

## SWS 2025 November Challenge Scrape or Rubbing Alcohol

### Scraping techniques

Scraping involves removing wet or semi-dry watercolor paint to reveal the underlying paper or create specific textures.

### Examples

#### 1. Creating Lines and Details; Highlighting and Texture; Adding Movement:

- While a watercolor wash is still damp, use a sharp, rigid tool like a fingernail, the back of a paintbrush, or a credit card edge to scrape lines into the paint.
- This can be used to create hair, grass, architectural details, or other fine lines.
- Scrape off areas of paint to reveal highlights on surfaces like water, glass, or to create a rough texture on elements like rocks or bark.
- In a sky or landscape painting, strategic scraping can create a sense of wind or movement in clouds or foliage.

### Key points to remember

- The results of both techniques can vary depending on the type of watercolor paper, the specific pigments used, and the amount of water and rubbing alcohol applied.
- Non-staining watercolor pigments tend to react more dramatically with rubbing alcohol, resulting in more pronounced textures and white areas.
- Experiment with different tools for scraping and application methods for rubbing alcohol to discover a wide array of creative possibilities.
- Always test these techniques on a separate piece of paper first to familiarize yourself with the effects before applying them to your main painting.



## Rubbing alcohol techniques

Rubbing alcohol interacts with wet watercolor paint by repelling the pigments and creating lighter areas or white spots.

### Examples

#### 1. Dropping Alcohol onto Wet Wash:

- Paint a wash of watercolor on your paper.
- While the paint is still wet, dip a brush or dropper into rubbing alcohol and gently drop it onto the wash.
- The alcohol will push the wet paint away, creating interesting patterns and revealing the paper underneath, especially with non-staining pigments.
- This technique can create a "tie-dye" or bubble-like effect.

#### 2. Spritzing Alcohol:

- Apply a watercolor wash to your paper.
- Using a paintbrush or spray bottle, spritz rubbing alcohol onto the wet paint for a more dispersed and cloudy texture.

#### 3. Dabbing with a Sponge or Q-tip:

- Apply a watercolor wash.
- Dip a sponge or Q-tip in rubbing alcohol and gently dab it onto the wet paint to create softer, blurred edges and textured areas.

#### 4. Painting with Alcohol:

- Instead of dripping or spritzing, you can use a brush dipped in alcohol to draw lines or patterns directly onto wet watercolor washes.

