

Michael Chesley Johnson PSA MPAC PSNM

Plein Air Painting Workshops

Supply List for Plein Air Landscape Workshops

I work in two mediums, oil and pastel. What follows is a list of what I recommend for these. If you are painting in some other medium, please bring what you normally bring, but also the items marked "Miscellaneous" below.

For Oil Painters

- **Paints:** Cadmium Yellow Light, Cadmium Yellow Deep, Cadmium Red Light, Ultramarine Blue, Phthalo Green (or Viridian), Titanium-Zinc White, Chromatic Black
- **Thinner:** Gamsol or Turpenoid Regular (not Turpenoid Natural!)
- **Medium:** Galkyd Lite (optional)
- **Panels:** Ampersand Gessobord (9x12s - plan on 2 panels a day for full-day workshops - and also a few 5x7s)
- **Brushes:** Hog Bristle Flats (#10, #8, #4)
- **Also:** Wet panel carrier, container for thinner

For Pastel Painters

- **Pastels:** Full set (120-pc) of Faber-Castell Polychromos Pastels or full set (96-pc) of Prismacolor Nupastels; plus a good selection of softer pastels (Mount Vision has a 25-pc "plein air supplement" but Unision or Richeson works well, too)
- **Paper:** Kitty Wallis Sanded Pastel Paper (9x12 sheets - in addition to the white, get a few sheets of the Belgian Mist color - plan on 2 sheets per day for full-day workshops)
- **Backboard** to tape paper to
- **Solvent:** either denatured alcohol, Gamsol or Turpenoid Regular (not Turpenoid Natural!)
- **Old bristle brush** (cheap 1" trim brush is fine)
- **Also:** Container for solvent, masking tape (NOT the blue tape; get a neutral-colored tape)

Miscellaneous

- **Outdoor easel:** For oil, I use the 9x12 Guerrilla Painter Box; for pastel, the Heilman "backpacker" box with easel; plus a tripod for each. An old standby is the trusty French Easel. Whatever you use, it should be portable and lightweight and above all **stable**.
- **Umbrella:** Not necessary, but helpful in intense sunlight.
- **Stool:** Not necessary, but if you must sit to paint, I strongly suggest a camp stool or collapsible chair, since not all locations have picnic tables.
- **Paper towels and small garbage bags**
- **Small Sketchbook and 6B drawing pencil** for making quick thumbnail sketches.
- **Viewfinder, gray scale and pocket color wheel**
- **Hat, sunblock and water bottle**
- **"Baby Wipes"** for cleaning fingers. Most locations will not have running water.
- **Appropriate clothing and footwear.**
- **Photos to work from.** In the event of inclement weather we will work in the studio from photos.
- **Lunch.** Bring a bag lunch, because if we're out in the field, we may not have dining facilities or a deli nearby.

Keep in mind that this is mostly a plein air workshop! What this means is:

- **Everything should be portable.** You should be able to carry everything in ONE trip.
- **Think ahead to what you might need in the field,** such as drinking water, snacks, baby wipes for your hands, sun hat, sunblock, etc. But remember -- you still have to carry whatever you bring in ONE trip. (Most likely, we'll be walking very little distance from the car, but you never know!)

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- **Restrooms may not be immediately available.** The nature of plein air requires a certain amount of flexibility on the part of both instructor and student, and although we will try to find locations that have restrooms, you may have to use the facilities the Great Outdoors provides.
- **Be flexible!** Some locations may be better at certain times than others depending on weather and time of day. Be prepared to carpool, as some locations may not have parking for everyone.

Suggested Reading

My books, [Backpacker Painting: Outdoors with Oil & Pastel](#) and [Through a Painter's Brush: A Year on Campobello Island](#), have lots of information plus demonstrations. (Order from my website, www.MichaelChesleyJohnson.com.)

The "Bibles" of Outdoor Painting:

[Guide to Landscape Painting](#) by John F. Carlson.

[Composition of Outdoor Painting](#) by Edgar Payne.

Solid Books on Painting, Plein air or Studio, Oil or Pastel:

[Landscape Painting In and Out](#) by Kevin Macpherson.

[Gruppe on Painting, Brushwork, Gruppe on Color](#) by Emile Gruppe.

[Painting the Landscape in Pastel](#) by Albert Handell & Anita Louise West

[Plein Air Painting in Watercolor & Oil](#) by Frank LaLumia

[Capturing Light in Oils](#) by Paul Strisik.

[Problem Solving for Oil Painters](#) by Gregg Kreutz.

[Painting the Impressionist Landscape](#) by Lois Griffel.

[Color and Beyond](#) by Ann Templeton