

# Learning watercolour painting from YouTube

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It's amazing how simple it is to get started learning to paint with YouTube tutorials.

I avoided painting for a long time, sticking instead with line drawings and colouring in with PhotoShop. Although learning digital art is a good skill in itself, I find it a lot more fun to paint.

I could even use some of my paintings as backgrounds for my comics by combining them together in PhotoShop.

## You don't have to be naturally talented

I didn't really like painting at school since it didn't come naturally to me. I also don't recall being taught any specific painting techniques, so my paintings were rubbish. The art syllabus generally involved cycling through a very basic history of art, creating still life drawings, attempting pop art, and that sort of thing.

I admit that I was a stuck-up art student, and I only wanted to create art when I felt like it. Often, I never felt like it (because I was a teenager). Even though I did GCSE art, I treated it as a box to tick and didn't feel inspired. As a result, I put art on the back burner for a long time.

As an adult, I view creativity as a great way to express myself and do something that promotes my wellbeing.

## Painting clouds

In the previous couple of weeks, I've been [learning to use acrylic paint](#). These were relatively easy to pick up as acrylics are so easy to blend and paint over.

I've struggled more to use watercolours in the past because they are a little tricky. It's a shame because watercolours are actually very fun to use.

The trick is to make the page wet, and layer on your colours bit by bit. You can end up with some very vibrant colours like the ones below.





You have to be careful not to mix your colours accidentally by painting next to paint that is still wet, otherwise you end up with some unruly splodges. Leave a little gap between your sections if you want to paint in a different colour while your paint is still wet.

For the image on the left, I used a flat brush and a combination of red, purple, blue and yellow watercolour. For the top-right image, I used the same watercolours but adding black to create a darker sky. In the bottom-right image, I used the same watercolours but adding orange to the yellow. The two images on the right were painted with a thin brush.

The white fluffy clouds and stars are painted on top of the dry watercolour backgrounds using a combination of flat and thin brushes, with white acrylic paint.

I was really captured by the colours on this one, compared with my [previous paintings](#) . Who doesn't love clouds and sunsets? The pastel shades and combination of the yellows, pinks and blues had a really nice effect. I plan to use this colour scheme in other projects. I was really pleased with the effects because they stand out and look pretty.

## Materials and resources

I own a water colour travel set which cost around £20, but I didn't want to use this expensive set to practice with. I bought another set of watercolours from [Fred Alduous](#) for around £3, and the quality was fine for my purposes. I can't find the original set online but here is a similar [set of 8 watercolours](#) .

I bought the watercolour blocks rather than the tubes of paint because they were the cheapest. You can get some really expensive watercolours (upwards of £50), but if you're

just starting out I recommend getting something basic!

My sketchbook is a cheap one I bought a long time ago. The paper isn't that good for painting on because it crinkles when you get it wet, but luckily it smooths back out afterwards. One of my brushes came with the watercolour set, and I borrowed the other brush from my boyfriend because I was at his house. He also lent me the acrylic paint.

Again, I used a tutorial by [YouTube vlogger Makkoccino](#). She publishes weekly painting tutorials and each video is very in-depth and good quality. Using YouTube tutorials is great because they are free, and you can search for anything you want to learn.

## Don't wait for inspiration

Looking for inspiration before you create is admirable, but I now appreciate that artists need to work at disciplining themselves. You need to learn a craft in order to be successful.

That's why I plan weekly painting sessions where I learn how to paint from YouTube tutorials. I would like to do more painting, but it also has to fit into my busy life. My general activities are freelance writing work, running meetups, socialising, and other hobbies.

I recommend planning an "Art Club" with someone you know for fun art sessions together. My boyfriend Simon and I often do Art Club together, which we always find enjoyable.

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*Main image:* by [Joshua Reddekopp](#) on [Unsplash](#)



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