

SWS Monthly Challenge August 2025

August was going to be a month for a break, mostly because of everyone being on vacation, hosting family or friends or just enjoying summer. However, you could pick one or two or even three of the previous challenges and practice them all in one painting. Or, if you find yourself just needing some time with your paints figuring out what you have and how you can use your colors, create some watercolor charts. Maybe you have done this before with the colors on your palette or maybe you have some “new” paints to explore in a color chart way. Below is some excerpts from Anthony Roebuck on Watercolor Charts. Let's see what you create when we get back together in September.

What's the purpose of a watercolor chart ?

Have you ever been puzzled about what colors to mix in a particular situation?

Watercolor charts are all about **mastering mixing**. These simple charts help you learn how to mix your collection of paints and remember which ones you need to reproduce a particular hue.

I'm always surprised by the huge variety of colors that can be created from just a few tubes of paint. If you do this exercise, it will help you **understand how your own paints work together**. You're going to do a lot of mixing ! But that's the whole idea...

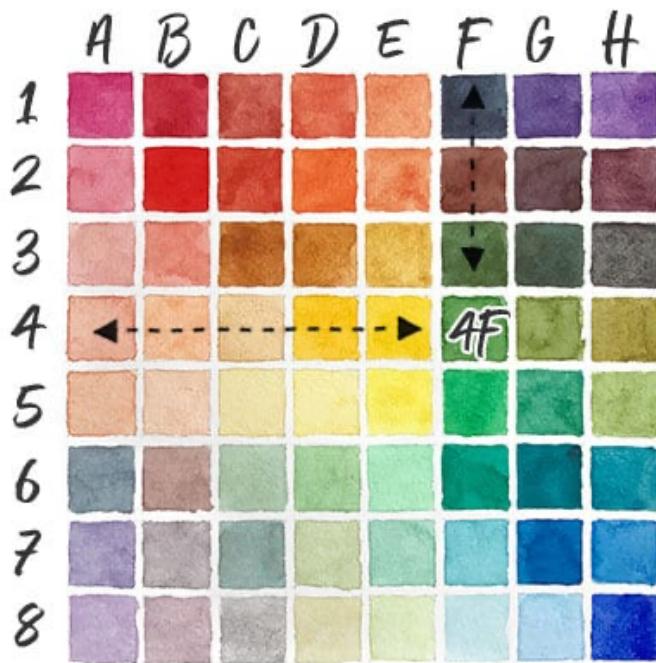
You may be astonished by the colors your paints can produce !

How does a watercolor color chart work ?

A watercolor chart is a grid of colored squares using all or some of the paints in your palette. The grid is labeled on the top and side axis with the names of all your paints. Each square in the chart is at the intersection of a row and a column of the chart.

You fill in each of the colored squares on your grid by mixing the color on the side axis with the color on the top axis.

For example in the diagram Row 4 + Column F = 4F



The completed grid gives you an overview of the mixing range of your palette colors.

6 good reasons to make a watercolor mixing chart

I always recommend using *single pigment and transparent watercolor paints*. Why ? Because if you mix too many pigments, it often ends up as a muddy dull color. I'm sure, like me, you prefer bright vivid colors in your paintings. Mixing single pigments is less inclined to produce flat colors. A color chart will help you identify which single pigments produce a desired color mix, and you may find some 2 or 3 pigment paints which mix badly !

Knowing how to mix blacks or grays with just two colors is extremely useful, (*if you have a tube of black paint, you'll probably find you don't need it*). A mixing chart will help you find which two colors mix beautifully to produce interesting grays and blacks.

Sometimes you also need to reduce the intensity of a color (*paint that comes directly from the tube is at its brightest, most intense hue*). A lot of artists will be tempted to do this by adding black, but black will deaden your colors ! It's much better to add a complementary hue, and your color chart will help you identify the right combination.

Mixing greens can also be quite tricky.

When we go to mix paints, we find it difficult to pick the right combination to get the right shade of green. A color chart goes a long way to helping with this.

Pinks and skin tones can be particularly frustrating to mix.

A lot of beginners will mix red with white paint. The results are similar to when you try to mix a color by adding black. Your colors will look flat and uninspiring. There are several combinations that will produce great flesh tones, and your mixing chart will help you discover them.

Do you really need all those tubes of brown, indigo and violet?

Convenience mixtures like these are useful if you need a very specific color all the time, but you can probably mix these colors with your existing palette of paints.

Making your own color chart could save you money because you'll know how to mix a color using two other paints. You may find that you end up using less colors.

This is especially useful to know if you intend to paint while traveling, so you can make your own small travel palette.

Even if you have a limited palette, you'll probably find some pleasantly surprising mixing results along the way.

And in the end a good chart will make your life easier.

I've used 8 colors for this example mixing chart, but you can use more or less. You can use any combination of colors you want to test.

So sit back, grab a coffee and have some fun !

The different types of watercolor mixing chart

The color wheel

The mixing chart

The glazing chart

The dual color mixing chart

The value chart

The palette chart

Watercolor swatches

Check out Anthony Roebuck website for more details and a printable color chart grid to get you started.