

Materials/equipment/preparation list for Jem Bowden plein air watercolour courses

Materials must be provided by each participant. This is a recommendation and is intended to be as helpful as possible. It reflects what Jem will *likely* be using, but should be balanced with participants using whatever colours, brushes, paper type, seat/easel etc, they favour and are accustomed to.

Students need to be self-sufficient. Please carefully consider what things you personally might need to be comfortable outdoors potentially for much of a day, including variable weather and underfoot terrain. Walking boots can be ideal. It is *very likely* that we will encounter wet sand, mud or grass, so the right footwear (and other clothing) is an essential part of your kit for this course.

THIS IS A PLEIN AIR COURSE!! We WILL be going out unless it is either raining or VERY windy. Therefore come equipped and ready for less than perfect weather. You have been warned !!! Please read all the following carefully.

Watercolour paper:

Either a 'block', or taped, pre-stretched or otherwise held paper on board.

A pad can be just about okay as a learning material, as long as it is 300g/140lb weight minimum, and only up to about A4 or quarter-imperial size max, otherwise the issue of windblown or curling pages means it is usually better to tear out pages and tape them down.

Bring plenty of paper: potentially to complete up to 3 paintings per day, plus some spare sheets for exercises and mishaps, and some scrap for testing on. Size, surface type, brand, etc, should ultimately be your choice. For information, Jem (currently) mostly uses half-imperial size 'Not'/Cold-pressed Bockingford, 200lb (425g) weight, which he affixes to a light (corrugated plastic) board.

IF you wish to see similar results to those that Jem gets in his painting (especially regarding soft edges) then using the same paper type is the most important thing.

A board, suitable for taking out, and tape (or alternative) for affixing paper to it.

Brushes: Your usual ones, *but hopefully including:* At least one large Wash type brush, and a fairly large Round with a decent point. If possible, bring all you have, especially big brushes. Small brushes will be of little use.

Paints: *Jem strongly recommends tube paints rather than pans, for ease of mixing and particularly to obtain strong darks.*

'Student quality' can be fine. Use whichever colours and brand you prefer or are used to.

For information in case you wish to use similar (though Jem stresses this is NOT necessary), Jem's palette currently includes (mostly W&N Professional range): French Ultramarine, Winsor Blue (Red Shade), Light Red, Indian Red, Winsor Lemon (or other cool, 'bright' yellow), Raw Umber, Cobalt Turquoise and possibly one or two others. A more restricted palette would be absolutely fine, and potentially a very good idea. Jem often uses just three or five of these in any one painting.

Digital camera/smartphone camera/tablet or at least a card viewfinder:

Necessary when selecting a subject and composing, as well as for collecting visual information for later reference. A card Viewfinder can work, but is less easy to use than the contemporary equivalents.

Pencil and rubber: both soft. (Jem uses an 8B pencil)

Mixing palette - with large mixing areas. Small palettes are more of a hindrance than a help even when working outdoors (unless you wish to work VERY small). Plastic is better than ceramic, being that it is a lot more lightweight.

Water pot, plus water container for transporting water, such as a plastic litre bottle. (+ wire to hang pot from easel?)

Sketch book if you use one, or some loose drawing paper. We may or may not need this much, depending on how you work.

Kitchen/toilet roll: for mopping up runs/pools/mishaps and cleaning your palette.

Absorbent rag/cloth/sponge: for quickly drying off brushes when painting (alternatively use the above for this too). *This is important!*

Easel, if you use one. **Lightweight chair/stool** if you wish to paint seated. Alternatively, a waterproof plastic sheet for sitting on the ground. For info, Jem stands at an easel when painting and demonstrating. He uses the Jakar Lightweight Adjustable Watercolour Easel (model circa 2015).

Peaked cap or brimmed hat. *Essential* - for looking towards, and protecting from sun (and the odd raindrop).

A bag/container of some sort to carry all of this and anything else you might consider useful (Insect repellent, sun lotion, antihistamine tablets, etc.) Jem fits everything including easel into a hiker's backpack, and cheap plastic portfolio for his board & paper.

Please feel free to contact Jem in advance if you have any questions relating to materials:

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