

Plein Aire Cityscape Painting with Eric March

Creative Arts Workshop, Spring Term 2018

Easel

You will need some sort of painting support. Things to think about when selecting a field easel: How heavy is it? Will I be carrying it around a lot? Does it feel durable or will it fall apart after a couple of uses? What size canvases can it hold/what size canvases do I need it to hold? If it breaks is it fixable? How much does it cost/how much will I be using it? Does it hold wet paintings for transport? Does it hold supplies? Does it provide a palette support? A place for medium?

Some suggestions:

1. I use a tripod-mounted hand-made pochade box adapted from a sketch box like this one:
<http://www.jerrysartarama.com/cappelletto-fabrizia-sketch-box>

My DIY design is inspired by a box like this one from Artwork Essentials:

<http://www.artworkessentials.com/products/Pro/pro.htm>

2. These Guerrilla Boxes are similar but clunkier: <http://www.jerrysartarama.com/10x13-inch-guerrilla-painter-french-resistance-pochade>

You can also use a pochade box without a tripod by putting it in your lap or on a bench in front of you.

3. French Easel. I used a French Easel for many years before discovering that tripod mounted pochade boxes are simpler, lighter, and more durable. I would go with the Half Box as it is lighter and you don't really lose any utility: <http://www.jerrysartarama.com/jullian-original-and-half-box-french-easels>

- 4.) Steel or aluminum tripod easel. This is the simplest option, however it does not provide for a palette tray or a way to transport a wet painting. These needs can be accommodated in other ways. Tripod easels often don't get quite high enough for ideal height for standing while painting. They can also be somewhat unstable because they are so light. <http://www.dickblick.com/products/richeson-italian-steel-tripod-easel/> or <http://www.dickblick.com/products/winsor-and-newton-aluminum-bristol-easels/>

Painting Supplies

Palette – a wood palette rubbed with linseed oil is a versatile and non-breakable option. Sometimes field easels come with palettes built-in.

Palette knife – a couple different shapes can be helpful to have, with at least one trowel-shaped knife.

1 small cup for clean mineral spirits, 1 small cup for medium. Best to have these with screw tops so they are easily transportable. You can get them so they are a set of two that clip on to your palette.

Brush cleaning jar – either Silicoil or, preferably, stainless steel sealable brush washer. You need a way to clean your brushes! The steel jar is better for field painting because it will not break. Pack these well for transport as they might leak even when sealed.

Turpenoid for cleaning brushes (odorless turpentine not “Natural” Turpenoid). Fill your brush washer 3/4 full of Turpenoid.

Vine charcoal (6-12 sticks)

Spring Clamps or other clips can be helpful to stabilize your field easel or hold a canvas to an easel. Also useful for attaching brush washer jar, brush can, and other stuff to your field easel.

Paper towels (Viva or Bounty work best)

Small bag for trash

Brushes – flat bristle brushes, sizes 1, 2, 4, 8 (helpful for cityscapes/rectangular shapes). I like Robert Simmons brushes.

A can or stand for holding brushes. A folding brush folio stand can be an excellent way to transport and hold brushes while working. Brush can/holder can be clipped to a field easel for easy access. (<http://www.dickblick.com/products/alvin-prestige-paintbrush-holders/>)

Paint

White: Titanium white (less toxic, a more opaque, slower drying). Alternate: Flake white or Cremnitz White. (Lead white is toxic, dries faster and is more transparent.)

High Chroma Warms: Cadmium Lemon, Cadmium Yellow Deep or Medium Cadmium Orange, Cadmium Red, Alizarin Crimson or Quinocridone Magenta

Earth Colors: Naples Yellow, Yellow Ochre Pale, Raw Sienna, Venetian Red, Burnt Sienna, Burnt Umber, Sap Green

High Chroma Cools: Viridian, Cerulean Blue, Cobalt Blue, Phthalo Blue Green, Ultramarine Blue

Black: Ivory Black (a cool black, dries slower), Mars Black (a warmer black, dries faster, better for first layers of a painting than Ivory)

Painting Supports

A good support is the foundation of a good painting. It can make your painting a joy with great flow or fight you every step of the way. There are many different materials that are suitable for oil painting. Many artists develop a taste for certain kinds of surfaces, but some general qualities to look for in a painting support include archival construction and materials, not prone to warping or cracking, slightly absorbent but not too “dry.” If working in oils, the surface should have an oil prime, although acrylic-primed surfaces can also work fine. I would suggest a canvas size between 11” x 14” to 8” x 10”.

Canvas Boards

These are cheap but not the best surface. To improve them, I suggest giving them an additional layer of gesso with a palette knife and then sanding them lightly with a fine sand paper.

Linen Boards

Acrylic-primed masonite

Primed or sealed wooded boards/artist surface plywood

Primed or sealed museum board

InnerGlow panels (nice!)

Other Outdoor Materials

Folding chair

Wide-brimmed hat

Water

Sunscreen

Sunglasses

Food