



Spiritual Art Club Supplies List

It's easy to feel overwhelmed when you look at a supplies list. You need to enjoy your materials, and you need a positive relationship with this, so begin this now! Let yourself have your reactions, and then breathe, expand your perspective. This is an investment in your own creative self expression. Start with what is manageable and build from there.

The emphasis is on paint, and you will need both acrylics and watercolours. If you are not sure about a particular product, please ask me before purchasing!

You will not want to purchase everything at once, but accumulate your supplies over time and take advantage of any discounts and sales; in the US, Blicks and Michael's supply everything you need; in the UK, Cass Arts Great Art, Jacksons, Ken Bromley and Hobby Crafts all have good websites; Arteza art materials are ok, though I have only used their acrylic paints. Their metallic and pearlescent acrylic paints are bright and fun, they are medium-body.

Acrylics:

Acrylic paints

You will need a basic set of acrylic paints - cheap craft acrylics in small bottles are fine, or a "starter" set of primaries. As well as your favourite colours, be sure to have titanium white, titan buff (pale beige), Payne's grey (a dark grey), and some gold metallic paint. You can either buy pre-mixed colours, or buy primaries so you can mix them yourself. It is ok to use pre-mixed colours at this stage, or learn to mix colours yourself. You can even use tester pots of household paints.

Acrylic mediums

Matt medium, gloss medium, satin glazing liquid, acrylic varnish (satin)

Acrylic gesso – it's useful to have this in both black and white, but if you have white you can add black paint to it. Gesso is essential for some of our projects and for recycling.

GAC100 (Golden) – this is needed as an isolation layer to stabilise your layers

Acrylic tools: old credit cards, old bristle brushes, small household paint brushes, a small brayer (a firm rubber roller that is used to spread acrylic paint), skewers, nail art tools

Substrates for acrylics: acrylic paper, mixed media paper, watercolour paper; at a pinch you can use many types of paper if you coat both sides with gesso. We will also be using rice or washi paper as a surface to paint on and then use in collage.

You can repurpose good quality sturdy cardboard packaging by covering both sides with gesso, or use any flat smooth surface such as a tray or board

Canvases: choose the box type that is ready to hang; choose a range of sizes

Cradled birch boards: – such a pleasure to paint on, and ready to hang when you are finished. You will need to prime them with gesso if they are bare wood. Choose a range of sizes.

Acrylic inks

These behave somewhat like watercolour, and come in beautiful intense colours including metallic and pearlescent shades that give a big bang for your buck. A metallic ink is a great way to add extra special drama to a finished piece.

Watercolours

Cheap watercolours give disappointing results as there is not enough pigment in the paint and your work looks washed out and watery. Choose a small amount of the very best watercolours, such as the Winsdor and Newton professional range (not the Cotman rage), QR (Golden), and Daniel Smith. Tubes make it easier to have intense colours. The finest watercolours have a quality known as granulation which means that the colours separate and move on the page, and bring a lively, unpredictable beauty to your work. If you are on a budget it is better to have a small mixing set of primaries in tubes, and mix your own colours, and add more colours as you can afford them.

A few bottles of **liquid watercolour** in sky/sea/grey shades are not essential but will help with the watercolour flow series. A good brand is Dr Ph Martine's Hydrus Fine Art Watercolour. (Do not get the "Radiant Concentrated Watercolour" by the same brand as this is not lightfast!). The beauty of these is the intensity of their colours!

You also need a big tube of **white water-based gouache paint**, to mix with your watercolours, such as Windsor and Newton.

Metallic watercolours that come in pans and sets, such as those by Gansai Tamblin, Coliro/Finetec (Kremer Pigments in the US), or Van Gogh, are good value and bring a special quality to your work. You use them to add accents to your work and paint over other colours and they look fabulous over black.

Watercolour surfaces

Watercolour paper is expensive, and so it is a precious resource. Buy it when it is on sale. Watercolour paper needs to be heavyweight, 140lb, because cheaper papers cannot cope with the amount of water you need for expressive watercolour painting. The paper lifts, warps and the surface will shred – so don't economise and only buy paper that specifically states it is for watercolour, as paper that is described as “mixed media” is often unsuitable. I use hot-pressed (this means it has a smooth surface) watercolour paper from Cass Arts that comes in pads of 50 as a good compromise between quality and price as you do not want to feel afraid to experiment on paper that is too expensive. The largest size (A3) is better value, you can cut it up. Paper made of cotton rag is the best. If you buy Khadi papers (handmade Nepalese papers) make sure you get the very heaviest weight. If you are splashing out (!) order a pad of **black watercolour paper**.

Watercolour brushes

You need brushes specifically for watercolour, and do not use them with your acrylics. Watercolour brushes are soft and fine, whether made of animal hair or new synthetic materials. You need brushes that hold their shape, keep their points, and will also carry a load of wet paint in their belly. Choose a range of sizes and shapes, and until you know what you want a size 6 round brush is a good all purpose brush. Watercolour brushes are sized from 0 – tiny – to 18 or more (very large). You also need a large wash brush, such as a squirrel or synthetic wash brush, or a large flat brush, in a size 12 or larger, so you can lay down wide areas of water and colour. Chinese calligraphy brushes are often inexpensive and fun to use with watercolours.

Gouache

If you have gouache paints, either water based or acrylic, you can use these for many of the projects. Liquitex acrylic gouache comes in beautiful colours and is easy to use. It dries to a flat, matt surface that is non-reactive if you add further wet media on top, so this is a great advantage when we are creating in layers.

Collage materials

Rice or washi paper that is intended for brush calligraphy and Chinese art – this is essential

Tissue paper, Japanese papers, thin and translucent packaging materials

Pages from books

Small clippings from magazines

Small shreds of fabric or lace, buttons, natural bits and pieces, or vintage ephemera

Small sharp scissors for precise “fussy cutting”

A cutting mat, blade and ruler for cutting backgrounds etc

Acrylic medium to use as glue, either matt or gloss, plus a cheap coarse brush to apply it.

Making Cards

You can chop up heavy watercolour paper into postcard sizes, or buy manufactured watercolour postcards and greetings cards; you can purchase tri-fold blank greetings cards with cut out apertures, and these make a very nice display for your work. You can cut and fold your own black or coloured cardstock, using a trimmer, and a scoreboard is useful for this. Then mat your work onto the cardstock background.

Miscellaneous supplies

Anything you have can be used, such as

Pens and pencils, eraser and sharpener, ruler, set square, cutting mat, compass, a corner rounder

Posca pens – these are brilliant as waterproof when dry

Paint pens and markers – choose water resistant when dry if possible

Skewer and other mark-making tools; old credit card; a small brayer, cotton buds

A dip pen

Gel pens in white, gold and black

Crayons, coloured pencils, watercolour pencils, ink pens, gel pens

Rubber stamps and ink pads

Stencils

Distress inks

Gel plate (for making backgrounds, collage papers and prints using a brayer and acrylic paints on thin papers)

A colour wheel. This is very helpful in understanding what colours play nicely together.

It's a good idea to have **an art journal** for this course, though you can if you wish put your work on loose sheets and bind them together later. If so, find a box where you can store them safely. Choose a journal that is made of heavy watercolour paper or you will have disappointing results with cheap paper that cannot cope with water. A good choice is the Dina Wakley Media Journal by Ranger as it has a fun mix of different surfaces bound together – cotton watercolour paper, canvas, burlap and kraft and comes in a big size .

For all the art sessions you will need: a messy work area set up in front of your laptop, covered in plastic tablecloth, freezer paper, or whatever you can put together, such as layers of cardboard; kitchen paper; baby wipes; two jars of water; and your supplies for the lesson within easy reach.