

Image not found

L'atelier Canson <https://www.cansonstudio.com/sites/all/themes/passerelle/cansonconseils/logo.png>

Published on *L'atelier Canson* (<https://www.cansonstudio.com>)

[Home](#) > Selecting your watercolor paper

Image not found

https://www.cansonstudio.com/sites/all/themes/passerelle/cansonconseils/canson_commons/images/btn-prece.png

[Return to article list](#) [1]

Selecting your watercolor paper

Image not found

https://www.cansonstudio.com/sites/all/themes/passerelle/cansonconseils/canson_commons/images/article-fav.png

[Art Material](#) [5]

Rate this article

Give Selecting your watercolor paper 1/5

?

Rate

Grammage, thickness, grain? Should you choose paper depending how you feel about it? Not really. It depends on how much water you use: for an ideal rendering, it shouldn't buckle or bleed. Here are a few pointers!

1. Grammage: a matter of weight

Watercolor paper is ranked by number of grams per square meter, generally between 190 and 800 g. What you need to know: The higher the grammage, the more resistant the paper is to paint and water.

Image not found

- [Aquarelle choisir le grammage du papier](https://www.cansonconseils.com/sites/all/themes/passerelle/cansonconseils/images/190A.jpg)

Under 300 g/m²: while less expensive, this paper has the defect of buckling faster. So it is essential to stretch it before painting by attaching it to a backing.

For whom? For beginners and those who can control the degree of wetness of the paint perfectly.

- **300 g/m²:** the ideal grammage for most watercolors, neither too thin nor too thick.

For whom? For everybody, because it is a good compromise, particularly for beginners.

- **Over 300 g/m²:** this heavier, thicker paper holds moisture better. Paint dries more slowly on it: wait until you are more comfortable with wet techniques before using it.

For whom? For those who like to take their time and/or do detailed work.

Memo: Grammage or thickness?

It is hard to distinguish between these two concepts? Note! Grammage is not the same thing as paper thickness, just as thickness is not the same as paper weight.

- **Grammage:** weight of a square meter of paper.
- **Thickness:** that of one sheet of paper, measured in microns.

2 . The grain of the paper: whatever you're most comfortable with

The choice of grain depends entirely on what you want, on your subject, and on the way you'll be working with it. In a nutshell, everyone picks a grain according to their needs!

Aquarelle - le grain satiné

Image not found

https://www.cansonstudio.com/sites/default/files/aquarelle-004-B_0.jpg

- **Satin finish:** it provides a very smooth surface that works perfectly for narrow lines and doing details.

Aquarelle - le grain fin

Image not found

https://www.cansonstudio.com/sites/default/files/aquarelle-004-C_0.jpg

- **Fine grain:** the most frequently used texture. Its surface, neither too smooth nor too rough, slightly rougher than satin finish, and easy to use and adapt to (almost) any situation.

Aquarelle - le grain torchon

Image not found

<https://www.cansonstudio.com/sites/default/files/aquarelle-004-D.jpg>

- **Rough or torchon grain:** given its coarser texture that tends to erase details, it requires considerable technical mastery. While not suited to highly detailed subjects, it works perfectly for color and relief effects.

Practical advice: test the paper!

To learn about the features of various papers, there's nothing like doing a little test. Load a dry brush with paint and apply the paint:

- On paper with a satin finish à the spot of color will be uniform.
- On fine grain paper à the paint will fragment slightly and the edges will be irregular.
- On rough grain paper, the paint will not cover dips in the paper, producing a very fragmented rendering.

3. Zoom: Pad or loose sheets?

- **Pad glued on four sides:** thanks to its sheets stuck to each another, it allows the paper to remain perfectly taut while working. What could be more obvious to beginners!
- **Loose sheets:** first fastened to cardboard, a panel or a frame with adhesive tape or thumbtacks, they are essential for large format work.

Suggested products

Canson® Montval®

Image not found

https://www.cansonstudio.com/sites/default/files/styles/miniature___lire_aussi/public/New-aqua-montval.jpg?itok=kjFLJv5Y



Image not found

https://www.cansonstudio.com/sites/all/themes/passerelle/cansonconseils/canson_commons/images/link-a-arrow.png

[VIEW THIS PRODUCT](#) [6]

See also

Watercolor: 4 Sided Glue Pads

Le bloc aquarelle collé 4 côtés

Image not found

https://www.cansonstudio.com/sites/default/files/styles/miniature___lire_aussi/public/aquarelle-004b.jpg?itok=jZF5PjAL

Designed for use in all situations, the 4-sided glue pad allows you to use all types of wet techniques without pre-treating the paper: It is the perfect companion for nomadic artists.

Image not found

https://www.cansonstudio.com/sites/all/themes/passerelle/cansonconseils/canson_commons/images/link-a-arrow.png

[DISCOVER](#) [7]

Watercolor paper

El papel de acuarela

Image not found

https://www.cansonstudio.com/sites/default/files/styles/miniature___lire_aussi/public/aquarelle-010.jpg?itok=sYgOKVuD

Strong water absorbency, a handsome shade of white, and a texture with a finer or coarser grain are the major qualities of watercolor paper. But do you know how they are obtained? Decoding.

Image not found

https://www.cansonstudio.com/sites/all/themes/passerelle/cansonconseils/canson_commons/images/link-a-arrow.png

[DISCOVER](#) [8]

Links

[1] <https://www.cansonstudio.com/techniques/aquarelle>

[2] [//twitter.com/share?url=https://www.cansonstudio.com/printpdf/477&text=Selecting your watercolor paper](https://twitter.com/share?url=https://www.cansonstudio.com/printpdf/477&text=Selecting%20your%20watercolor%20paper) <https://www.cansonstudio.com/printpdf/477> via @CansonPaper

[3] <https://www.cansonstudio.com/printpdf/477>

[4] <https://www.cansonstudio.com/print/477>

[5] <https://www.cansonstudio.com/art-material>

[6] <http://en.canson.com/watercolour/canson-montval>

[7] <https://www.cansonstudio.com/watercolor-4-sided-glue-pads>

[8] <https://www.cansonstudio.com/watercolor-paper>