, a dark mix of burnt sienna and natural grey, and another of natural grey. Use the size 20 brush to paint clean water down to the masking tape. Paint pale natural yellow at the bottom and over the horizon and windmill, blending it away upwards into the water.



4 Paint the burnt sienna mix at the top with big horizontal strokes, leaving a few light patches and fading into the natural yellow.



5 Paint the dark mix of burnt sienna and natural grey across the top to draw the eye to the centre of the painting. Add water as you come down to blend away.



6 Use the brush point and natural grey to paint lines of cloud diagonally down towards the windmill to lead the eye to the focal point. Twist the brush as you go. Dry the brush on kitchen paper to blend away the mix towards the windmill. Clean the brush, squeeze it to just damp and pull down to blend away the clouds.



7 Take a twist of kitchen paper and lift out highlights using a rolling motion on the right-hand sides of the clouds. Wipe down and to the left to soften the clouds in. While the paper is wet, you can fiddle with lifting out techniques but not with a brush. Now dry the painting.



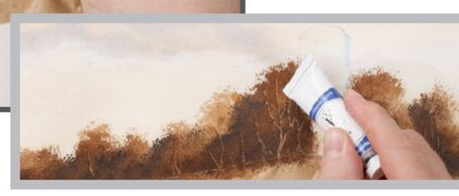
8 Wet the area just above the masking tape with clean water. Make a thick mix of burnt sienna with a little natural grey and use the large tree and texture brush to stipple the paint in the palette, then tap it gently above the masking tape and either side of the windmill to create trees. Add more grey to the mix to blend away the trees to the left.





9 Change to the medium tree and texture brush to add detail. Add more natural grey to create a dark mix and stipple shadow at the bottom of the trees and at the edges of the windmill. Use the same mix to create separation between areas of foliage.

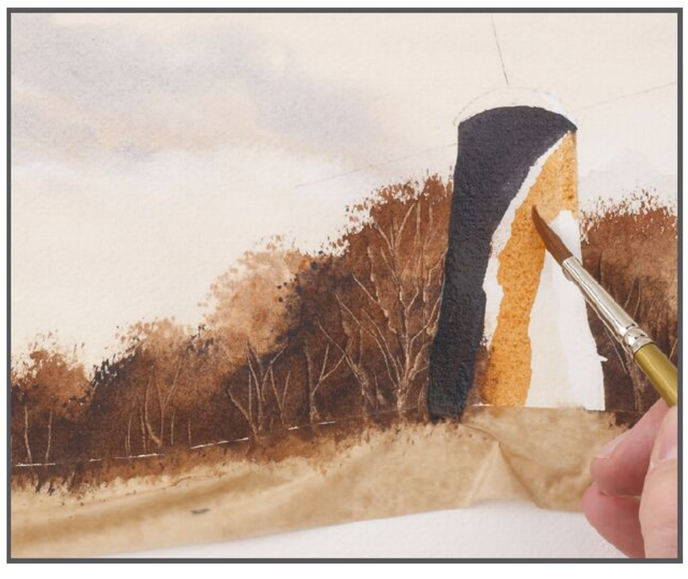




10 Use a fingernail to scratch out tree trunks and branches while the trees are damp. You can then use the corner of a paint tube to refine the marks. Dry using a hairdryer.



11 Rub all the masking fluid off with a clean finger. Make a strong mix of natural grey: paint to water ratio 70:30 and a pale mix of burnt sienna. Use a size 6 round brush to paint dark shadow on the left of the windmill and under the roof, going over the trees. Make an arc shape to create the curve of the windmill.



12 Paint the pale burnt sienna down the right-hand side of the windmill, leaving a white line between this and the grey.



13 While both colours are wet, scribble diagonally to blend them together.



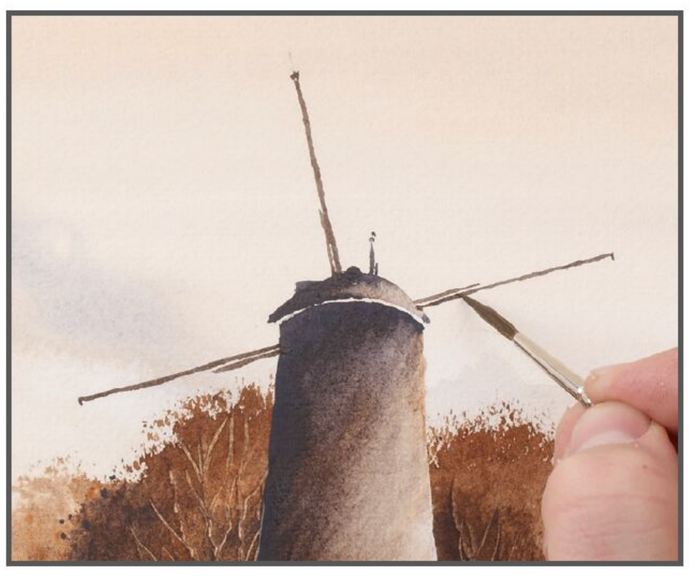
14 Paint more pale burnt sienna on the right, then clean the brush, blot it on kitchen paper and blend away the paint to the right to create a light right-hand edge, using diagonal brush strokes.



15 Paint the roof with the dark grey mix, leaving a thin line of white. Blend away to the right using the pale burnt sienna mix.



16 Add detail to the roof with the dark mix of natural grey.



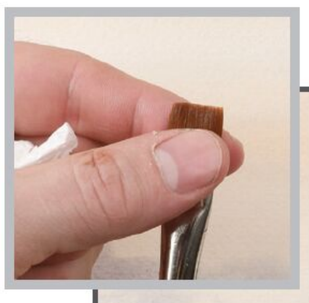
17 Use a size 2 rigger to paint the sails of the windmill using a dark mix of natural grey and burnt sienna. Rotate the brush in the palette to create a good point. Paint double lines closer to the building.



18 Flick the rigger up at an angle from each sail as shown.

19 Put in the horizontals for the sails and add more detail, including a little wheel and ropes. The detail emphasises that the windmill is the focal point of the painting.







20 Take a 12mm (½in) flat brush, wet it and squeeze the end between your fingers to make a damp, sharp edge. Lift out colour at the bottom and top of the windmill to create ridges, and dab with kitchen paper. Lift out some verticals in the same way.



21 Lift out verticals for the window recesses.



22 Use the size 6 brush and dark natural grey to paint the darker side of the arched window, then soften this down with a damp brush.



23 Finish the doorway in the same way, and add shadow under the ledge and railings. Flick a dry brush on the lighter side of the windmill to suggest stonework.

24 Clean the brush, dab it on kitchen paper so that it is damp, and use it to lift out colour to highlight the edges of trees near the windmill. Dab with kitchen paper.





25 Continue in the same way on the left of the windmill. If you take out too much colour, you can drag some in from the surrounding area. Put in a little dark natural grey to the left of highlighted parts to add form.



26 Make a very dark brown mix from natural grey and burnt sienna and paint the left-hand side of the tree trunk on the left, using the point of the brush in the direction in which the tree grows. Add branches in the same way, just painting the shadowed left-hand side.



27 Clean the brush and use pale burnt sienna on the right-hand side of the trunk and branches. This will soften into the darker colour.



28 Use the size 2 rigger and the dark mix of natural grey and burnt sienna to paint further branches and twigs, in the direction in which they grow. You can use your finger to fade them at the top.



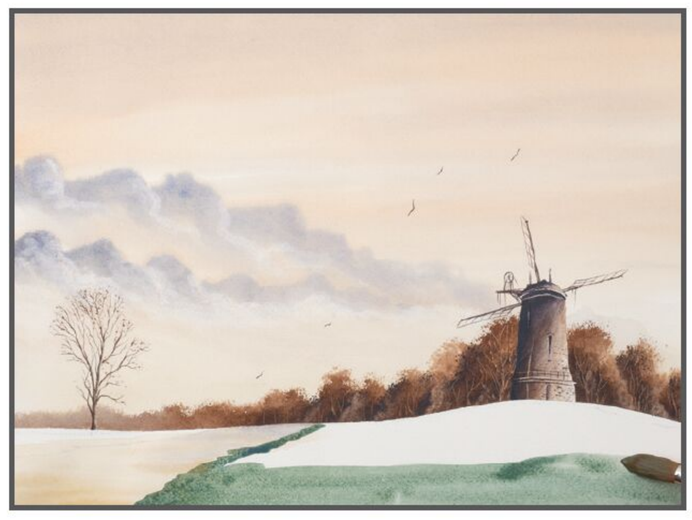
29 Use the medium tree and texture brush with burnt sienna and a very dry brush to tap in a little wintry foliage, using the flat of the brush.



30 Change to the rigger and the dark mix of natural grey and burnt sienna to paint birds, at an angle to make the scene look windy. Always paint an odd number.



31 Carefully nudge down the masking tape away from the painted area, and pull it off. Use the size 20 brush to paint the path with pale natural yellow, then while this is damp, use the size 6 brush to drop in shadows from the trees with pale natural grey. Clean the brush, squeeze it dry and blend the shadows away to the left. Dry the painting.



32 Mix a green from aureolin and natural blue and paint round the edge of the path and along the bottom of the grassy area, then about halfway up.



33 Clean the brush, wipe it on kitchen paper and soften and drag the paint up to the treeline. Use the point of the size 6 brush to smudge and soften the hard line which was previously masked with masking tape.





34 While the grass is wet, use the size 20 brush to sweep across streaks of aureolin to brighten it. Without washing the brush, pick up burnt sienna and sweep this across to create harmony with the sky, trees and building.



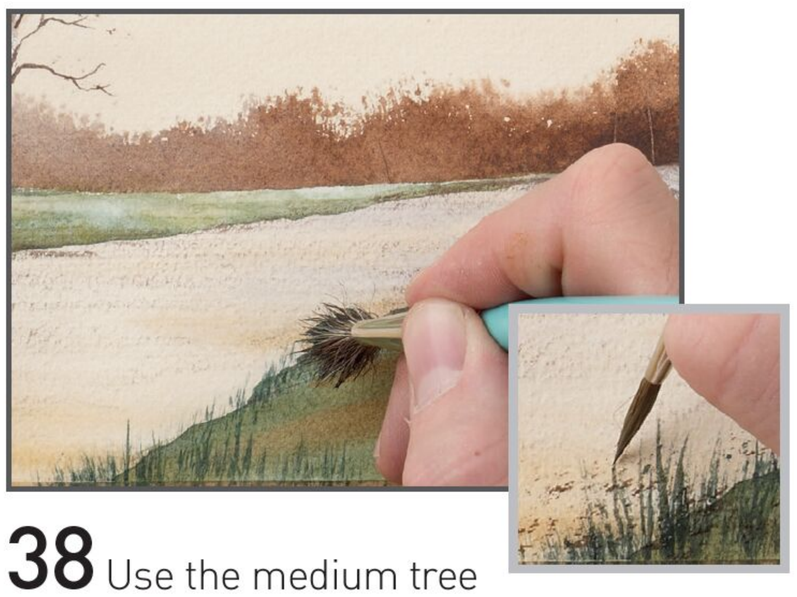
35 Repeat the same steps for the grass on the other side of the path. Allow to dry.



36 Pick up browns and greys from the palette with the no. 6 brush and dab the brush on kitchen paper so that it is quite dry. Flick the paint horizontally from the edges of the path with the side of the brush to create texture. Suggest shrubs around the windmill and a path coming from it in the same way. Continue adding texture to the grass and fading it at the edges with a damp, clean brush.



37 Use natural grey to paint cast shadows from the windmill, the trees and the single tree on the left.

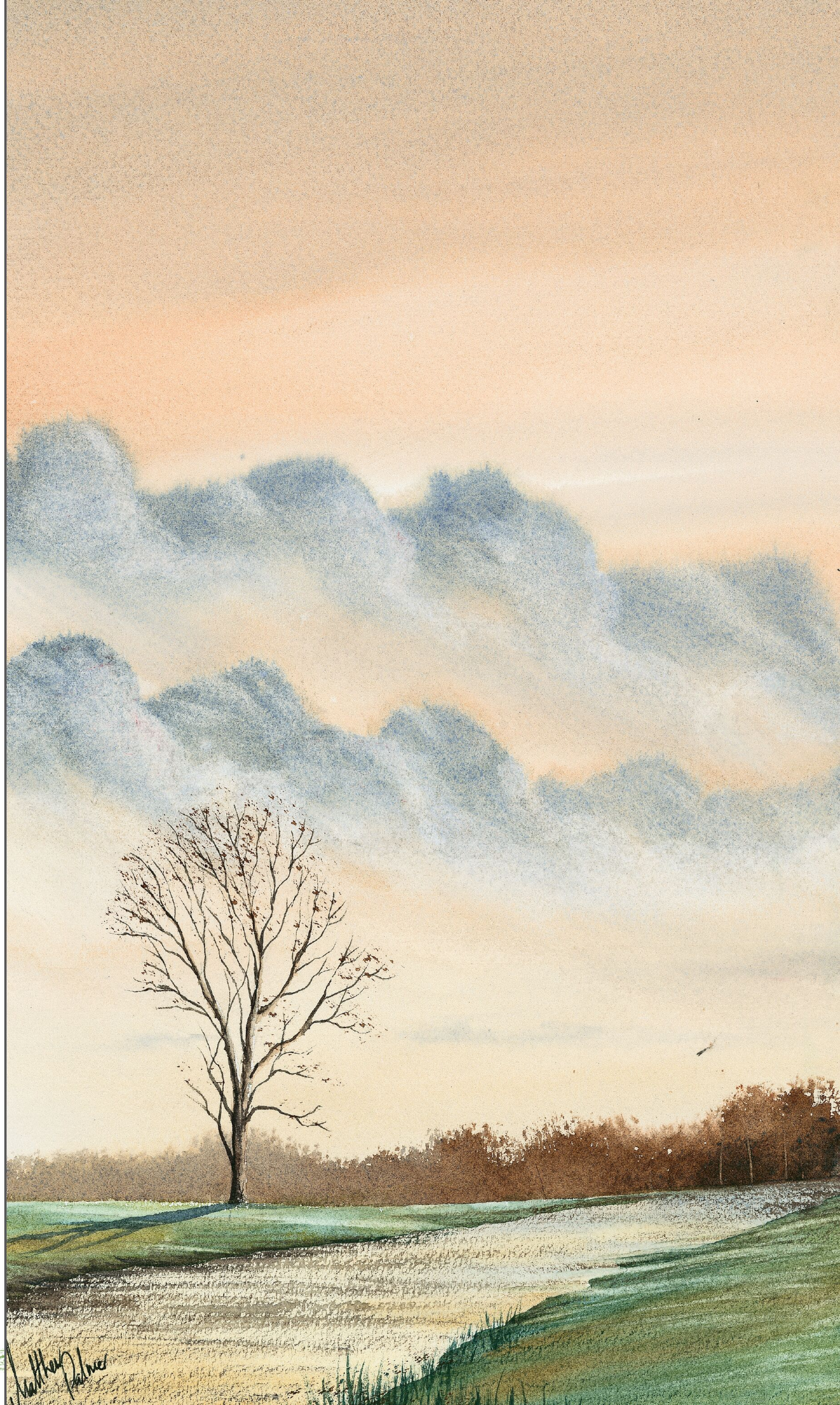


38 Use the medium tree and texture brush and a mix of aureolin and natural blue to stipple paint over the edges of the grass. Use the longer hairs, with the writing pointing down, to stroke up grass at the edges of the path. Use the rigger to add some longer grasses.



39 Wet the 12mm (½in) flat brush, blot it on kitchen paper until just damp and use it to lift out colour from the grassy area, following the contours of the hill.

The finished painting.









Into the Mist

Here I painted the wet into wet background of the sky and water at the same time, as the sky colour reflects in the water. I used a pale natural yellow at the bottom of the sky to give distance. Once this was dry, I dampened the area where the misty trees are, and using a strong average green, gently stippled in the trees. The soft edge this creates give a wonderful feeling of distance, making the trees look almost out of focus.

Seascape

Exercise

This exercise has a warm sky and will get you practising movement in water, dry brush on the sand and light and shade. The sun is the light source, so think about this as you add shadows to the castle.

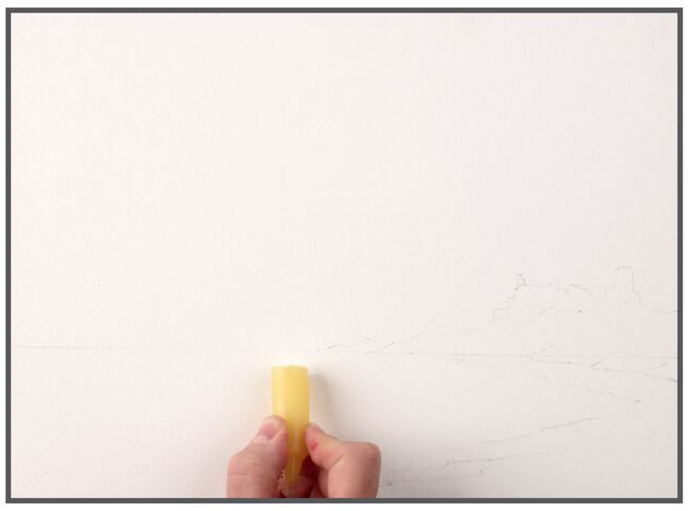
You will need

300gsm (140lb), 100% cotton Not watercolour paper; pencil; wax candle; coin and kitchen paper

Colours: aureolin, natural yellow, burnt sienna, natural blue, alizarin crimson, natural grey

Brushes: size 20 round, size 6 round, size 8 round

Outline 3



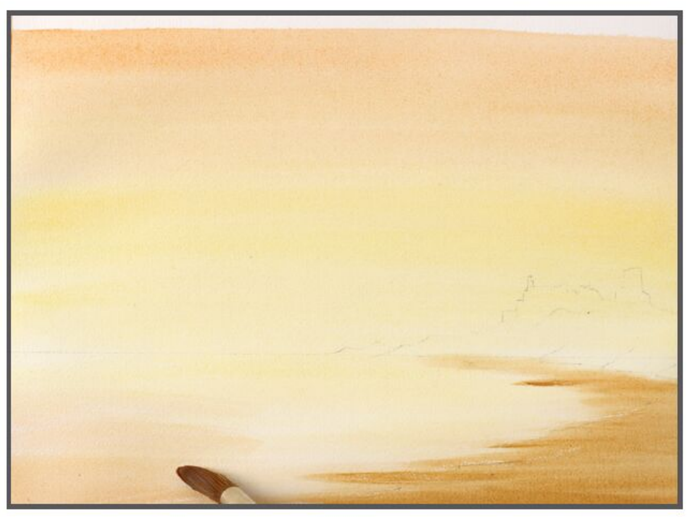
1 Transfer the outline on to watercolour paper. Use a bit of wax candle to scribble a few horizonal lines of resist for highlights on the water under the sun, and for a few lapping waves on the beach below the castle.



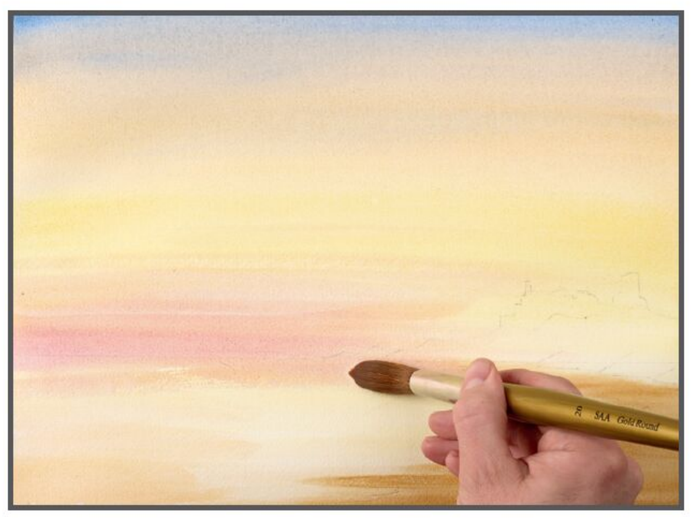
2 Mix your sky colours before beginning to paint: aureolin; burnt sienna; natural yellow; natural blue; alizarin crimson; and natural grey. Use the size 20 brush and clean water to wet the whole paper, then sweep aureolin across the middle with horizontal strokes, blending it away downwards.



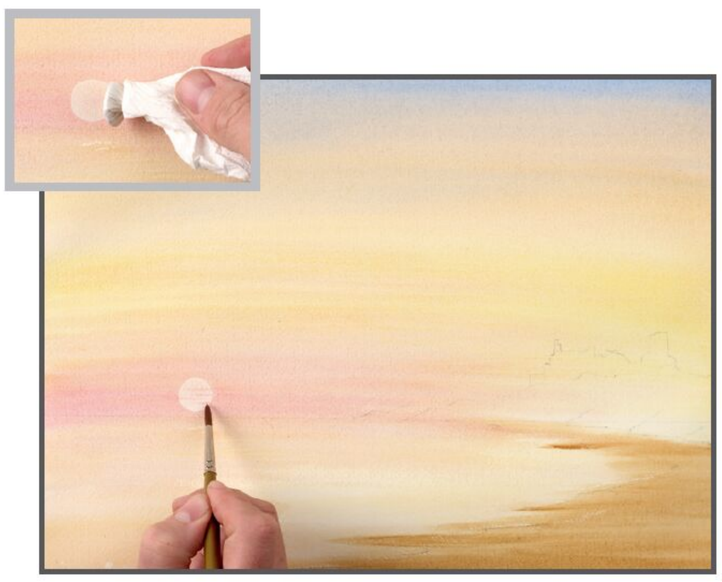
3 Paint natural yellow above this in the same way, blending it away downwards, then paint a thicker mix for the beach.



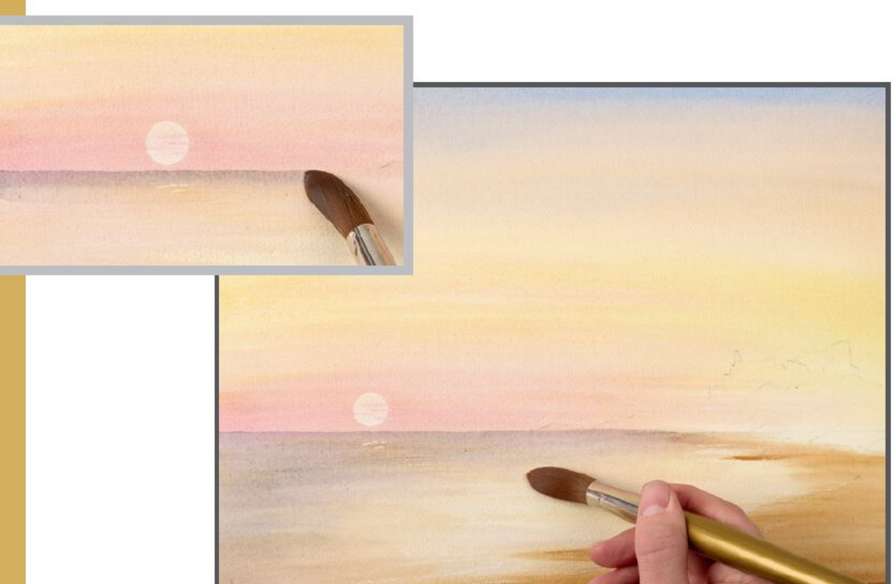
4 Clean the brush and paint burnt sienna close to the top and bring it down horizontally, then paint more burnt sienna in the water at the bottom left.



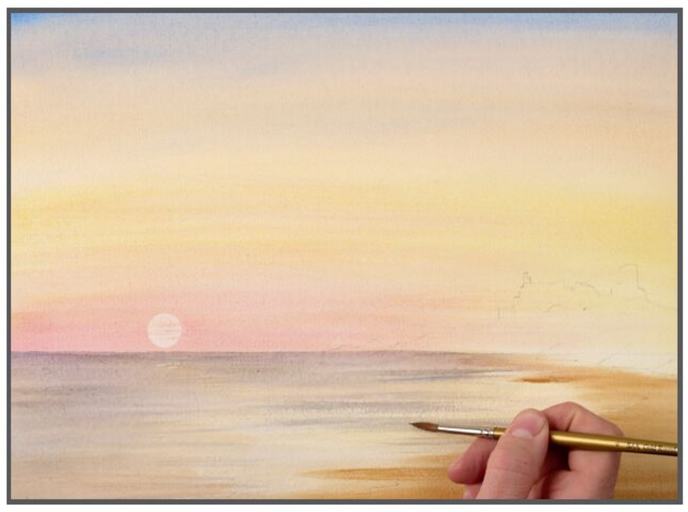
5 Clean the brush, paint natural blue right at the top and blend it down into the still wet natural yellow. Do not blend it down into the aureolin or it will go green. Clean the brush and paint alizarin crimson in a band on the horizon, then use a clean, damp brush to blend it away up and down.



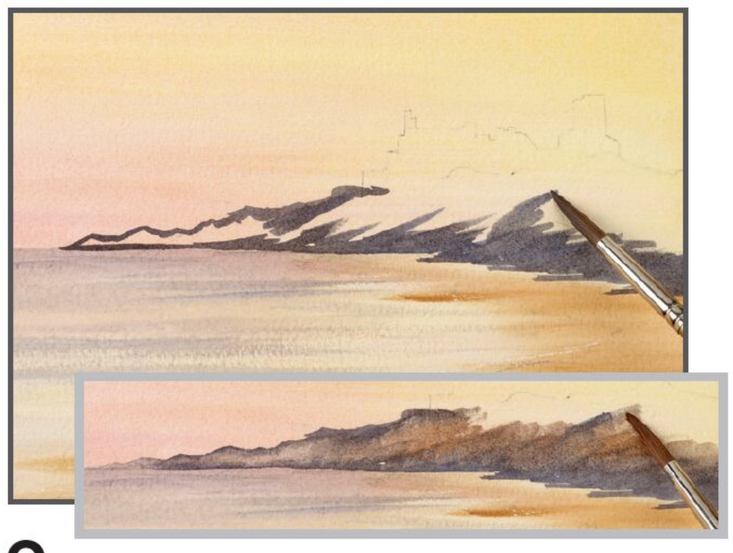
6 Wrap a coin in kitchen paper and use it to lift out a sun shape above the horizon. Use the size 6 brush to paint lines of cloud across the sun with alizarin crimson. Allow to dry,



7 Use the size 20 brush to paint natural grey across the horizon and the left-hand side of the sea area, then clean the brush, dab it on kitchen paper and use it to blend the grey away to the right.



8 Use the size 6 brush and a thicker mix of natural grey to paint horizontal lines in the sea. Paint quickly to suggest movement in the water.



9
Change to the size 8 round brush and a thicker still natural grey mix and paint the outline and main contours of the land under the castle. Clean the brush and paint inside the grey lines with burnt sienna, scribbling to blend it with the grey, creating texture.



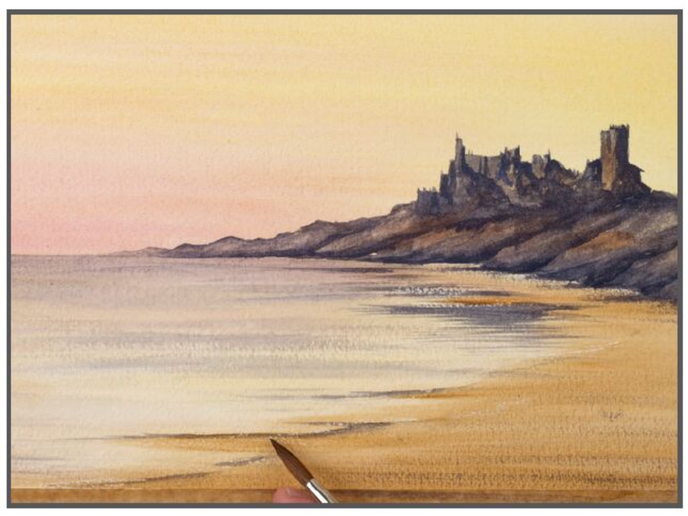
10
Paint the castle in the same way, alternating between natural grey and burnt sienna. Suggest turrets, flag poles and other details with the point of the brush and dark natural grey.



11 Use a dry brush and the same mix to drag texture out from the land into the sea, then paint dark shadows on the castle and crevices going down to the sea. Blend away the edges and crevices with a clean, damp brush.

12 Use a dry brush and natural grey to sweep texture across the beach.





13 Paint quick horizontal lines of natural grey over the sea lapping on to the beach, going over the candle wax. This suggests the reflection of the castle. Add more lines coming forwards and soften the edges with a clean, damp brush.



The finished painting.

Cornish Seascape

Seascapes are among my favourire subjects. I love the colours you can use for the sea and the way you can create your own scene, as the sea is always changing its mood. Add larger waves in the foreground, as this will give a great sense of distance.

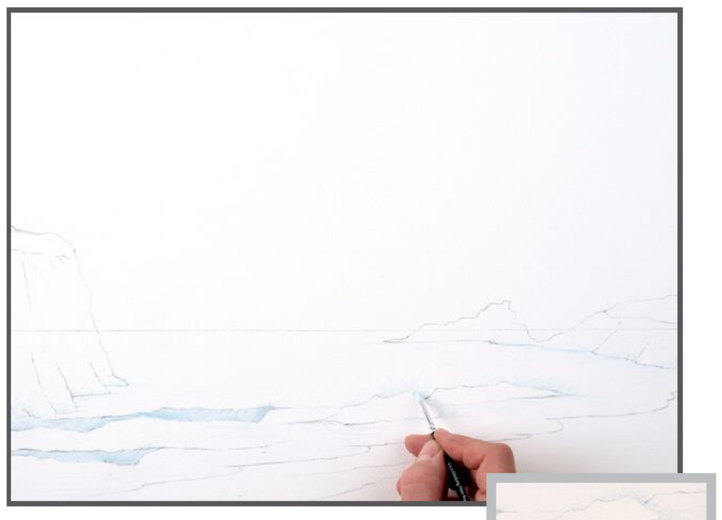
Outline 4

You will need

300gsm (140lb), 100% cotton Not watercolour paper; masking fluid; masking fluid brushes; wax candle; kitchen paper

Colours: natural yellow, natural blue, natural grey, viridian hue, burnt sienna, alizarin crimson, aureolin, white gouache

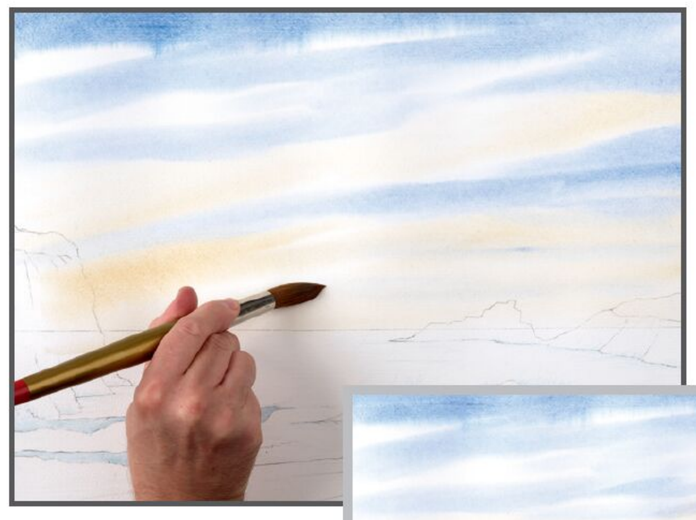
Brushes: size 20 round, size 8 round, 12mm (½in) flat, size 2 rigger

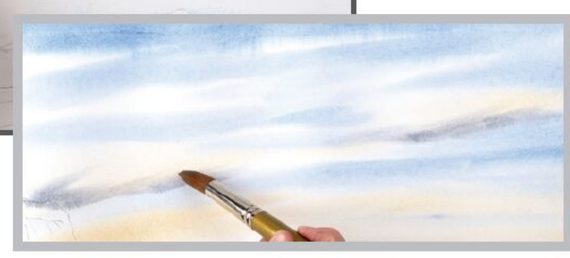


1 Transfer the scene on to watercolour paper. Use different sizes of masking fluid brush to apply masking fluid to the wave crests and horizontal ripples, and dot and stipple foam splashes around rocks and land. Use wax candle to add a few more horizontal strokes of resist, following the pencil lines for the surf.

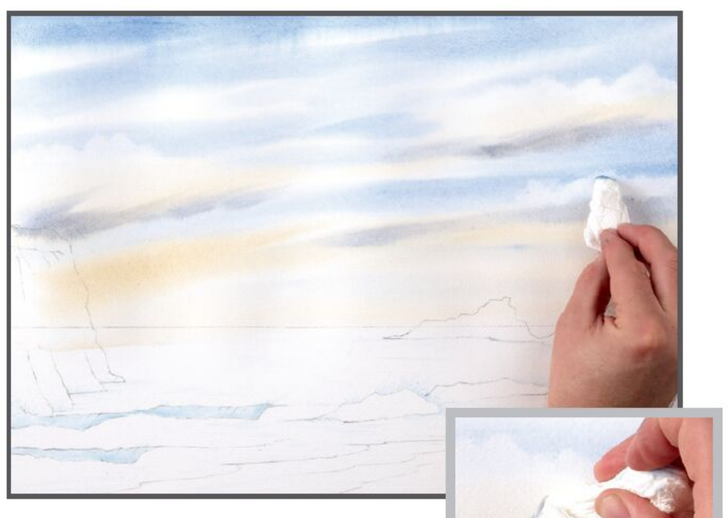


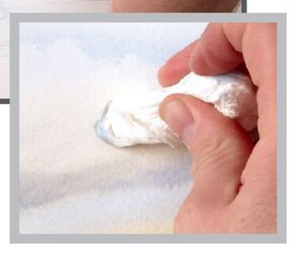
2 Make the mixes for the sky before beginning to paint: natural yellow with 90% water; a stronger (50:50) mix of natural blue; and natural grey. Wet the sky area to just over the horizon with the size 20 brush and clean water and paint natural yellow at an angle. Clean and dab the brush on kitchen paper and blend away the colour to the horizon.





3 Working wet into wet, paint natural blue across the top, leaving white gaps and move in horizontal strokes down into the yellow. Paint streaks of natural grey below some of the light patches to suggest cloud shadows, still working into wet paint.





4 Take a twist of kitchen paper and roll it in the damp paint to lift out colour, creating the shape of the cloud tops. Keep rotating the kitchen paper so that you are always working with a clean piece. Soften the edges of the grey upwards at an angle by wiping with kitchen paper. Make sure no hard line has appeared where the paint ends near the horizon, and if it has, soften it in the same way. Dry the painting.



5 Make the mixes for the sea and beach: natural blue and viridian hue with lots of water; natural blue and natural grey of a similar consistency; and stronger natural yellow. Working carefully wet on dry, use the size 20 brush to paint the horizon with the natural blue and natural grey mix, making sure it is straight. Paint a line around 2.5cm (1in) thick. You can go through the rocks, which will be darker.

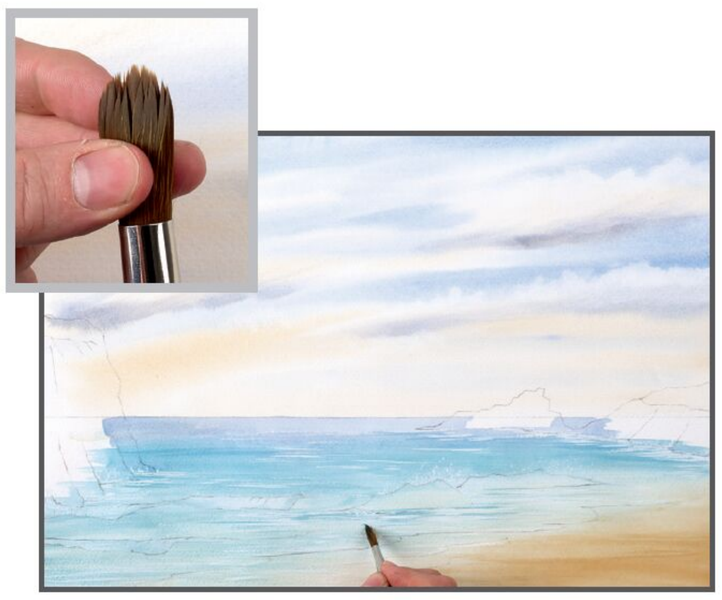




6 Clean the brush and paint the blue-green mix below this to blend and overlap. You can paint over the rocks. Now clean the brush again and paint the beach with natural yellow in the bottom right-hand corner. Do not go quite up to the shoreline.



7 Clean the brush and dab it on kitchen paper so it is just damp, then sweep it across to connect the sand with the blue-green of the sea, blending the two areas. Allow to dry.



8 Clean and dab the brush again and pinch it flat with your fingers as shown. Brush the blue-green mix over the water to create texture. Change to the size 8 brush and paint random horizontal strokes of a stronger blue-green mix for ripples.



9 Use the same mix to paint darker blue-green behind the masked areas of foam to darken them. Clean and dab the brush and use it to soften in.



10 Paint the same mix under the masked areas of surf, then clean the brush, dab it and blend the paint away towards the beach.



11 Continue adding shadow beneath the surf lines, making them paler and narrower towards the right to create distance. Mix natural yellow and natural grey for a shadowed sand colour and paint this below the foremost wave.



12 Make a stronger mix of natural yellow and use the size 20 brush, dabbed until just damp to paint texture on the beach using the dry brush technique. Mix burnt sienna and natural yellow and paint this in the foreground to warm it and bring it forwards, still using the dry brush technique.



13 Use the size 8 brush and a stronger mix of natural blue and viridian hue and a tiny bit of alizarin crimson to add shadow under the waves. Clean the brush, dab it on kitchen paper and blend the shadows away downwards.



14 Continue adding shadow to the waves, and also add ripples in the same way.



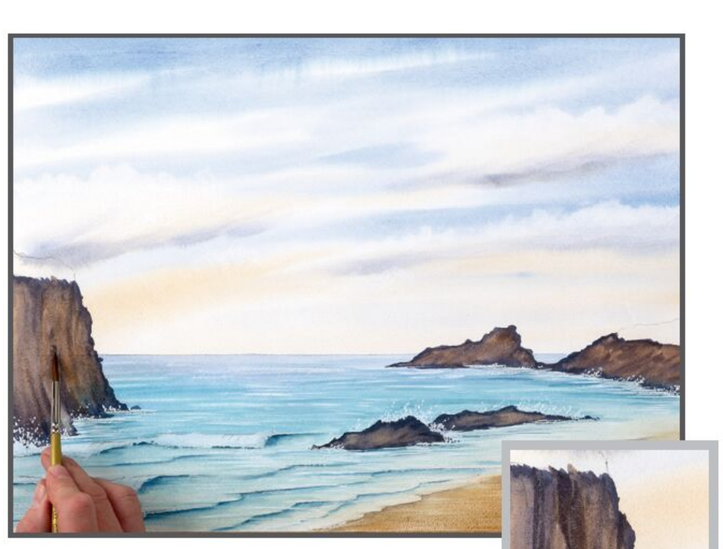
15 Take the 12mm (½in) flat brush, wet it with clean water then squeeze it between your fingers to create a sharp edge. Lift out ripples, wiggling the straight edge from side to side and dabbing with kitchen paper.



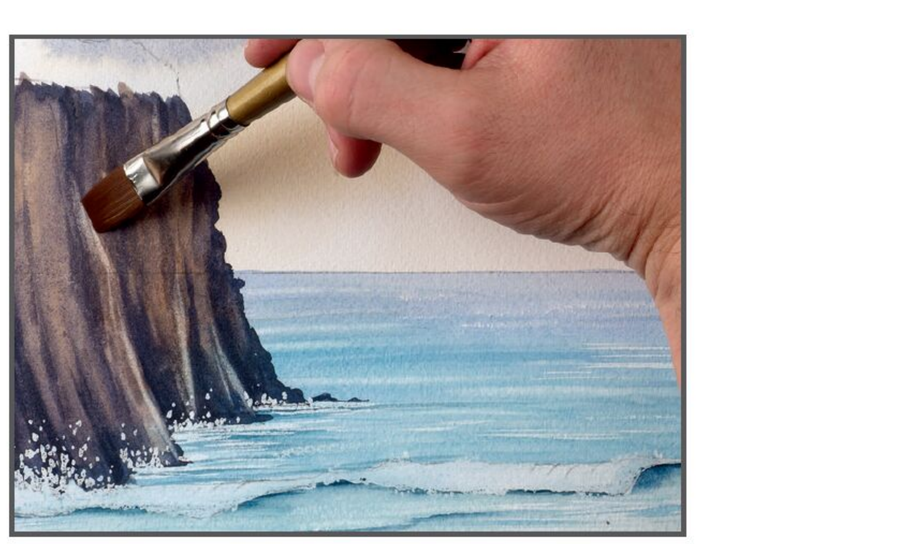
16 Highlight the tops of some of the waves in the same way.



17 Make a 50:50 mix of natural grey and a pale mix of burnt sienna. Use the size 8 brush to outline the right-hand rocks with the grey, using a jumpy brush technique to add character, then scribble inside with the burnt sienna mix to blend the two colours to create texture.

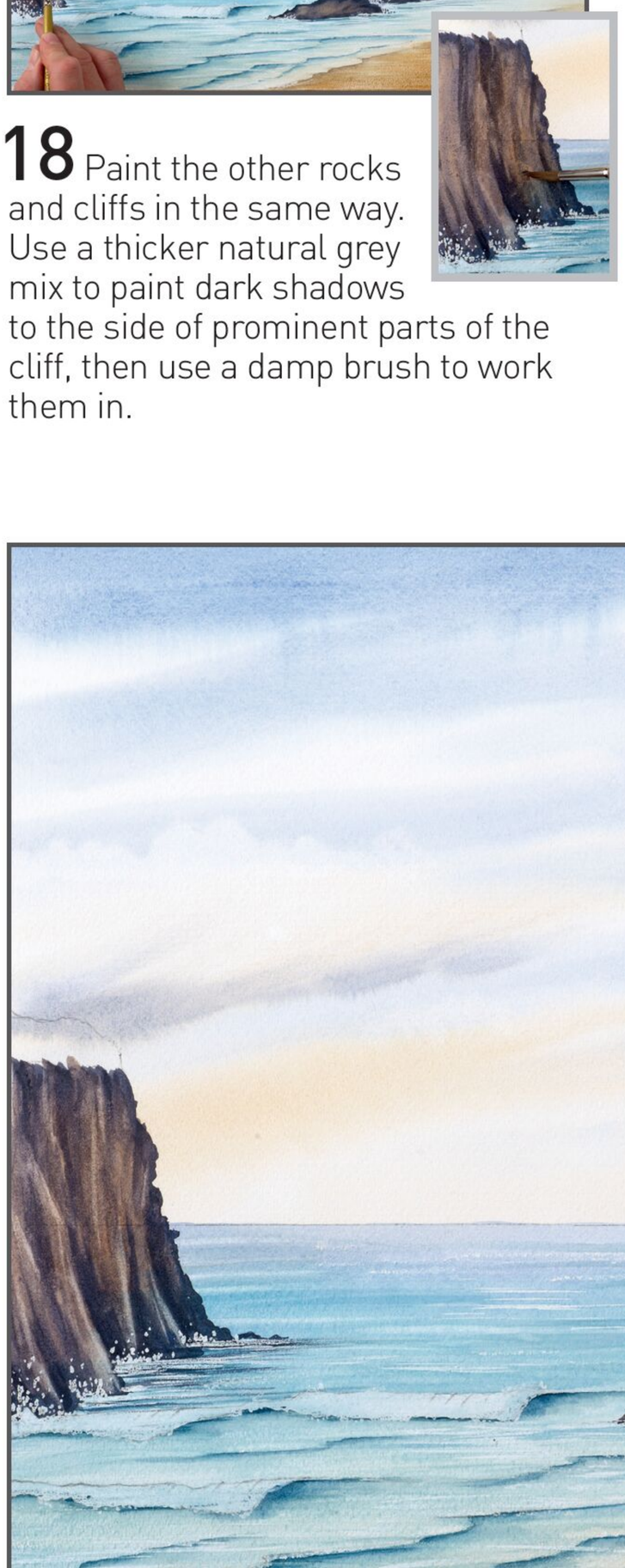


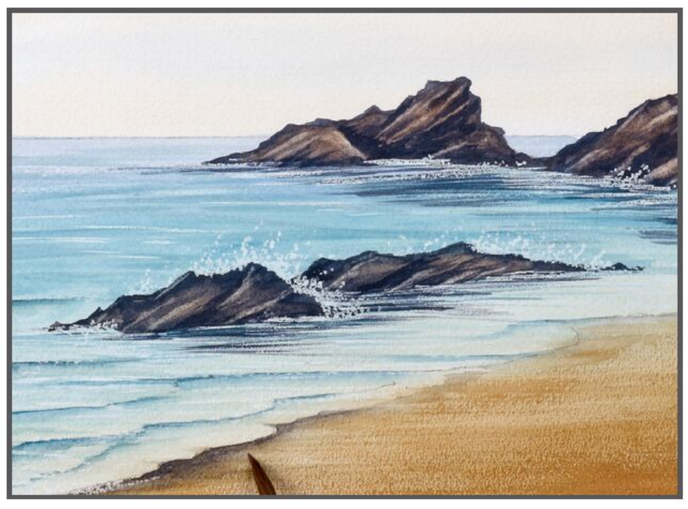
18 Paint the other rocks and cliffs in the same way. Use a thicker natural grey mix to paint dark shadows to the side of prominent parts of the cliff, then use a damp brush to work them in.



19 Wet the 12mm (½in) flat brush, squeeze it flat and use it damp to lift out highlights in the cliffs and rocks, then dab with kitchen paper. Use the size 8 brush damp to soften any hard lines that are made.

20 Use the size 8 brush with natural grey to create horizonal rippled reflections below the rocks. You can smudge these in with your finger.





21 Darken under the surf on the beach with natural grey and blend it away with clean water.



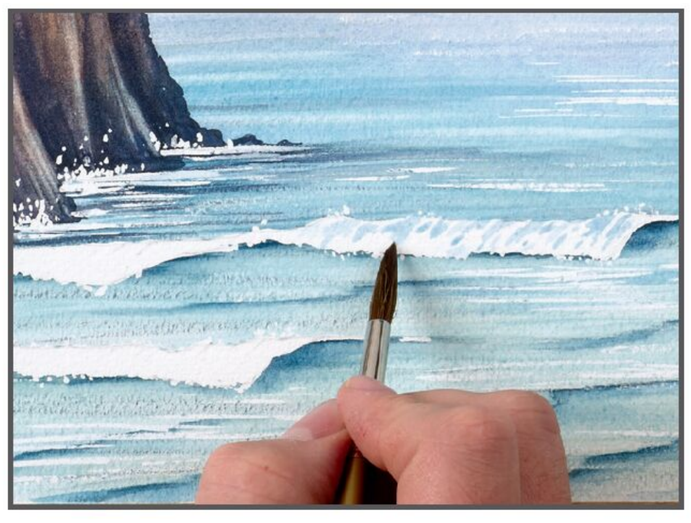
22 Mix a grass green from aureolin and natural blue and paint both the cliff tops. Clean and dab the brush and drag the colour down to the rock, then drag the cliff colour into the grass so that it is not too bright.



23 Pick up natural grey on the brush, dab it on kitchen paper and use the dry brush technique on the water and the beach. Allow to dry.



24 Remove all the masking fluid with clean fingers. Use watered down viridian and natural blue to glaze over the white of the ripples to bed them in.



25 Paint motion lines on the rolling waves, following the curve from the top edge.

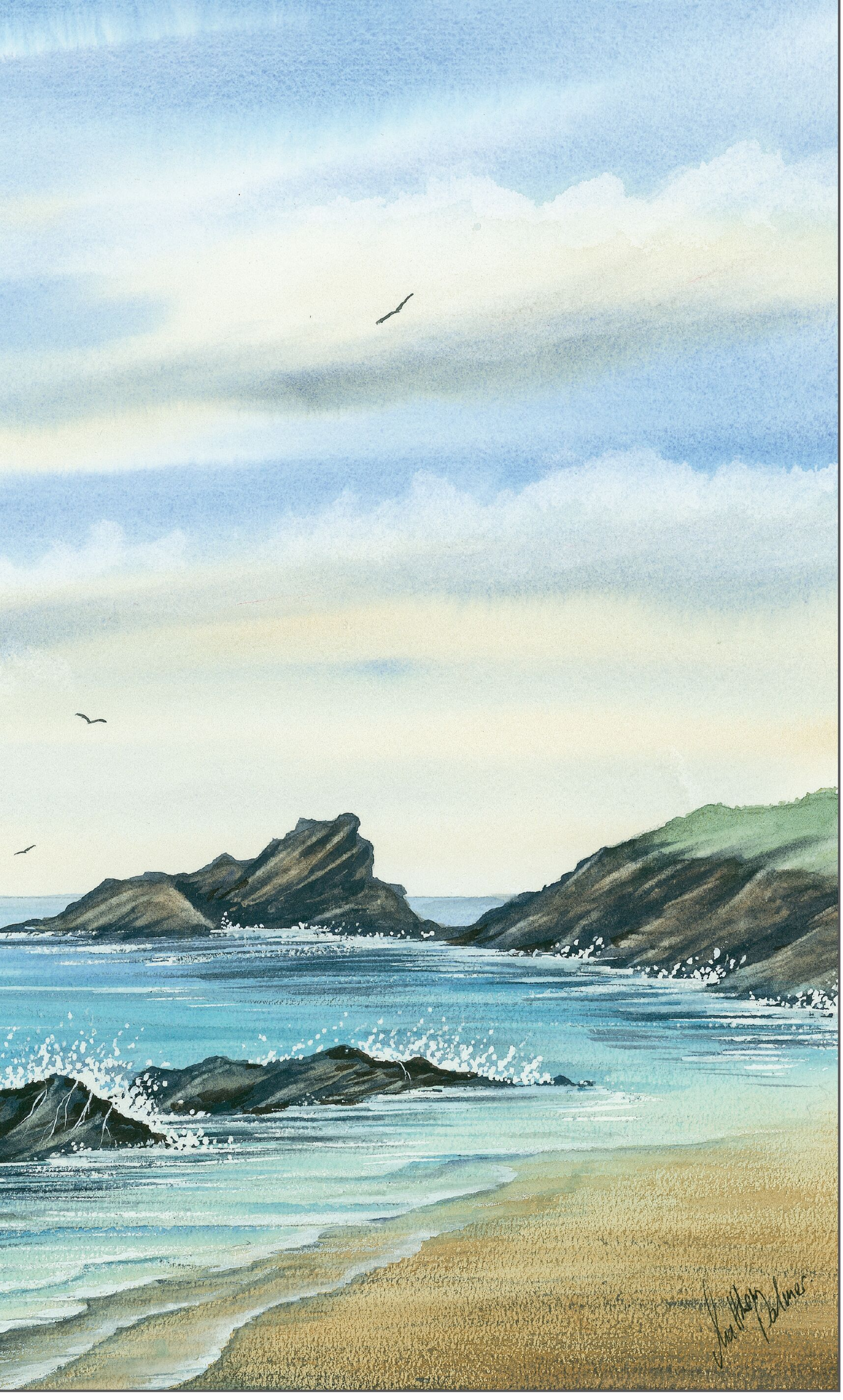


26 Take a size 2 rigger, just damp, and twist it through neat white gouache. Use this to add splashes and rivulets of water coming down rocks, as well as a few ripples. Highlight the edges of the foreground waves and blend the white in with water.

27 Clean the rigger and use natural grey to paint silhouetted seagulls.







The finished painting.



On Our Way Home

The sky in this painting creates that 'calm before the storm' mood. I painted a pale natural yellow first, followed by natural blue, then used a strong, bold mix of 90% natural grey + 10% burnt sienna. Always allow skies to dry naturally; don't be tempted to go back into one and add more paint. Masking fluid was used to protect the lighthouse and the boat (see page 35). The lifting out technique (see page 33) followed by scratching out with a craft knife was used to give the light effect.



Looking Out to Sea

I often paint a scene several times, using the same photograph as reference but changing things a little each time. This version of the seascape is darker in tone and has a more dramatic sky, with strong diagonals leading to a boat on the horizon. I used masking fluid to protect the waves, applying it by stippling with my small tree and texture brush for the splashes. You could use white gouache for this instead. I used white gouache on top of the dried watercolour to paint a few rivulets of water running from the rocks.

Snow scene

Exercise

This crisp winter scene is a great way to start learning how snow is painted. Although snow is white, it is the bluish shadows that mould and form the shape of the landscape.

You will need

300gsm (140lb), 100% cotton Not watercolour paper; pencil; masking tape, coin; kitchen paper; hairdryer

Colours: alizarin crimson, natural blue, natural grey, burnt sienna

Brushes: size 20 round, size 6 round, large tree and texture brush, size 2 rigger

Outline 5



1 Transfer the scene on to your watercolour paper. Remove the stickiness from your masking tape and use it to mask the uneven edge of the snow. Prepare your colour mixes before beginning to paint: alizarin crimson with plenty of water; a stronger natural blue; natural blue and alizarin crimson and natural grey with a hint of burnt sienna.



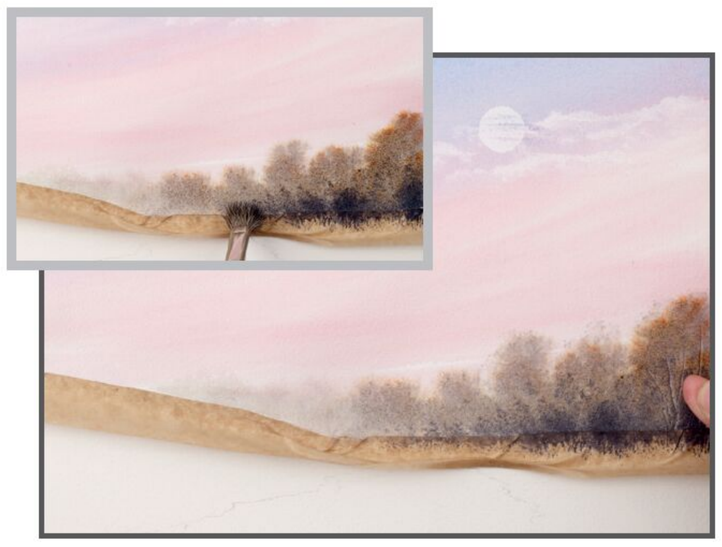
2 Wet down to the masking tape with the size 20 brush and clean water, then paint diagonal streaks of alizarin crimson in the lower half of the sky. Clean the brush and working wet into wet, paint the natural blue mix at the top of the sky, coming down at the same angle, and allow the blue to fade into the pink.



3 Wrap a coin in kitchen paper and use it to lift out a moon shape. Use a twist of kitchen paper to lift out clouds, rolling the tissue on the paper. Use the kitchen paper to soften the clouds downwards into the sky. Use a mix of natural blue and alizarin crimson, fairly dry on a size 6 brush to add clouds over the moon.



4 Dampen the picture above the tape with clean water, then use the large tree and texture brush to pick up the natural blue and burnt sienna mix. Dab it on kitchen paper then use it to stipple on tree shapes. Clean and dab the brush and use it to blend the paint away to the left-hand side.



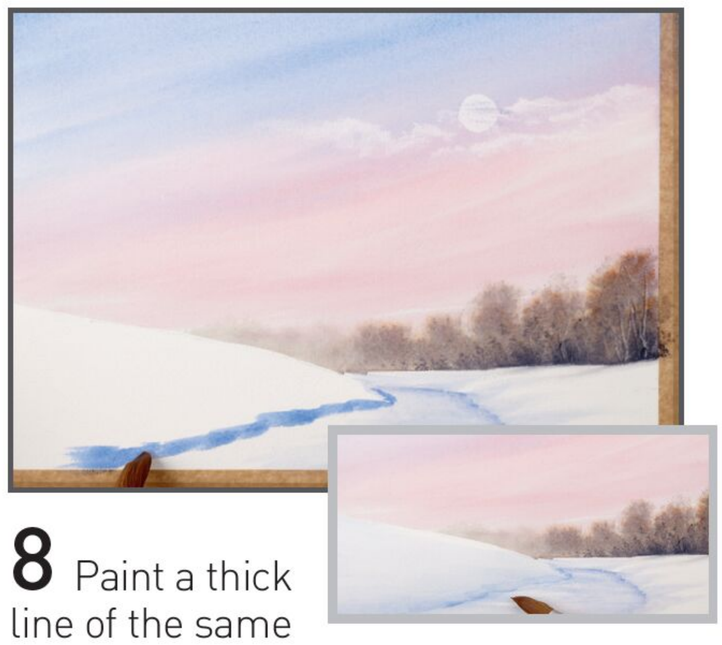
5 Working wet into wet, stipple natural grey at the base of the trees. While the paint is wet, use your fingernail to scratch out trunks and branches in the nearer trees. Dry the painting, then carefully remove the masking tape, pulling it down away from the painted area.



6 Wet and dab the size 6 brush on kitchen paper and use it scrub colour down into the snow, softening the hard edge.



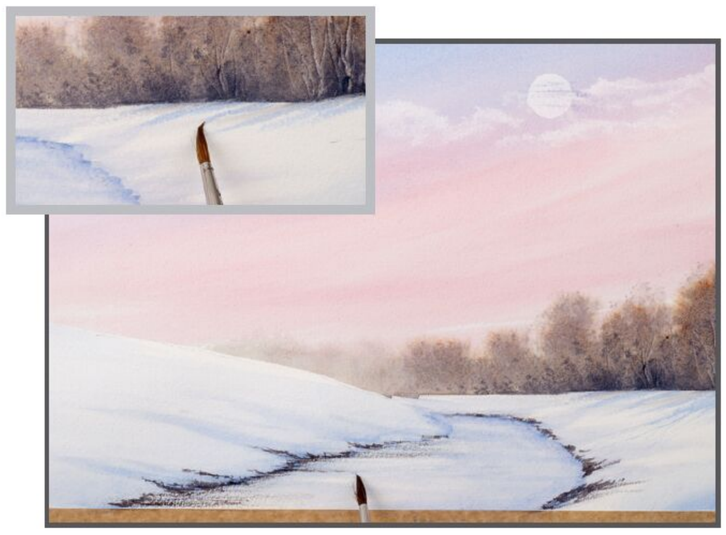
7 Use the size 20 brush with natural blue and a touch of alizarin crimson to paint a footpath, wiggling the point of the brush. Clean and dab the brush on kitchen paper and soften the colour to the left, then flick it to the right with an almost dry brush to create the contour of the hill. Dry the painting.



8 Paint a thick line of the same colour at the base of the left-hand hill. Clean the brush, dab it on kitchen paper and blend the colour away to the left to create the contour of the hill. Keep cleaning and softening in this way.



9 While the paint is damp, use the size 6 brush to paint pale lines of the blue mix uphill to create the hillside shape, softening with clean water where necessary. Add the blue mix in the bottom right-hand corner and soften this in as before.



10 Paint cast shadows from the trees with the same blue mix, using a fairly dry brush and soften them with a damp, clean brush. Use a dark mix of natural grey and burnt sienna on a dry brush to paint bits of undergrowth showing throught the snow at the edges of the path. You can smudge the edges with your finger.



11 Use a size 2 rigger to create blades of grass in the foreground with the same mix. Use the size 6 brush and very pale alizarin crimson to paint a glaze over the left-hand hillside, suggesting a reflection of the pink in the sky.



The finished painting.

Village in Snow

I enjoy painting a snow scene any time of the year; they are always popular and are without a doubt my favourite subject. I love the way you can mould and give shape to the landscape, just by painting a few shadows. When painting a snow scene, think contrast and add lots of darks next to the light areas to give a sense of depth and form.

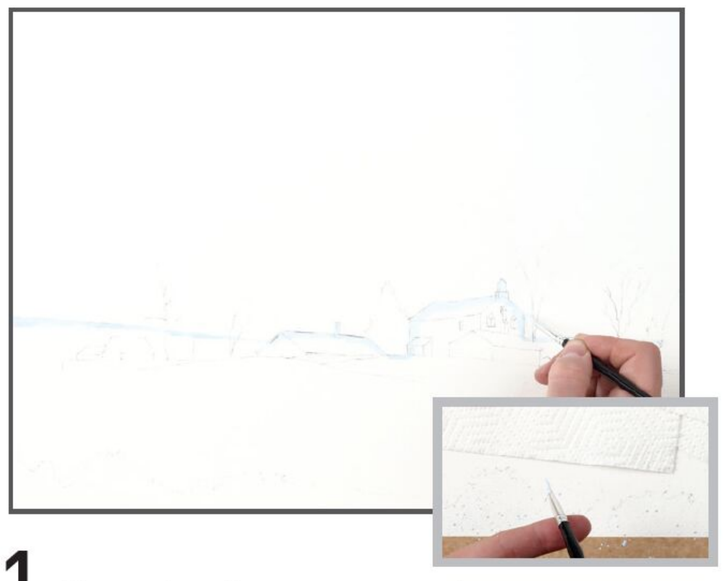
Outline 6

You will need

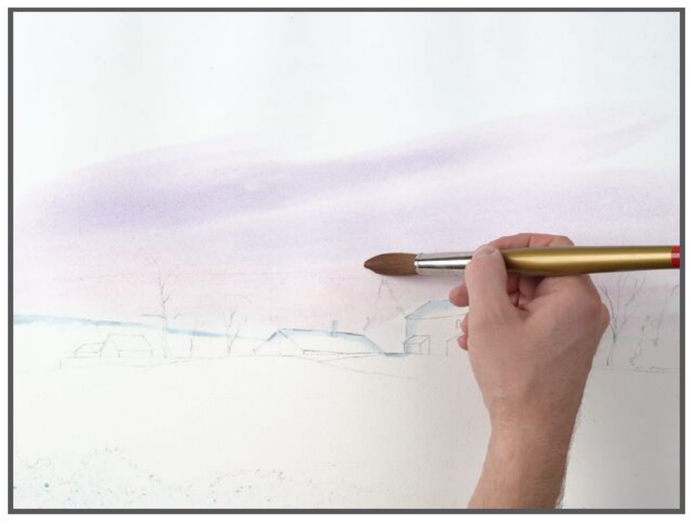
300gsm (140lb), 100% cotton Not watercolour paper; large and medium masking fluid brushes; masking fluid, kitchen paper; fine grain sandpaper, craft knife, paper mask

Colours: natural blue, intense violet, alizarin crimson, burnt sienna, natural grey, aureolin, natural yellow

Brushes: size 20 round, size 6 round, large, medium and small tree and texture brushes, 12mm (½in) flat, size 2 rigger



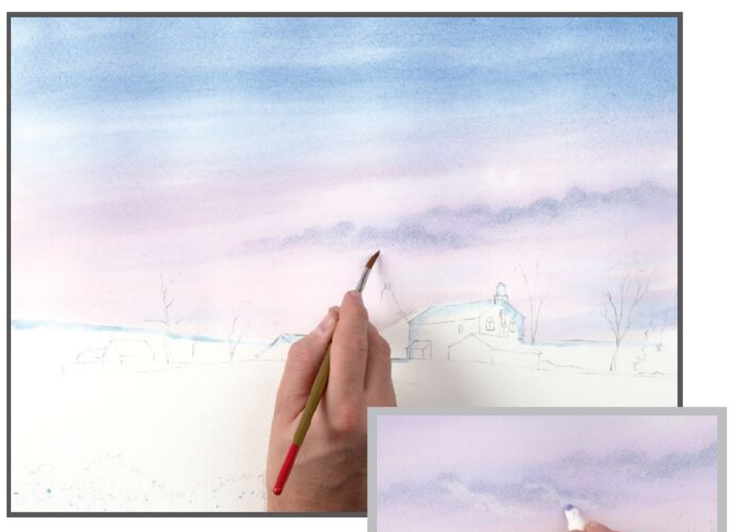
1 Transfer the scene on to watercolour paper. Use the large masking fluid brush to mask the horizon, going through the trees, the edges of the house and church and the bell tower. Use the medium brush to refine details, then cover all but the bottom left of the scene with kitchen paper and splatter masking fluid by tapping a loaded brush. Allow to dry.



2 Make your colour mixes: natural blue; very pale intense violet; pale alizarin crimson and natural grey. Use the size 20 brush to wet down to the masking fluid, then sweep in the intense violet mix at an angle. Fade it at the bottom with the pale alizarin crimson mix.



3 Clean the brush and paint the stronger mix of natural blue at the top, bringing it down to blend with the pinker tones. Clean the brush again, squeeze out excess liquid and use it damp to soften any bands that appear.



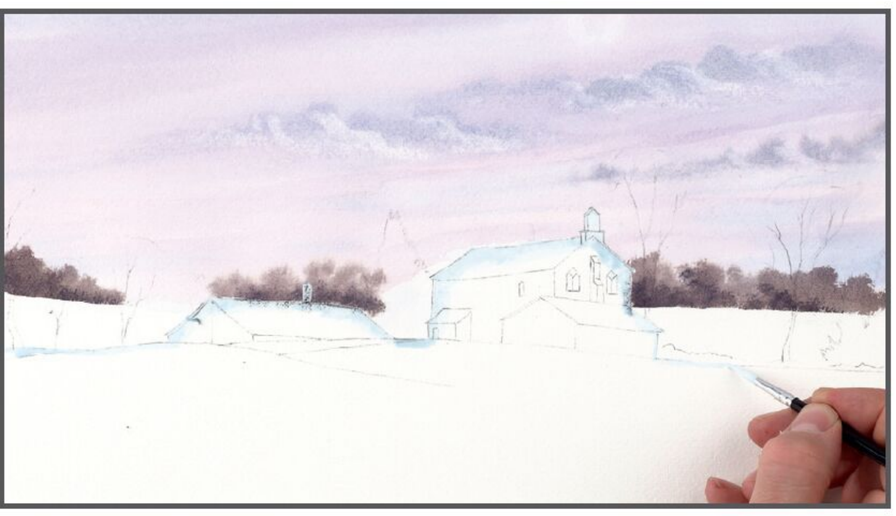
4 Pick up natural grey on the size 6 brush, dab it on kitchen paper then paint soft clouds wet into wet, twisting the brush to create the shapes. Clean and dab the brush and soften the lower edges into the sky. Take a twist of kitchen paper and roll out highlights on the right-hand sides, then wipe at the edges to soften them.



5 If you are using 100% cotton paper, once the sky is dry, you can re-wet it and add more clouds in the same way. Next, dampen the horizon with clean water. Mix burnt sienna with a little natural grey. Pick up the mix with the small tree and texture brush, dab on kitchen paper and tap in distant trees down to the masking fluid.



6 Continue the trees across the snow line. Darken them at the base with natural grey, then darken the left-hand sides of clumps of foliage to create form. Dry the painting.



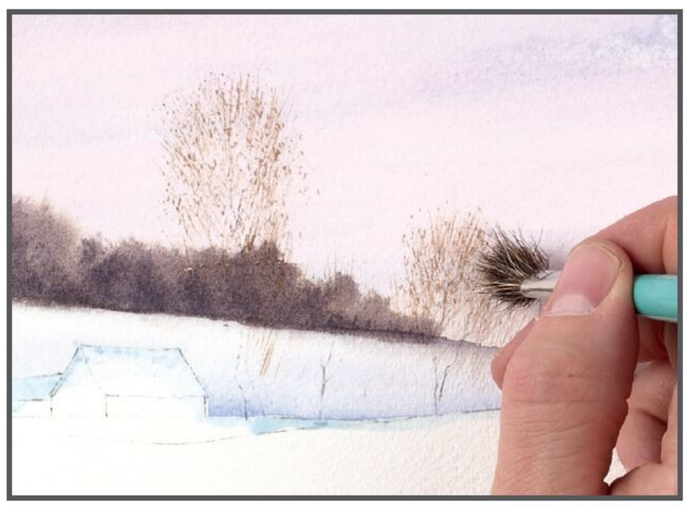
7 Remove the masking fluid from the horizon below the trees, but leave it on the buildings. Use the medium masking fluid brush to apply a further line of masking fluid lower down as shown, going round the edges of the buildings and along a snow-covered wall on the right.



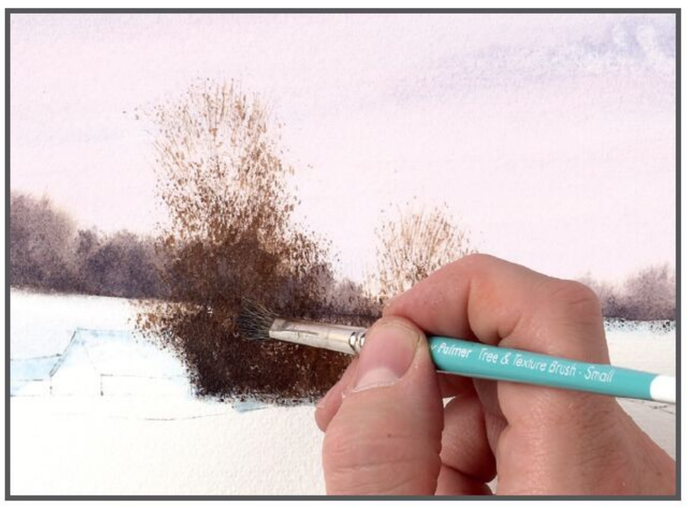
8 Load the size 6 brush with natural blue and a little intense violet with lots of water. Paint beneath the wall on the right and along the right-hand edges of the buildings. Soften the colour upwards with a clean, damp brush.



9 Paint and then soften the same colour on the other side of the painting, above the new masking fluid line. Soften the hard line of the horizon with a clean, damp brush.



10 Pick up a mix of burnt sienna and a little natural grey on the medium tree and texture brush. Take off any excess on kitchen paper and use the long hairs to create the texture of the individual trees' winter foliage. Stroke the colour on first to create a spiky shape, then stipple on top for texture.



11 Stipple more densely down to the masking fluid to create a wooded area. Use the small tree and texture brush and a darker mix of paint with more natural grey. Take time on the trees. Allow to dry.



12 For the fir tree beside the church, mix aureolin, natural blue and a little alizarin crimson. Paint the top of the tree with the brush straight, then pivot and rock it from side to side with the brush flat and the writing facing down. Add natural grey to the mix and stipple densely at the bottom next to the masked buildings.



13 Paint the firs on the right in the same way, trunk first as shown.



14 Work along the masking fluid edge, stippling with the same dark green. Use kitchen paper in addition to the masking fluid to avoid spoiling the snow. Dry.



15 Remove all the masking fluid. Take a 12mm (½in) flat brush, wash and squeeze it so that it is just damp, and use it to lift out any rough edges along the masking line, and to remove any hard lines in the sky.



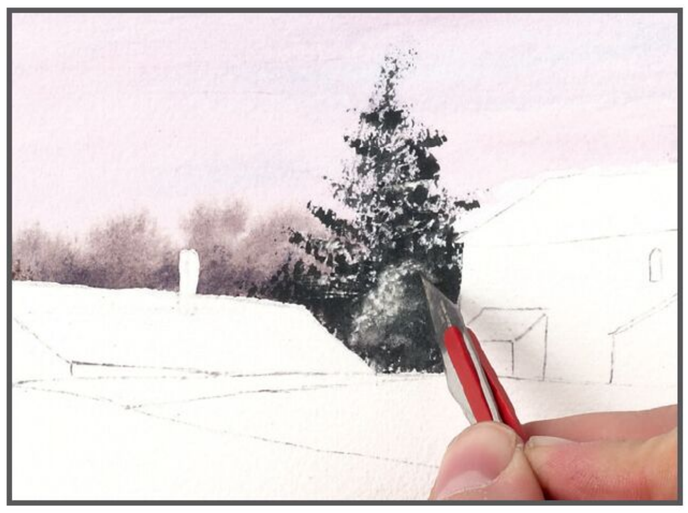
16 Use the same brush and method to lift out the lighter sides of the middle ground tree trunks. Dab with kitchen paper. Add highlights to separate the branches of the firs on the right.



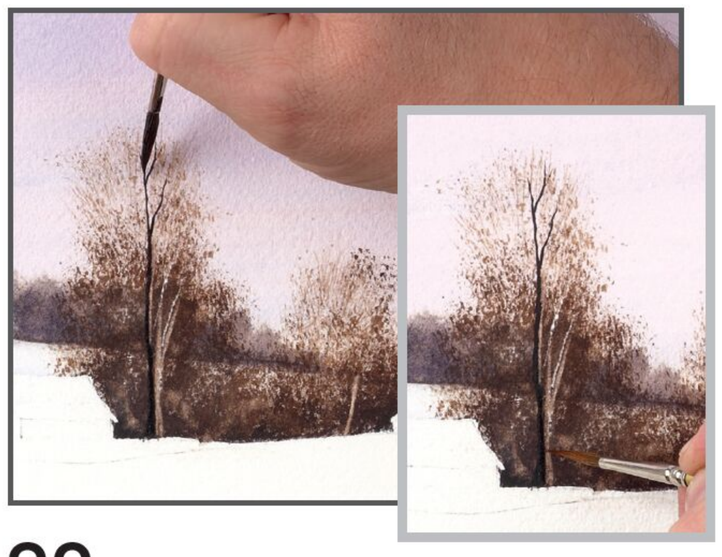
17 Use a damp size 6 brush to lift out highlights, creating a bush in front of the central fir tree. If you take off too much colour, you can bring it in from the surrounding area. Do the same in the dense brown wooded area.



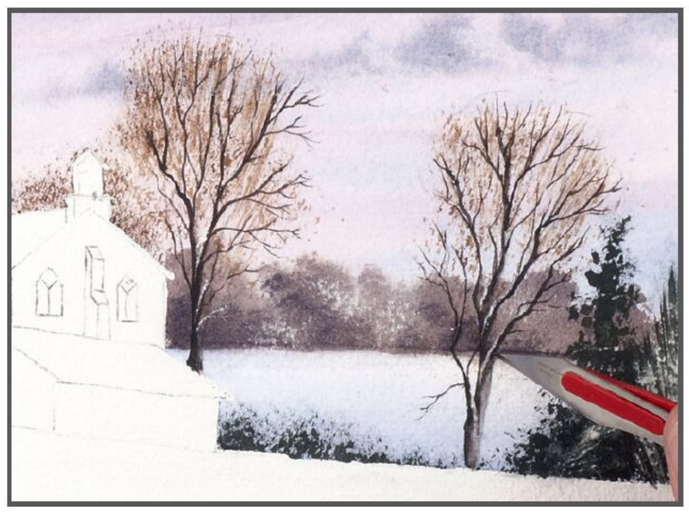
18 Bend a piece of fine grain sandpaper round your finger and use it to scratch off the surface of the distant trees, suggesting snow. Fold the sandpaper and use the edge to scrape out diagonals in the fir on the far right.



19 Dig and flick with a craft knife to create further snowy texture. This works best in the dark green trees.



20 Twist the size 2 rigger through a dark mix of natural grey and burnt sienna with a little natural blue, to create a good point. Darken the left-hand sides of the middle distance tree trunks. Blend into the lighter side with a damp brush.

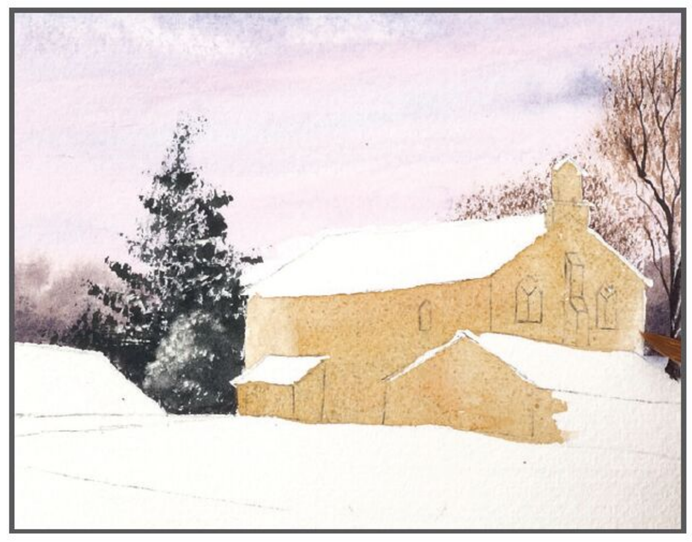


21 Use a craft knife to scrape out snow on the tops of branches.



22 Make colour mixes for the buildings: natural yellow and a pale mix of burnt sienna. Paint the church with natural yellow, dropping in a bit of burnt sienna here and there.

23 Clean and then dab the brush on kitchen paper and use it damp to lighten the colour, highlighting the right-hand side against the woodland background.

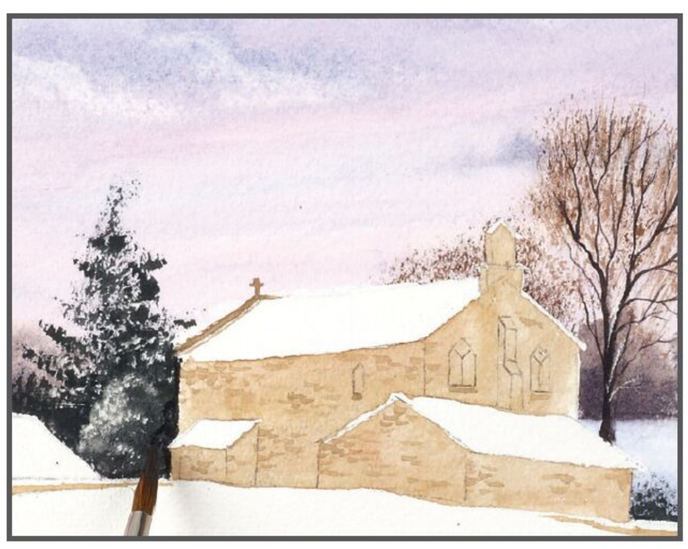


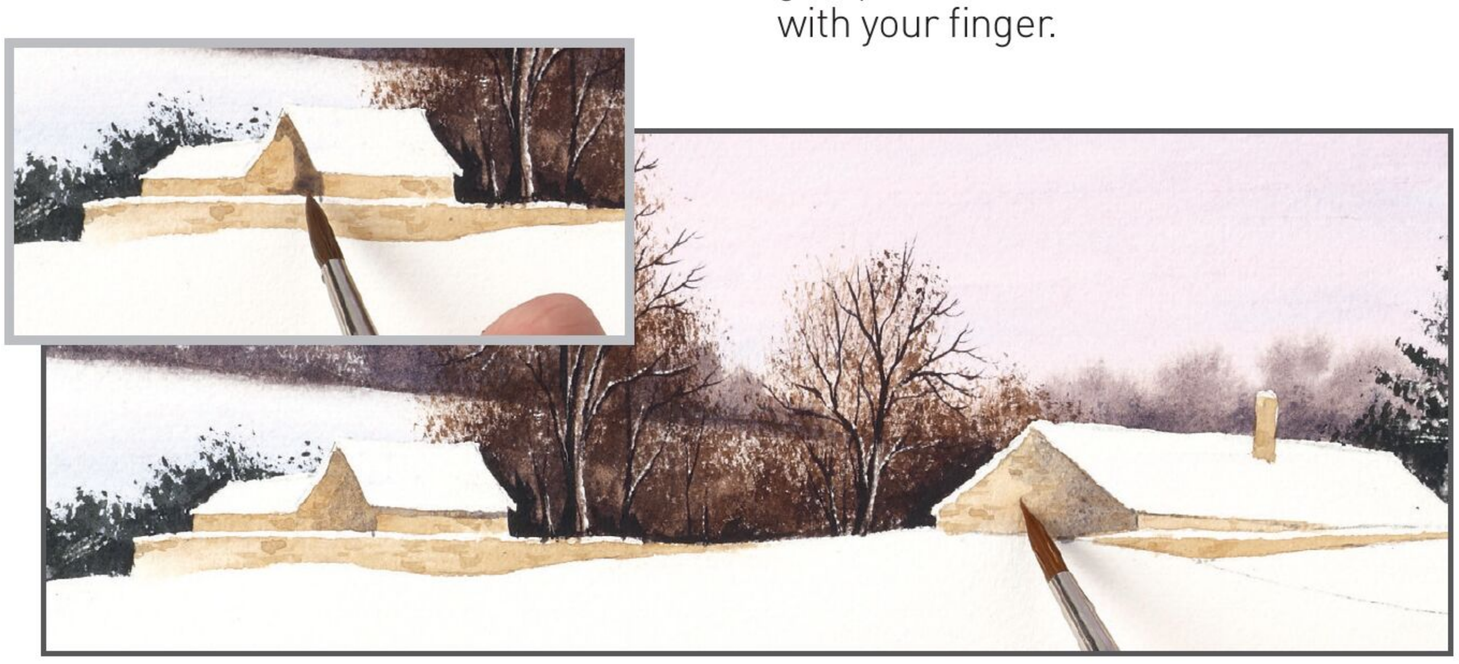




24 Paint all the buildings and the stone wall on the right in the same way, leaving white for snow on top. Mix natural grey with the natural yellow and paint the coping stone and cross at the left-hand side of the church.

25 While the paint is wet, use the point of the brush and the same mix to suggest stonework with a few little grouped marks. You can soften these with your finger.





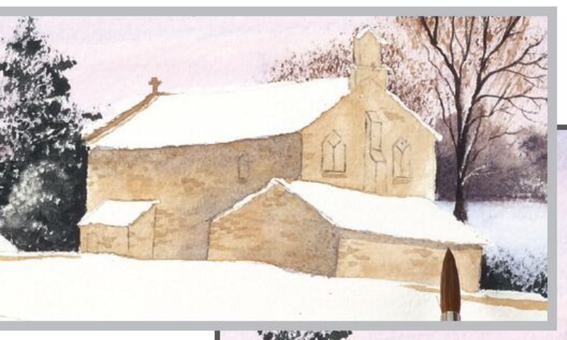
26 Use natural grey to reinforce the dark areas round the edge of buildings so that they stand out. Dry.

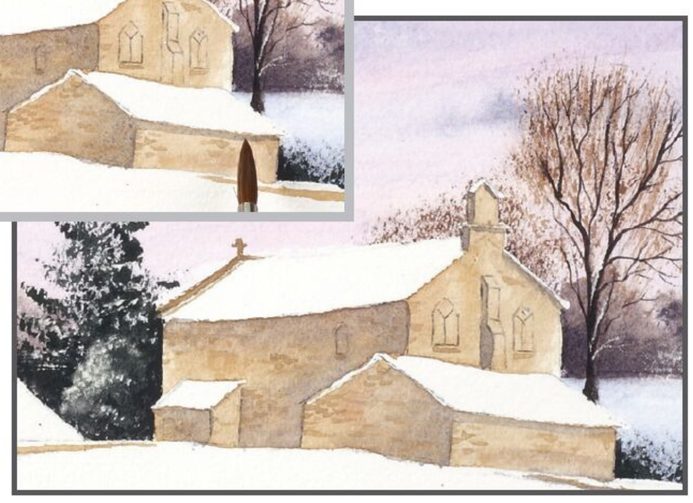
27 To paint the shadows on the buildings, use a mix of natural grey wet on dry. Paint the apex of the building on the left first, then clean the brush, dab it on kitchen paper to leave it damp and use it to blend the shadow away to the left. Repeat for the building in the middle.



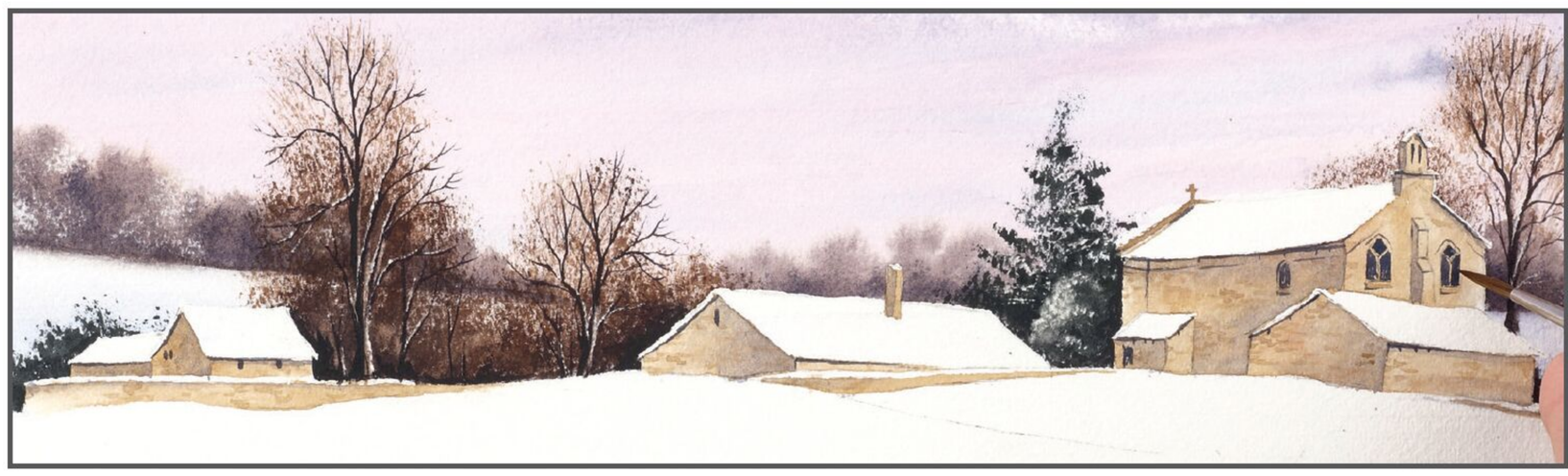


28 Continue painting the shadows on the church and the buildings in front of it in the same way, putting the shadows in, then blending them away to the left.

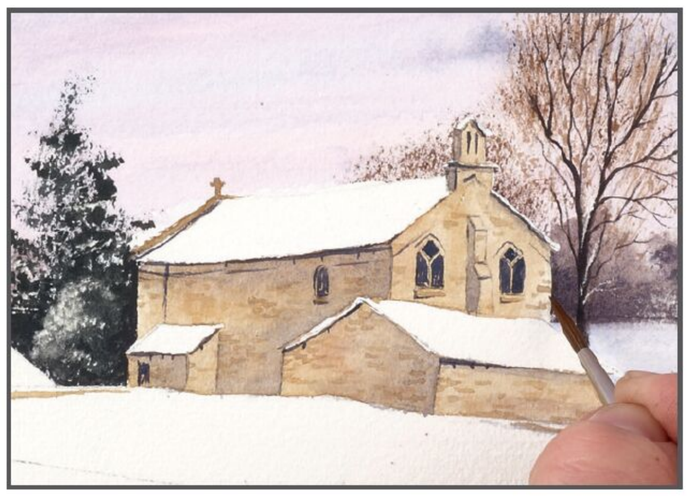




29 Paint the shadows under the apex of the small building, the left-hand side of the chimney, the buttress, bell tower and porch, in the same way.

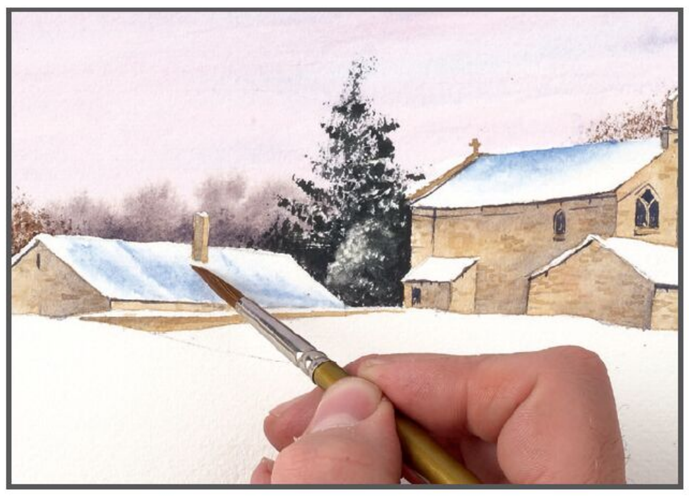


30 Use the rigger brush and dark natural grey to paint the architectural details such as the dark under the eaves on the left and in the windows, doorways and gaps in the bell tower.



31 Use natural yellow to add stonework again, particularly over shadowed areas.

32 Change to the size 6 brush and paint a line across the top of the snow on the church roof with natural blue, then clean and dab the brush and use it to blend this shadow away downwards. Make random lines in the direction of the slope of the next roof, then blend away.





33 Make mixes of burnt sienna with natural grey; natural blue with 80% water; and intense violet with 80% water. Use the size 20 brush to sweep the blue mix diagonally across the bottom of the painting to create shadow in the snow. Clean and dab the brush then use it to soften the edges of the shadow.

34 Painting wet into wet, sweep in intense violet, reflecting the sky colours, in the same way, to blend with the blue.





35 While the area is damp, use the large tree and texture brush to stipple on burnt sienna and natural grey for the foreground bushes. Without cleaning the brush, pick up more natural grey and darken the bottom.



36 Wait until the paint is just damp and use your fingernail to scratch out stalks and branches in the bushes. Angle the marks towards the focal point of the church to aid the composition. Dry the painting. Use the size 20 brush to add more snow shadows with natural blue. Dab the brush and squash it flat between your fingers before using it to apply diagonal strokes.



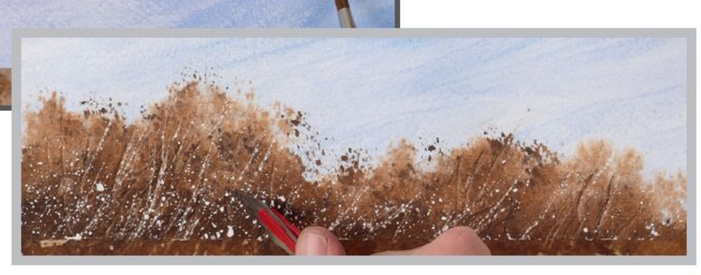
37 Continue adding shadow. Use the size 6 brush to paint the small field in front of the buildings and blend away the edges of the shadow with a clean, damp brush. Add tree shadows across the snow, still working wet into wet.

38 Use a paper mask and the small tree and texture brush with burnt sienna and natural grey to put in hedges between the fields. Blend them away into the snow in places.

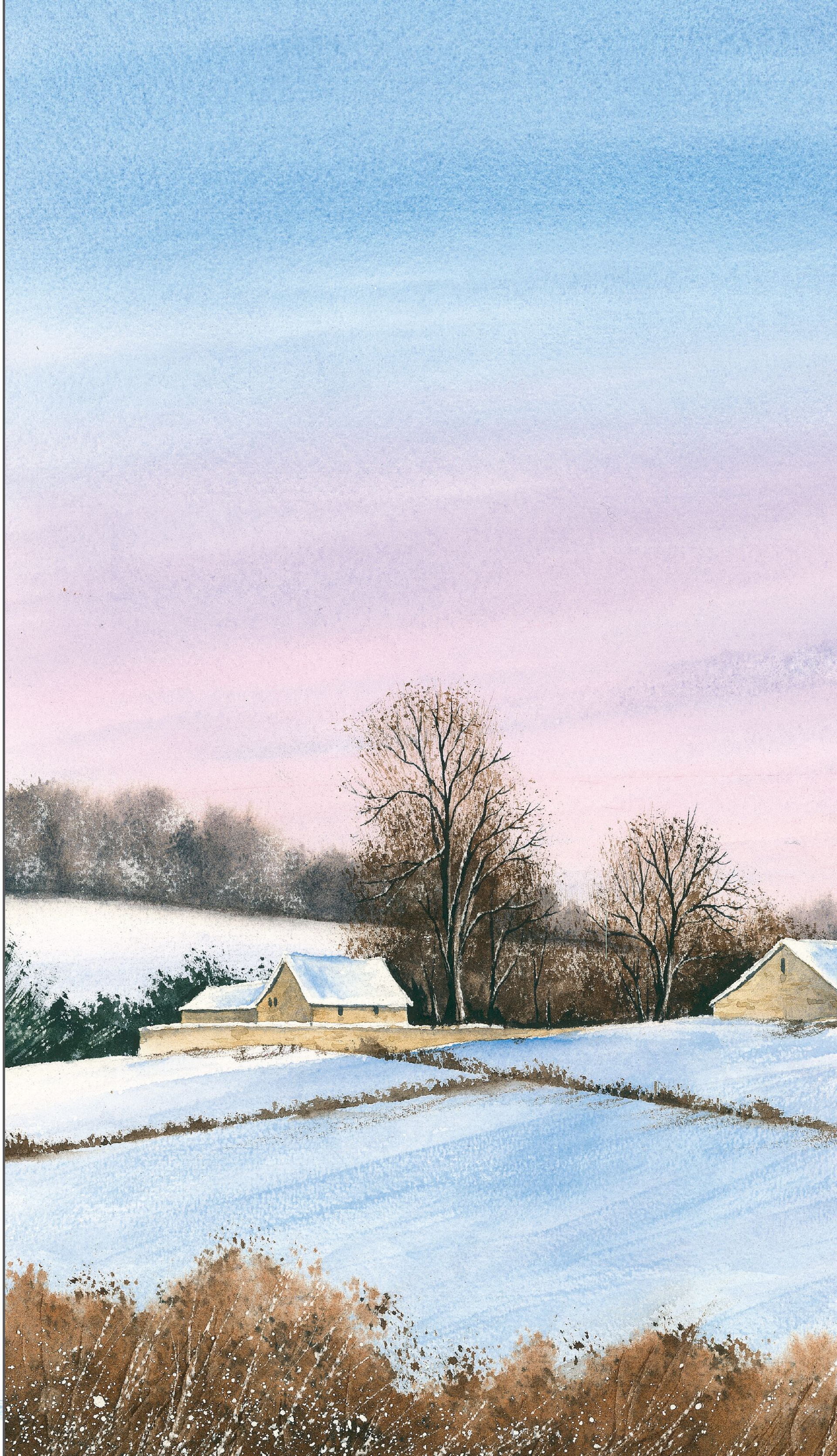




39 Use a clean, damp size 6 brush to feather the bottom of the nearer hedge, blending away the hard line and bedding it into the landscape. Create bits of dry brush texture in the same way. Remove the masking fluid from the foreground bushes and use a craft knife to scratch out colour, suggesting snow in the undergrowth.



The finished painting.









Overlooking the Castle

Masking fluid was used to keep the snowy horizon light. I then painted in the dark, high-contrast sky, using strong natural grey to give the atmosphere. The rocks and castle started off as a pale wash of natural yellow, and natural grey was used to add shadows to the rocks.

Mountains and lakes

Exercise

This painting is a progression from the exercise on pages 58–59. The sky is more detailed here and the painting features water with reflections.

You will need

300gsm (140lb), 100% cotton Not watercolour paper; kitchen paper; masking tape; hairdryer; craft knife

Colours: burnt sienna, natural yellow, natural blue, natural grey

Brushes: size 20 round, medium tree and texture brush, size 6 round

Outline 7



1 Transfer the drawing on to watercolour paper. Mix the sky colours: pale burnt sienna; pale natural yellow; and natural blue. Use the size 20 brush to wet the whole paper, then sweep natural yellow in diagonal strokes over the mountains, moving to horizontal strokes for the water.



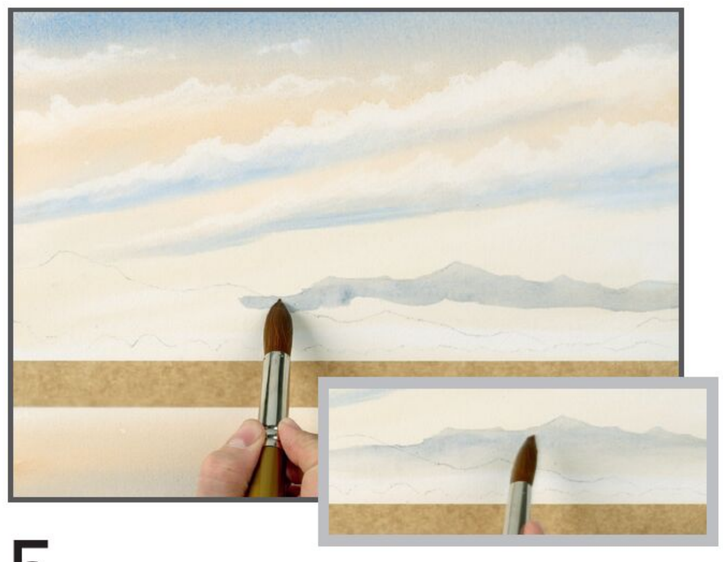
2 Working wet into wet, paint burnt sienna from the top down at an angle. Blend it down with a damp brush, then paint it at the bottom of the water and blend it up to create a gradient sky.



3 While the paper is still wet, use the brush damp with natural blue to paint a band across the top, then blend it down. Do the same at the bottom and blend it up. Paint a couple of lines at an angle in the sky, then blend them away upwards with a clean, damp brush.



4 Use a twist of kitchen paper to roll and lift out cloud highlights. Lightly drag down into the blue to soften the effect. Add more clouds using the same techniques. Allow to dry.



5 Take the stickiness off a piece of masking tape by pressing it on your clothes, then apply it below the horizon. Use the size 20 brush and natural grey to paint a line around 2.5cm (1in) thick for the distant mountains. Blend the colour downwards with a clean, damp brush.



6 Clean the brush, dab it on kitchen paper and squeeze it flat, then use it to lift out colour in diagonal strokes. Dry the painting.



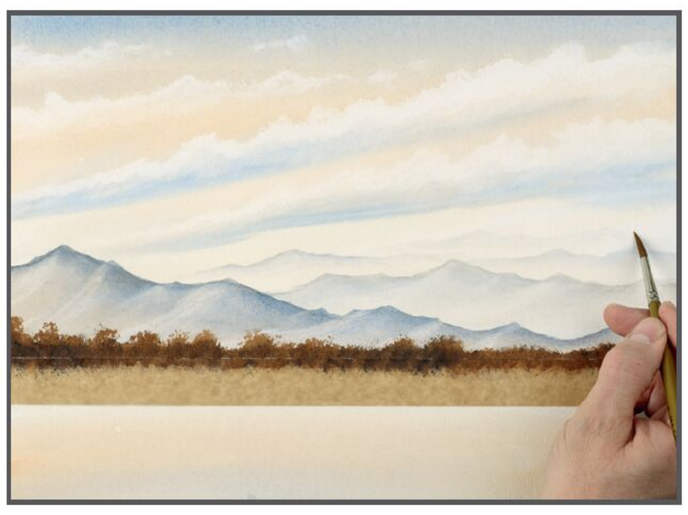
7 Use a stronger mix of natural grey to paint the nearer mountains with a thick line as before, then paint burnt sienna below this line and drag the grey down into it.



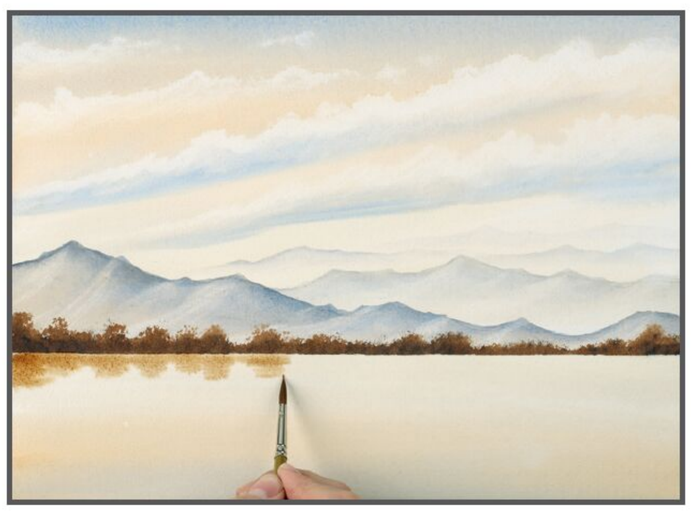
8 Lift out highlights as before.



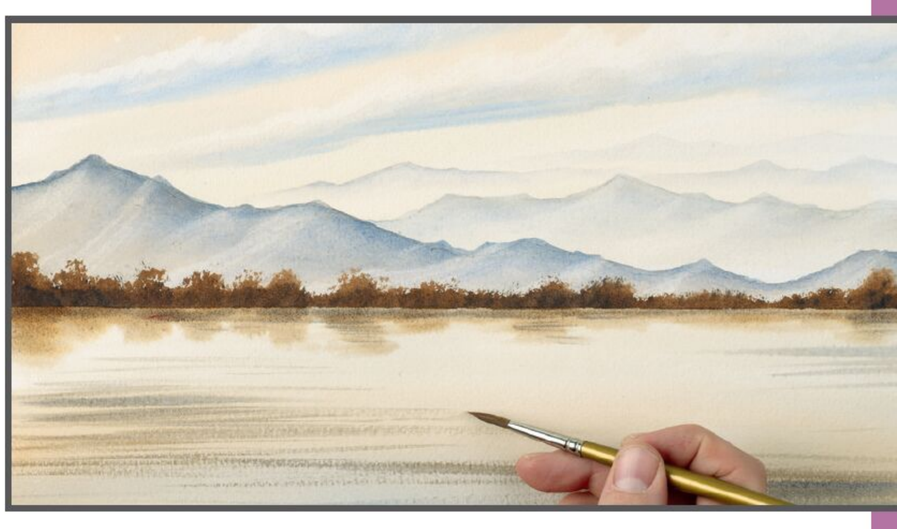
9 Use the medium tree and texture brush to pick up a thick mix of burnt sienna and natural grey. Take off most of the wet paint on kitchen paper, then stipple bushes across the masking tape. Without cleaning the brush, pick up natural grey and stipple this at the bottom of the bushes.



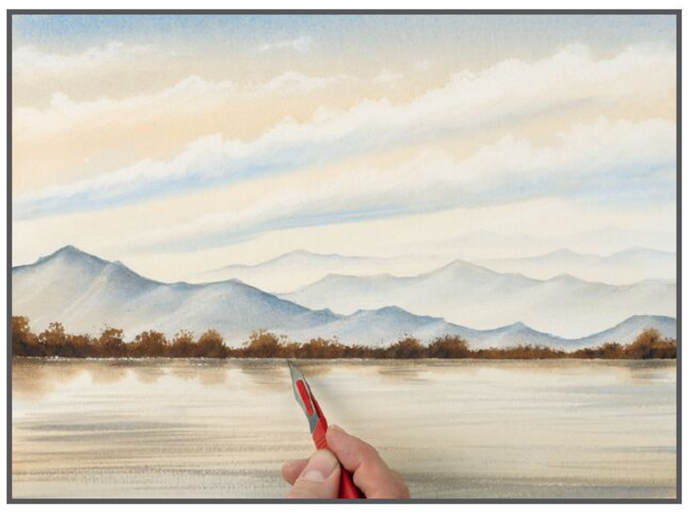
10 Use a size 6 brush and a watery mix of natural grey to put in more mountain ranges further in the distance, and soften them down as before. There are no pencil lines for these, so improvise.



11 Allow to dry, remove the masking tape and wet the water area with the size 20 brush and clean water. Use the size 6 brush to scribble horizontal lines of burnt sienna to reflect the bushes, paying attention to their height.



12 Use a 50:50 mix of natural grey to paint ripples in the water.



13 Clean the brush, dab it on kitchen paper and use it to soften any hard edges in the water. Dry the painting. Use a craft knife to scratch out a broken line on the waterline and work down creating horizontal highlights.



The finished painting.

Lakeside Houses

In this painting you will learn how a building is painted, and how to create distance. There are several different trees in this scene which will help to build your tree-painting skills. Notice how I have painted lots of foreground interest in the form of the wall. This is a great way to create distance as it pushes the rest of the painting back. Look how far you can travel through the painting, from the wall to the furthest mountain.

You will need

300gsm (140lb), 100% cotton Not watercolour paper; masking fluid; masking fluid brush; masking tape; kitchen paper; craft knife; salt

Colours: natural yellow, natural blue, natural grey, aureolin, burnt sienna, lemon yellow

Brushes: size 20 round, size 6 round, 12mm (½in) flat, medium tree and texture brush, small tree and texture brush, size 2 rigger, large tree and texture brush, size 8 brush

Outline 8



1 Transfer the scene on to watercolour paper. Mask the edges of the building with a masking fluid brush and masking fluid. Use bits of masking tape to mask the edge of the dry stone wall.



2 Make the sky mixes before beginning to paint: pale natural yellow; nautral blue; and pale natural grey. Use the size 20 brush to wet the whole painting apart from the house. Sweep natural yellow upwards from the back of the house, over the mountains and into the top of the water.



3 Paint strong natural blue at the top and blend this away downwards into the natural yellow. Paint more at the bottom and blend away upwards in the same way, then use a clean, damp brush to soften any hard lines.



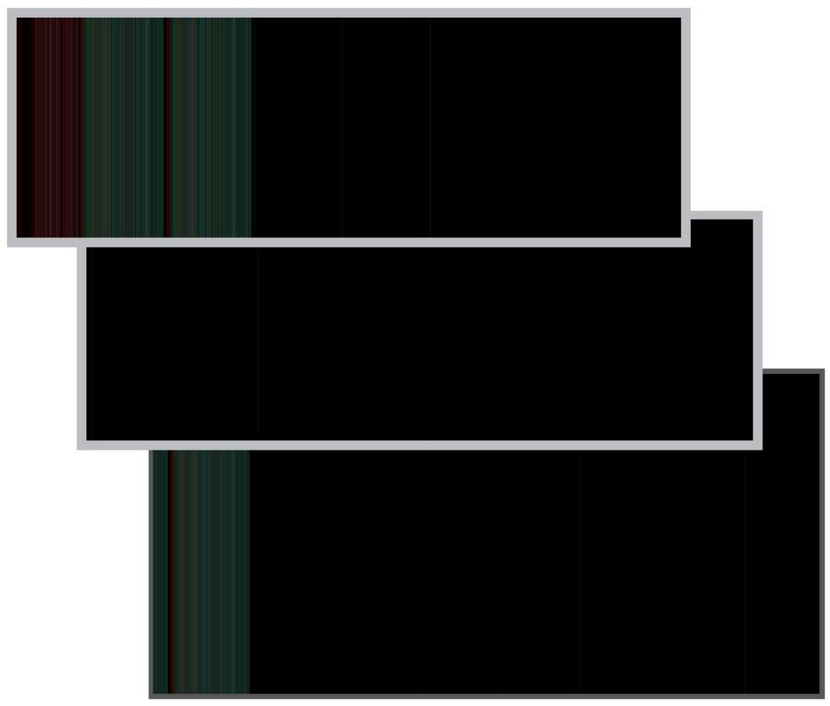
4 Still painting wet into wet, paint bands of cloud with natural grey. Clean and squeeze the brush and soften the clouds upwards.



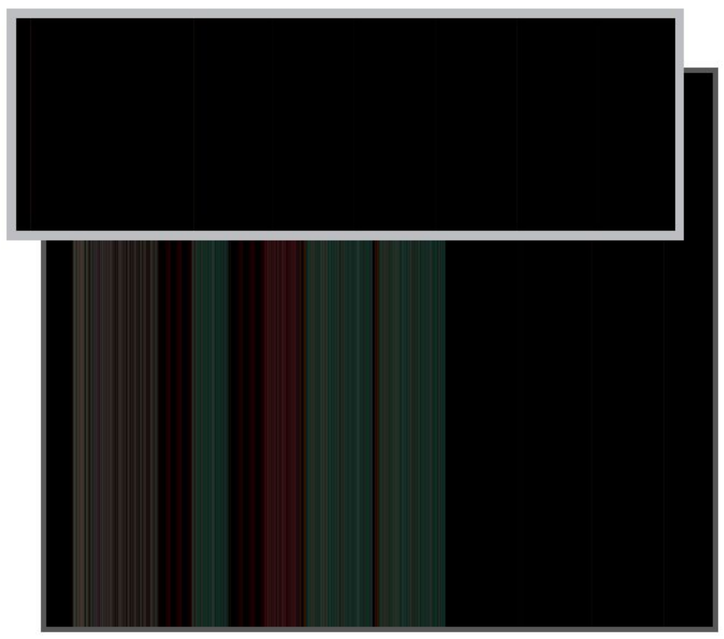
5 Use a twist of kitchen paper to lift out the cloud tops, then wipe down into the grey to soften.



6 Take the stickiness from some masking tape and place a straight band to mask the horizon up to the building. Use the size 20 brush and pale natural grey to paint the outline of the distant mountains, then blend away downwards with a damp brush. Squeeze out the brush and lift out colour in diagonal strokes.



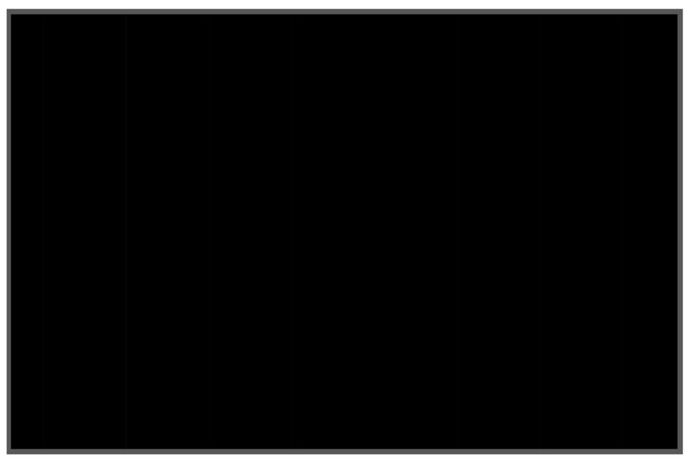
7 Use stronger natural grey to paint the top of the nearer mountain. Clean the brush and brush in aureolin at the bottom. Drag the grey down to blend with the grey. This makes a distant-looking, textured green.



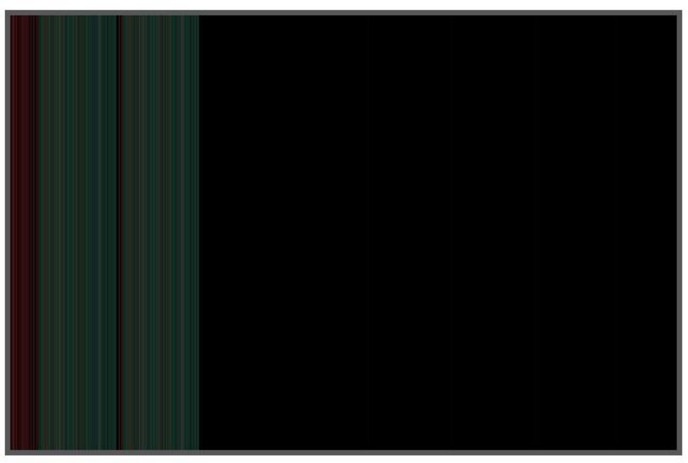
8 Clean and squeeze out the brush, then use it to wipe out highlights as before. While this is still damp, use the size 6 brush and a stronger natural grey to paint shadow on the hills. Clean and dab the brush and use it damp to soften the edges.



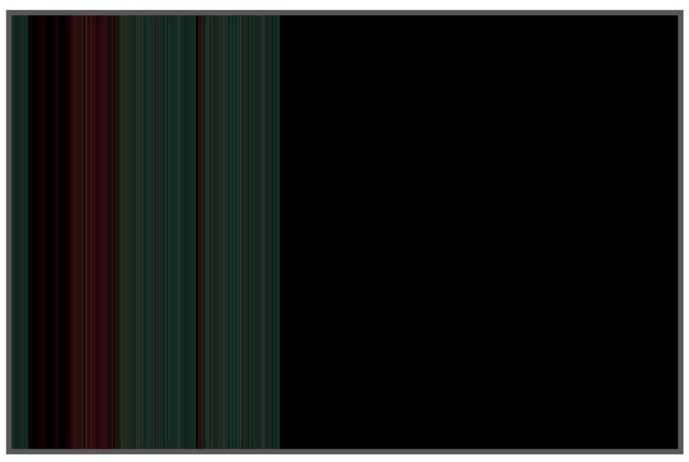
9 Add a bit more aureolin to brighten the green of the nearer mountain, then use a very pale grey to add a further range of distant mountains, and to add shadows to others.



10 Use the 12mm (½in) flat brush, clean and damp, to lift out highlights on the nearer mountain, next to shadowed areas.



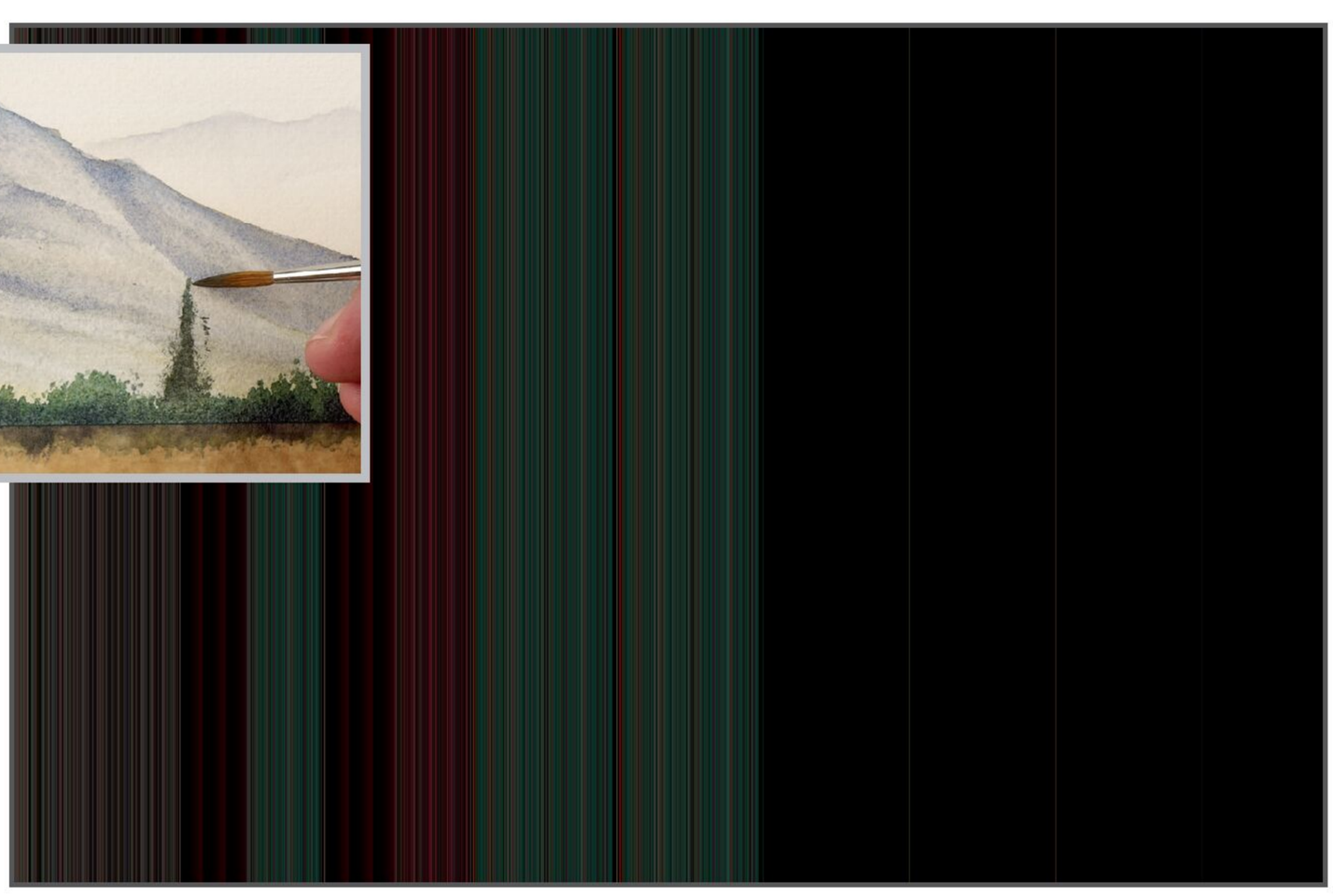
11 Take the medium tree and texture brush and a green mix of aureolin first, then natural blue. Practise stippling on scrap paper to take off the excess, then stipple along the masking tape, using gentle pressure.

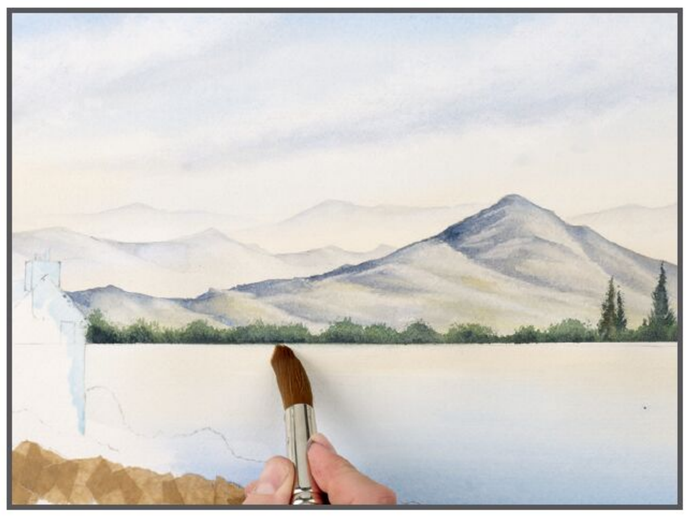


12 Change to the small tree and texture brush, add natural grey to the mix and darken the base of the trees by stippling wet into wet.

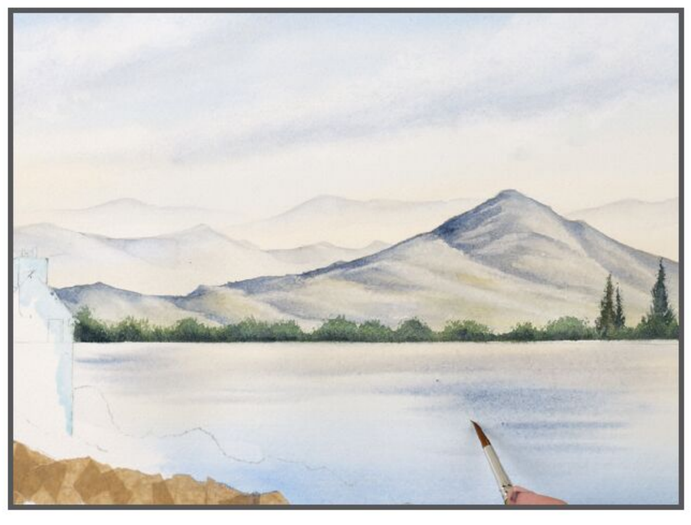


13 Mix natural grey and aureolin to make a green for the fir trees. Turn the brush on its side with the writing facing downwards and tap a vertical line for the trunk. Paint the rest of the fir shape, then change to the rigger to paint the top of the tree. Add two more trees in the same way.

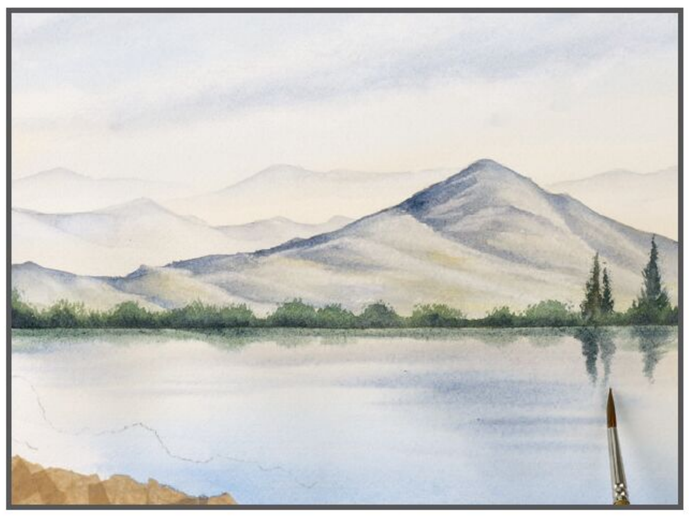




Remove the masking tape carefully and wet the water area with the size 20 brush. You can use the clean water to soften the hard edge a little.



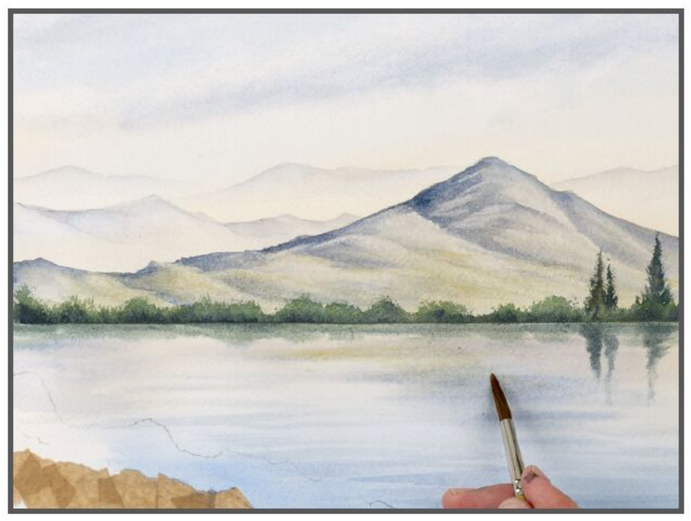
15 Use the size 6 brush and natural grey to create horizontal ripples for the reflection of the mountain.



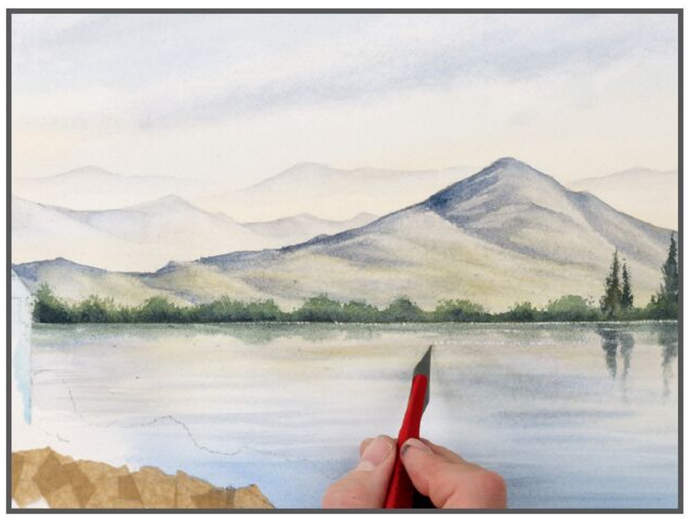
16 Mix aureolin and natural blue and paint the tree reflections with horizontal brush strokes, bearing in mind the height of the trees. Use a darker mix with natural grey added for the fir tree reflections and the waterline. Soften the ends of the reflections with a clean, damp brush.



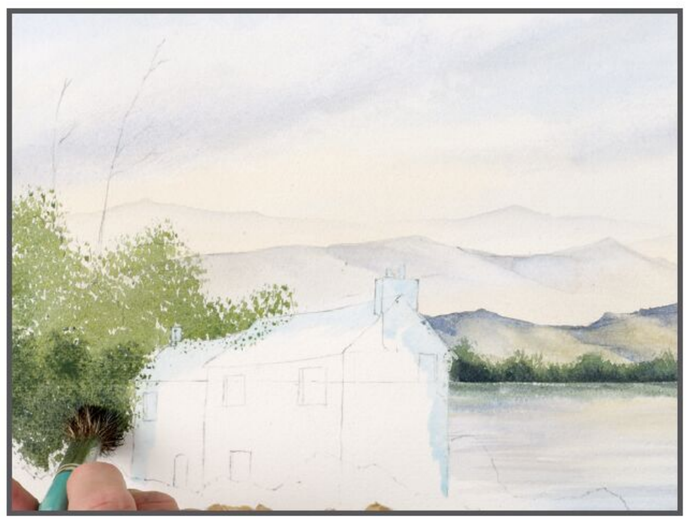
17 When the water area is dry, paint faint ripples with a pale mix of natural grey with 80% water.



18 Glaze a little aureolin over the hills and add ripples in the water in the same colour.



19 Use a craft knife to scratch out horizontal highlights on the waterline and in the water generally.



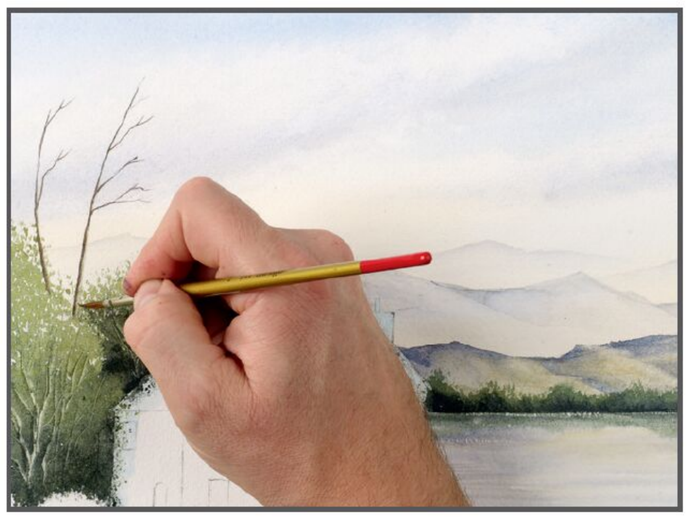
20 Mix aureolin and natural blue, pick it up on the large tree and texture brush, wipe it on the palette then tap it on scrap paper before stippling trees to the left of the house. Pick up natural grey without cleaning the brush and stipple the darker colour lower down.



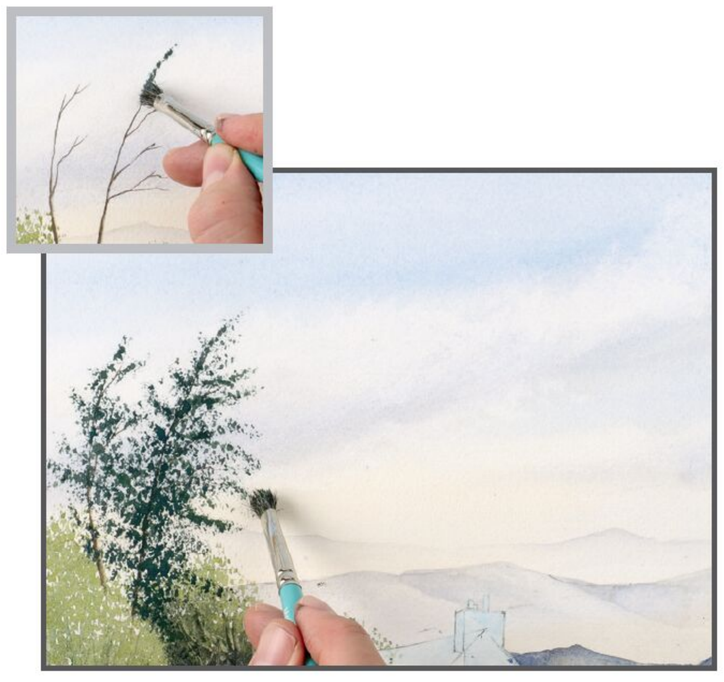
21 Use the small tree and texture brush to darken the trees behind the house and to separate one area from another.



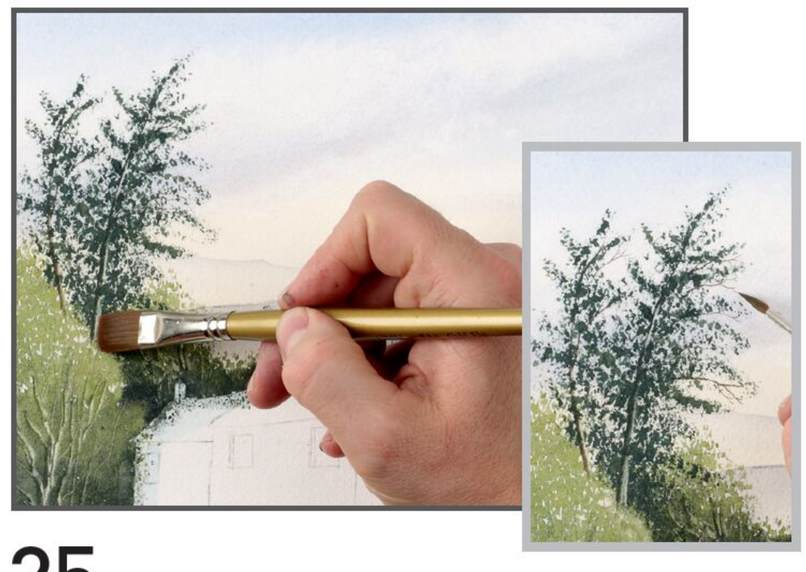
22 Use a fingernail to scratch out trunks and branches while the paint is damp.



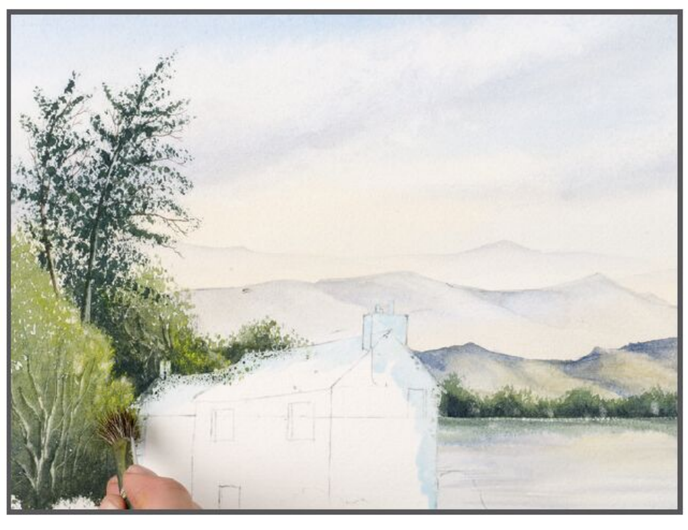
23 Mix burnt sienna and natural grey and use the rigger to paint more tree trunks and branches. Clean and dab the brush until it is just damp and use it to lighten the right-hand sides.



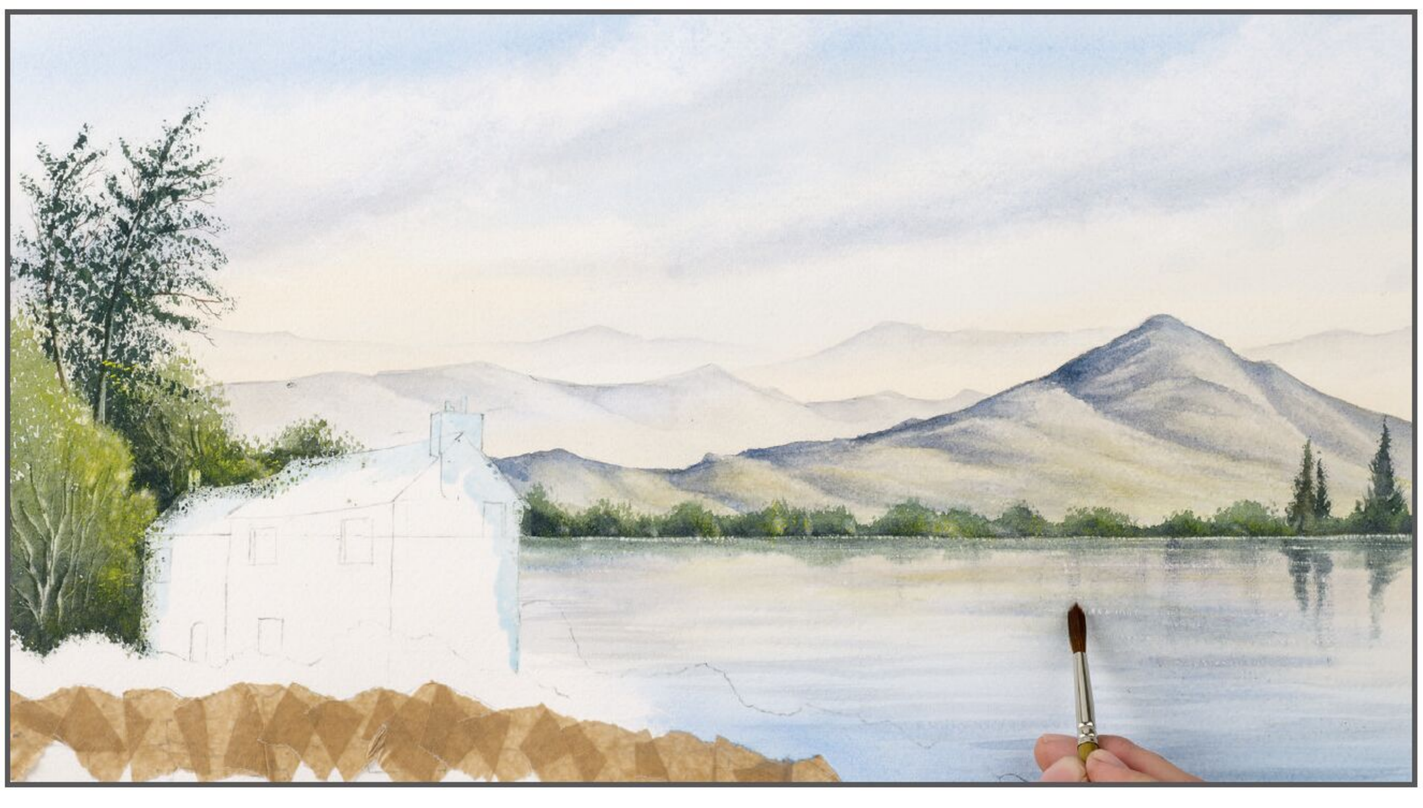
24 Use the small tree and texture brush and the fir mix of aureolin, natural grey and natural blue to paint the tree tops with the brush on its side. Next use it upright, rocking from side to side, to add foliage further down.



25 Take the 12mm (½in) flat brush, clean and damp, and use it to lift out highlights in the trees. Use the rigger to add branches with burnt sienna and natural grey. Allow to dry.



26 Use the medium tree and texture brush with the opaque colour, lemon yellow, to stipple into the deciduous trees to brighten them. Allow to dry.



27 Mix a medium natural grey and pick it up on the size 6 brush. Squeeze it to splay the hairs and drag colour down into the water to create vertical reflections. Allow to dry.



28 Remove the masking fluid. Lift out any green colour on the roof. Put in the shadows on the buildings with a pale natural grey.



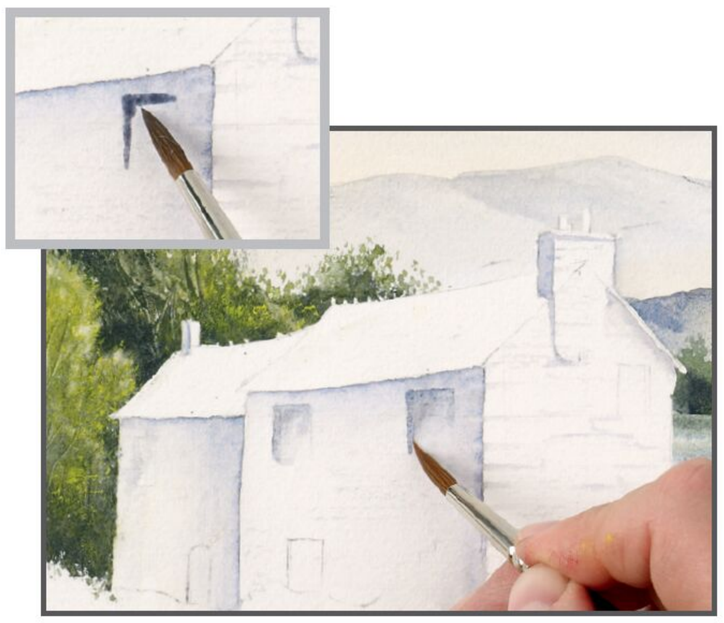
29 Clean the brush and dab it, then use it damp to soften the edges of the shadows.



30 While the brush is damp, drag lines of the grey on to the lit face of the house to suggest stones.



31 Use the same mix to add shadow and detail to the chimney, then add an impression of stonework. Paint the shadows of the left-hand building in the same way, then use dry brush work over the stonework.



32 Paint the windows with 'L' shapes as shown, then use a clean, damp brush to blend the colour outwards to soften it.



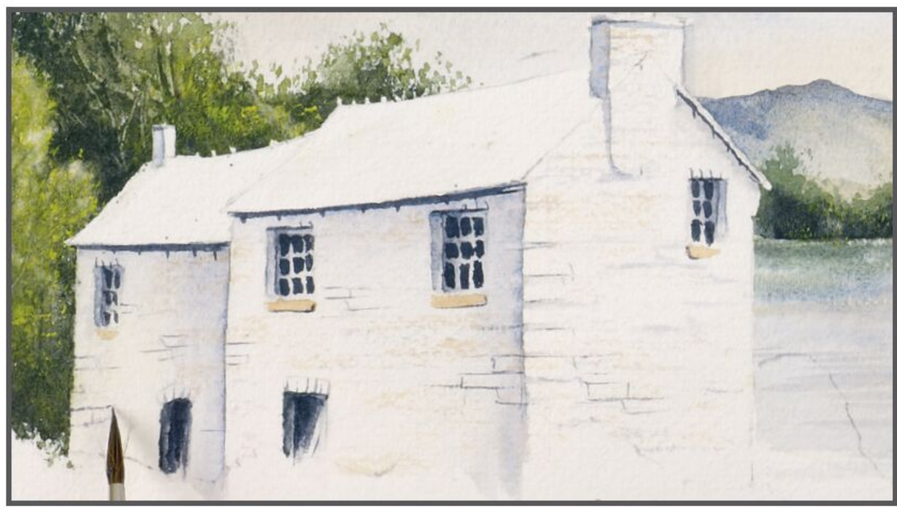
33 Paint the darkness in the doorways in the same way, but with a darker mix of natural grey. Drag up short lines of paint to suggest the stonework of the lintels. Dry the painting.



34 Create the window and door recesses with negative painting: add a line of dark grey for the darkness inside, then blend this away to the right with a damp brush. Create the panes with a still darker mix.



35 Use natural yellow to paint the lintels below the windows, and to add dry brush work to the stonework.



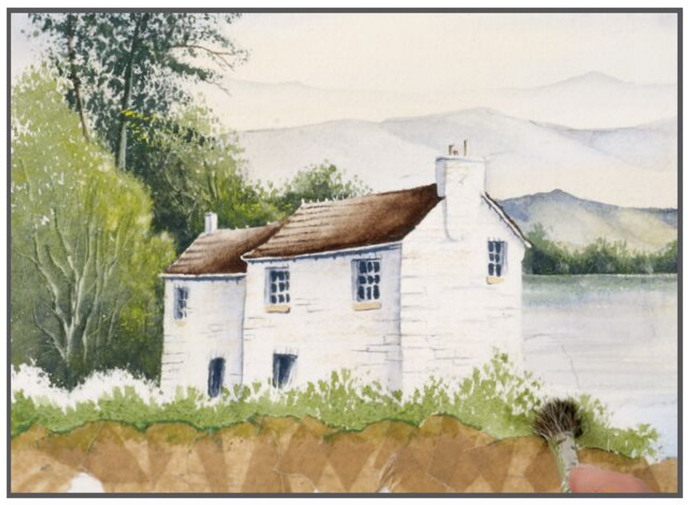
36 Change to the rigger and a dark natural grey mix to paint architectural details such as guttering and stonework. Use a fairly dry brush and smudge paint with your fingers where necessary.



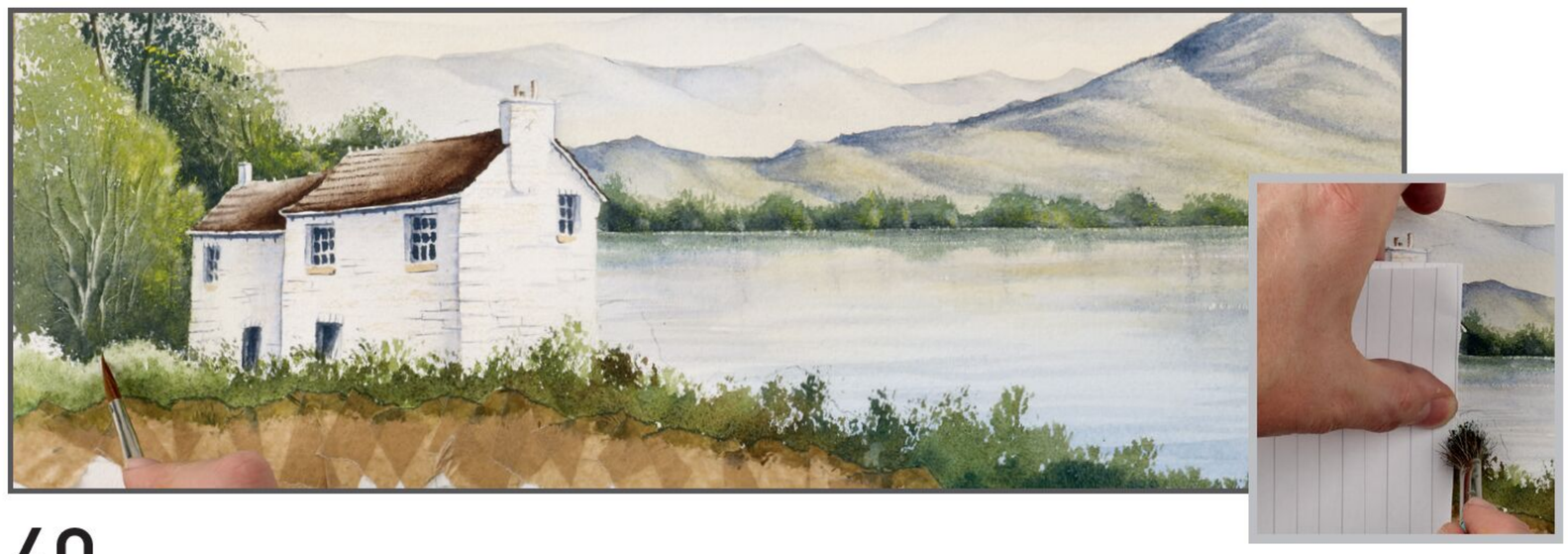
37 Mix burnt sienna and natural grey to paint the edges of the roof as shown, then clean the brush, wipe it on kitchen paper and blend the colour away.



38 Paint a line of the brown on the right-hand side of the roof apex. Paint the chimney pots with a much paler mix of the same colours, then paint the second roof. Dry the painting, then suggest tiles with horizontal lines.



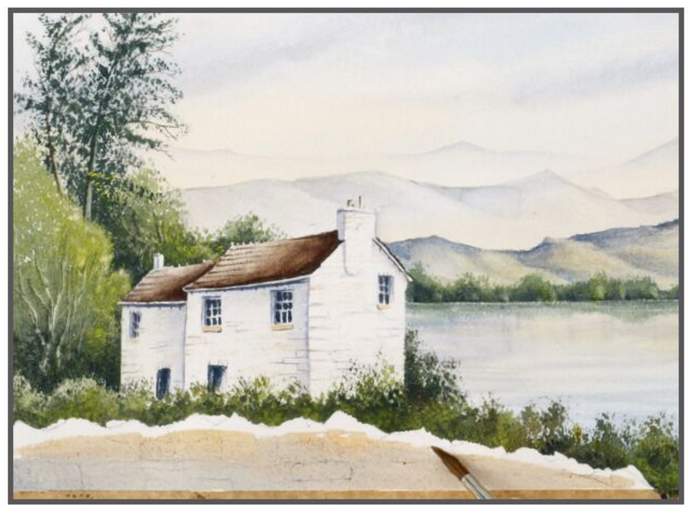
39 Mix a green from aureolin and natural blue and use the medium tree and texture brush to stipple greenery above the stone wall, leaving some white.



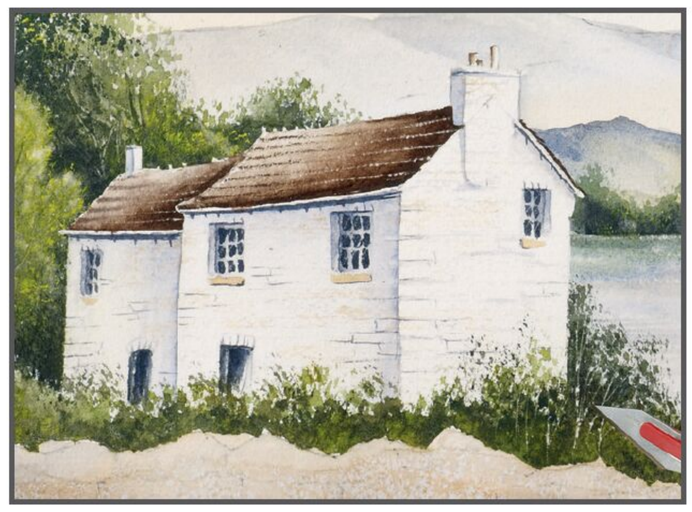
40 Pick up some of the brown on the palette with the green and stipple the darker mix down to the masking tape. Use the size 6 brush with clean water to blend the green up into the white spaces you left. Continue stippling up to the building, using a paper mask where necessary.



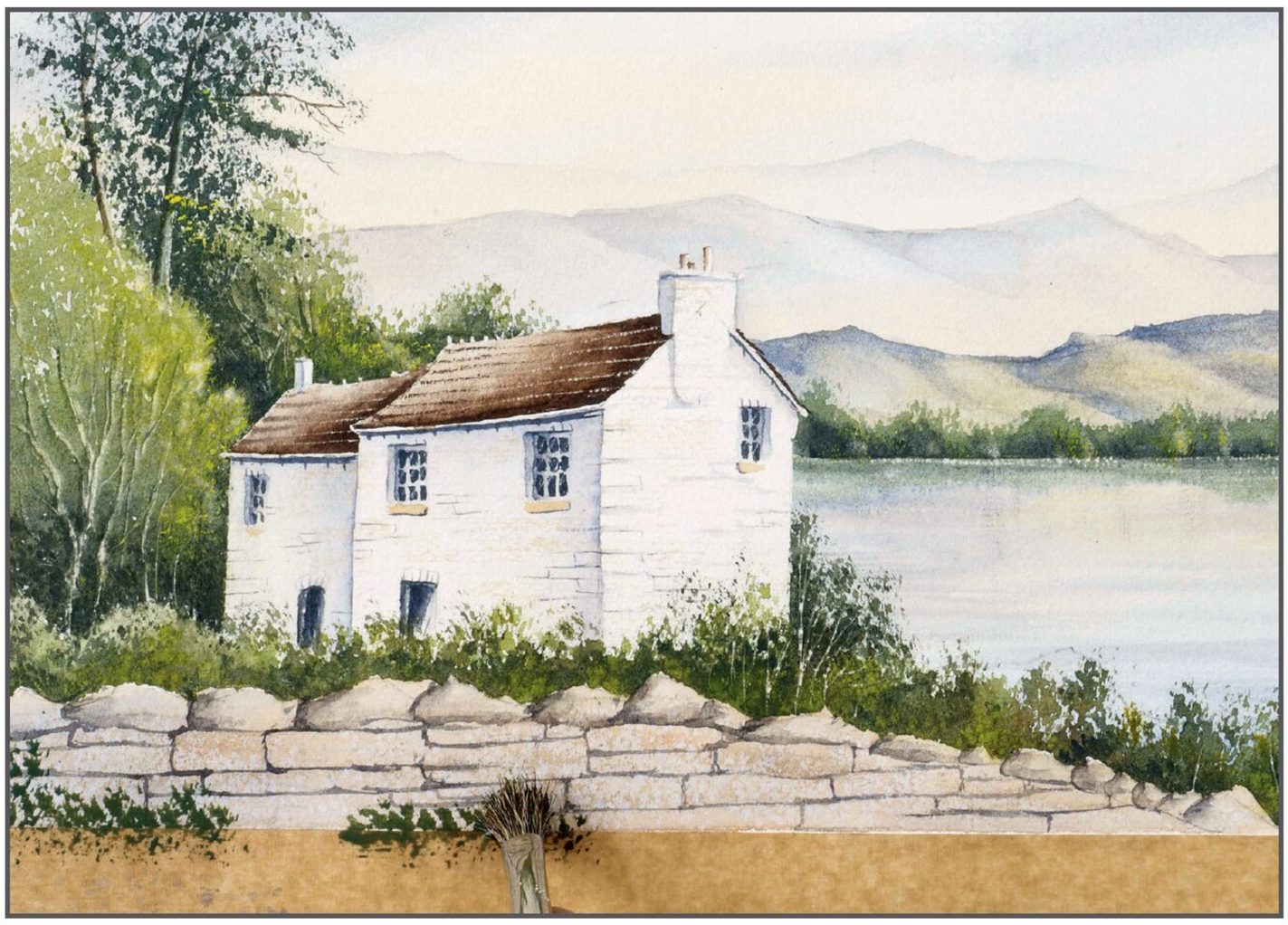
41 Stipple thick lemon yellow to add highlights, especially next to the darker parts. Allow to dry.



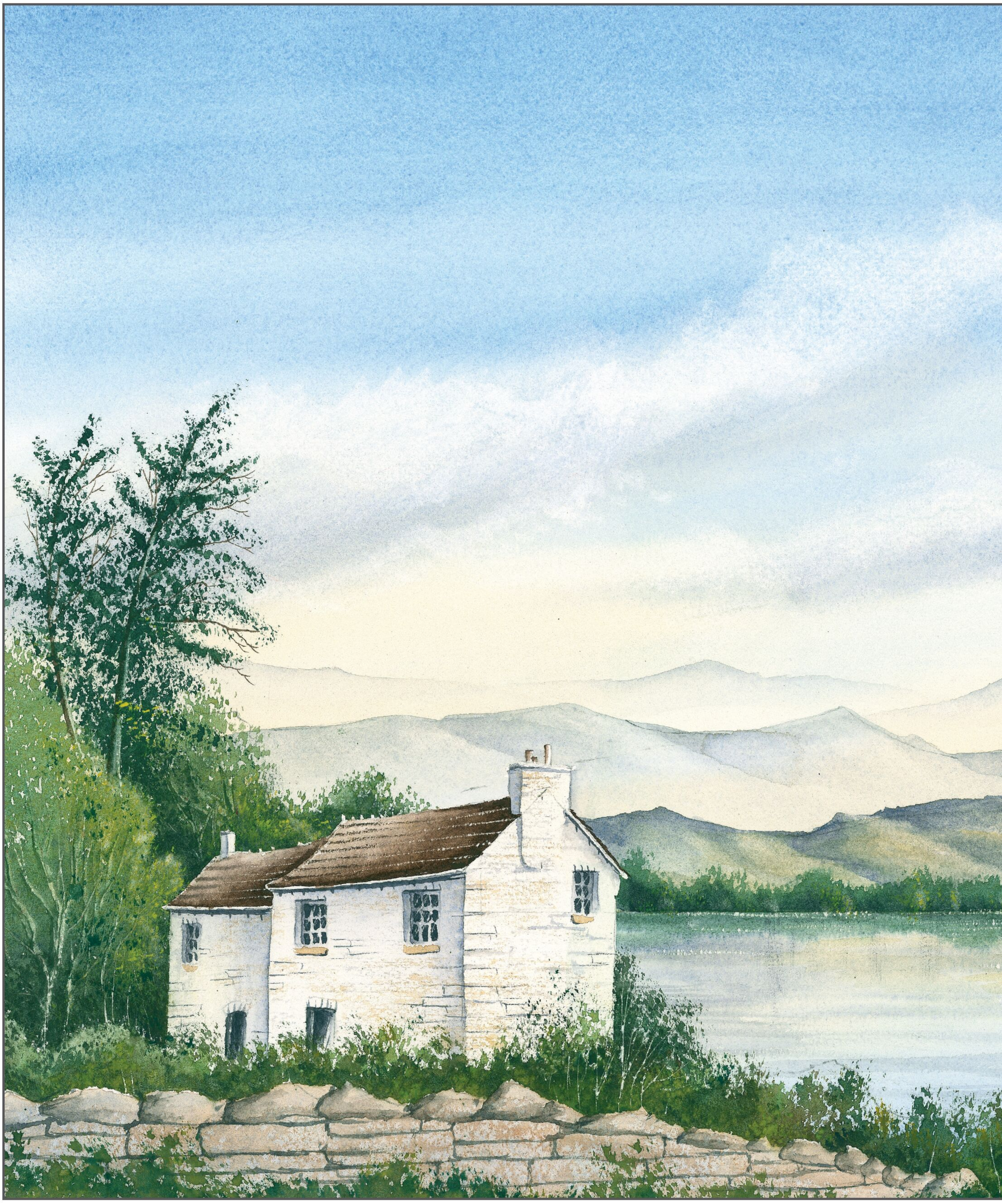
42 Remove the masking tape. Use a size 8 brush to paint on a pale natural grey mix, then a pale burnt sienna mix, then a little natural yellow. Leave a white edge at the top. Blend the paint upwards with a clean, damp brush. Sprinkle salt on the wall to create textural effects.



43 Use the craft knife to scratch out tile marks on the roof, highlights in the windows and stalks and twigs in the foliage.



44 Paint the cracks and shadows in the wall with the size 6 brush and natural grey. Blend with a clean, damp brush to soften shadows. Paint a bit of greenery with the aureolin, natural blue and palette brown mix and the medium tree and texture brush, to bed in the wall.

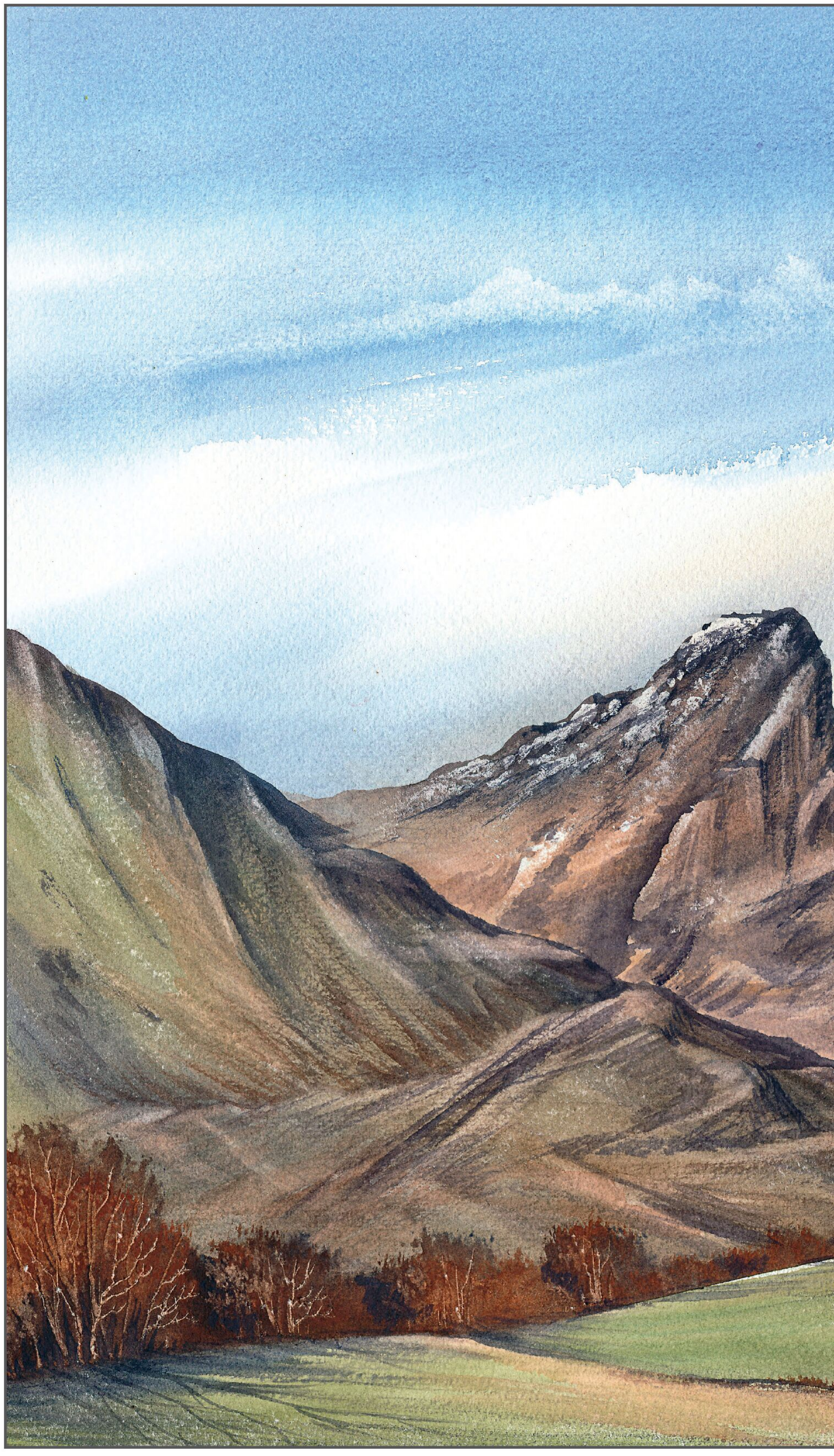




The finished painting.

The Three Sister Mountains

In this painting I painted the furthest mountain first, using a very pale and transparent natural grey. As the mountains get larger and closer I added warmer colours, eventually introducing greens for the closest mountain. The overall result is a scene with massive depth. The small cottage and gate give scale to the scene. If they were left out, the viewer would have much less idea of the size of the mountains.




Matthew Palmer
2012

Waterfalls

Exercise

Fast-running water adds life and variety to a landscape, and can be captured using simple techniques. For this exercise I used one of my tree and texture brushes, but you could use a size 6 round brush to paint the fall. Splay the hairs slightly before stippling to create the textured effect.

You will need

300gsm (140lb), 100% cotton Not watercolour paper; masking tape; kitchen paper

Colours: natural yellow, natural blue, aureolin

Brushes: size 20 round, medium tree and texture brush, size 6 round, size 12 round

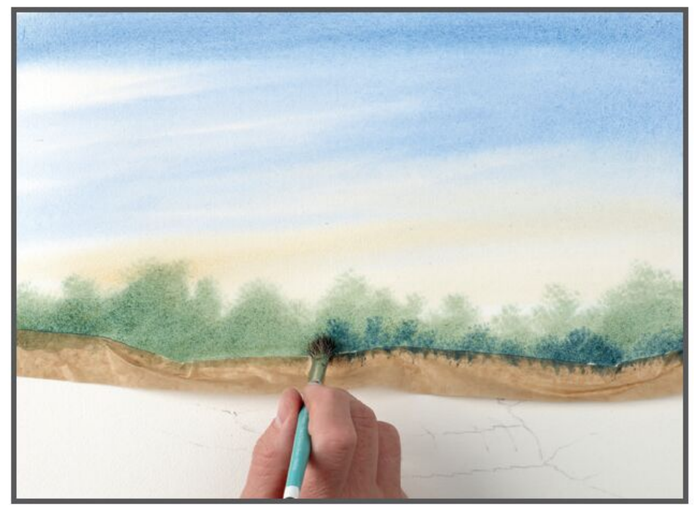
Outline 9



1 Transfer the drawing, then use masking tape to mask the horizon line, which should not be straight.



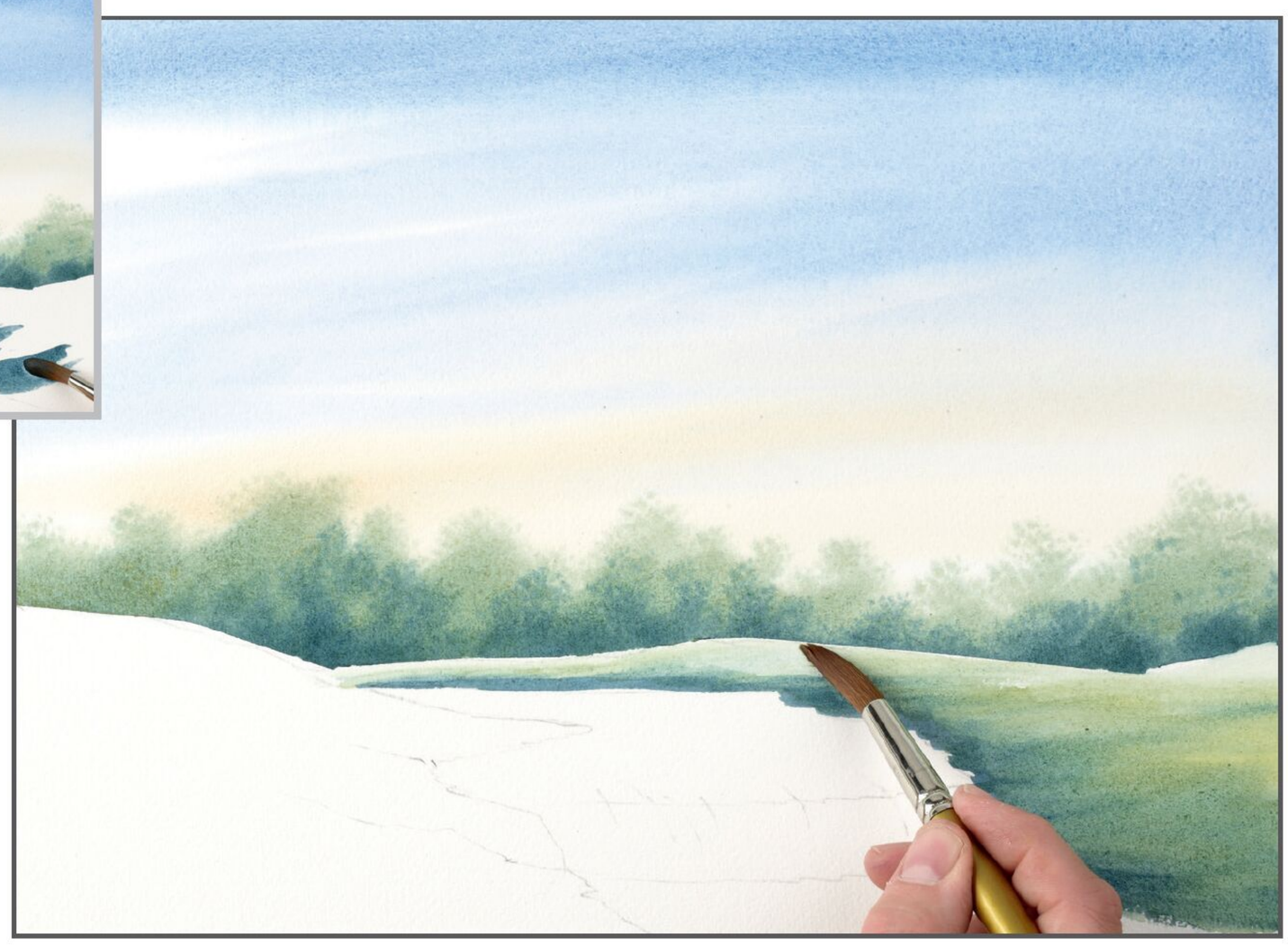
2 Make the sky mixes of pale natural yellow and natural blue. Wet the sky area with the size 20 brush, then sweep natural yellow across the sky at an angle. While this is wet, clean the brush and sweep natural blue across the top, blending down into the natural yellow.



3 Mix aureolin and natural blue and use the medium tree and texture brush to scrub in the shapes of the trees. Stipple the tree tops. Add more blue to the mix and working wet into wet, stipple the lower parts of the trees. Allow to dry.

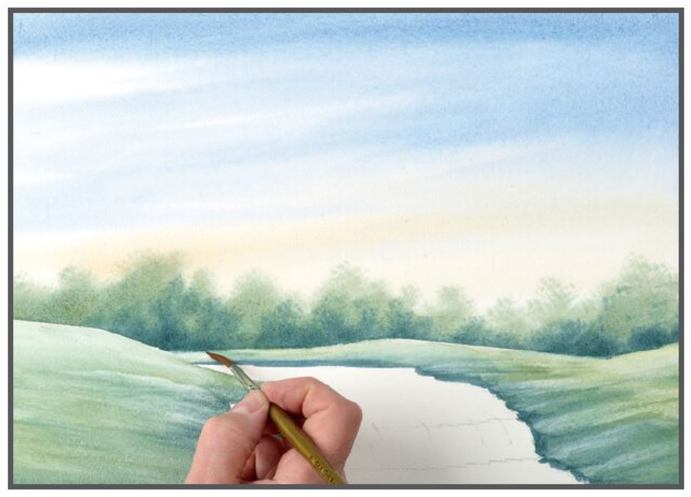


4 Remove the masking tape. Use a size 12 brush and the same blue-green mix to paint a thick line along the river bank, following the curve of the waterfall. Without cleaning the brush, pick up aureolin and scribble the colours together to paint the right-hand bank. Leave a white gap at the top near the trees, then clean the brush, dab it on kitchen paper and blend the colour away upwards.

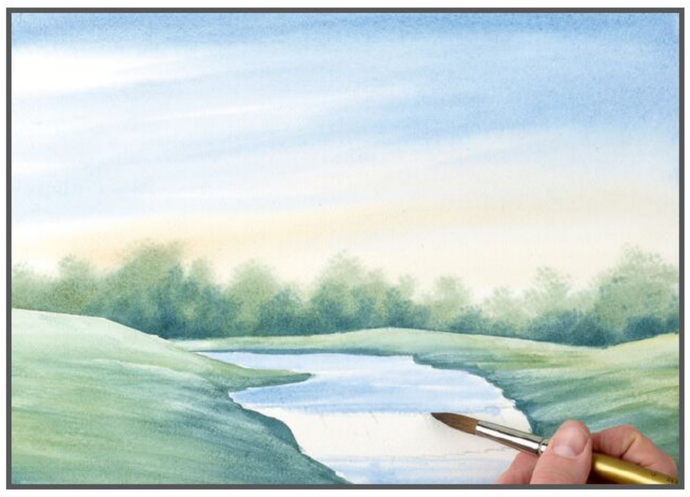




5 Clean the brush, squeeze it flat and use it to lift out colour for highlights, following the contours of the river bank.

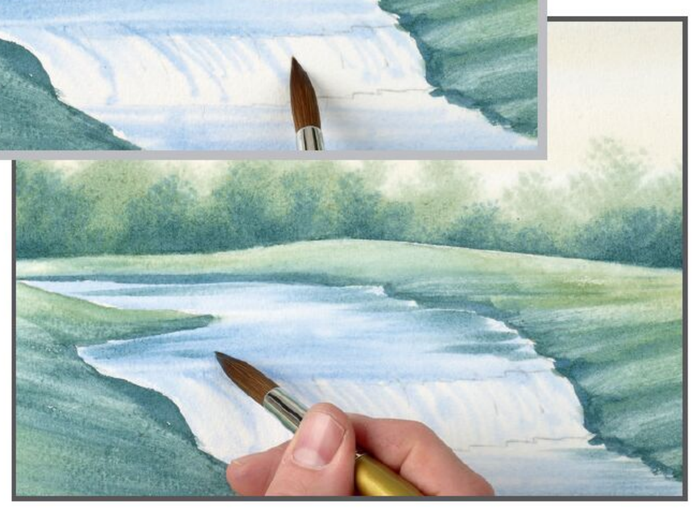


6 Follow the same steps to complete the left-hand river bank. Use a clean, damp size 6 brush to soften the hard edge from the masking tape.

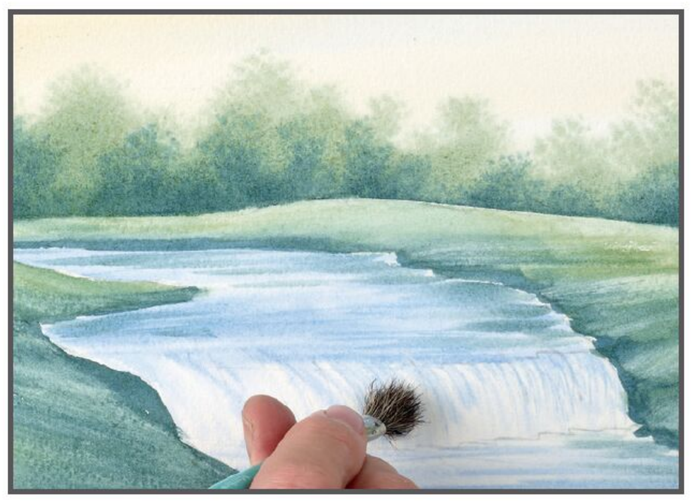


7 Wet the water area with a size 12 brush. Paint pale natural blue in horizontal lines above and below the waterfall, leaving some white.

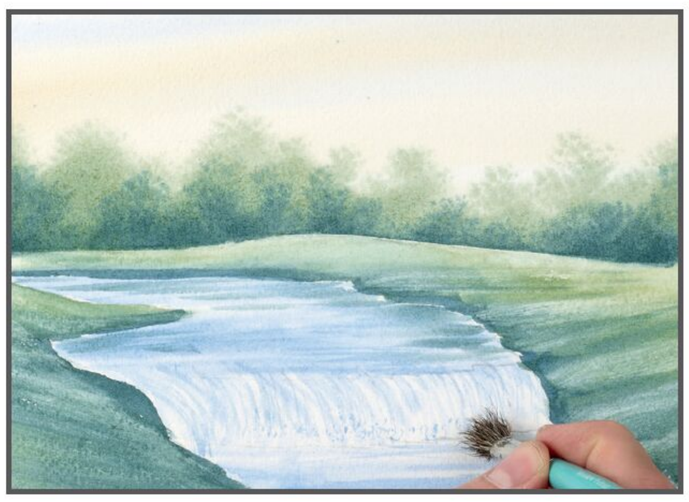




8 Use the point of the brush to sweep fairly dry paint over the waterfall, following the flow of the water. Pick up aureolin and natural blue and paint short horizontal lines from the river banks into the water.



9 Pick up natural blue on the medium tree and texture brush, crush the bristles in the palette then dab paint on to kitchen paper. Use the long hairs to gently sweep texture down the water flow.



10 Use a pale mix of natural blue to dot in a suggestion of foaming, frothy water at the bottom of the waterfall.



The finished painting.

Bluebell Stream

Bluebell paintings are very attractive and always popular. Here you learn how to paint a distant carpet of bluebells by blending the greenery with the flower colour, then adding texture by stippling with a stronger colour. There is also a rippled stream reflecting hazy distant trees, and a waterfall to add movement to the scene.

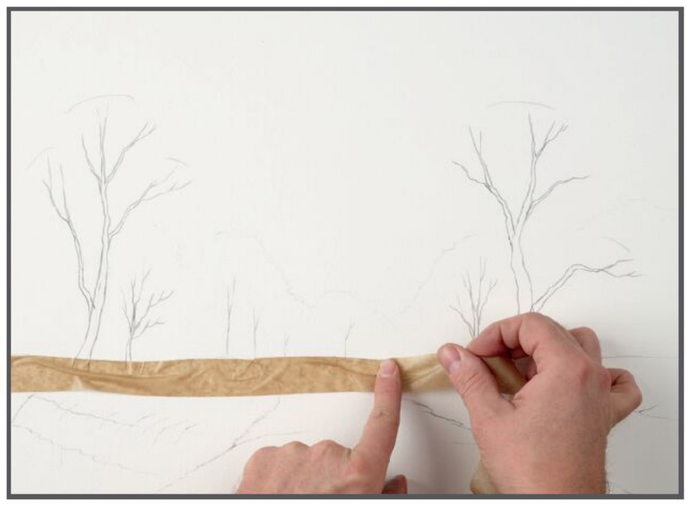
Outline 10

You will need

300gsm (140lb), 100% cotton Not watercolour paper, masking tape, wax candle, kitchen paper, salt, craft knife

Colours: burnt sienna, natural blue, aureolin, lemon yellow, natural grey, natural yellow, alizarin crimson, intense violet

Brushes: size 20 round, large tree and texture brush, size 2 rigger, size 12 round, size 6 round, medium tree and texture brush, small tree and texture brush, 12mm (½in) flat



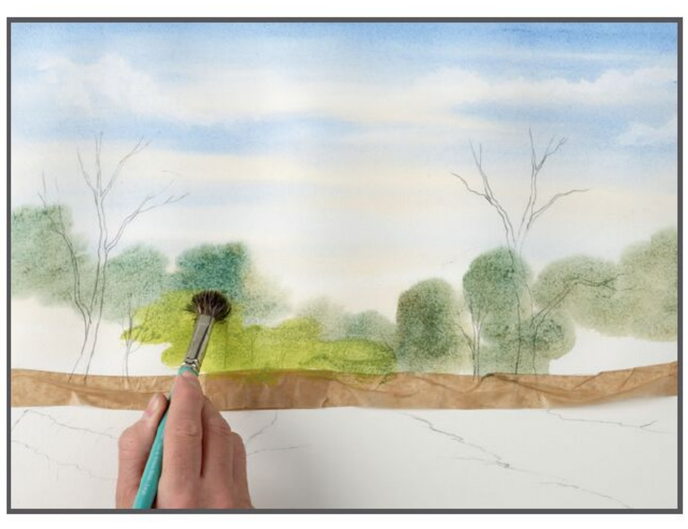
1 Transfer the scene on to watercolour paper. Apply a little wax candle at the top of the waterfall and over the fall itself. Use masking tape to mask the horizon in an uneven line.



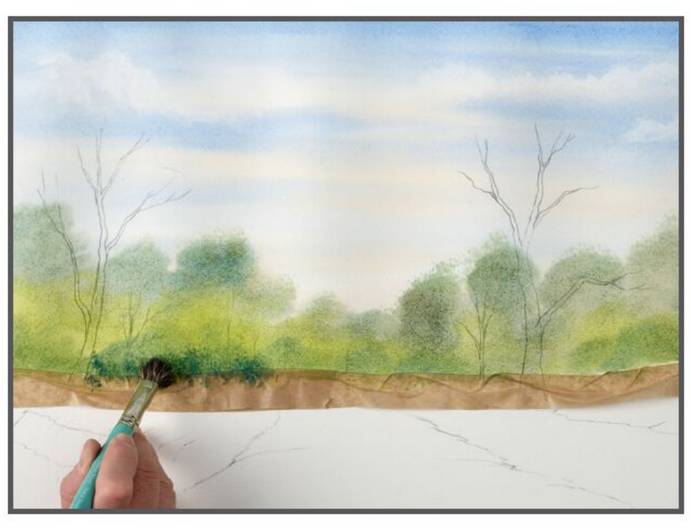
2 Make your first set of paint mixes before beginning to paint: burnt sienna; natural blue; thick aureolin and natural blue for a dark green; lemon yellow and a little natural blue for a bright green; and natural grey with a touch of burnt sienna. Wet the sky with the size 20 brush and paint streaks of burnt sienna in the lower and middle sky. Leave some white.



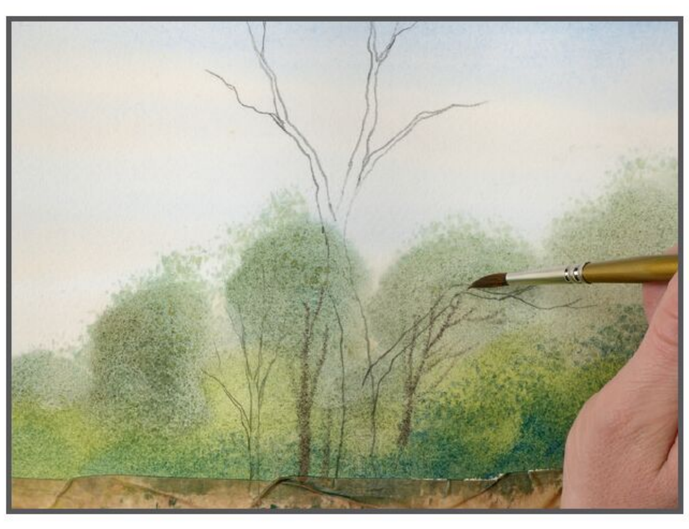
3 Clean the brush and paint natural blue across the top and downwards in horizontal streaks. Roll a twist of kitchen paper to lift out clouds and wipe them down at the bottom to soften them.



4 Use the large tree and texture brush to paint on the dark green, then work in the bright green.



5 Add darker green at the tops of the trees, stippling for texture, then add more natural blue to the dark green and drop this in at the bottom.



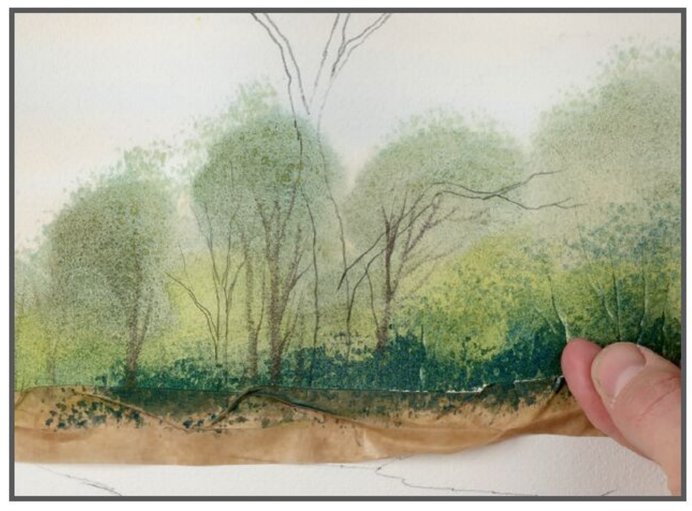
6 While the tree area is damp, use the size 6 brush with natural grey and burnt sienna to paint distant tree trunks. Clean and blot the brush and blend the trunks away upwards.



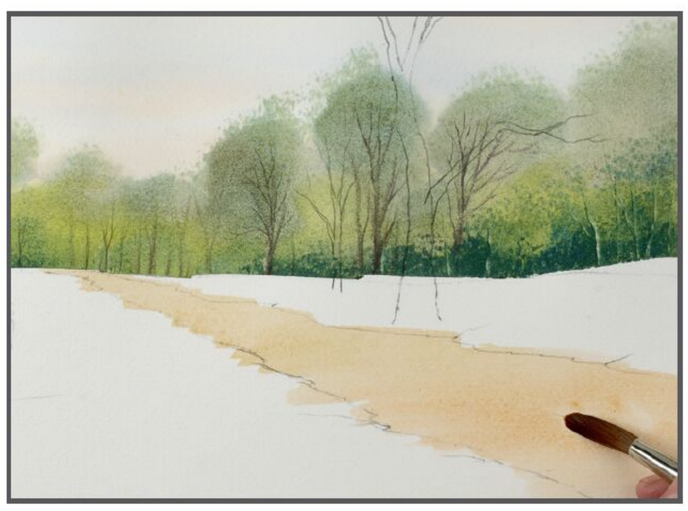
7 Make the trees paler in the middle. Use the rigger to extend the branches into twigs.



8 Still working wet into wet, use the large tree and texture brush and the dark green to go across the bottom adding a darker shade. Fade it into the centre to create distance.



9 Use a fingernail to scratch out trunks and branches in the damp paint. Allow to dry and peel off the masking tape.



10 Use the size 12 brush to paint the footpath with pale natural yellow at the back and burnt sienna coming forwards.



11 Flick natural grey from the right-hand side to suggest shadows. Sprinkle salt on the path to create texture.



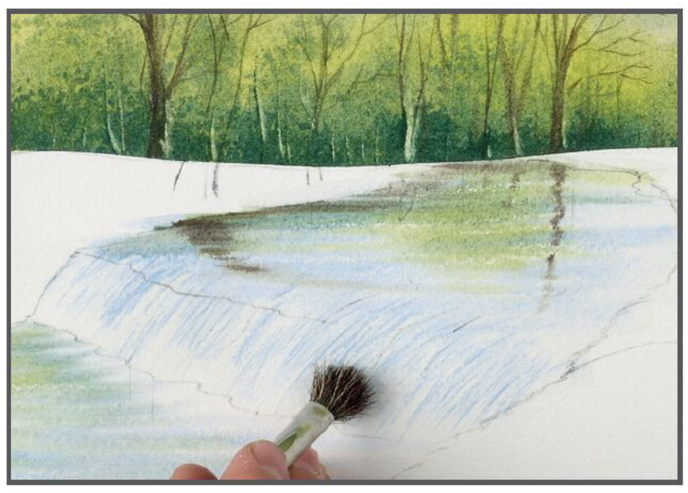
12 Wet the water area and paint horizontal lines of natural blue above and below the falls, then pull lines over the fall, leaving white for froth.



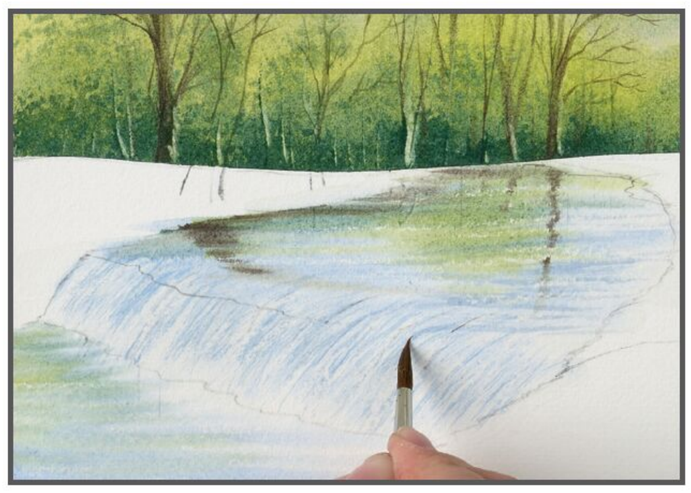
13 Use the size 6 brush and the dark green to paint horizontal ripples in the water for reflections, then add the brighter green.



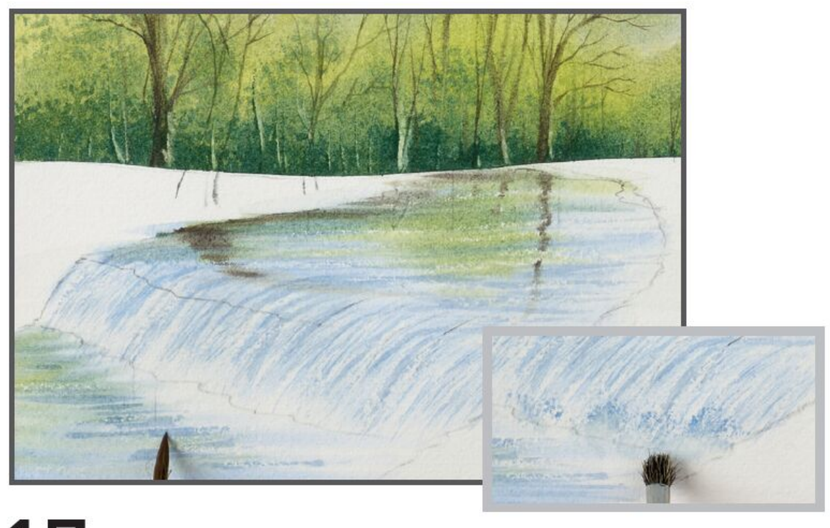
14 Paint wiggled lines to suggest rippled reflections of tree trunks with natural grey and burnt sienna. Paint the reflection of the larger tree that has not yet been painted. Allow to dry.



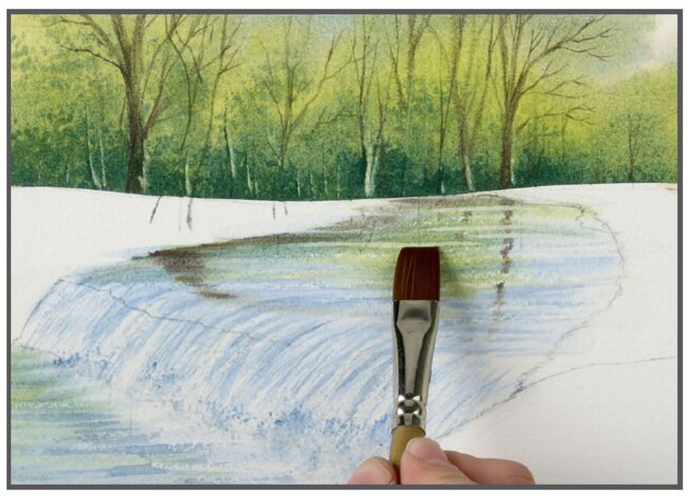
15 Crush the medium tree and texture brush in the palette to spread the bristles and pick up pale natural blue. Use the long hairs to gently stroke down the texture of the falling water. Add a bit of natural grey and continue.



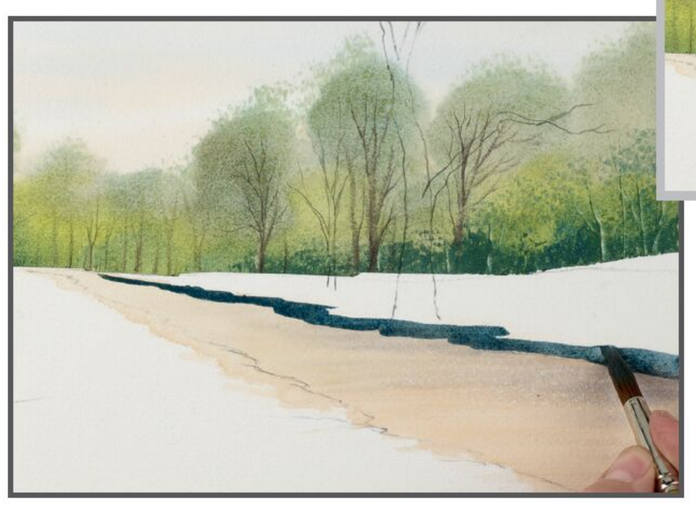
16 Use the size 6 brush and natural grey to paint horizontal ripples above the falls, then take them down over the falls.



17 Paint further ripples at the bottom, leaving white paper for froth. Change to the small tree and texture brush to paint bubbles and froth by splaying the bristles and dabbing gently with the same mix. Clean and dab the brush and use it damp to soften in these marks.



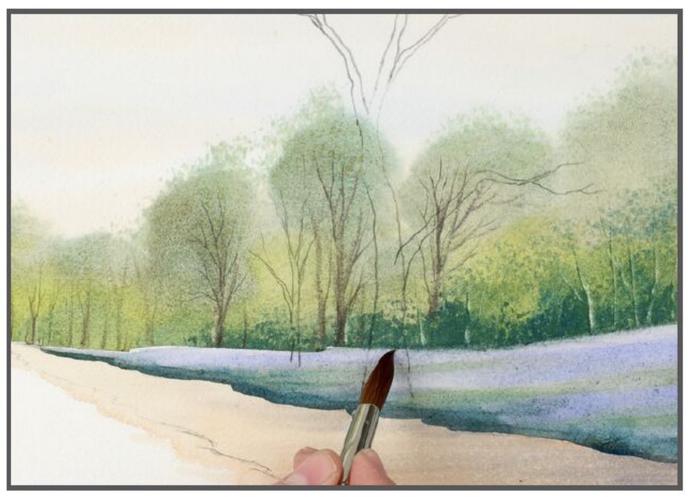
18 Use the 12mm (½in) brush, wet and squeezed flat to lift out horizontal ripples over the reflections.



19 Make your next set of mixes: a dark green from natural blue, aureolin and alizarin crimson; lemon yellow and natural blue; and a bluebell mix of intense violet and natural blue. Use the point of the size 12 brush to paint a line of dark green along the right-hand edge of the path.



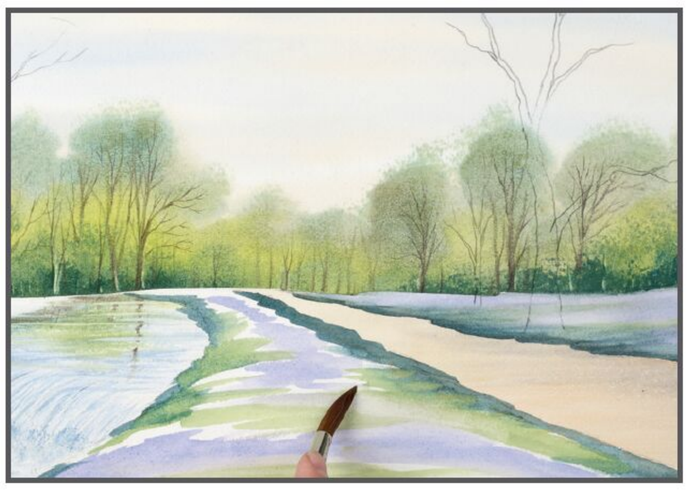
20 Clean the brush and paint the lighter green in streaks, following the contour of the land. Clean the brush and paint the bluebell colour in the gaps without mixing the colours.



21 Clean the brush and blend and fade the bluebells. Blend away the hard treeline.



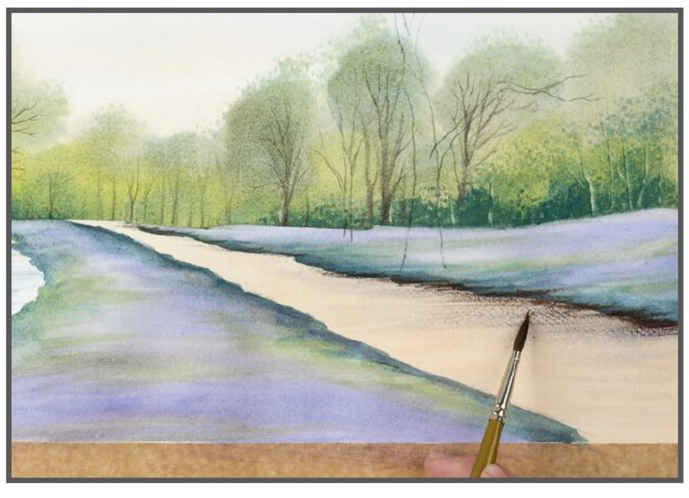
22 Paint the dark green either side of the middle band of bluebells, then paint streaks of the lemon green.



23 Clean the brush well and paint the bluebell colour into the gaps, without touching the green.



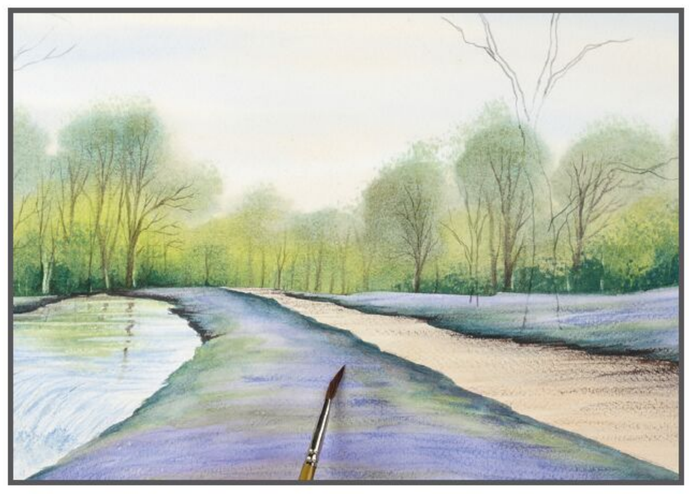
24 Clean the brush again and use it to blend in the bluebells. Complete the left-hand area of bluebells in the same way.



25 Use the size 6 brush with natural grey and burnt sienna to flick shadows and texture from the right-hand side of the path.



26 Repeat on the left-hand side of the stream and in the distant part of the right-hand bank.



27 Use a stronger mix of the bluebell colour to apply dry brush texture over the bluebells, going over the green too.



28 Change to the 12mm (½in) flat brush, wet and squeezed flat, to lift out colour from the right-hand area of bluebells. Dab with kitchen paper. Repeat over all the bluebell areas. Allow to dry.



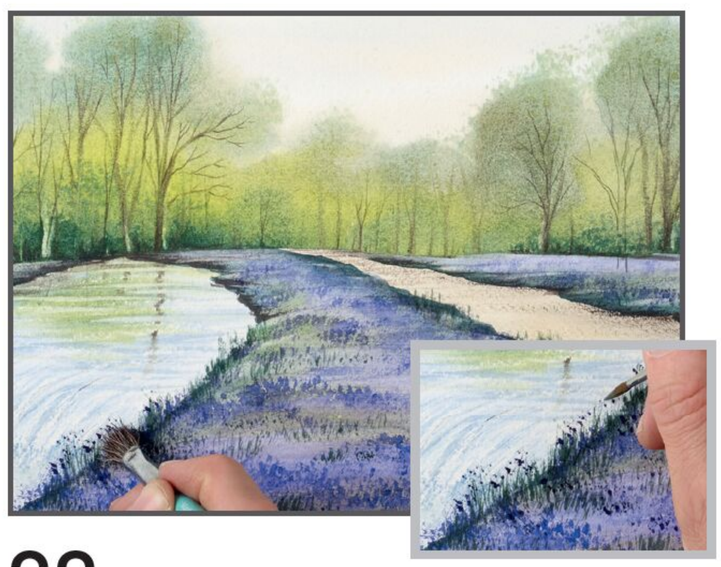
29 Use the medium tree and texture brush and a strong mix of intense violet and natural blue to stipple rows of bluebell texture. Clean and dab the brush until just damp and use it to soften the bottom of the rows.



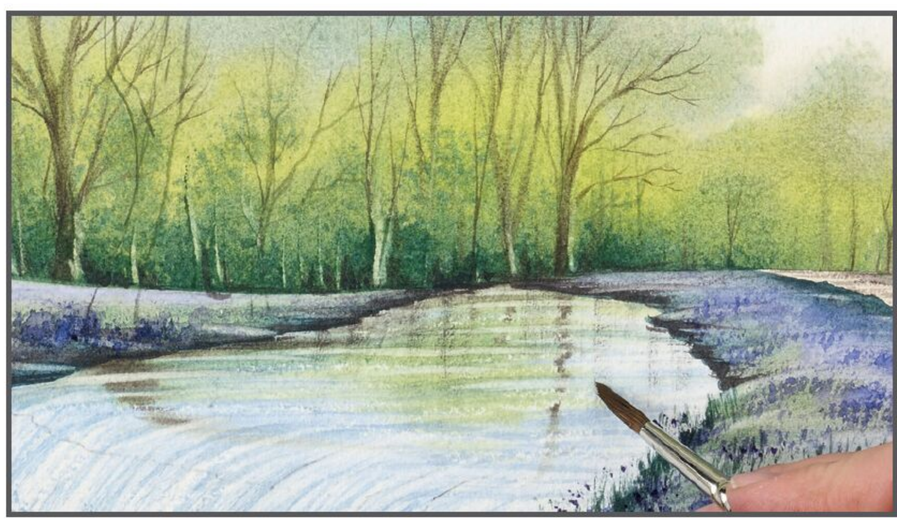
30 Continue over the other areas of bluebells, changing to the small tree and texture brush further away.



31 Use the medium tree and texture brush and a dark green mixed from natural blue and aureolin to flick up grasses in the bluebell area and at the edge.



32 Paint bluebells on the edge of the water with thick intense violet, stippling with the brush. Use the rigger and the dark green to flick up grasses.



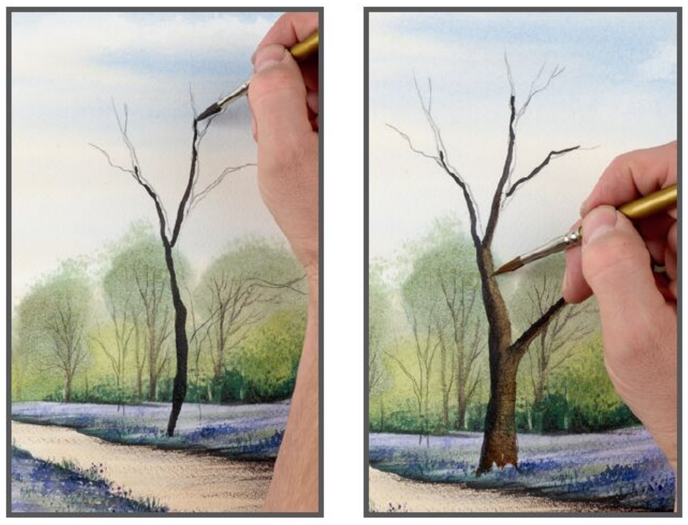
33 Change to the size 6 brush and use natural grey to drag down lines into the water, suggesting vertical reflections.



34 Use a craft knife to scratch out little dots of white flowers among the bluebells, and pebbles on the path, then scratch ripples in the water and texture down the falls.



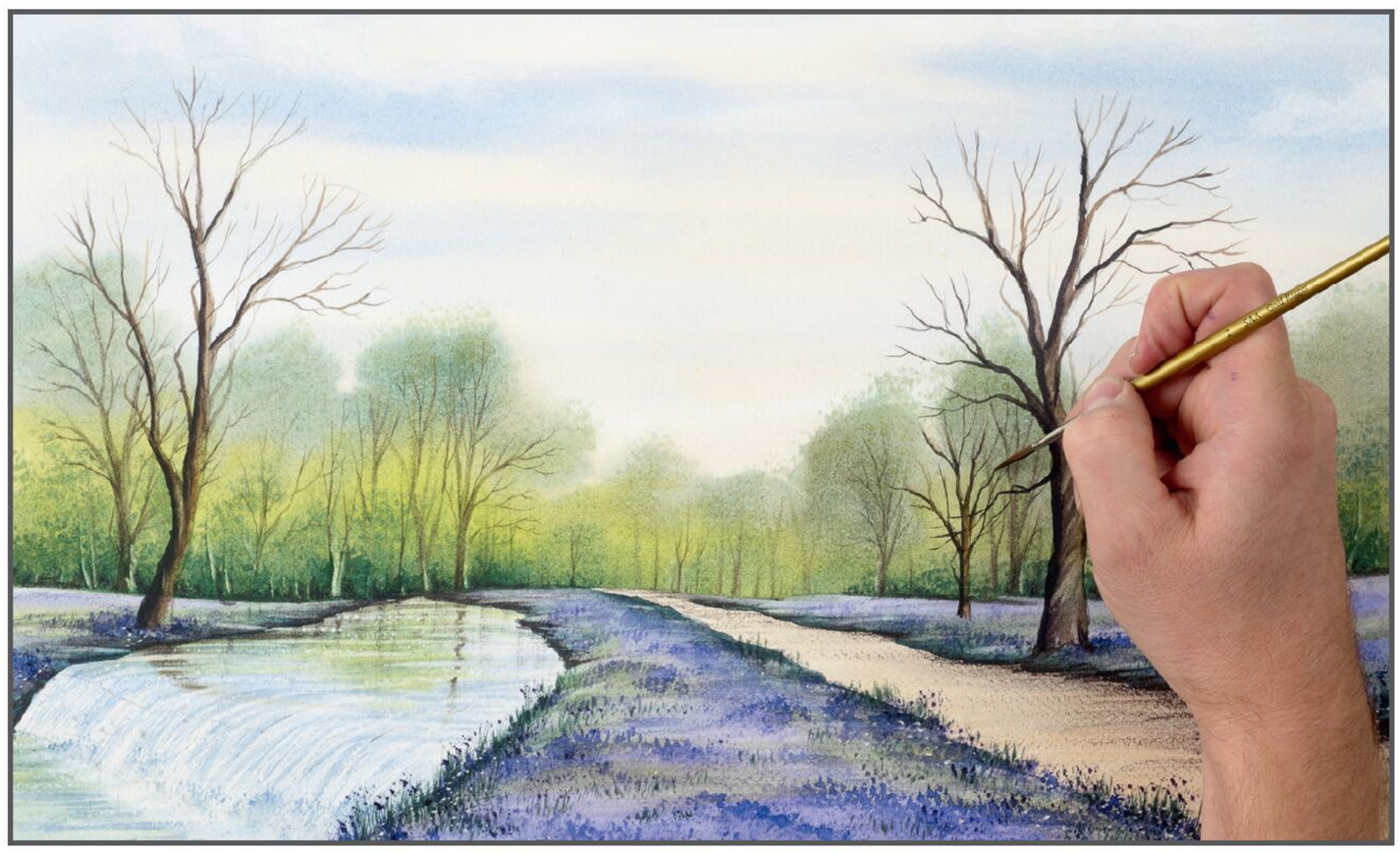
35 Skim a dry size 6 brush with natural grey over the pebble marks in the path, then add shadows by making little 'L' shapes beneath them, to give them form.



36 Mix thick natural grey and a little burnt sienna and paint the left-hand side of the main tree on the right, in the direction of growth. Clean the brush and paint pale burnt sienna on the right-hand side, scrubbing so that the colours blend.



37 Clean the brush, squeeze it dry and use it to lift out highlights in the tree, creating form and detail. Add finer branches with the natural grey and burnt sienna mix, then change to the rigger to create even finer twigs.



38 Complete the main tree on the left and the one on the right in the middle distance in the same way.



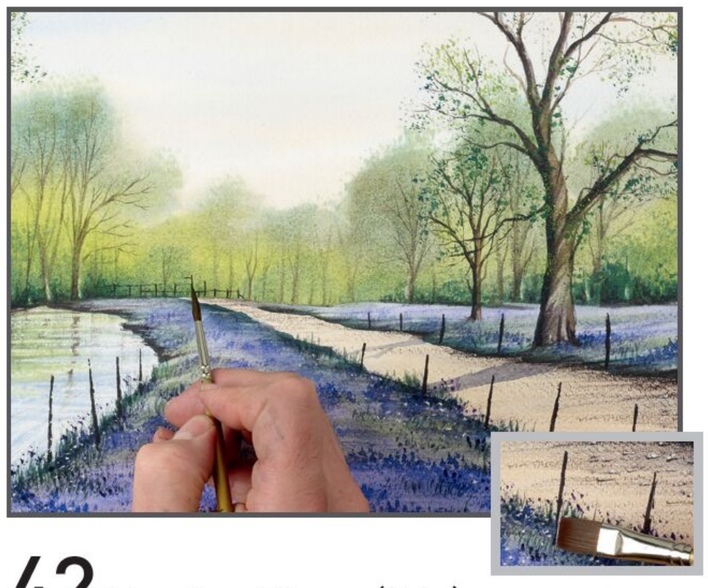
39 Use the large tree and texture brush with lemon yellow and a little natural blue to stipple foliage on to the nearer trees. Add a bit more blue to the mix to stipple the foliage lower down.



40 Pick up neat lemon yellow on your brush (see inset). Stipple this opaque colour over parts of the trunks and branches.



41 Use the size 6 brush and pale natural grey to paint shadows from the trees, cast to the left.



42 Use the 12mm (½in) flat brush and a mix of natural grey and burnt sienna to paint fence posts, then change to a rigger for the more distant ones. Wet and blot the flat brush and use it to lift out highlights on the right-hand sides of the posts.



43 Paint wire in the foreground with the rigger and strong natural grey. Go over a second time and paint little blobs to suggest barbed wire.

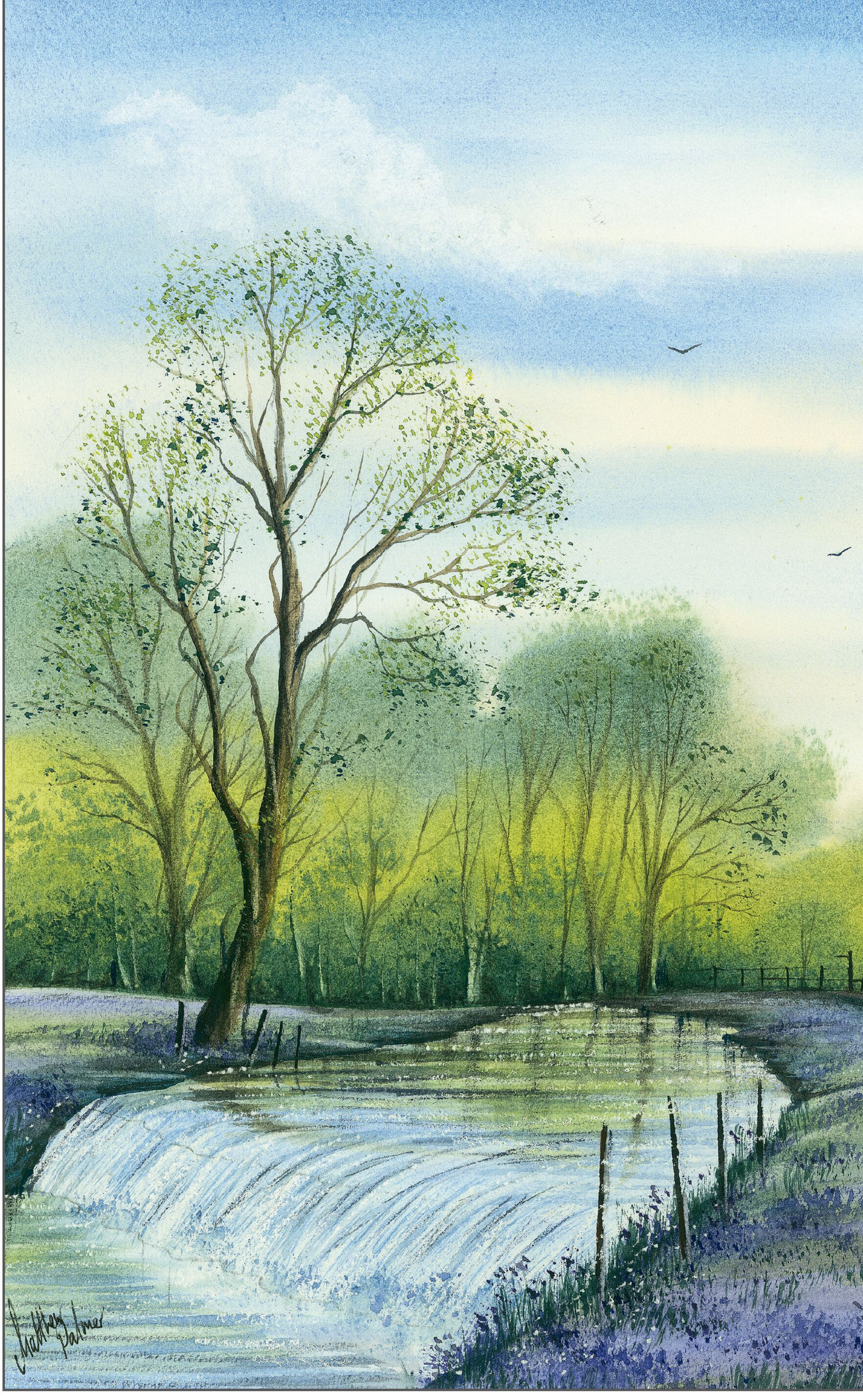


44 Paint birds with natural grey.



45 Paint shadows cast to the left of the posts with the size 6 brush and pale natural grey.

The finished painting.







Opposite

In the Woods

This watercolour began with a wet-into-wet background, and the colours were all applied in one go. To paint the boulders, either use the lifting out technique (see page 33) or one side of a credit card to scrape off the paint while it is still damp. A natural sponge was used to gently dab the mass of leaves.



How to use a natural sponge to paint a mass of leaves

Mix more paint than you think you will need, as a natural sponge with soak it all up. Mix the colours with a size 12 round brush. Clean the sponge well and wring it out, so you have a damp sponge. Then gently dab the paint on the sponge and apply to the paper. Practise the technique and get to know the sponge, as different parts of a sponge will give different effects.



This shows the sponge technique used on dry watercolour paper.



The sponge technique on wet watercolour paper, using three shades of green. See how the colours mix on the paper. This is perfect for a woodland painting.

All rounder

Exercise

This is a great exercise to practise many different techniques, as it shows how to paint distant hills, buildings, figures, snow and reflections, all in one scene. You will also learn how to use salt to create the effect of falling snow.

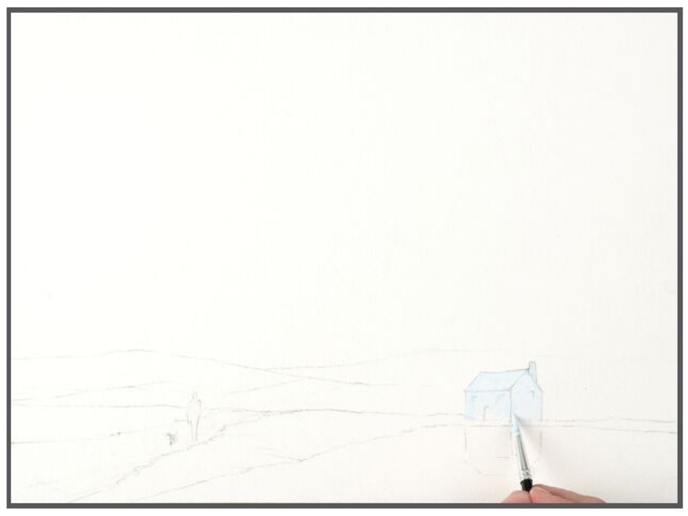
You will need

300gsm (140lb), 100% cotton Not watercolour paper, masking fluid, large masking fluid brush, salt, masking tape, kitchen paper, paper mask

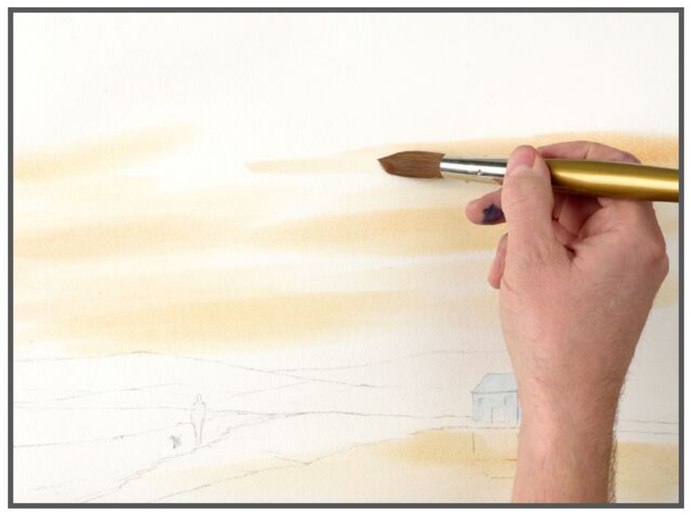
Colours: natural yellow, natural grey, burnt sienna, natural blue

Brushes: size 20 round, small tree and texture brush, size 12 round, size 6 round, 12mm (½in) flat

Outline 11

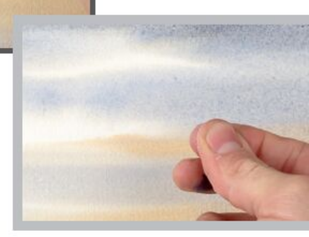


1 Transfer the scene on to watercolour paper. Use the large masking fluid brush and masking fluid to mask the house.



2 Make your first mixes before beginning to paint: pale natural yellow; natural grey; and burnt sienna. Wet the whole painting with clean water and paint patchy bands of natural yellow in the water and across the sky. Paint in burnt sienna in the same way.

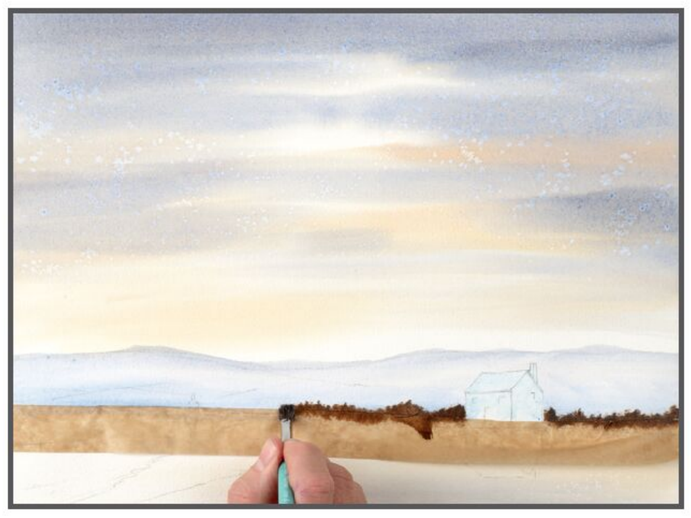




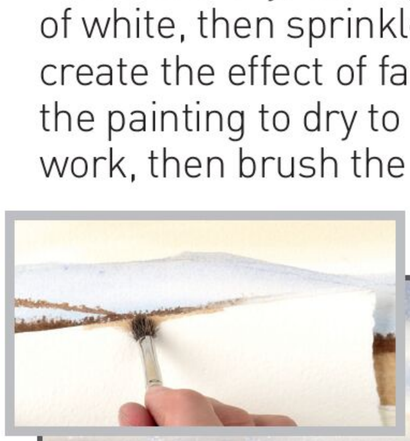
3 Paint in streaks of natural grey wet into wet in both the water and sky, leaving patches of white, then sprinkle on salt to create the effect of falling snow. Leave the painting to dry to allow the salt to work, then brush the salt off.



4 Apply masking tape in an uneven line to suggest the horizon. Make a pale mix of natural grey and another of natural blue. Use the size 12 brush to paint the tops of the distant hills. Wet and blot the brush and blend the colour away downwards. Paint the blue above the masking tape and blend away upwards.

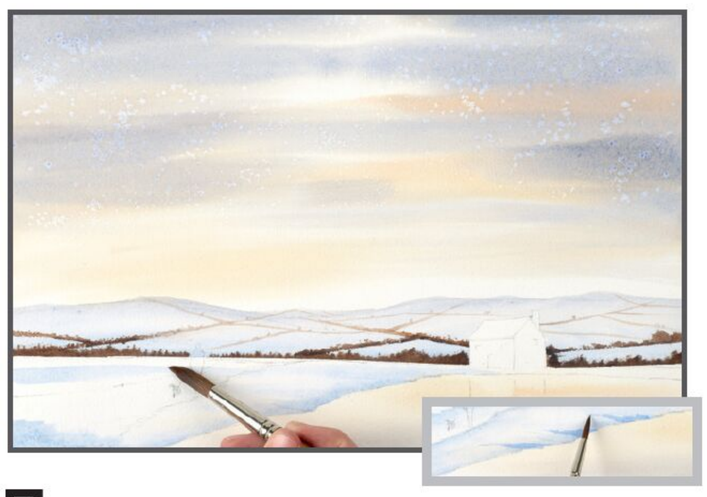


5 While the hills are damp, use the small tree and texture brush with a strong mix of burnt sienna and natural grey to stipple the hedgerow at the tape edge. Go carefully round the figure.

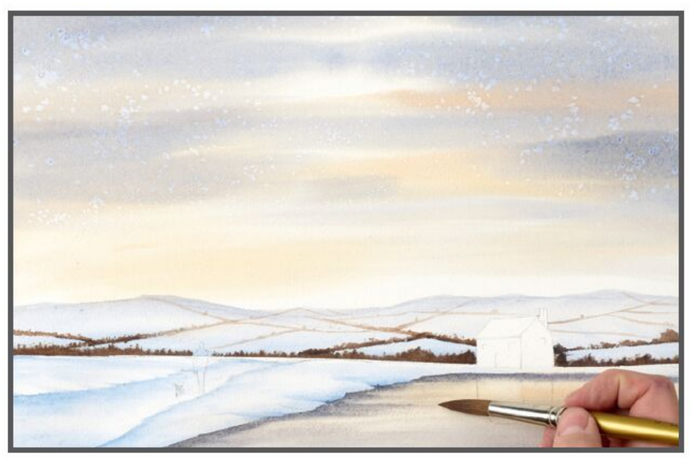




6 Use a paper mask to stipple hedgerows around distant fields, changing the angle as required and blending the colour away into the distance. Use the size 6 brush and continue painting distant hedgerows with paler paint. Add larger marks for trees. Dry the painting.



7 Remove the masking tape and the masking fluid. Use the size 12 brush and pale natural blue to paint shadows in the snow. Clean the brush, dab it on kitchen paper and blend away the colour to the left. Use the size 6 brush to paint dark shadows in the gaps at the water's edge, and blend them away.



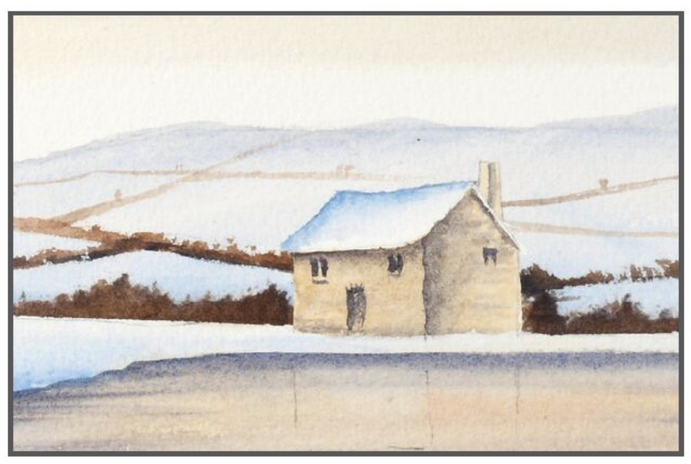
8 Wet the lake area, then use the size 12 brush to drop in dark natural grey at the edge and let it spread. Clean and wipe the brush and drag out ripples. Dry the painting.



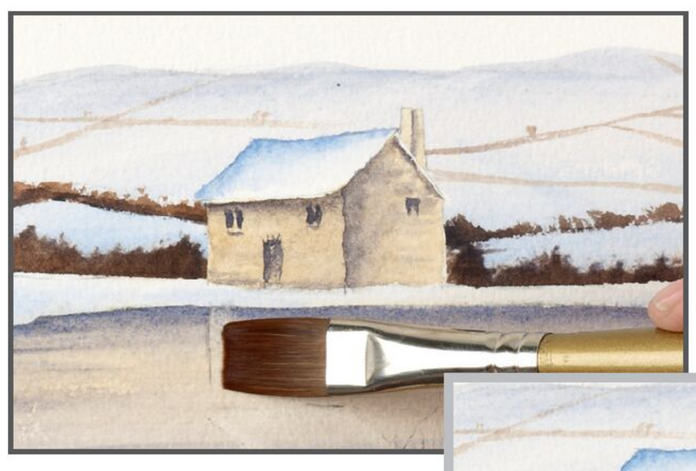
9 Use the size 6 brush and natural yellow to paint the cottage. While it is wet, drop in a little natural grey, especially at the edges. Paint darker grey under the roof, then clean and wipe the brush and blend this away.



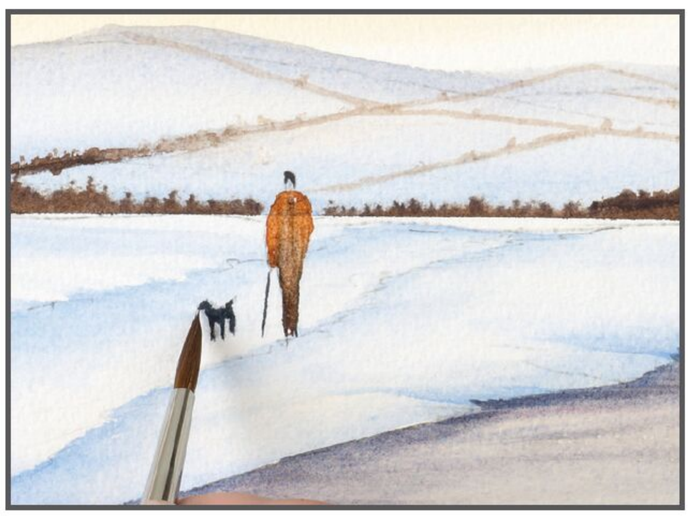
10 Paint pale blue at the top and edge of the roof then clean and wipe the brush and blend this away.



11 Repeat the process of applying natural grey shadow to the house edges, including the chimney this time, then blending them away. Paint darker natural grey to create the shapes of the door and windows.



12 Wet and squeeze dry the 12mm (½in) flat brush and use it to lift out a reflection of the lighter edges of the house in the water. Use the size 6 brush and natural grey to paint reflections of the darker areas around the house, and its details.



13 Paint the figure as an egg shape in burnt sienna, then add trousers in strong natural grey. Add the head and walking stick in darker natural grey, then the dog with an 'M' shape. Add a head and tail to the dog. Add a shadow with pale natural blue, following the contours of the land.

The finished painting. At the final stage I added a little dry brush work for grass and texture with burnt sienna and natural grey, then I dampened the area above the chimney and dotted in a little natural grey, which spread to create smoke.



Boating Lake

This painting is what I would call an 'all rounder'; a painting that features almost everything you could want in a landscape: a sky, trees, water, buildings, distant mountains and hills, figures and lots of foreground detail in the boat. The end result is a scene full of life and interest. Remember to persevere, as in a painting like this with lots happening, it is those last few brush strokes that really make the painting.

You will need

300gsm (140lb), 100% cotton Not watercolour paper, masking fluid and fine masking fluid brush, wax candle, kitchen paper, salt, masking tape, scrap paper, craft knife

Colours: natural yellow, natural blue, burnt sienna, natural grey, aureolin, lemon yellow, alizarin crimson, white gouache

Brushes: size 20 round, size 8 round, size 12 round, small tree and texture brush, size 6 round, medium tree and texture brush, size 2 rigger

Outline 12



1 Apply masking fluid to the the small building and the wall in front of it, the fence posts, figures, horizontals in the water where the boat reflection is, and the ripples in the water by the shore. Use a candle to add strokes of wax resist across the water area for sparkle.



2 Use a size 20 round brush to wash water over the whole painting, then sweep pale natural yellow over the sky and mountain area, in a slightly diagonal direction higher up. Continue with horizontal strokes over the top part of the water. With a clean brush, paint natural blue strokes at the top of the sky. Feather in any harsh strokes with a drier brush.



3 Use a paler mix of natural blue to paint horizontal strokes in the water. Use some dry brush technique.



4 Mix burnt sienna and natural yellow for the beach. Wipe the brush to dry it before applying the colour. Sweep natural grey in from the corner to imply shadows. Sprinkle salt on the beach area to create texture.



5 While the paper is damp, add shadows to the figures and boat with a size 8 brush and natural grey. Clean the brush, wipe it almost dry, pinch it flat and blend away the shadows. Dry the painting.



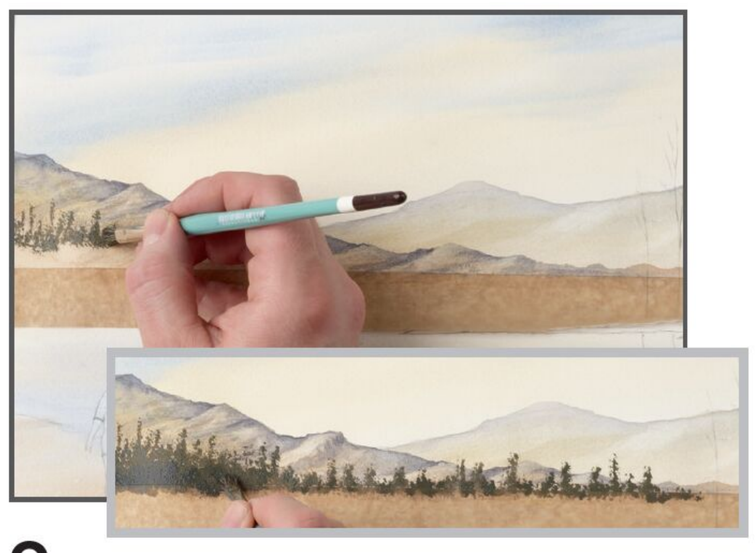
6 Mask the horizon line with masking tape, just pressing down the top of the tape. Paint the top of the distant hills with the size 12 round brush and pale natural grey. While this is wet, sweep in pale aureolin below this, then pale burnt sienna at the base of the hills. Use a damp brush to soften the edges downwards.



7 Clean the brush, squeeze it flat and lift out highlights from the mountains.



8 Repeat the same steps but with stronger colour mixes for the nearer mountains on the left. With a size 8 brush and natural grey, paint shadows next to the highlights. Dry the painting.



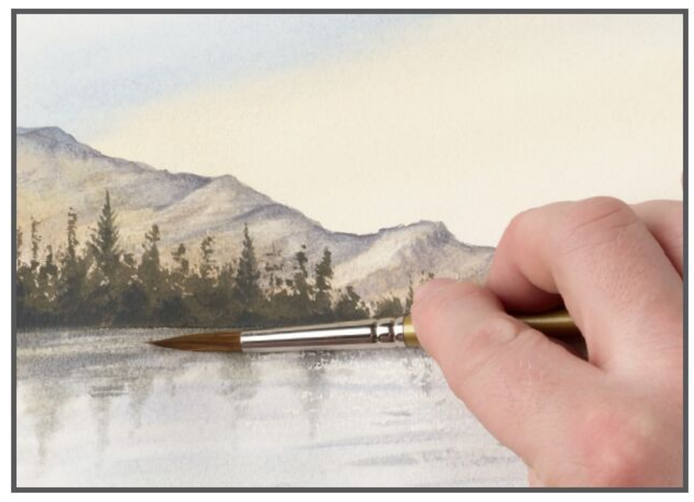
9 Use the small tree and texture brush on its side with a mix of aureolin and natural grey to paint fir trees on the left. Stipple the same texture below this with the end of the brush, then continue along, creating firs. Stipple natural grey at the bottom for darks. Blend the trees away to the far right with a damp brush.



10 Use a size 6 round brush to refine the fir trees with aureolin and natural grey. Add higher tops to some. Allow to dry and remove the masking tape.



11 Wet the water area with the size 20 brush and clean water. Use a size 8 brush and natural grey to paint horizonal ripples.



12 Paint the reflections of the trees with aureolin and natural grey. Clean and squeeze out the brush and use it to lift out some lighter ripples.



13 Paint shadows in pale grey on the distant mountains on the right, next to the highlights.



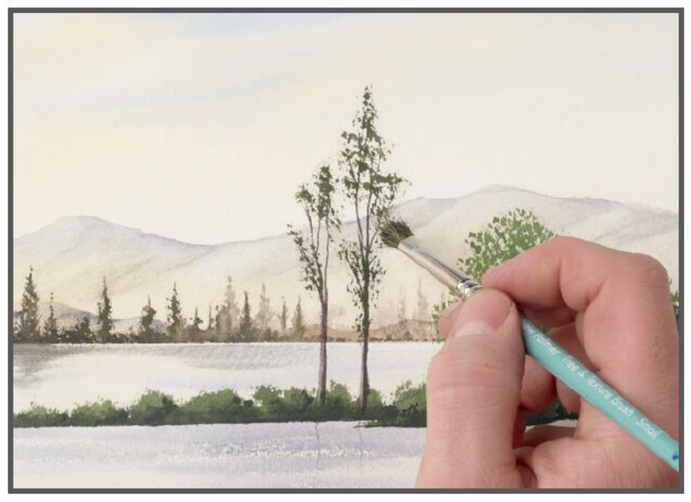
14 Paint the nearer trees on the right with the medium tree and texture brush, stippling on lemon yellow and natural blue, then add more lemon yellow on the left. Add natural grey to the mix to paint the shadowed areas on the right. Mask the waterline with scrap paper and continue stippling.



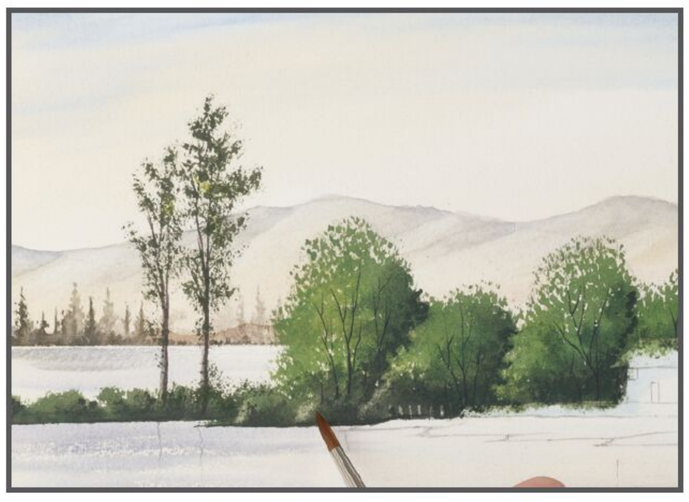
15 Continue stippling the green mix to the left to complete the promontory, then stipple the darker mix at the base. Use a size 6 brush and the darker green to improve the contrasts in the trees.



16 Use a size 2 rigger and a dark mix of natural grey and burnt sienna to paint trunks and branches for the trees on the promontory. Dampen the brush to lift out highlights on the left-hand side. Add a few branches to the other trees in the same way.



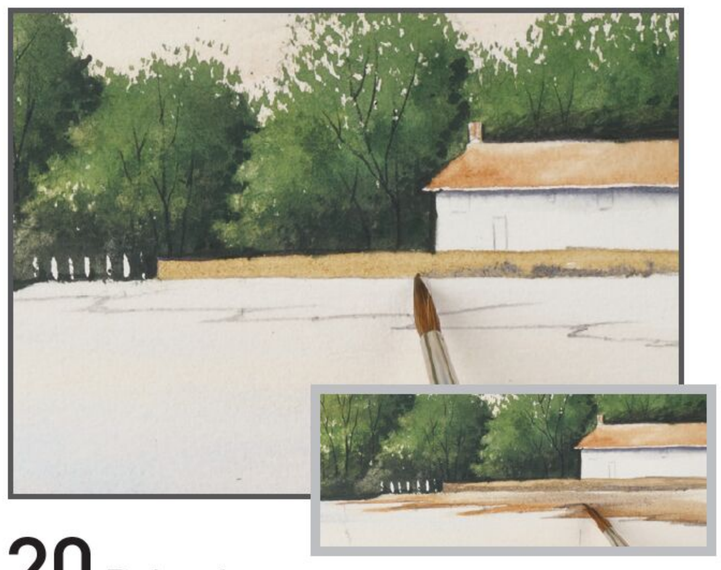
17 Use the small tree and texture brush with lemon yellow, natural blue and natural grey to stipple foliage on the trees.



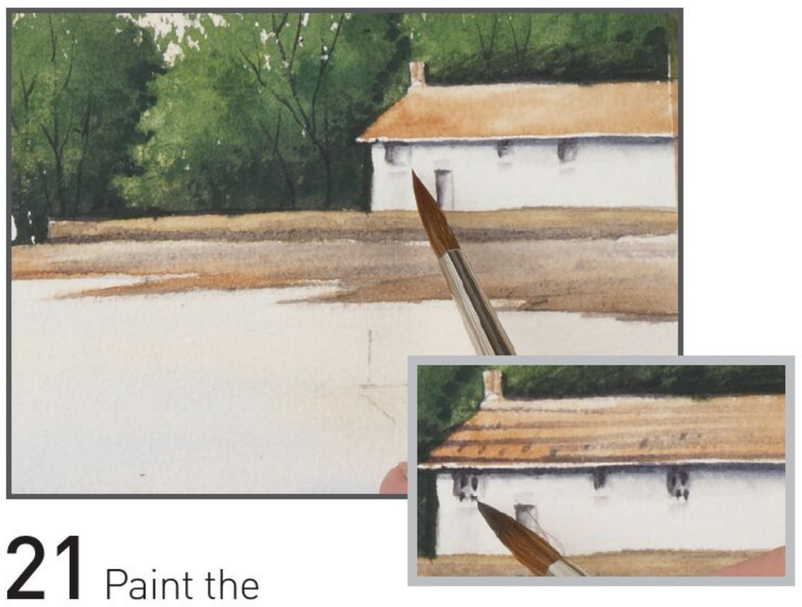
18 Twist the edge of a clean, damp size 6 brush on the lighter parts of the land under the trees to highlight them.



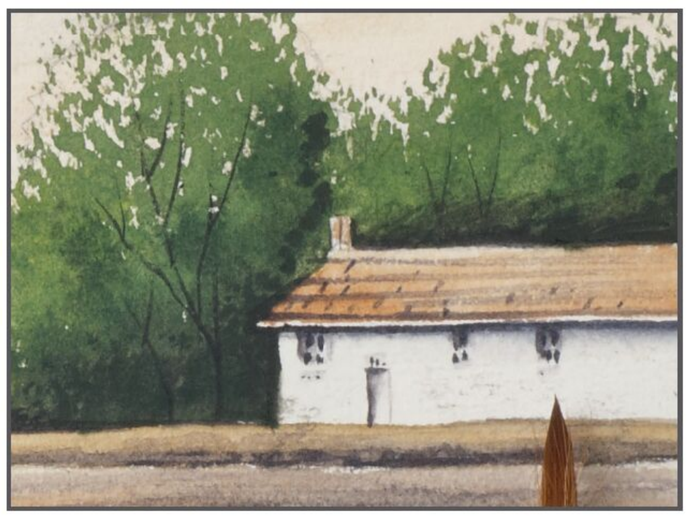
19 Dry the painting and remove the masking fluid from the building. Still using the size 6 brush, paint a line of natural grey shadow under the eaves of the building and blend it downwards with a damp brush. Paint the roof with burnt sienna and natural yellow, leaving a thin line between this and the shadow.



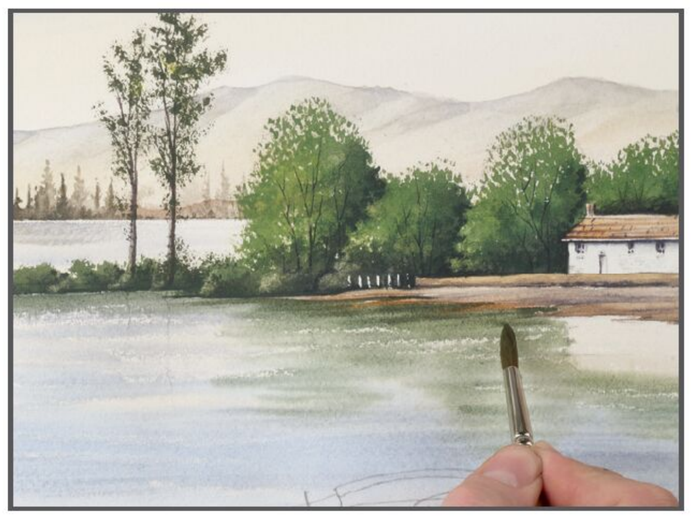
20 Paint the wall with natural yellow and drop in natural grey wet into wet at the bottom. Paint the shoreline with burnt sienna and natural yellow. Darken the edges of the shoreline and the wall with natural grey.



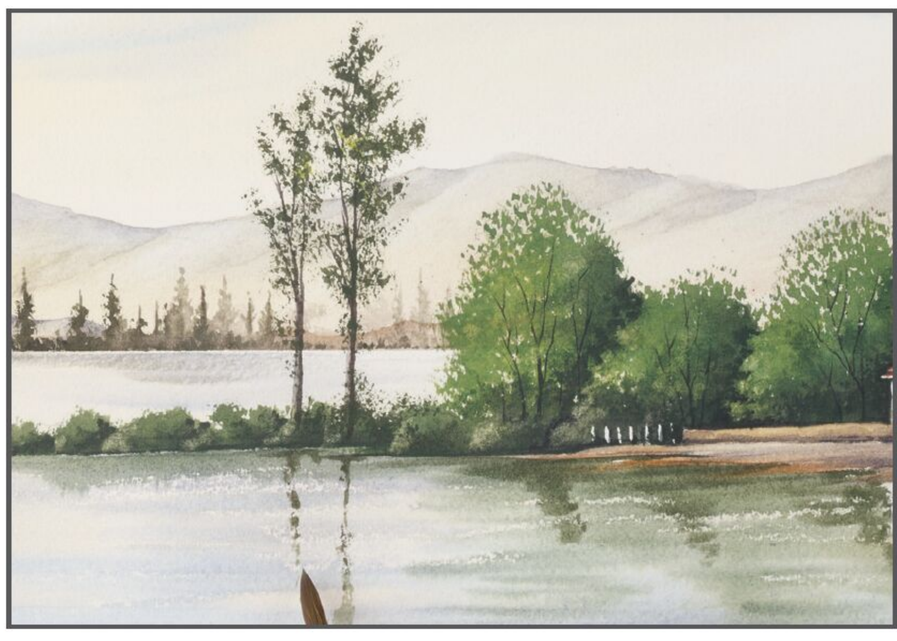
21 Paint the windows with natural grey. Paint the left-hand upright and along the top, then blend to create a rectangle. When dry, use a dark natural grey mix to suggest roof tiles, guttering and window panes.



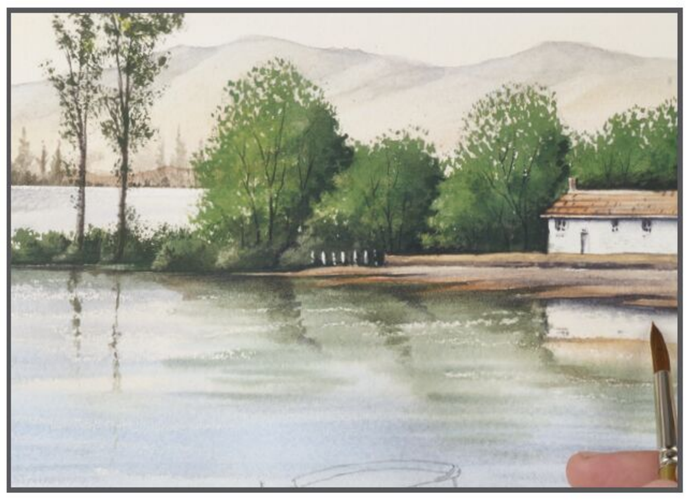
22 Texture the shoreline and the building with the dry brush technique using natural grey.



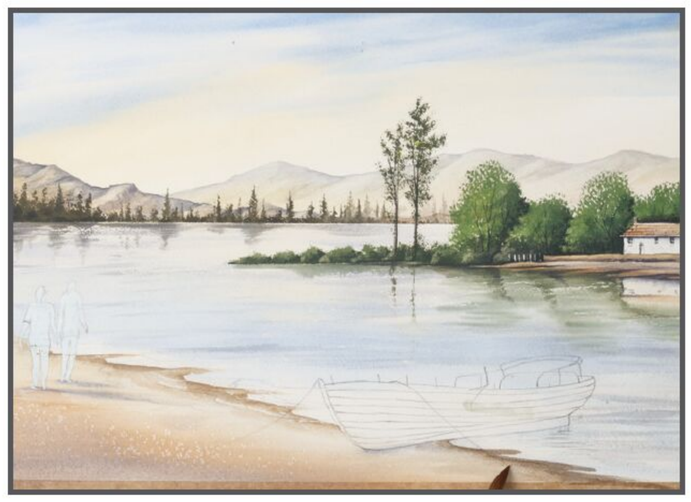
23 Wet the water area with the size 20 brush and clean water. Use the size 8 brush and lemon yellow and natural blue to paint horizontal strokes of tree reflections. Leave the building reflection white.



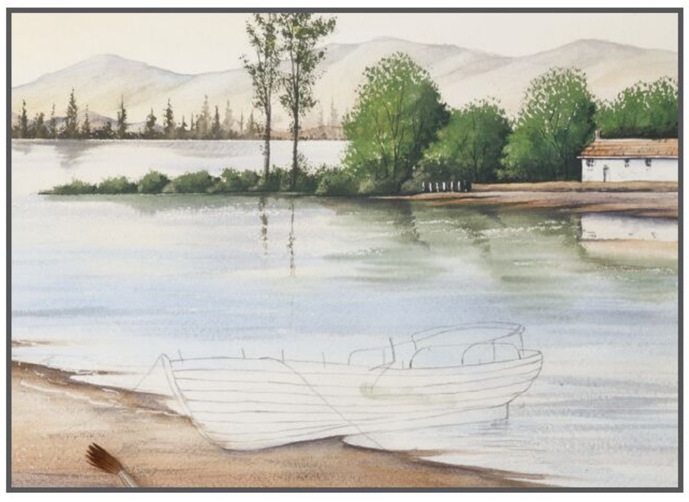
24 Paint the reflections of the taller trees with natural grey, blending them away at the bottom with a damp brush.



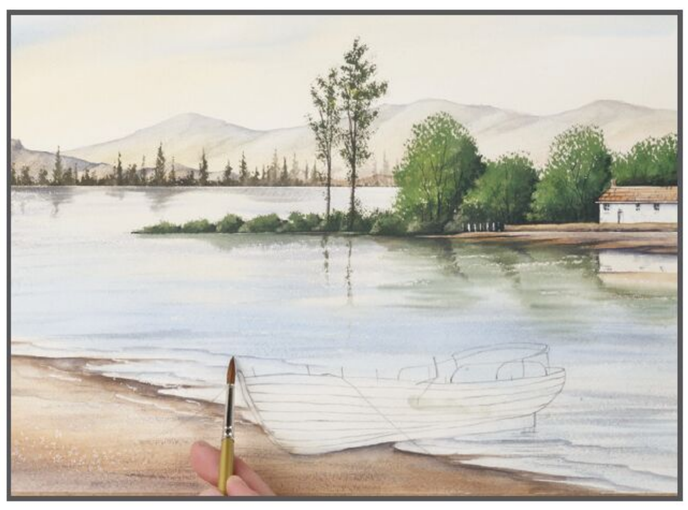
25 Add detail to the reflection with natural grey to match the darks above. Paint the roof reflection in pale burnt sienna and natural yellow. Paint natural grey below the shoreline.



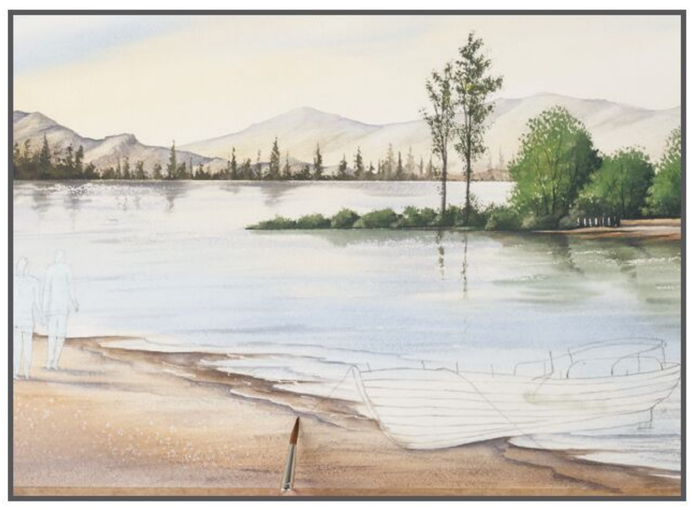
26 Use the size 12 brush and a mix of burnt sienna, natural yellow and natural grey to paint a wiggly line separating the beach and the water. Clean the brush, wipe it on kitchen paper and blend the line away into the beach, fading to the left.



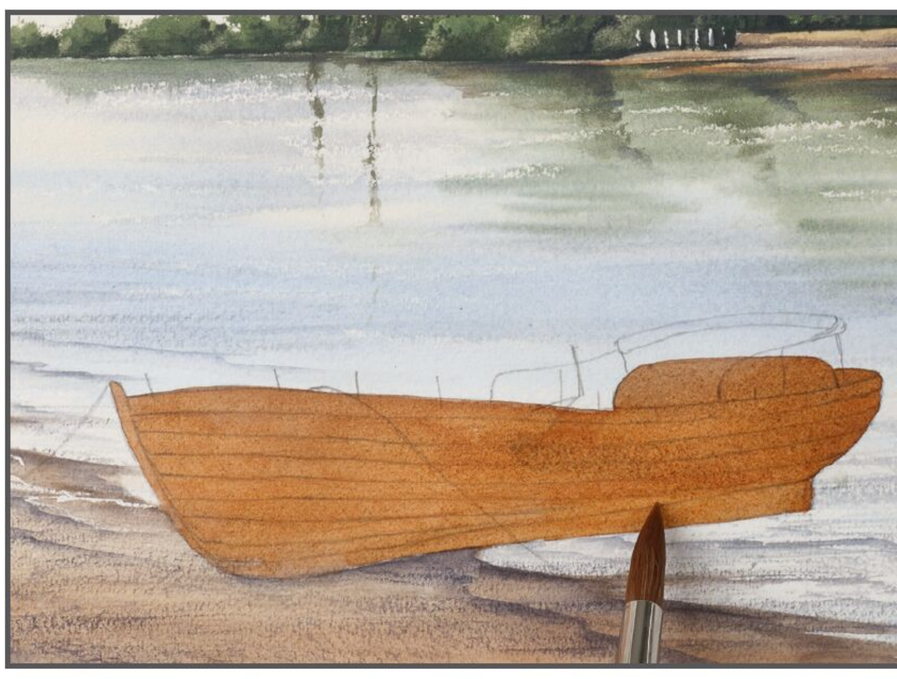
27 Sweep texture over the beach with the size 6 brush and natural grey. Tidy the shoreline, paint shadow under the boat and blend the colour away with a damp brush. Sweep grey over the beach with a dry brush.



28 Using a paler grey, paint ripples extending from the points breaking the water of the shoreline.



29 Paint ripples in the sand in the same way.



30 Remove the masking fluid from the boat and figures. Use a size 12 brush and a mix of burnt sienna and a little natural grey to block in the boat.



31 Use the size 8 brush to paint the boat shadows in natural grey with a little burnt sienna. Shadow the seat on the back with a thin line, then blend it away with a damp brush.



32 Paint the shadow curving round the stern of the boat and blend it in. Dry the painting.



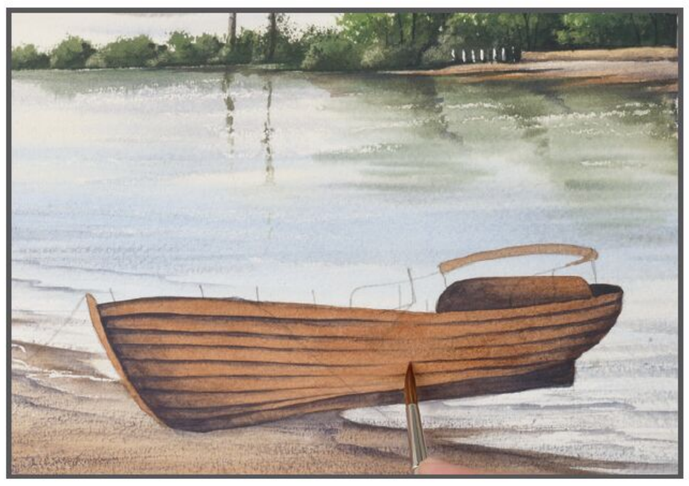
33 Paint the shadow down the prow of the boat, making it wider at the bottom, then blend it away in the same way with a damp brush.



34 Use the size 6 brush to paint the very dark shadow just inside the stern. Paint the ridge at the bottom of the boat and blend out so that it becomes lighter towards the prow.



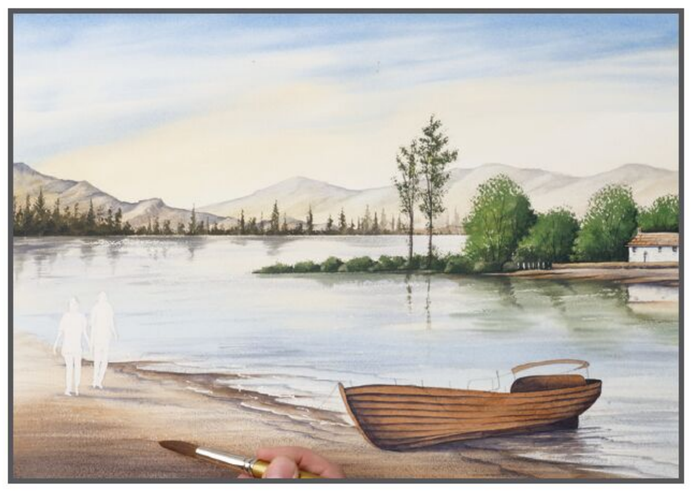
35 Paint a strong line of natural grey under the top wooden slat as far as the centre of the boat, then blend it away downwards with a clean, damp brush.



36 Continue painting the nearer parts of the slat shadows in this way, then paint the ones from the back, fading them into the centre as before.



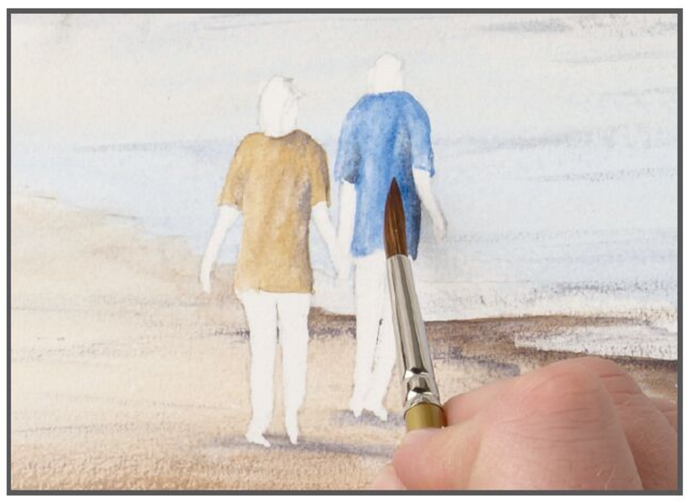
37 Paint the reflection of the boat with a pale wash of burnt sienna and the size 6 brush, then add horizontal brush strokes with pale grey. Paint more shadow under the boat with natural grey.



38 Use the size 12 brush to paint more burnt sienna in the bottom left-hand corner of the painting. Sweep dry brush strokes off to the right, to frame the scene better.



39 Begin painting the figures. Use a strong natural yellow to block in the left-hand figure, a woman. Blend away the lit left-hand side with a clean, damp brush. While the paint is damp, drop in the shadows with natural grey.



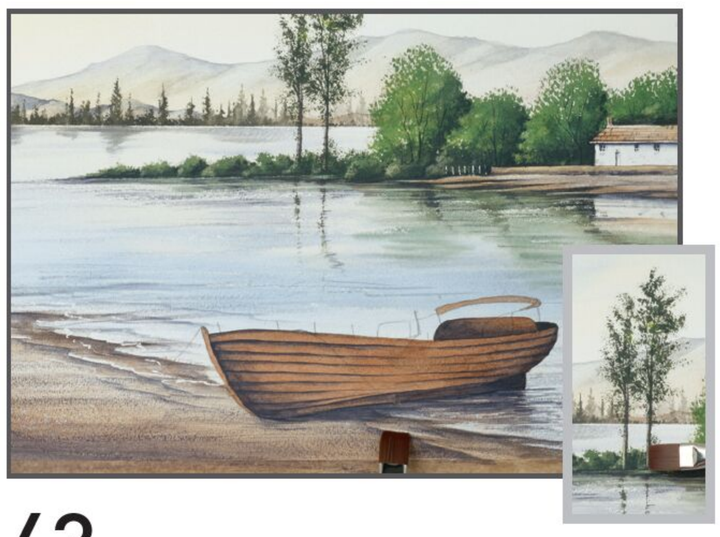
40 Paint the right-hand, male figure with natural blue, blocking in, fading off the left-hand side and then dropping in natural grey as before.



41 Mix alizarin crimson and natural yellow, both very pale, to make a skin tone. Paint it in on the right of the figures' heads to suggest faces. Paint their arms and blend away to the left. Paint the woman's leggings with natural grey, fading the colour off to the left, then paint the man's trousers with natural grey and burnt sienna.



42 Change to the size 6 brush and paint both figures' hair with natural yellow. Blend away to the left to lighten it. Shadow the hair while it is damp with natural grey and burnt sienna. Paint cast shadows with natural grey. Take a 12mm (½in) flat brush, just damp, and lift out highlights on the figures.



43 Use the same brush and technique to lift out ripples in the water and on the shoreline. Blot the dampened parts with kitchen paper. Highlight the left-hand sides of the tall trees in the same way.



44 Accentuate the form of the boat by lifting out highlights on the prow and side, and on the rim of the seat.



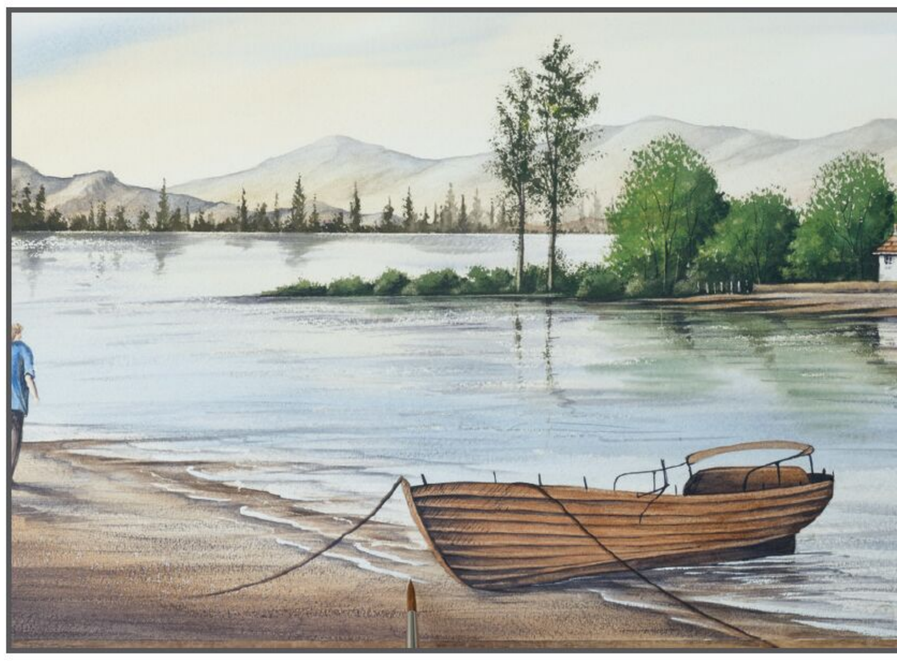
45 Use the size 2 rigger with thick natural grey to paint the fine detail of the boat. Paint diagonal flicks on the wood to create texture.



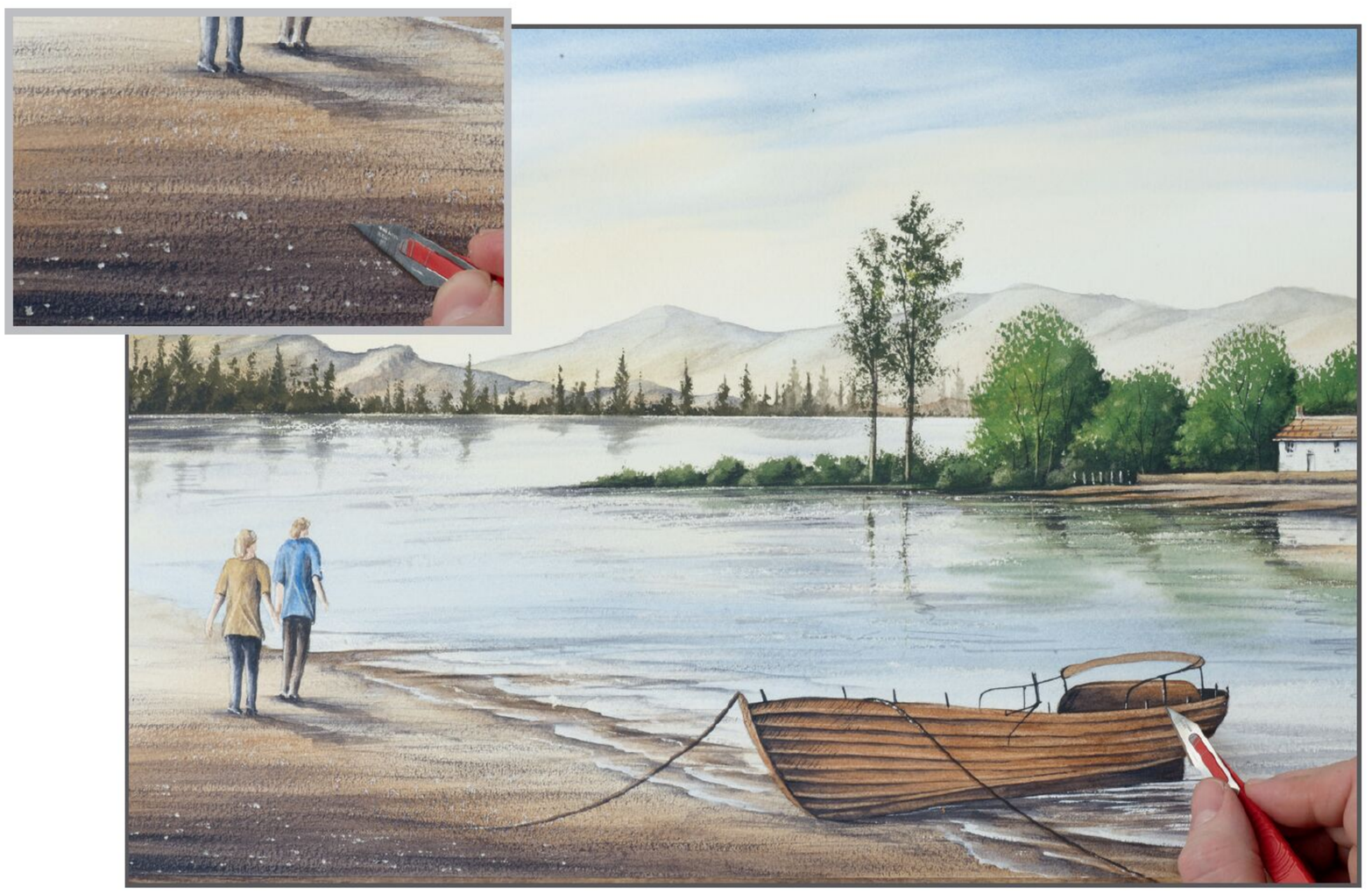
46 Paint the mooring rope going off the edge of the picture, in natural grey, then paint the lighter side with pale burnt sienna. Do the same for the rope on the other side.



47 Highlight the distant firs with the size 6 brush, used damp. Twist and dab the brush to lift out colour.



48 Use white gouache or opaque white to paint touches of highlight where the boats sits in the water and on the waves on the shore.

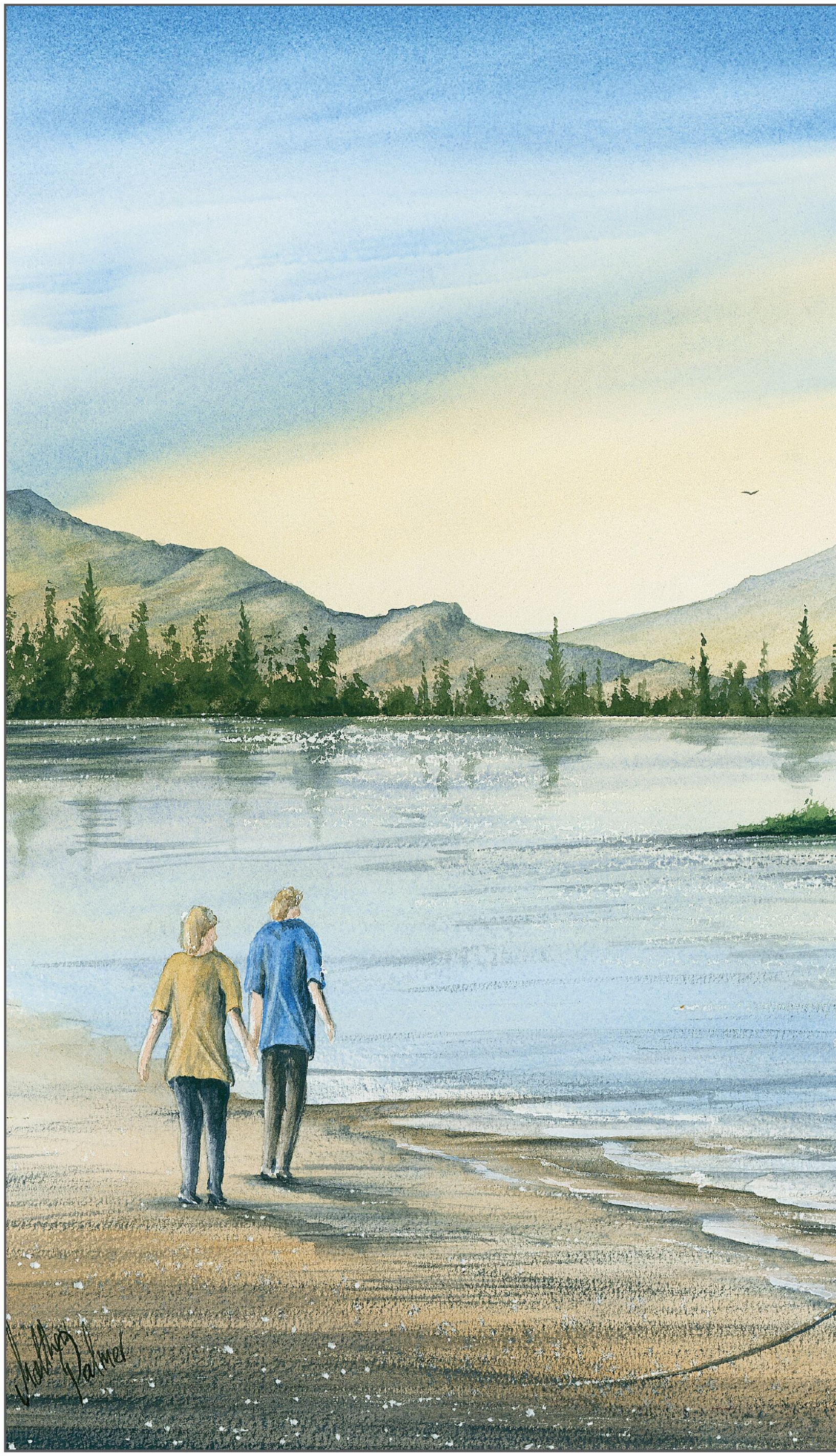


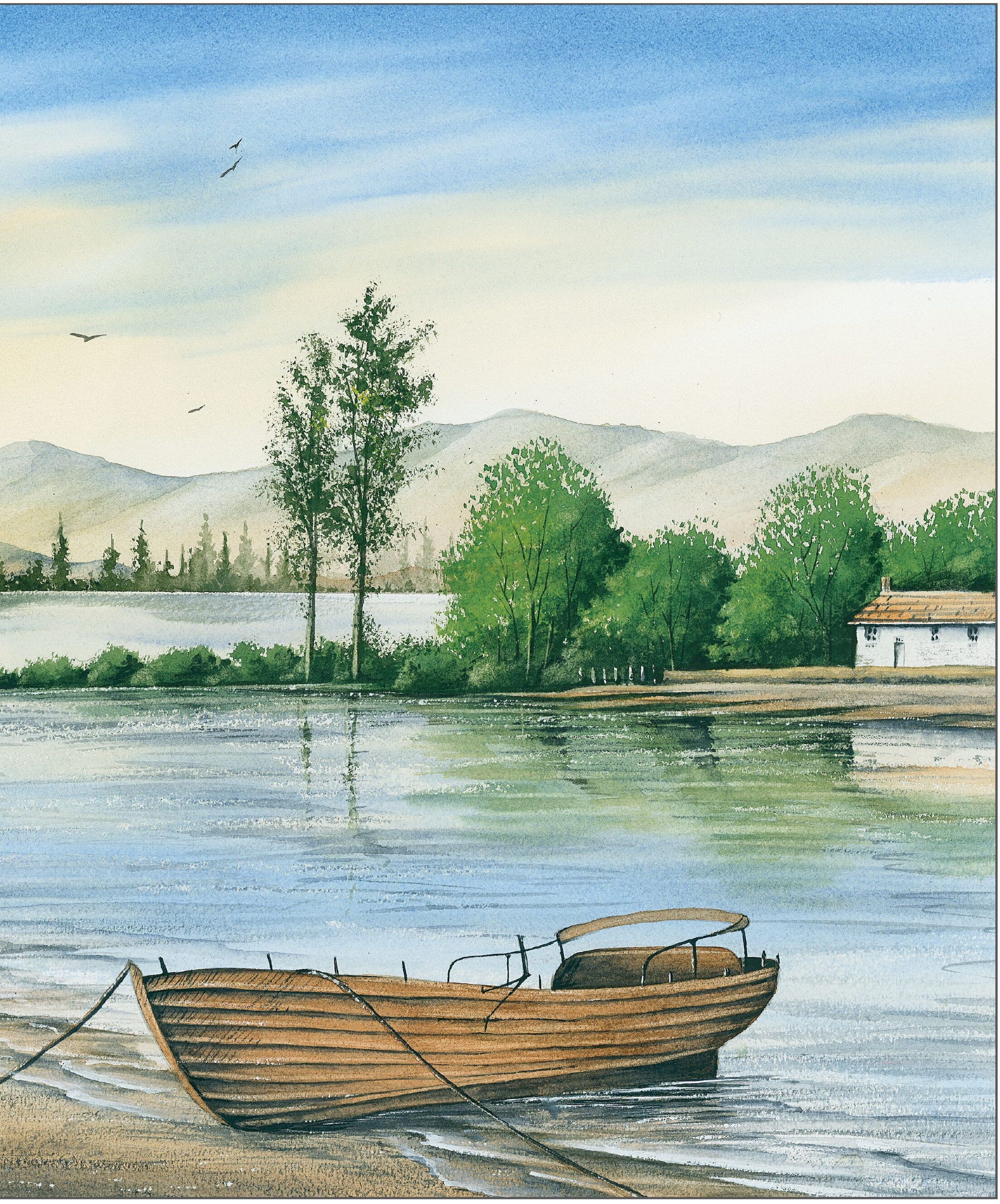
49 Use a craft knife to scratch out highlights in the water, pebbles on the beach and the metal railings of the boat where they go over a dark area.



50 Use the size 6 brush and natural grey to paint birds in the sky. These are always useful to cover any spots of paint that have spoiled your sky.

The finished painting.





Lakeside

This is a slightly different version of the previous painting. I have added more trees to the distance, painted a second boat to the shoreline and painted the landing jetty with the small ferry. I often paint two or three variations on a painting, sometimes many years later. This is the great thing about art: you have the artistic license to do whatever you like to your painting, so long as you enjoy it!




4.7.09

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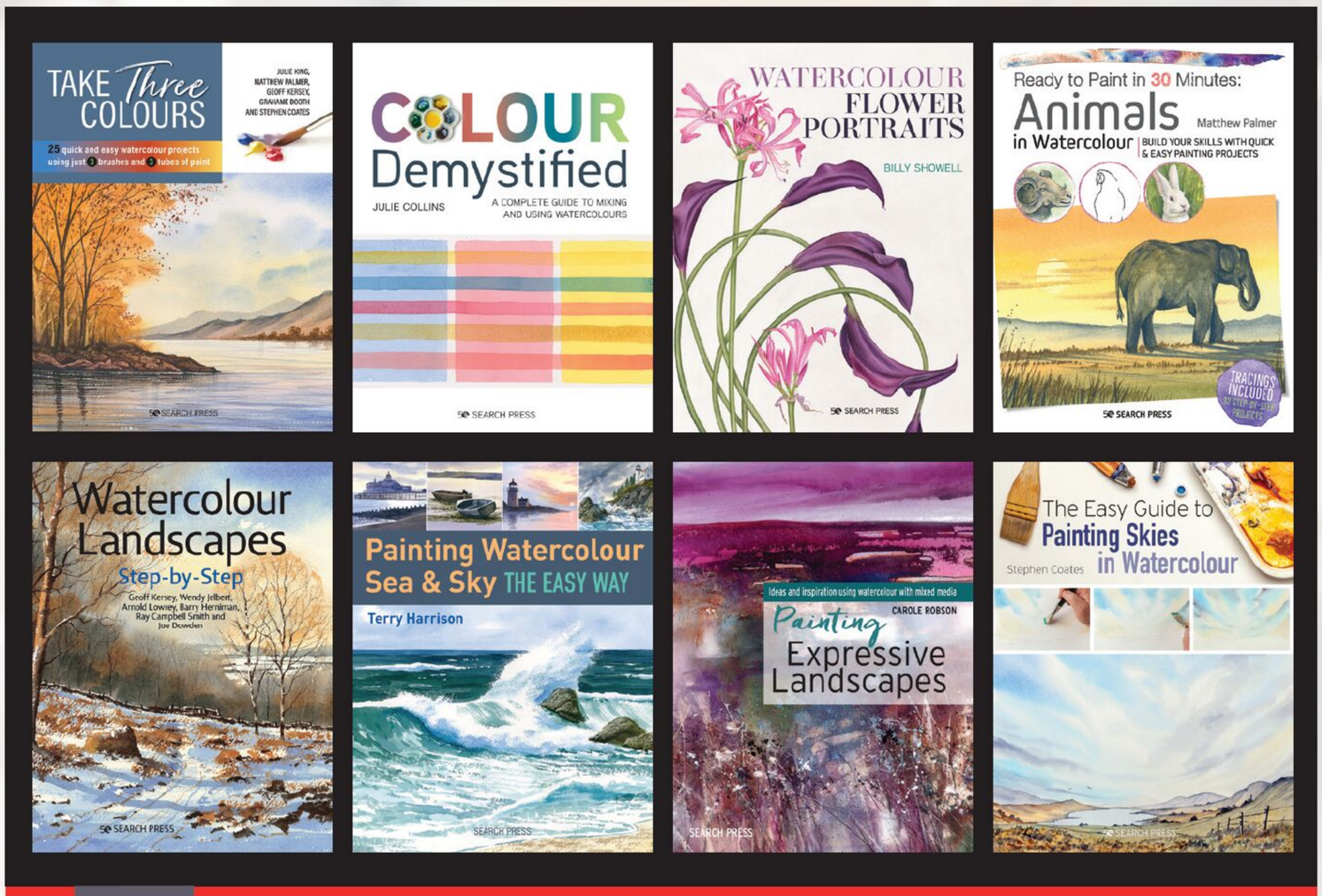
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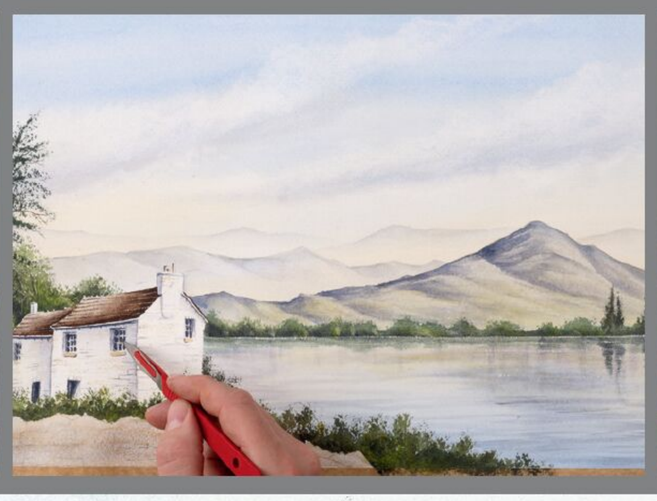
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