

# **Six Colours Three Brushes**

## ***Painting with Frank Halliday***

Welcome to BBC Radio Norfolk's Art series "Six Colours - Three Brushes."

As the title suggests painting does not have to be complicated or expensive. The paper, pencils and paint, though, are only one part of it. The most important thing is allowing yourself the confidence to have a go. We hope that Six Colours - Three Brushes will inspire you to try!

Whether you paint outside, or the things around your home, painting can give great pleasure. This information pack tells you everything you need to get started as well as many of Frank's tips and techniques that will help those who have already begun their artistic journey!

You can also learn more about the Visual Arts on display in galleries around the county with the BBC Norfolk website at **[www.bbc.co.uk/norfolk](http://www.bbc.co.uk/norfolk)**

# **Six Colours Three Brushes**

**The biggest hurdle to painting is telling yourself you can't do it**

Comparing yourself to others and saying you could never do as good as that. Art is a personal thing. No two people will paint the same scene in the same way. No scene looks the same two days running. Weather and nature sees to that. This means there is a lot of scope for your own interpretation.

Painting on the radio also means that you can get the help and advice you need - without ever needing to show your work to anyone! You have nothing to be scared of and if you don't like what you have done, no-one need ever know.

However, we hope once you have started you may want to take it further, to share and learn with others, so we have included details of places where you can get personal tuition to develop your skills.

This Information Sheet covers the basic equipment and the basic techniques. But first - those six colours and three brushes of the title.

## **Six Colours**

Raw Sienna  
French Ultramarine  
Burnt Umber  
Alizarin Crimson  
Cadmium Yellow  
Winsor Blue - Red shade

## **Three Brushes**

Number 16 Round  
Number 6 Round  
Number 3 Rigger

# Lesson 1

## Inspiration

Many people believe that painting is too difficult. But Frank knows from the beginners he has worked with that once you understand the basic equipment you can paint a picture you will be pleased with. Even if you have never picked up a brush before. And once you get started - there is often no stopping.

Whatever your age, your ability, with a brush and a few colours you can create wonderful masterpieces.

### But what do you paint?

Most us only see the things around us at eye level. Art helps you see life differently. Take the time to look around - upwards to see the tops of buildings and trees. The distant fields where the tones and colours diminish as they get further away and gives you that wonderful recession.

Inspiration is all around. Don't feel you have to paint what other people paint. There are many beautiful churches and coastal scenes that have been painted, but that does not mean you have to do the same. Painting is a matter of personal choice. What you paint is up to you. It could be an old barn door, an old water butt, anything.

Choose something you like, but when you have decided, ask yourself the question 'What makes me want to paint it?' and then concentrate on that. It could be a beautiful shadow against a sunlit building. Whatever it is, emphasise that particular aspect. This is what will make your painting special and unique.

Simple subjects can make wonderful paintings.

# Lesson 2

## The Sketch pad

Once you have decided on what to paint, you need the right equipment.

Firstly a small watercolour pad around 140lbs weight (300gms.) Don't worry about the technical terms because if there is anything you need to know any art supplies store will be able to help. 140lbs weight means if you were to buy a ream of paper it would weigh 140lbs

You will need a soft pencil. Pencils are rated hard to soft. H is hard - B is soft. They go up in numbers from 2B right up to 10 B (softest.) Frank uses 4B which he says gives him a nice light stroke for sketching and a heavy stroke if he wants to fill in shadows.

You will also need an eraser. Choose a putty rubber. These can be shaped like putty and used to take out everything from a thin narrow line to an area you have already shaded to make it clear again. Putty erasers are gentle on the surface of your watercolour paper and will avoid you having marks of lots of rubbed out lines which will show up when the water is applied.

You will also need a small sketch book. You may feel a bit inhibited at first getting a sketch book out in front of others, so try a smaller one such as a 4" x 6" which you can slip into your pocket alongside your pencil and rubber. When you see something you like just open it and do a little sketch of it. It might be a bit of a gate or a lamppost - anything. Test yourself by saying you will do it in five minutes. Don't overdo it, don't put every blade of grass in it, or every shop window, use the minimum of lines on. Then try another one, turn round and sketch from a different angle or a different position. Sketch anything - and keep going till you have filled the book.

If it's a day when the colours are particularly special, then make a note of them so you have a record when you go home later to paint. A sketch book refreshes the memory and can bring back the experience of how you saw it at the time.

Sketching can be a real joy and once you have got used to using a 6"x4" you may want to progress in to using something a bit larger. Use whatever is right for you.

# Lesson 3

## The Paint

Most people tend to buy paint kits that are as cheap as possible. Frank believes this is a mistake because if you want to produce some decent work you've got to have decent paint.

There are many different types of paints, from watercolour to acrylic to oils. This Information Sheet will concentrate on watercolours as this is Frank's speciality and mirrors the Six Colours - Three Brushes radio series.

There are two types of watercolour paints. There are the blocks of paint known as 'pans' and there the tubes of paint. Both need water added to make them ready to apply to the paper, though Frank says colours can be used straight from the tubes at times to create particular effects.

Whichever you use is a personal choice.

With the tubes you squirt out the colours onto a palette and when water is added you have instant colour. With the pans you mix water on them with the brush and then use them straight onto the paper or mix with other colours on your palette.

Don't go overboard at first. Get a starter kit with six blocks or six tubes. You can buy kits ready made up or buy the colours individually to make your own set. Then experiment. Try one colour, make a mark on a piece of watercolour paper with it. Add more water to that colour on the palette and make another mark alongside your first. Do this about 6 times, adding even more water each time until you get to a real dilution. Gradually you can see that as you add more water you get a paler and paler colour. Then do the same with another colour. In this way you can make up a reference chart for yourself numbering each mark you make and describing which colour and how much water you added to create that particular tone.

Then try adding two colours together and repeat the exercise. In this way you will get to know how your colours perform. You will be amazed at the variety of tones you can get from just six colours.

## Know Your Greens !

It's all a matter of personal preference, but when choosing your pans or tubes you might like to consider Frank's theory about Green.

"I don't have a green in my collection as I prefer to mix it up using the various blues, yellows and browns. Many beginners fall into the trap of using a standard green for every tree and bush. It's usually too strong and they can all end up looking the same.

"If you have to mix it, you can't exactly mix the same colour twice so you get more subtle variations and shades. Just look at the amount of greens around you in the woods. Try and reproduce these through mixing the different colours."

# Lesson 4

## The Brushes

It is tempting when you start to get a fistful of brushes of all varieties and shapes. It is better to keep it simple and get a few decent ones.

The three brushes of our series are:

A Number 16 Round. This is quite a large brush. You can use the side to do washes and it will also give you a beautiful point for when you want to paint detail.

A Number 6 Round. This is a much smaller brush and can be used to paint really fine detail.

A Number 3 Rigger. This is a brush that was originally designed for the rigging on ships. It has long hairs on it and you hold it with the tip of the handle of the brush and use it in a flowing movement to paint grasses, tree trunks, branches, twigs, telegraph wires.

These brushes will suit you throughout your painting career, but it is all a matter of personal preference and you may want to add other brushes as you go along. A  $\frac{1}{2}$ " or 1" flat brush can be used for washes. Some people like a very fine flat brush which is like a chisel brush for doing brickwork and depicting the edges of buildings and pantile roofs.

Brushes can be made of various materials.

The finest quality is Kolinsky sable which comes from the far reaches of Siberia. The animals are hunted for their skins these brushes are made from their tails. 95% of the tails that come over to make brushes are rejected which is why they are so expensive. Sable has the advantage of holding more water in the brush which means you can go on for longer with a wash

Next is a Sable and synthetic mix. This can give you the absorption of the sable but with a lovely spring to give you a good point.

Finally there is the totally synthetic which is the least expensive and can also give you a lovely point.

# Lesson 5

## The Palette

The secret of any watercolour artist is in the use of the colours. The palette is where you mix them and use them. Frank tends to work with a cheap plastic palette. His has 18 square boxes around the edge which he uses to mix up the individual tube colours and 5 large areas in the centre for mixing his washes and different colours together.

Over time Frank has added extra colours to the Six of our series. He now has 14 which he believes can be mixed to give him whatever colour he needs. He has four blues, a Payne's Grey, a Winsor red which he says is particularly good for poppies. He mixes the deep brown Burnt Umber with French Ultramarine blue for subtle greys. Raw Umber he says is beautiful for stone. Burnt Sienna for the lovely autumn tints and pantile roofs. Light Red, which is actually a browny colour for brickwork and stone.

One of our "Six Colours" Raw Sienna is one of his very favourites. It may not look much but when added to water on the palette it gives a real feeling of sunshine. Another of our Six, Cadmium Yellow he says is a good strong staining colour, very opaque and ideal for summer greens and trees. He also has a Cadmium Lemon which give him the fresh greens and citrus colours of Springtime. Mixed with Payne's Grey he uses it for shadows with a green tinge.

And finally he has a Winsor Blue - Green Shade which mixed with a touch of Cadmium Lemon gives him a deep turquoisey colour, ideal for those Caribbean seas !

## Watercolour Paper

It is better to use proper watercolour paper for painting. Cartridge paper will result in duller washes and absorbs colour unevenly. There are different types of watercolour paper as mentioned earlier with the sketch pad. Thicknesses are described as weights. 90lb (190gms) is a thin and light paper and will need stretching before being used for washes as it can wrinkle with the water and paint. A 140lb paper will also need stretching. It is only the heavier papers such as the 200lb - 300lb (425gms - 640gms) that do not need this treatment.

Stretching is done by immersing paper in a bowl of cold water for about three minutes. Take out and blot gently to remove any excess water. Carefully tape the paper down flat on to a board and allow it to dry fully, which could take twenty four hours. (If you are in a hurry you could speed up the process with a hairdryer)

# Lesson 6

## Get Painting

Don't be afraid, painting is not brain surgery. The worst you can do is not very well - and you can just turn the paper over and try again or throw it away as a 'glorious failure.'

Get out your sketch book, flick through and see which one appeals to you that day. This is the one to start on. Get your watercolour pad and transfer the minimum amount of lines from the sketch to the paper. If you don't think you will ever be able to re-draw your sketch then you can always try tracing from the original ! Just turn your sketch over, shade diagonally across the lines with a soft pencil, turn the sketch back over, place it on the watercolour paper and when you draw over the lines again they will magically appear !

Next, decide what colours you are going to use. It may help when you are out sketching to make colour notes on the sketch. The colours of the main objects, the contrast of colours. You will find that over time colours will become more evident and more familiar to you and therefore easier to describe more accurately. Taking a camera out when you are sketching could prove useful in remembering the colours later on.

Look among your Six Colours and do a few colour mixes to get the feel of the paint. This is where all your previous experimenting with how the paints perform will pay off. You will already have an idea of what colours on their own, or mixed together, will be just right for your lamppost, post-box, or sailing boat etc.

And don't be afraid to get it wrong at first. You will have more success as you go along.

Frank says the first picture he did was of a cyclamen in a pot. When he showed his wife she thought it was a carrot sticking up out of the ground - it never put him off.

# Lesson 7

## Washes

Everyone who takes up watercolour painting should have a go at washes. They are the basis of all paintings

Look at the sky. As it comes over the top of you the colour is more intense than at the horizon. You have to create this on a flat piece of paper. The way to do this is with a Graduated Wash.

Choose the colour you wish to use for your sky such as the French Ultramarine. Mix a batch on your palette at a fuller strength for the top of the sky. Place your watercolour paper at an angle of 15 degrees by propping something under the pad you're using. Get the largest brush you are using, the Number 16 Round, dip it in the colour then from left to right - or right to left whichever is more comfortable for you - and put a line of colour across the whole width of the page. Then go back to your colour on the palette. Add a little extra touch of water and put another line across in the same way, so that it is overlapping the last one and there is no join to be seen. Though there are two brush lines, it should look all one wash.

Keep repeating this, adding a little more water each time until you find at the bottom of the page it will look almost like clear water with just a hint of blue.

Whatever you do, don't go back on it. Whatever you've got, leave it. You will have a better picture than if you try touching it up with a brush afterwards.

Once it has dried you will be amazed at how it looks. You will have created that recession where the horizon is paler than the colour above you. You could then add a silhouette of some buildings at the bottom, perhaps a field and some trees to turn it into a simple painting.

You can create a sunset in the same way. This time try a wash using three different colours. This is called a variegated wash. Firstly use a dark colour at the top to show night coming on. As you come down the paper introduce a tone of red and wash that across, overlapping the one before and you will find it will blend into it. Coming down to the horizon wash in yellows depicting the last rays of sunlight.

Again, don't go back on it. Leave it. And when it's dry you will have a beautiful sunset.

Later if you want to paint in some dark clouds skipping across the sunset, you can mix a stronger colour of a similar tone and add them on top.

The technique of these basic washes is the secret of all watercolour painting.

The aim is to make it a nice gradual wash with no streaks and a tone that remains even. From the graduated wash of just one colour, to the variegated wash using 2, 3 or 4 colours.

If you want to create a flat tone behind something then use just one colour at the same strength all over the paper, or section of the paper required. Ensure for this that you have sufficient paint of that colour mixed up as trying again may not give you exactly the same colour.

The key to it all though is observation. Look and see what colour or colours are needed. It is often hard to paint from memory - so don't forget about recording details of colours or taking photos.

# Lesson 8

## Perspective

Perspective is what adds the sense of depth and fullness to the picture. The thing to look for all the time is the direction of light. On the lightest side of anything it's going to be paler than the shadow side.

To show this in practice, look at one of the round mills we have in the county. If you were to paint this, firstly you would need to choose the colour you are going to use. Then mix up two washes of this same colour on your palette. One with less water added for the darker side and the second one with more water added to make a paler colour for the lighter side of the mill.

Next, paint a wash of clear water over the mill area. Then paint it with the paler of the two washes. Whilst it's still wet and fluid, paint the darker wash on the left hand side (if the light is coming from the right - or - right if coming from the left.) You will find the dark colour will seep around the mill giving it a softer effect. If you try to paint one colour and then another over the top of it when it's dry, you will get a hard edge and lose the round effect.

If you are drawing a building - think of it as a cube or a small box. If you look at a box from the front all you can see is a square. When you move the box and angle it so that you can see two sides, perspective comes into play. There's a recession from the nearest point to the back of the box which is going away from you.

Here's how to create this effect in your painting: The first line you need to have on a piece of paper is your eye level, or the horizon. All lines eventually go to the horizon or eye level. If you imagine you are standing on a railway bridge and looking into the distance, the railway lines seem to converge to a point. The same principle applies to buildings, telegraph poles, railings etc. They all recede into the distance.

A sense of depth can be achieved by the colours you use, placing paler colours in the distance and stronger ones at the front. These could be different colours, or different strengths in wash of the same colour.

# Lesson 9

## Composition

Composition is what you put into your picture - and where you put it. Painting is just like photography. Take a photo from the right place with all the people or buildings looking good through the viewfinder and you will be praised for your expertise.

We've all taken pictures where the person is too close or too far away, or there is too much happening on one side of the photo whilst the other looks bare and empty. Paintings are just the same. It is a matter of personal choice what you put in your painting and where you decide to 'shoot' it from - but there are some basic rules which may help.

If you are painting a landscape imagine the piece of paper cut into thirds. The beginner falls into the trap of putting the horizon half way up the picture which immediately gives the viewer the impression the picture is cut in half.

Think, 'Is it a land picture, or a sky picture ?' If it's a sky picture then you want a low horizon. Perhaps one third land and two thirds sky. To make a really dramatic sky with something like billowing stormy clouds you can lower the horizon even further, so that it is just one fifth land and four fifths sky.

If you are painting a church, a lane and some trees don't fall into the trap of having two trees either side of the road like lollipops or book ends. Move to another viewpoint.

Even though the trees may be the same size, one can now look more dominant than the other because of where you are positioned. In this way you can gradually make your painting go into the distance. You can then enhance the effect by using different colours and tonal values to make it appear to recede, all of which will make your picture look more realistic.

# Lesson 10

## Observation and Thinking

Art will change your approach to life! It can make you see things differently because you are now looking more keenly at shapes and colours, appreciating the textures and shading in small items as well as the big landscapes.

Just the way a group of objects such as a cluster of trees, is placed together can inspire you to want to paint.

And when you do see something you like, think, ' what colours would I need to create that, how much water would I need to add ?' Sketch it and make notes of what you have seen. Every scene is unique for just that moment, so enjoy it and think what it is about it that appeals to you. Take photos to help remind you for when you come to paint later on.

Frank says "Art is all about the inner you. It's your view, your interpretation. What may seem ordinary to one person, may strike another in a completely different way.

"Whether it's a field of poppies with the light shining on the corn, a church or a person cycling down a lane. If it's something that triggers your mind - capture it - make a record of it and paint it.

# **Six Colours Three Brushes**

## **Frank Halliday - The Man behind the Palette**

Frank Halliday was born in Yorkshire and has lived in many parts of the country before settling in Norfolk. He rejected the opportunity of attending Art College in favour of a business career, but has never lost his love and enthusiasm for painting.

Frank has had one-man exhibitions in Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Norfolk; showing in Oils, Pastel and Watercolour. Three of Frank's watercolours entitled "Norfolk Skies" have been published as limited edition prints.

Frank has published a tuition book on watercolours for international publisher Search Press entitled "Laying A Watercolour Wash." (ISBN 0-85532-902-5.) He has also released four watercolour videos.

Frank runs painting courses at home and in various settings throughout Norfolk and abroad. He demonstrates to art societies throughout England.

Frank now works professionally for Winsor and Newton as a demonstrator and some of the colours he mentions would be based on the ranges he uses in his work for them

If you would like to know more about Frank's work and courses please contact him for more details

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# Frank Halliday's Useful Colour-Mixing Combinations

In addition to the normal mixing of basic colours, listed here are a few suggested colour combinations (in varying quantities) which may help the enthusiast to arrive at what they are trying to achieve more quickly.

## **Winsor Blue (Red shade) and Cadmium Lemon**

Spring greens for grasses and leaves

## **Cadmium Lemon and Payne's Grey**

Terrific dark rich greens for deep shade and evergreens

## **Winsor Blue (Red shade) and Cadmium Yellow**

Summer greens for grasses and leaves.

**Introducing Burnt Umber to the combinations above will provide an endless variation of darker shades for areas in shadow**

## **French Ultramarine**

For a grainy sky. Add a little Alizarin for a more delicate grey. Add a little Burnt Umber to the mixture to get a range of lovely greys for your muted misty pictures and cloudy skies

## **Cobalt Blue and Light Red - or - French Ultramarine and Alizarin**

Distant Hills, trees and buildings.

## **Light Red or Burnt Sienna**

Pantile Roofs. Combinations of these give a good range of tones

### **French Ultramarine and Burnt Umber**

Branches and tree trunks. Vary mixes and strength to depict areas that are lit

### **Light Red and Burnt Umber**

For a variety of colours for brickwork

### **Raw Umber and French Ultramarine**

For a variety of colours for stonework

### **Raw Sienna**

In a thin wash use for white sails

### **Burnt Sienna and Burnt Umber - or - Light Red and Burnt Umber**

Sails that are tan in colour

These are a few suggestions to help you get started with your colour mixing. Try your own combinations and ask yourself, "What have I seen that is this colour?" then make a note of it for future reference.