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In the presence of moisture, pastels become pasty. When you moisten them more, you can use them as light washes.

What you need to know

- Watercoloring, that is, using a wet paintbrush to paint with dry pastels in the style of watercolors, spreads and softens colors while keeping the lines strong.
- Moistening a surface done in oil pastels with white spirit or turpentine moves color around without decreasing the tone.

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1. Dry pastel watercoloring

- Stretch a sheet of water resistant paper, such as watercolor paper.
- Sketch your work with soft dry pastels using relatively thick, sweeping oblique lines.
- Work the areas you have selected with a moistened paintbrush: The color will unify.
- Use a very supple paintbrush to water the pigments down some more to obtain a light wash between the lines while keeping them visible.
- Easily create a stippled effect on heavy grain paper: The pastels will attach to the high points while

the wash will deposit a lighter color in the low ones.

Trick of the trade: Like the painter Edgar Degas, you too can turn a bit of dry pastel into powder, moisten it and apply it directly to your work.

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2. Dilute some oil pastels

- Liberally apply the color in strong sweeping lines.
- Moisten an oil painting paintbrush with white spirit or turpentine.
- Brush on the pastel: its pigments will blend and the color can be moved around just like paint. Your lines will disappear and be replaced by paintbrush strokes.

Trick of the trade: You can also directly apply oil pastels to your moistened paintbrush by lifting color from the tip of a pastel stick.

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The stencil method can add a little DIY trick to your dry pastel compositions. It allows you to easily obtain forms with very clean contours: guaranteed style and graphic effects!

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