

learn to paint *realistic watercolor* *viola flowers* a Skillshare class with Anne Butera

Materials:

- watercolor paper
- watercolor paint
- brushes - I use pointed round tip brushes, both regular and long
- viola flowers or photos of them (included below)
- paper towels (try cutting them into smaller rectangles)
- jar of water (keep this clean)
- pencil
- kneaded eraser
- palette with multiple wells for mixing and storing paint

Use whatever brands or types you have on hand or with which you are comfortable. Below I've listed the specifics of what I use.

Watercolor paper - for this class I've painted three viola flowers on 5 inch by 7 inch pieces of watercolor paper cut from larger sheets of Arches 140 lb. cold pressed paper.

Paint - I use pan watercolors from three manufacturers: Winsor & Newton (W&N), Sennelier (S) and Yarka St. Petersburg (Y). I'll share specific color mixes below.

Brushes - the brushes I use most often are from Dick Blick and are part of the Blick Master Series. Some of my brushes are synthetic fiber (<http://www.dickblick.com/products/blick-master-synthetic-brushes/>) and some are Male Kolinsky Sable (<http://www.dickblick.com/products/blick-master-kolinsky-sable-for-watercolors/>). I also use a Princeton Velvetouch spotters and Princeton Velvetouch long pointed round brushes. <http://www.princetonbrush.com/velvetouch-series-3950-princeton-brush-company-brush-3950/>

Pencil and erasers - any pencil or eraser will work for this. I prefer a mechanical pencil with a .5 mm lead because of its sharp point. Mine is from Papermate. Kneaded erasers are very helpful for lifting the graphite from the paper and lightening the lines.

Palettes - I don't know what brand my mixing palette is, but you can find similar palettes at many art/craft stores and here: <https://www.amazon.com/Darice-97789-13-Inch-by-10-Inch-20-Well-Palette/dp/B004GXBXHG>

Empty palette boxes to house your open stock watercolor pan paint can be hard to find. Purchasing a set (often called a travel set) will get you paints and a palette box. The large metal case I use in this class was found here: <https://www.amazon.com/MEEDEN-Empty-Metal-Watercolor-Palette/dp/BO1MRJDHSZ> It works fine and can fit full size and half size pans.

Paint colors: I'm sharing what I used in the videos not as a requirement, but for your information. Use the colors you have on hand to create similar color mixes, or to match the colors of the violas you're painting. No color is the "right" color and every artist has his or her own preferences. I prefer working with pan watercolor paints (professional grade), but many artists like tubes better. Experiment and see what you prefer.

Purple 1

Violet Rose (Y), Dioxazine Purple (S), Indigo (W&N), Rose (Y), Blue indanthrene (S)

Purple 2

Dioxazine Purple (S), Claret (Y), Rose (Y)

Yellow

Hansa Yellow (Y), Cadmium Lemon (W&N)

Yellow Orange (small well)

Hansa Yellow (Y), Cadmium Orange (Y)

Orange

Cadmium Orange (Y), Sennelier Deep Yellow

Green

Russian Green (Y), Sennelier Deep Yellow

Light Green

Phthalo Green Light (S), Sennelier Deep Yellow, Russian Green (Y)

Dark Purple Grey

Payne's Grey (S), Dioxazine Purple (S)

Light Purple Blue

Ultramarine (Y), Rose (Y), Cinereus Blue (S), Azure Blue (Y), Cobalt Violet (S)

Your Project:

Paint a viola flower (with or without leaves) using watercolor and post a photo of your painting in your class project. Please feel free to share any thoughts you had about the process including photos of your sketches and a photo of the flower you used for reference (if you didn't use one of the photographs I've included here). If you have questions, please feel free to ask them in the class discussion. **I am always happy to help!**

Some tips and other things to keep in mind on your own:

- The more time you spend practicing sketching viola flowers, the more successful you will be when sketching the outline of your flower to paint.

- Remember that your sketches and sketchbook are just for YOU. You do not need to share your sketches with anyone. If you want to sketch with a friend or friends, or share your images on social media for encouragement and support, that's ok, too. Do whatever you feel most comfortable with. There's no right or wrong way to go about learning to make art!
- Be patient. If you're just starting out it can take a long time to feel comfortable and successful with this type of painting! The more you paint and practice the better you'll get and the more comfortable you'll be. (I know this from experience. If you need an example, take a look at this post from my blog: <http://mygiantstrawberry.blogspot.com/2015/12/looking-back-at-my-journey-as-artist.html>).
- After you mix the paint on your palette, let it dry before working on your painting. I find that freshly mixed (and very wet) paint is harder to work with than drier paint. It's also more difficult to get very dark colors if your paint is too wet.
- Be patient with the painting process. Let one area dry completely before adding paint (or water) to an area that touches it, otherwise the paint will flow in directions you don't want. Also, erase pencil lines only *after* the paint has dried! If it's still damp, the color will smudge and you may damage the paper.
- If paint gets on your paper in an area that you don't want it to, blot it with a clean, dry paper towel. If that doesn't completely remove the color, clear water applied to the paper and then blotted with a dry paper towel will help. If that still doesn't work, consider painting over it (if it fits with your composition. If it doesn't you can always cut up your painting and use it to create a collage in your sketchbook).
- Wiping a damp brush (with no paint on it) on a damp painted area will lift off some of the paint. I use this technique to lighten areas. You can also use your brush to push the paint from one area of a painting to another to give an area a gradient.
- Use a brush that is the appropriate size for the area you're painting. Generally, the larger the brush, the more water it can hold. Smaller brushes hold less water and can paint more concentrated, dark marks than larger brushes. When painting fine lines a larger long pointed round brush loaded with plenty of paint may be more effective than a smaller brush.

Just as there are many artists, there are many ways to paint, many styles and many techniques. Not every technique or style will resonate with you. I'm sharing what I've learned from many years of experimentation. I hope that you will find something useful in my class, either a technique or a tip that will work with how you paint or that will help you develop your own unique style.

I hope you will enjoy the process and have fun with your painting!

Going further...

In my Skillshare Class *Use Your Watercolors to Create Simple Repeat Patterns in Photoshop* I demonstrate the process of creating a tossed floral pattern created with viola flowers. Once you digitize your paintings (I have another class that shows you how to do this) you can use your own flower paintings to create fabric designs of your own. You can also use your images on other products.

Companies for Creating Products with Your Designs

The following companies are a good place to start if you want to print products with your watercolor illustrations. For help with digitizing your images and creating simple repeat patterns, see my other Skillshare classes.

Spoonflower –with Spoonflower, www.spoonflower.com, you can print (and sell) fabric, wallpaper and gift wrap with your designs. Spoonflower also has many tutorials to get you started and also offers weekly design challenges that are a fun way to practice creating designs. Your design must be at least 150 dpi/pixels per inch to print with Spoonflower. A higher resolution will allow you to scale your design.

Moo – create business cards, postcards, greeting cards, stickers, etc. They're well known for something they call "Printfinity" which allows you to use multiple images in one pack/set. Very high quality (and also a bit pricy). For a limited time get \$30 off your first order with this link: <https://refer.moo.com/s/n5vrp>

Society 6 is a print on demand site that creates all sorts of products with your images, from fine art prints to shower curtains to notebooks to pillows to mugs to clothing and more. The notebooks and rugs that I share in my intro video were created on Society6. www.society6.com. There are different file size requirements for different types of products.

Blurb (Note: I have not used this company) – print on demand book publishing. I've heard good things about this company if you want to create a physical, book-form portfolio of your work.

There are many more print on demand type companies out there. Ask around or search on Google for more ideas.

Reference Photos:



Thank you for taking this class! I hope you enjoyed it and I hope it has inspired you. Please reach out if you have questions or concerns, if you need a little encouragement or even just to say hi. My virtual studio door is always open!

Wishing you joy!

Anne

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