

WATERCOLOR ROADBLOCKS and how to push through them!

1.

DRAWING SKILLS AREN'T STRONG ENOUGH

SOLUTIONS:

- When starting out, **work from a flat reference** and place it right next to your painting surface.
- Try to **use a reference that is the same size as the drawing** that you want to make, whether that's from an iPad, printed photo, or physical subject.
- **Look back and forth between the subject and your page constantly** so you don't get lost in your drawing.
- **Sketch lightly** so you can erase as often as you need to!
- **Don't make your sketch too tiny.** This will make it extra hard when you start to add watercolor.

2.

PAINTING BECOMES MUDDY

SOLUTIONS:

- **Use less water!** Think of it more like drawing and less like painting. For detailed work and outlines, use your smallest brush and only enough water to move the pigment across the page. If you're working on large areas like skies, water, or a hillside, feel free to use more water and a bigger brush.
- **Work in layers.** Once you've put down one color of paint, wait a few minutes for it to dry completely before moving on to adding more details and color.

3.

PAINTING LACKS CONTRAST

SOLUTIONS:

- Look at your subject and **make a color swatch of the lightest and darkest colors** that you see. This is your value range. Try to incorporate that really light and really dark color into your painting to give it contrast.
- **Let some of the white of the paper shine through** to create the most contrast.
- Throughout the process, **squint while looking at your subject and then squint and look at your painting.** If it looks like your subject has darker colors, you need to go back into your painting to add more dark layers.