

Zentangle Background Options and Techniques

NOTE: If you are ahead of schedule, you may continue to create a more complex background around your main Zentangle subject, using additional designs or recognizable imagery.

The main focus of your painting is the Zentangle image in the center of the page. A good way to finish your painting while keeping the focus of attention on your central complex design is to create an interesting abstract background using some simple watercolor techniques.

You have a lot of freedom! You may use a combination of: Pencils, Ink, Watercolor Trays



Some Fun Techniques to try:

Basic

- 1) **Wash** – a transparent, even layer of color used to work into large background areas. This is your “base” color that you use to overlay additional stuff.
- 2) **Graded Wash** – wash that varies in intensity from one side of the paper to the other.
- 3) **Wet into Wet** – drops of paint can be applied to wet brushes causing “blossoms” of colors as they bleed into each other. This can be an interesting “out of focus” background effect.

- 4) **Sponging** – you can sponge paint onto the paper to create textures; often used to suggest leaves, clouds, etc.
- 5) **Splatter** – paint can be applied to a wet or dry wash area by splattering from a toothbrush to create effects such as falling snow, fog, rain, white water etc.

Intermediate

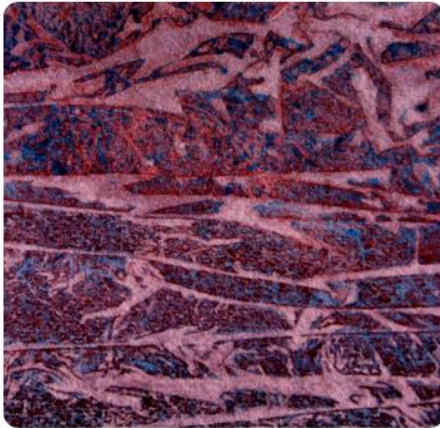
6)



Salt on a wet wash

Salt is sprinkled on a wet wash and starts to gather the watercolor pigments. The wash has to be still wet but not too shiny. The effect will vary depending on the size of the grains of salt and the wetness of the paper. Brush off the salt when everything has dried.

7)



Wrapping paper on a wet wash

Crumple wrapping paper and lay it on a wet wash. Once it has dried, remove the wrapping paper.

8)



Lifting off color on a wet wash

Color can be lifted off with a tissue paper and a thirsty brush can be used to carve lighter areas in a wash to add texture. Lifting off paint on a wet wash is a great technique to paint clouds in a sky.