

Plein Air in the Gardens

Instructor: Enid Braun

Materials List

Soft pastels are composed only of pigment and binder in stick form. The proportion of binder or filler to the amount and grade of the pigments determines quality and price. While harder pastels are less messy, softer pastels are more versatile and allow more layering of color. My recommendations are biased toward the softest possible. New students or those on a budget could start with a basic set of pastels (24 colors at a minimum) that could be filled out over time by purchasing individual sticks from any manufacturer. Half-stick sets are a good value for beginners.

As a minimum your palette should include **white, black, two yellows (one pale and one warm), one orange, two reds, both a greenish and an ultramarine blue, and both a yellowish and a more true green**. I also urge you to buy **a true violet**, not a lavender shade; purples are very difficult to mix with red and blue pigments. You will not need earth colors such as sienna, ochre, and umber. A basic set of full or half sticks can be filled out over time, and there will be some class pastels for everyone to use.

The following list is top to bottom professional-grade makers to student-grade. If you shop in-store, feel free to compare the textures and colors from the various manufacturers.

Note: Occasionally students have purchased oil pastels or cray pas by mistake; these are not at all the same as chalk pastels, which this class is using. The differences are significant.

This list is in descending order of softness, quality, and cost. A good value would be a Sennelier half-stick set, which is often on sale online.

***Schmincke**

***Unison**

Sennelier

Harder pastels and student grade:

NuPastel (good for underpainting)

Rowney

Blockx

Girault

Goldfaber Faber-Castell (blue line) (student grade)

Paper: I will discuss options at greater length. A huge variety of paper can be used with pastels, the key factor being a “tooth” to hold the pastel. Traditional laid paper made for pastels such as Mi Tientes works fine for those who like to blend colors, but for real layering, more substantial tooth is needed. Coated papers and boards such as a medium-sanded surface allow far more layering of colors. Cold press watercolor paper pads or blocks work well for pastels, because they provide their own board to support the paper while working.

Masonite drawing boards and blue tape will be provided if you prefer single sheets, but a lightweight board that is a great option is ½-inch-thick foamcore.

Suggested paper size is 11x14".

A small pad of sketch paper and a pencil or other drawing tool is recommended for thumbnail compositional quick studies.

Workable Spray Fixative: Will be provided, though students should be prepared to purchase for extended use.

Additional: It is suggested that students have some kind of smock or oversized old shirt to protect their clothing from the pastel dust. Disposable plastic gloves can also be helpful.

For working outside, a hat with a visor or brim and insect repellent are recommended. Many students find a portable field easel helpful, especially when working outdoors. Additionally, please bring sufficient drinking water.

Most complete source for all pastel materials (check their frequent specials on many items):
Dakota Pastels dakotapastels.com; 888-345-0067

Other online sources:

Cheap Joe's cheapjoes.com; 800-227-2788

Dick Blick dickblick.com; 800-828-4548. Art supply stores do not carry open stock colors of anything other than their own brand, but you can order online. The stores themselves are good source for paper and fixative. They have a large store on lower Broadway in NoHo (Manhattan), **or** 536 Myrtle Avenue near Classon (Brooklyn).

BEFORE YOU PURCHASE MATERIALS:

If your class is canceled due to low registration, you will be notified by phone **4-5 days** prior to start of the class.

BBG reserves the right to cancel a class for any reason.