

Greetings Fellow Artists!

I look forward to painting the CA coast with you. Please take the time to look over the materials-list—feel free to contact me with any questions that you have.

Phone: (406) 539-8393

E-mail: aaronschuerr@gmail.com

Web Site: www.aaronschuerr.com

One way I prepare a field kit for traveling is to do a series of small studies. If I have reference for the area, (in this case, the CA coast,) I'll do a handful of studies from those references. Ideally, I'll look at different light patterns—front lit, back lit, morning, evening, etc. That way I come up with a wide range of color. As I work, I set these colors aside so that I can add them to my field kit.

I also break my pastels in half. I prefer to work with smaller pieces for two reasons: I work with the side more than I work with the tip, and I can pack more colors.

If you want me to email you some reference images from the CA coast so that you can use it to pick out colors, let me know. It can be really valuable to reference some images when picking out a palette of colors.

I find that many pastels sets are heavy on bright and mid-value colors. For the most part, landscape colors are subtle. I find that I use a lot of colors that are mid-value to light, with the largest variety in greens and blues.

- Often the darks in sets are intensely chromatic—what I would call accent colors. It's good to have a few intense darks (Terry Ludwig has some chromatic darks,) but most of my darks are less heavily pigmented. I try to find darks that range from neutral to leaning toward blue, green, red, etc. and some earthy darks.
- **Ocean blues** can be deep but are rarely intense. They range from blue violet to grey to turquoise. Generally, sky blues are a step lighter, ranging from a very light turquoise to a mid-value blue violet. Many sky colors tend to be very light, especially the turquoise colors. Sometimes, the ocean atmosphere will produce subtle greys to a milky orange color in the sky near to the horizon.
- **Greens:** I look for a range of cool to warm greens. I like to have some deep greens for conifers, and warm, bright yellowish-greens for grasses. Hillsides and distant coast will shift to grey-green. Like the blues, I bring a wide range- they get used a lot!
- **Cliff colors:** Finding a good range of greys (neutrals) can be a challenge. I find the CA coastal rocks to be slightly warm and fairly light in value. Sometimes along the base of a formation you'll get deep warm darks. As the distance increases, the rock formations shift to blue grey.
- **Whites:** I only use pure white as an accent color within a highlight. Otherwise I look for a range of off whites for clouds and waves.

- **Other Colors:** I've only painted CA in spring- I remember a lot of warm rusty oranges and reds along the coast, reminiscent of fall colors. I also pack some yellows, and whitish yellows, and earth tones. Hope this helps! I know it's a challenge to figure out a good palette for traveling. Let me know if you need additional help.

Best, Aaron Schuerr

Plein Air Painting Materials

- The most important thing is to have a good lightweight setup for working in the field.
- Make sure to check the weather forecast and pack accordingly. Bring a sunhat, sunscreen, and water bottle. Plan to bring a sack lunch each day.

Pastel Materials

- Easel** I have modified a Strada Easel for pastel- if you are interested in how to do it, contact me. Other good setups include The Edgemon Easel www.edgemonart.com and Heilman Pastel box. <http://heilmandesigns.com>
- Pastels** I have a reasonably priced pastel set available on Amazon. I don't require you have it, just have a look and see what you think. Bear in mind, this is a general set, colors are chosen for a wide variety of landscapes and seasons. I did not put it together as a desert set. If you purchase it, I'd suggest augmenting it with your own pastels. <https://www.judsonart.com/products/set-80-aaron-schuerr-plein-air>
- More is More!!** Bring as many pastels as you can reasonably use. I break mine in half, so that I can fit more colors into my field kit. I use a variety of brands, Terry Ludwig, Diane Townsend, and Blue Earth being some of my favorites. Best to get out there and get working with your pastels so that you can figure out what works for you.
- Paper** I use Pastelmat, but it's not for everyone! It comes in 12x16 and 9x12 packs- I've experimented with the colored papers, and I really like them. I also use UART (400 or 500 grit) and Ampersand Pastelboard. **(Just avoid dark colored papers!)** You can purchase either the Pastelmat or the UART mounted to board from Dakota Art Pastels www.dakotapastls.com. Paper sizes from 8x10 and 12x16, up to 16x20 is fine.
- Drawing/Sketching Materials-** Bring a few sheets of charcoal paper, some vine or willow charcoal (the fatter the sticks, the better!) an eraser or two, and a stump. I've been using a new sketchbox design created by Joshua Bean.

- f. If you are interested check out the link:
www.joshuabeen.com/merchandise/sketchboxes. It's a great setup for doing notans (value sketches.) Cost is \$75 with the markers/paper included, so I'm not requiring it- just something to consider!
- A lightweight board to tape the paper to.
 - Willow or Vine Charcoal (comes in bunches and in different diameters. Get at least one fat stick!)
 - Medium Stump
 - Chamois
 - Kneaded eraser, gum eraser
 - Artist tape or masking tape
 - Sketch Book and pencil
 - Portable Easel- either a frenchbox easel or a pastel pochade box (contact me if you need)

Oil Painting Materials

- a. **Easel:** Make sure you have a sturdy portable easel that you can use. I use a pochade box- here are some sites to check out with good options: www.openboxM.com, www.allaprimapochade.com, www.artworkessentials.com., www.stradaeasel.com. These websites also have some great painting accessories to check out. If you have any questions, please e-mail me.
- b. **Palette:** Either wood with a nice patina, glass or plexiglass work well. Paper palettes are not recommended.
- c. **Storage-** you'll want wet boxes to store your wet paintings in. You can get nice wood panel holders, but they are expensive. A cheaper option is at www.raymarart.com. They make boxes from corrugated plastic.
- d. **Panels-** I prefer oil primed linen panels. As far as sizes I suggest a range from 6x8 – 11x14. I work mostly 8x10, 9x12, 10x12, and 11x14. Plan to have some cheap 6x8 panels for painting exercises.
- e. **Brushes – Please do not show up with ratty old brushes.** Invest in good brushes and I will show you how to maintain them so that they last for years. I use Rosemary and co. ivory brushes. www.rosemaryandco.com/oil-brushes/ivory-oils. I also like Silver Brush Limited's Grand Prix line of hog bristle brushes. www.jerrysartarama.com Sizes- I use mostly 6 and 8 brights, flats and a few filberts. I keep a range from #2-10.
- f. **Paint** Student grades work, but not as well as artist grades. Here is a nice basic palette: cadmium Yellow light, cadmium yellow medium, yellow ochre, cadmium red light, Alizarin crimson, burnt sienna, cobalt blue, ultramarine blue and titanium white. For the ocean it can be nice to have phthalo blue as well.

- g. **Turpentine jar/brush washer** – Also available at www.jerrysartarama.com. Type brush washer into the search. A small sealable jar for cleaning brushes.
- h. **Drawing/Sketching Materials-** Bring a few sheets of charcoal paper, some vine or willow charcoal (the fatter the sticks, the better!) an eraser or two, and a stump. I've been using a new sketchbox design created by Joshua Bean. If you are interested check out the link: www.joshuabeen.com/merchandise/sketchboxes. It's a great setup for doing notans (2-3 value sketches.) Cost is \$75 with the markers/paper included, so I'm not requiring it- just something to consider!
- i. **Other Stuff:**
- Palette cup (for clean solvent)
 - Easel umbrella
 - Water bottle, sunscreen, sunhat
 - A medium paint knife for mixing
 - Medium (optional – linseed oil, liquin, that sort of thing)
 - Paper towels! (I like Viva.)
 - Sketch book, pencil, and erasers.