

Landscape Composition Boot Camp: Exploring the 5 Aspects of Variation

with Mitchell Albala and Pacific Northwest Art School - May 2026

Supply List

With a few exceptions, you should have most of these supplies already.

Questions: email instructor mitch@mitchalbala.com

Media: You may work in **oil**, **acrylic**, **watercolor** or **pastel**.

Acrylic, watercolor and pastel painters, please see special notes at end of this list.

! If there are special supplies you need to work in your particular media, that are not mentioned here, please bring them.

RECOMMENDED TEXT

[The Landscape Painter's Workbook: Essential Studies in Shape, Composition, and Color](#)

PHOTOGRAPHS

We will be working from photographs in this workshop. I have a large collection of landscape photos that I will have in class, but you are welcome to use your own. For tips for selecting photos, see special article at my website.

<https://mitchalbala.com/landscape-painters-guide-selecting-reference-photos/>

Note: The photos do not have to be printed at full 8.5" x 11". 5" x 7"-ish or so is fine. We will be tracing over some of these photos, so it's important to have actual printouts.

BRUSHES

Use the brushes you are accustomed to using for your medium.

COLORS

Many of our exercises will be done in black and white. For our final painting(s), which may be in color, use the set of colors you are accustomed to working with. If you would like some direction on a good landscape painting palette, see this article at my website.

<https://mitchalbala.com/split-primaries-landscape-painting-palette/>

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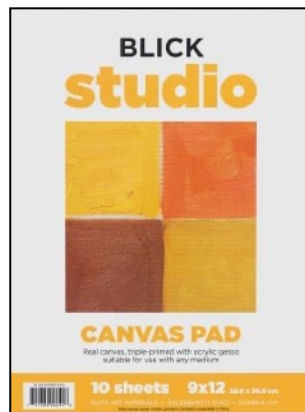
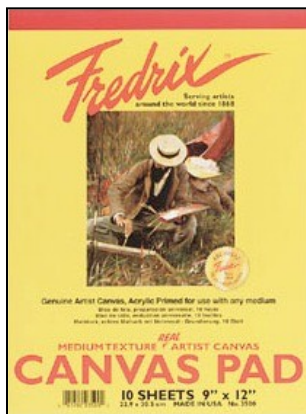
PAINTING SURFACES

Many of our exercises will be small, quick studies, for which you don't need fancy surfaces. Many of these exercise studies can even be done in your sketchpad. For the actual paintings we may do, bring two or three small surfaces, 8 x 10 or 9 x 12 maximum.

For oil and acrylic painters, these are two very handy, portable options.

Option A - Canvas panels; they are inexpensive and portable. Fredrix and Dick Blick brands are best.

Option B - Pre-primed, unstretched canvas.



Fredrix brand: "Medium Texture Real Artist's Canvas Canvas. In either 12" x 16" or 9" x 12". The benefit of pre-primed unstretched canvas this is that you can use whole sheets, or cut the sheets to a desired size and tape them to a "backboard" (cardboard panel). This is a very lightweight and portable approach. If using this approach, you will also need:

Lightweight "backboard" - approx. 11" x 14" for taping canvas pieces to (an old canvas panel or a plasticized foam core panel are ideal for this).

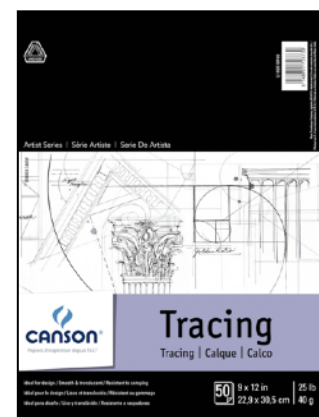
Note: Many canvas pads are not made from real canvas, but texturized plastic or paper. **Do not** get this paper type.

OTHER SUPPLIES

Transparent tape or glue stick - One of our exercises is down with cut paper. You can hold the pieces down with small pieces of transparent tape or a glue stick.

Tracing paper - ESSENTIAL 9" x 12". Be sure it is very translucent and that you can see through it easily (some varieties are very milky and opaque). Canson's brand is particularly clear and translucent

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Scissors

Pencil(s) - **ESSENTIAL** soft, dark 6B pencil

Kneaded Eraser

“L”-Shaped cropping tool **ESSENTIAL** (right) - These can be made by simply cutting an 9" x 12" or 8" x 10" picture matte diagonally in half. Or make your own from thin cardboard. Do not make them out of very thick cardboard like corrugated cardboard or foam core. They don't need to be overly large.

Small sketchbook - approx. 8" x 10" or smaller, with paper suitable for your medium.

Palette - Use the palette you are accustomed to using for your medium.

Masking tape - 1/2 or 3/4 inch. White, black or standard beige.



Marker: Black and 50% gray: Prismacolor double nib marker. Or Dick Blick's line of similar markers, equally good and a little less expensive. Or equivalent brand. (You don't need a whole set of 7 to 10 grayscale markers).

Solvent (for oil painters) Gamsol is the **only** solvent we use in the studio. If you are traveling, and can't bring your own, we will provide some for you.

Small tube of **white and black gouache (or acrylic)** for touching up black and white studies. With a small #4 or #6 brush.

NOTE: For one of our exercises, you'll need to create a set of broad (wide) expressive strokes in black. Use fast-drying wet media (acrylic, gouache, or ink) or dry media (charcoal or pastel). With wet-media, use a large 1" to 1-1/4" brush.

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FOR ACRYLIC PAINTERS

- In this workshop, acrylic painters should use a Sta-wet palette. You can use either one large palette, which will hold your colors and serve as a mixing area ... OR ... use two small palettes, one to hold your colors and one for mixing.
- Fine mist spray atomizer
- Retarder
- Acrylic medium of your choice; e.g., matte medium

FOR PASTEL PAINTERS

I recommend sanded papers that allow you to rework/reapply pastel.

Bring the set of pastels you usually work with. Pastel artists often travel with sets that are an edited version of the full set they use in the studio. This is fine, as long as the set has:

- a good range of values
- an adequate range of warm and cool neutral colors
- a range 7 to 10 neutral grays; e.g., black to white

FOR WATERCOLOR PAINTERS

Be sure to have on hand small sheets of the watercolor paper you prefer working with.