

Watercolor textures

Trees - foliage

There are many ways of depicting leaves on trees, but I want to show you one simple way that you can adapt to your paintings.

These two greens are very useful for painting foliage.

Top: lemon yellow and cerulean blue mixed together make a sunny, bright, green

Below: cadmium yellow and ultramarine blue make a darker and dingier green, useful for the shaded side of the tree. You can make it even darker by using yellow ochre in place of cadmium yellow.



Try this exercise.

Paint a crescent of cadmium yellow to represent leaves in bright sunshine, then below this paint a curve of bright green and allow them to merge. Then paint in some dark green below to create the shadowed side of the tree.

You can leave the tree like this or go to the next stage to add crisper details if you would like to.

To add more detail, wait until the first layer has dried and then paint in some more leaf masses with your dark and bright greens. Add a few dots in places around the edge of the tree to convey the idea of loose leaves and to make the outline of the tree more interesting.





You can paint two or more trees together in the same way, and use the light and dark tones of the paint to separate one from the other.

Another way of adding foliage to trees is to use a piece of natural sponge.

Dip this into a fairly dry mix of paint and dab it onto your paper to create the leaves. Use two or more colors for effect.



Try these two methods and see how you get on. Then paint a landscape incorporating these ways of painting foliage.