

Color Mixing - Matching Hue and Value

Exercise 1:

Pigments to use: Winsor Lemon, Perm. Alizarin Crimson, French Ultramarine

Reproduce as closely as possible the painting below. Focus on mixing colors that match the original in HUE, VALUE and INTENSITY, and on getting them “right the first time”. If you look at this painting closely, you’ll see that the only glazing or layering is in the ultramarine foreground water shapes and the masts on the boats. Everything else was put down as a flat wash or wet in wet and then left alone. *This is direct painting.* Use the pigments above for this assignment, mixing them either in your palette first or wet in wet directly on your paper.

Before you begin the painting, it might be helpful to make swatches with the following 2-color combinations, *varying the proportion of each color* to see how many different hues you can make. Always start your mixture with the lightest of the hues & add the dark one to it.

Perm. Alizarin Crimson + Lemon Yellow

Perm. Alizarin Crimson + Fr. Ultramarine

Lemon Yellow + Fr. Ultramarine

Lemon Yellow + Perm. Alizarin Crimson

+ Fr. Ultramarine

With these colors, you will be able to mix clear violets/purples, slightly subdued, greyed greens and quite subdued oranges. You should be able to mix a good range of neutrals and darks.



Steve Hills, “Yellow Harbor”, watercolor, 1997

Exercise 2:

Pigments to Use: Any of the basic six.

Reproduce the second painting (below) as closely as possible, trying to match color hues, values and intensities. This is an exercise focusing on your ability to mix darks and neutrals without using black. To do this, you use 3-color primary combinations, varying the proportions to vary the neutral. You may wish to make some test swatches of these combinations before doing the painting.:

Lemon Yellow + Fr. Ultramarine + Perm. Alizarin Crimson

Lemon Yellow + Winsor Blue + Perm. Alizarin Crimson

Lemon Yellow + Winsor Blue + Scarlet Lake

Lemon Yellow + Fr. Ultramarine + Scarlet Lake

Trans. Yellow + Fr. Ultramarine + Perm. Alizarin Crimson

Trans. Yellow + Winsor Blue + Perm. Alizarin Crimson

Trans. Yellow + Winsor Blue + Scarlet Lake

Trans. Yellow + Fr. Ultramarine + Scarlet Lake

This painting is an example of *glazing to gradually build up color value* and create new subtle hues. The artist began with the lightest values, and then continued to layer color ending with the darkest most saturated hues.



Dotty Hawthorne, "Edna Valley at Sunrise", watercolor, 2001