

## COLOURWHEEL Art Classes

### Mixed Media - Watercolour and Soft Pastels: Forget-me-nots



I always get asked questions about how to make drawings and paintings more loose and really there is no simple answer, but the type of medium that you use can help as well as the photographic image that you start with.

In this session we'll be using watercolour and soft pastel to create an image of forget-me-nots. The secret is not to overthink your painting and simply enjoy putting down colour, mark making techniques down, and see what you're painting as a series of shapes and tones. Enjoy.



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For this image, we'll be using two watercolour techniques: wet-on-wet and wet-on-dry.

Wet-on-wet and wet-on-dry are both important techniques in watercolour painting. Each technique has its own specific qualities, producing different results.

### Wet-on-wet



Wet-on-wet means that you are applying wet paint to wet paper or adding more paint on top of wet paint. Many effects can be created using this method including colours bleeding into one another, soft edges and blooms of colour. Rolling the paper or tilting the paper can help the paint to flow into one another, especially if using more than one colour. This will help you to prevent fiddling too much. This technique is all dependent on how wet your surface is to begin with, and how much water has been added to your paint.

***Do experiment with these ratios to really explore how this can change the effects created.***

### Wet-on-dry



Wet-on-dry means that wet paint is applied to dry paper or onto an area of dried paint. Using this technique will give you more control over your brushstrokes and how you apply it to the paper. Painting onto a dry surface will also give you sharp or hard edges.

***Using both of these techniques can add interest, texture and depth to your work.***

### **Main Task**

**Equipment:** watercolour paper, mid-yellow/blue/viridian watercolour paint, 1 inch flat brush, palette with wells, soft pastels.

## Reference Image



Begin by taping your paper to a board to minimise buckling and to create a border. I'm using cold press watercolour paper. Watercolour paper is best as I'll be starting with the wet-in-wet technique so need a surface that can take this. Using a palette with wells, squeeze a little mid yellow, a blue and a green such as viridian into three separate wells. Add a little water to each but not too much so that the colour becomes too diluted.

Using a 1 inch flat brush, dampen your paper with clean water, tilt your board and starting from the top, feed in some yellow, followed by blue and then finally green. You are aiming to make the colours gradually darker as they go down and allow the colours to mix on the wet paper. Resist the urge to fiddle too much. Allow this to almost dry but not quite, and when the paint is still ever-so-slightly wet, mix a little blue into your green to darken it and stroke this up from the bottom to create grass-like textures. Using the side of the flat brush, add some longer stems and then finally add a few splatters by tapping the brush onto the paper.



Allow the paint to dry and then take a selection of blue pastels as well as a lilac colour. If you only have a light blue and a mid-blue, this will be fine. If you don't have a lilac, think about a purple with white blended over the top to tint it.



Begin with your light blue and mid-blue to block in the larger, more blurred shapes in the images. Smudge colours to blur them further with a paper stump, a finger, or brush over with a white pastel to tint them. I'm mainly thinking about working from the back to the front of the image.

Begin to block in the lilac shades and then also some of the more definite flowers using your mid-blue. It's at this stage I also use a saffron yellow to bring to think about some of the flower centres.



Gradually start to build in some of the detail that you see. I'm right handed, so I work left to right. If you're left handed, work right to left to prevent smudging. It's at this time I also begin to think about some of the more prominent leaves and stalks. I use a grass green and an emerald pastel on their sides to add these in. Tip: a soft coloured pencil or watercolour pencil will work at the end for any finer detail, but remember, we are aiming for loose so if using, try not to overdo!

Alternative images to use

