



**Patrice's
First 10 Tips
to Make
Watercolor
More FUN!**

© 2019, Patrice A Federspiel



Welcome to Patrice's First Ten Tips to Make Watercolor More Fun

Although I turned my passion into my career, I can honestly tell you that all of my best paintings happen when I'm having fun painting them. That's why my best advice to you is to **paint for yourself FIRST (First Bonus Tip!)**. To paint for yourself means to paint what YOU want to paint. You'll have more fun and learn more in the process. We always learn more when we're having fun.

Consider these tips nuggets of **Wisdom from the Tip of My Brush** gleaned during the 19 years I've been painting full time. I hope they'll guide you to a more playful time spent painting with watercolor. Watercolor is a great teacher!

Tip #1: Make Friends with Watercolor!



Friends play an important role in our lives. They're the family we choose and they're the people we look to when we want to have fun. When we make friends with Watercolor, we're more likely to have fun painting and we're likely to paint more often.

Friends know when to push and when to relax with one another.

Enjoy watercolor's fluid nature — don't try to make it do what it doesn't want to do. Go with its natural flow.

Tip #2: It's ALL about the Water

Think: "WATER — COLOR — WATER — COLOR — WATER— COLOR — WATER". Your brush goes into the water before it goes into the paint and it goes back into the water after it's been on the paper. Your brush is in the water more than it's in the paint or on the paper.

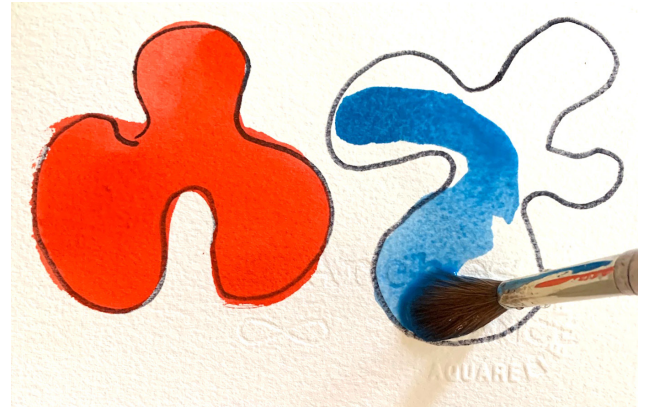
Learning to control your use of water is the key to painting with watercolor.

*"The more water you use, the more the paint flows.
The less water you use, the more you have control."*

~ Patrice A Federspiel

Tip #3: It's Just a bunch of Brush Strokes

As adults we know how to do a lot of things — and how to ask for help when we don't know how to do something. We feel good about all that we've learned. Life-long learning doesn't stop when school ends. Neither does practice. Painting “Brush Amoebas” (shown here) are a good way to practice your brush strokes.



Begin by drawing some simple shapes. Next load your brush with water and paint. Begin to fill in your shapes, **keeping your brush on the paper the entire time.** Don't worry about getting them perfect. This is about keeping your brush on the paper as long as possible, to create a smooth look to your paintings.

Tip #4: It's Just a Piece of Paper

In the beginning I was afraid to *“ruin a perfectly good piece of paper by painting on it.”* Eventually I realized the paper wasn't going to do me any good if I didn't apply paint. Later I learned that paper not used can mold, making it UN-usable.

Even an expensive piece of paper is just a piece of paper — and it's paper that you purchased so you could paint, so **PAINT! YOU** already deserve to use the best paper you can afford. **Colors show up more intensely on good paper. Good paper gives the best results.**

Tip #5: It's Just a Tube of Paint

Tubes of watercolor paint are small. Some cost more than others, depending upon the ingredients used to create the color. You didn't buy the paint to save paint, you bought the paint so you could paint. Please use it!

Put at least a large “thumbnail” amount of paint into each well of your palette. Paint lasts longer when there's enough of it to maintain its consistency. Using a spray bottle, pump a full squirt of water onto each well of paint before you start. It takes a few minutes for the paint to soften. Then remember to paint with the watery part of the paint, not the blob of paint at the bottom of the well.



Tip #6: Really LOOK at your painting

Presumably you're always looking at your painting while you paint. This tip asks that you look at it from different perspectives. This enables you to see it differently and to figure out if it's finished or what your painting needs to move it forward.

Turn your painting all around to look at it upside down and sideways. Hold it in front of you to look at its reflection in a mirror. You will see things completely differently and know what to paint next. Hang your painting up so you can see it at different times of the day. You'll notice things you might not have seen otherwise.

Tip #7: Three Cheers for the Adolescent Stage

EVERY painting goes through a series of life stages from "infancy" to "adolescent" to "adult". The adolescent Stage is that time of life when the parts and pieces don't look like they fit the whole.

If you've come to a stage where you don't like your painting, that's **GREAT!** You're at the adolescent stage. You're not done yet, it's still just a piece of paper, this time with paint on it, **AND** you've got nothing to lose by continuing to paint. **Give your painting the time it needs to "grow up" and continue to paint.**

Tip #8: Follow Your Energy

Our energies fluctuate throughout the day according to our biorhythms. Your energy is a reflection of the amount of life force energy you're feeling.

Value your energy! Notice when you feel energized by your painting and when your energy drops. Take a break, even a short one, and stop painting when your energy sags. Your energy is an indication of your painting acumen at that point in time. If your energy is flagging, take a break!

Tip #9: Creativity Benefits from Rules & Schedules

Discipline is a close friend of Your Creative Spirit. If you've scheduled painting time for yourself but don't feel like painting, paint anyway. Within five minutes you'll be glad that you did. Painting is fun, you owe it to yourself to add fun to your schedule.

Adding guard rails, rules, classes, or scheduled times to your painting life, boosts your creativity and your paintings. Just like Medicine and the Law are Practices, so too is Painting. **Practice is your best bet to improving your painting skills.**

Tip #10: Step Away from Your Painting

Paint as long as you know what to paint. When unsure of what to do next, walk away from your painting to get a fresh perspective. Ask yourself and your painting what it "needs or wants" to move it forward. Only keep painting when you know what to paint next.

At first, this might seem self-evident, but many of us want to paint so much that we keep painting without giving much thought to what colors we're using where or why. **Understanding what to paint next is important.**

Bonus Tip #11: Maintain a Beginner's Mindset

Continue to allow the paint and painting process to teach you more about yourself, about your own process, and about your life. **This is Your True Wisdom at the Tip of the Brush.**





About Patrice

Mystery & magic are key words for Patrice and her art. Living in the realm of possibility means not knowing what comes next—in life or in her paintings.

For years, Patrice got up to paint or sculpt before going to her “day job” as the Creative Services Manager for a Library Supply company. A morning person, she knew that if she waited until the end of the day to do her personal creative work, it wouldn’t get done.

Every day, before putting her project down, she’d take a photo of it to record her progress. She’d wonder, often aloud, *“How can I do this full time?”*

In January 2000, Patrice took her first vacation to Hawaii to visit a friend. While there, she was asked to house-sit for five months. Faced with the possibility of living her dream life as an artist, she thought,

“I could quit my job, I could sell my house, and I could paint!” She said, *“Yes!”*

The decision to move to Hawaii made, doors of opportunity continued to open, moving her further into the realm of evolution & possibility. Shifting from full-time employment to self-employment is tricky. Living five time zones and 4,000 miles away from family and friends honed her focus.

Students who work with Patrice experience watercolor as a path to expanded awareness. Her signature **“Hide-N-Seek”** process helps people reconnect to the joy of discovery they felt as kids.

“Ideas are multi-dimensional, translating them into paintings means shifting the ways in which we see.” ~ Patrice A Federspiel