



## Painting from Observation

We're going to jump right in by using observation to paint a few sketches of our roses, using a half sheet of watercolour paper. Keep your palette and water jar comfortably within reach as you'll need lots of water for this impressionistic style of painting. There are two areas on most deep palettes for mixing your paints – use the top surface to add the raw paint from the tube, then create each wash in one of the wells.

## The first wash

Look carefully at the rose you are painting to identify the colours you'll need. Add a little Permanent Rose, Raw Sienna and Ultramarine to your palette – shades of the primary colours red, yellow and blue.

Now observe the shape of the flower. We'll paint the flower the way that nature forms itself: from the centre outwards. Roses tend to spiral out amorously – almost randomly – and we'll make marks to represent this on the page.

Collect some water on your oval wash brush and pick up a tiny amount of Permanent Rose on the tip. Mix together in one of the wells of your palette, then add another brush load of water to make your first wash.

Repeat to make a wash with the Raw Sienna and then the Ultramarine. Wash the brush out and squeeze any excess water away between your fingers.

Using the Permanent Rose wash and starting from the centre, spiral outwards in unequal brushwork to the edge, using larger shapes as you reach the outer petals. Press and release the brush as you paint to vary the strength of the colour.

Next add some of the Raw Sienna wash, observing your rose to see where it should go. The two colours will mix together naturally on the paper. Use the Ultramarine wash to add some outer petals, pushing the brush into the shadow areas.



*Use both areas of your palette for mixing*



*Spiral out from the centre with your oval brush*

## Adding detail

While the washes are still damp, swap to your round Size 8 brush to add detail. Wet the brush, then mix some of the Permanent Rose on top of the palette to loosen the paint. Support your hand at the wrist, as we'll start in the centre again and you don't want to smudge the existing paint. Add small marks into the darker sections, winding the tip of the brush around to create small spirals. Try not to overwork any area of your painting.

Working on the top of the palette again rather than inside a well, mix some Permanent Rose with a little Ultramarine for a deeper red that's almost purple. Continue to add detail with the tip of the brush.

Wash out the brush, then use clear water to work over some of your lines. Press and release the brush along the marks you've made to soften them.

Continue to build up the shadow areas with more of the washes, changing brushes as necessary.



*Add finer detail with the round brush*



*Use an almost-purple mix to add shadows*

## Adding foliage

Pay attention to the negative shapes – that is, the background areas in between the leaves and the flowers. These are often simpler than the positive flower shapes themselves. Mix a little Ultramarine into the Raw Sienna on the top of the palette to create your green.

Nature is made up of shapes. Try to simplify the shapes – you already know them. Add the first leaf outside your painted rose with a pressure stroke. Aim to use as few marks as possible.

Avoid following the outline of the rose precisely. Select which leaves to add around the rose to create a natural balance.

Refresh your palette with more paint as required. Swap to the square brush to add some flatter brushstrokes and also some lines using the tip of the brush in a printing-like motion. Allow the colours to mix in the brush for a different colour effect.



*Avoid following the outline when adding foliage*

## Congratulations on painting your first rose!

We hope you're pleased with it, but don't be disappointed if it doesn't look the same as Trevor's – there's no wrong or right way to paint. Practice painting freely to build your confidence with the mixes and brush strokes you've discovered. Try wetting the paper first for a wet-on-wet technique, painting with the stiffer mix of Permanent Rose on the tip of the oval brush, or paint a pair of roses as demonstrated by Trevor, using lots of different brush marks.