



Basic Watercolor Workshop

A Refresh and Skill-BUILDER for All Levels

Dates: August 14–16, 2026

Time: 10:00 am – 3:30 pm daily

Instructor: Ellen Jean Diederich (TWSA, RRWS, WSA, WW)

Sponsored by: The Badlands Art Association

Location: NDSU Extension Stark/Billings County
2680 Empire Road, Suite 2680B
Dickinson, ND

About the Workshop

Whether you are looking for a watercolor refresher or want to build upon your current skill set, this workshop is for you! Because there is always so much to learn, we will focus deeply on the fundamentals so you can confidently apply them to any future painting.

During this three-day intensive, we will practice core techniques, explore how to arrange shapes, and use strong design principles to dramatically improve your compositions. Our ultimate goal will be working toward completing a finished piece on the final day.

You can expect multiple step-by-step demonstrations alongside plenty of dedicated time to explore and create your own original paintings. You are welcome to paint from provided photographs and/or bring your own personal reference photos (please do not bring photos of other artists' paintings to copy).

Syllabus

- **Friday:** Warm up by working directly with paint, paper, and the creative process. We will study shapes and color circles, then paint a row of trees to practice creating three-dimensional volume.
- **Saturday:** Warm up by painting a flower while holding it directly in your hand, then learn how to paint and seamlessly integrate a background around it. Afterward, we will trace or draw out a painting to work on together.
- **Sunday:** Continue developing and painting the piece started on Saturday. For those who choose, an additional second sketch and new demonstrations will be available to work from.

Supplies & Logistics

- **Lunch:** Please bring your own lunch each day.
- **Early Setup Help:** If you are a beginner or need assistance setting up your palette and supplies, please arrive early at **9:15 am on Friday morning**.
- **Beginners:** Be sure to bring whatever "stuff from home" and miscellaneous supplies you already have. I will have professional-grade paints, paper, palettes, and brushes available for purchase at the workshop.
- **Pre-Workshop Preparation:** Please watch this free, highly informative 20-minute video all about art supplies, packed with helpful hints before you arrive. You can find this and other free painting videos under the workshop section of my website: [Watercolor Workshop Supplies and Tips](#).

Registration & Contact Information

To reserve your spot or ask questions, please reach out to our coordinators:

- **Ruth Heley:** ruth.heley@gmail.com | 701-590-8508
- **Tod Winter:** todmwinter@supernet.com | 701-260-9504

Stay Inspired! You are cordially invited to sign up for Ellen Jean Diederich's weekly blog, "*Painting of the Week*". Each entry shares the unique story behind a painting, an expert painting tip, and updates on upcoming events and specials. Visit www.givinity.com/blog and sign up at the bottom of the page.

[Watercolor Workshop Supplies and Tips](#)
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ELLEN DIEDERICH

WORKSHOP

WATERCOLOR FUNDAMENTALS

TAKING A WORKSHOP?
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ARTIST



Ellen Die

Watercolor Workshop Supply List

Instructor: Ellen Jean Diederich, TWSA, RRWS, WSA, WW

Welcome! Many students struggle simply because of the paper, palettes, or brushes they choose. Using professional-grade paint and paper is strongly recommended, as student-grade materials can significantly slow your progress.

💡 **Rule of Thumb:** Start with the "stuff" you already have! Please bring your favorites, old brands you want to use up, and a variety of brushes (including oil painting brushes), various tools, and any water media paints you own. Many items can be substituted.

Need Help Setting Up?

If you are starting fresh or need help setting up your palette, **please arrive at 9:15 a.m. on Friday morning.** I will have professional palettes, paints, boards, paper, brushes, and erasers available for purchase at discounted prices to ensure you have tools that work. If you don't have good paper yet, please wait and purchase it from me at the workshop!

General Studio Supplies (Please Bring)

- **Reference Photos:** Photographs you have taken yourself to paint from, or printouts of images emailed to you by the instructor.
- **Technology:** An iPad (preferred) or cell phone to view references.
- **Drawing Tools:** 9" x 12" drawing pad, HB or #2 drawing pencils, Sharpie marker, and an 18" ruler or straightedge.
- **Erasers:** White Pearl eraser, Art Gum eraser, and a Magic Eraser.
- **Studio Basics:** Support board (such as Gatorboard or Plexiglas), masking tape, paper towels, and an ice cream pail for water.
- **Utility Brush:** A 2" black bristle house brush with a short handle (available at hardware stores).

Palette & Brushes

- **Palette:** A watercolor tray or a **Robert E. Wood Watercolor Palette** (highly recommended as the most economical and useful studio palette).
- **Paper:** 2 sheets of **Arches 140lb (or heavier) cold press** watercolor paper.
- **Brushes:** * Winsor & Newton (WN) Golden Scepter 1" wash brush
 - WN Golden Scepter ½" flat (wash brush)
 - WN #10 round
 - WN Series 530 Script/Liner brush

Paint Palette Guide

Winsor & Newton Professional Grade paints are recommended, but any professional brand will help you succeed. Note: Colors with "Cadmium" in the name are now also sold as safer "Cadmium-Free" alternatives.

The Minimum Palette (Essential)

- French Ultramarine Blue
- Permanent Rose
- Winsor Yellow Deep
- Burnt Sienna
- Hooker's Green

The Full Palette (Ellen's Layout)

- Antwerp Blue
- Burnt Sienna
- Cadmium Lemon
- Cerulean Blue
- Cobalt Blue
- Cobalt Turquoise Dark
- French Ultramarine Blue
- Hooker's Green
- Indian Red
- Permanent Rose
- Raw Sienna
- Rose Madder Genuine
- Scarlet Lake
- Winsor Green (Phthalo)
- Winsor Yellow Deep

Additional Favorites

- Cadmium Orange (or Cadmium-Free)
- Cobalt Green
- Cobalt Teal
- Cobalt Turquoise Light
- Cobalt Violet
- Mars Black
- Permanent Magenta
- Quinacridone Gold
- Titanium White

Optional Materials (Play & Experiment)

These items are *not* a required part of the core curriculum, but feel free to bring them if you want to experiment:

- Watercolor pencils (a box of 36 or more is recommended *only* if you are buying them new).
- Gouache or Acrylic paints.
- Matte medium or soft gel gloss.
- Collage items.
- Brayers, Speedball Easy-Cut blocks, and a linoleum cutter.

What to Expect

There will be plenty of live demonstrations, dedicated time to practice techniques, and opportunities to create your own paintings. A formal welcome letter with final details will be sent to you two weeks prior to the workshop.

Questions? Please feel free to reach out via email at ellen@givinity.com with any supply or preparation questions. See you soon!