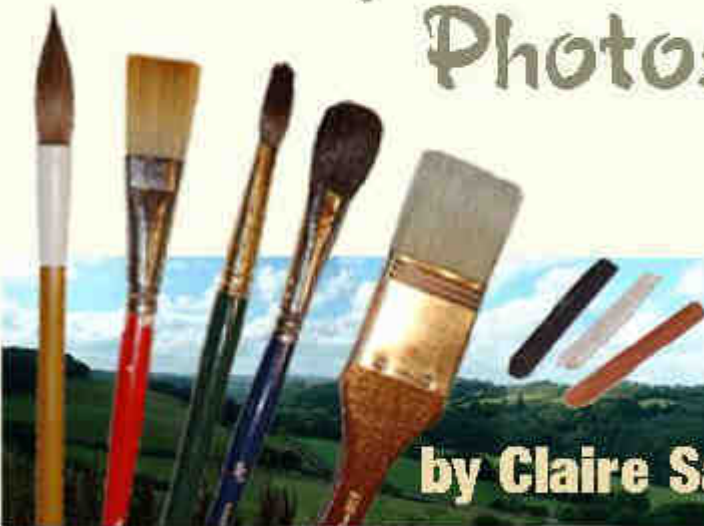


Art
of
Life



Art tips & techniques

Photos & templates

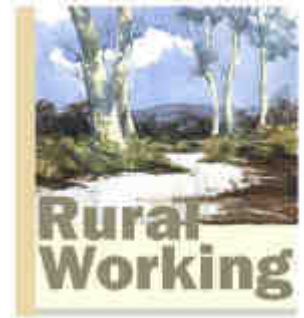


by Claire Savill





Welcome to the Ruralworking book of Art Tips & Techniques Images and templates to use for your paintings and silk paintings



You will find here a quick resource for tips and techniques, images and templates to make life a bit easier if you want to develop your techniques. The images templates can be used for acrylic, watercolour and silk paintings, just print them off to the size you need and trace them off. You can use a light box if you have one or just put the image up to the window and secure with a bit of tape and trace through onto paper.

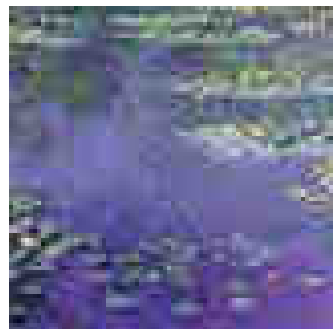
This is designed to get you going as quickly as possible with a few tips and techniques to help you along the way. It is also a useful resource for inspiration and to give you some alternatives to consider. Feel free to use and copy all images for your own use 95% are taken by me and the remaining few are copyright free.

Inspiration

Art is for everyone it enriches our environment. Watercolour, acrylic and graphite mediums never cease to give great pleasure. My head is full of ideas which seem to keep coming the more I paint, draw or sculpt. It seems that the more the doors open the more I see. Art is a form of communication which is received in many ways, encourages different reactions and changes/enriches in some way our world. From graphics which give strong identity such as flags and logos or a more subtle or sensual approach, it is a journey which is taken in different ways by the artist and the receiver alike.

Ideas come from all angles, your environment, things you see, hear, smell, the texture, colour, light around you keep an open mind. Contrast and compliments, modern contemporary or more traditional, the greatness of art is the

ability to open up to inspirations. Monet saw inspiration in water lilies and Andy Warhol in soup cans, Picasso in bicycle parts, it can come from anywhere; rural, urban or industrial. I am lucky enough to live on Exmoor this place has a wealth of subjects which push all the buttons for me. You only have to look out of the window or take a short journey to be part of this beautiful place. Art has given me the ability to appreciate my surroundings and I believe art, architecture etc. benefits areas which without it would be a grey flat place. For me the most important thing I have learned is to stop and look. I look at the world around me with new eyes and am learning all the time.



Monet, Warhol and Picasso, inspiration comes from unexpected places

Paint

All paint uses the same pigment, the medium (for oil, acrylic or watercolour) is what gives the colour its characteristics. Oil paint takes a long time to dry, it's can be a bit messy but it produces subtle shadings and handles beautifully. Acrylic dries very quickly (don't leave your brushes out of water for long it will finish them off.) Gouache, an opaque watercolour. Watercolour is easily portable and dries quickly. It has a beautiful translucent quality which uses the white of the paper to create light areas. There are two types, student and artist quality. Student quality is cheaper but does not carry as much pigment, however, some professional artists use it and swear it produces just as good a colour as the artist quality. Watercolour comes in tubes (easy to use and easy to mix large quantities for washes), and pans (easy to transport and you can start work straight away).



Tubes and pans

Watercolour

Watercolour painting is very rewarding. It has it's good points and bad like most mediums. Good: it dries quickly which means you can get on and paint, it gives beautiful rich colours which mix and mingle in different and interesting ways. It can be bold yet sensitive and the images produced can be truly spectacular. The bad side? It can be quite unforgiving if you make a mistake or change your mind. You can lift the colour out if you are careful, dampen the area and blot it with kitchen towel or lift out with a damp brush if you need to you can put the piece under a slow running tap and carefully "ease" the colour of with a soft brush. If the colour is a staining colour this will be particularly difficult. Some paints stain and some grain. Check the manufacturers chart to see which. Experiment by mixing them and see how they look when dry. To make a colour lighter add water or add white. If you add white you loose the glow of the paper underneath. To darken,

add increasing strengths of the complimentary colour. You can add black but this flattens the colour. The more colours you mix, the more likely you are to get "mud". A good rule is stick to two colours (three at a push) to mix another colour. To get grey mix red blue and yellow. Note that burn sienna works well to get a grey (it is red and yellow). Mix this with blue, it makes some nice greys.

Work from light to dark and keep the paper showing through to create light or white areas. Watercolour dries much paler than it seems when wet, if in doubt try out your colour on a scrap of paper before committing to the painting. Very often it helps to think through how you are going to approach your work, think for say, 80% of the time and do for 20%. Imagine each wash put on in layers how are you going to achieve the effect you want from as few layers as possible. In a way, less is more, if you can make as few marks as possible your painting will have a unique freshness.



Allow the white paper to shine through

Acrylic

Painting in acrylic is similar to oils but it dries very quickly. You can buy mediums which slow the drying speed and aid flow and transparency. There are many types including matt and gloss. Acrylic can be used on most surfaces but not shiny or greasy surfaces such as glass. Use it diluted and it acts like watercolour, use it thickly and you can almost mould the paint into 3d shapes. The colours are very strong and vibrant. Clean your brushes immediately after use as once the acrylic has dried you cannot remove it.

Quality

Get the best quality paint, brushes and paper you can afford. You will notice a difference as soon as you use them.

Colour Wheel and colour mixing

The colour wheel is a useful tool. It helps when mixing and deciding on which colours to use. For example, complimentary colours are the opposite ones on the colour wheel and if painting shadows, the shadow can be done in the complimentary colour to the object casting the shadow, ie a terracotta pot casts a blue/purple shadow.



Primary and secondary colours

Primary colours are so called because you cannot mix them from other colours. The primary colours are red, yellow and blue and secondary (colours created from two primary colours) are orange, green and violet.

Red + yellow = orange, red + blue = violet, blue + yellow = green. Tertiary colours are colours created from a combination of primary and secondary, ie a blueish green or reddish violet. Blues, violets and greens are cool (make things recede) and reds, oranges and yellows are warm (make things come forward and stand out). Complimentary colours (opposite in the colour wheel) look great together, take a look at red and green or blue and orange or violet and yellow. Colours

Mixing Colours



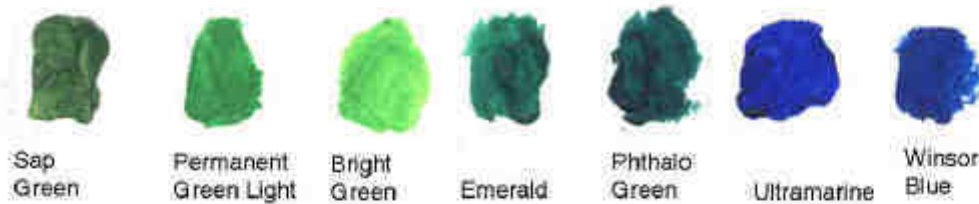
Use the predominant colour first, then mix the other colours to it gradually till you get the shade you prefer. If you want a reddish brown start with red and add yellow then blue in small quantities.



adjacent in the wheel work well.

Selective Palette

Using as few colours as possible a limited palette creates a harmony in the painting. It is amazing how many colours you can mix from just half a dozen.



Acrylic

Paper

Paper comes in different weights and sizes. The lighter in weight the paper the more likely it is to buckle when wet. Heavier papers do not need stretching. It comes in pads, blocks and sheets. There are three categories:

Rough (most texture with peaks and hollows in the paper, this is useful if you want to paint texture like sparkles on water).

Hot pressed has a smooth surface which is suitable for, say, delicate flower painting.

Cold pressed. Not so textured as rough, this is the most commonly used.

Brushes

Many types on the market, sable being the most expensive. Sable brushes hold a good quantity of paint and come to a fine point which means you can “draw” with the brush for longer periods of time.

A “12” size brush is about 30mm long and a size “0” brush is about 5mm long the higher the number the larger the brush. A basic selection of brushes will get you going, perhaps a 12, 8 and 2, a rigger and a larger flat brush. Mop brushes size 4 upwards are useful for laying washes.

Look after your brushes and they can last a lifetime. After use, clean them right up to the ferrule (the metal casing) and leave them standing in a cup brush upwards. Sable, roll gently in soap then rinse. After washing shape the hair back into place.



The brush on the left is a “0” then a rigger (used for long thin lines) on up to a mop (2nd rt) and lastly a pastry brush!

Mediums and fluids

Gum arabic, use with water to increase transparency and luster of the paint. Ox gall, and glycerine are wetting agents which means the washes will stay wet longer.

Masking fluid when used (and left to dry completely) will enable you to preserve areas of white paper. When the paint is dry you can remove the fluid and the preserved area lies underneath. Watch out, masking fluid will ruin your brushes so either clean the brush immediately in soapy water after use or use an old brush. Don't leave the fluid on for too long as it can sometimes lift the surface of the paper when you remove it.



Bits and pieces

Create interesting effects by putting on colour with sponges, pushing scrunched up cling film into paint and placing it on your image letting it dry, splatter paint from an old toothbrush (useful for texture such as sea foam), use pieces of twig sharpened to a point to use like a dip pen.

Salt when sprinkled onto a wash will draw in the paint around it and when dry will create interesting effects. Sand, string.... the list is up to your imagination.



Watercolour Washes

To achieve an even wash make a good quantity of colour more than you need as it's difficult to mix exactly the same colour again. You can work wet into wet or wet onto dry.

Wet into wet: hold your board at a slight angle so the paint flows downward. Wet the paper with a sponge or brush in the area where you want the wash. Fill your brush with colour and work smoothly back and forth, getting a brush full of colour as you need it. Work as quickly as you can so you can pick up the paint from the bottom of each brushstroke. If this has time to begin to dry you will see a hard edge. When you see a ridge of colour building up at the bottom carefully remove with a damp brush. Don't be tempted to go back over it it always seems to create a "cauliflower" shape of paint which is hard to remove.



Wet onto dry: Work in the same way as wet into wet. Make a good quantity of colour to ensure coverage. A few drops of ox gall will give a better flow and evenness of tone. If you can use a big a brush as possible it will make your life easier I use good quality 1.5 inch flat pastry brush. To create a graded wash dilute the paint as you move down the paper.

Dry brush

A useful technique to create texture in a painting such as bark or the surface of the sea. Load your brush with a little colour and dab off the excess onto kitchen paper. Drag the brush over the paper evenly and watch the paper sparkle through from below. This works well on rough paper.

Creating texture is fun and results can often give pleasant surprises

Negative shapes

A negative shape is the area around the subject. It can assist your work greatly if you take a look at those negative shapes and concentrate on their tone and accuracy.



The red area is the negative shape



Dry brush technique the edge of the paper is used for testing colours

Sketching

To get a good smooth shape with your sketching, try a "dummy run" with the pencil stroke before you make a mark. If possible, move your paper to fit your body, turning the paper round as needed. If outside, make a note of the direction of the light and the position of the shadows. Sketching with graphite pencil, charcoal, conte crayon, watercolour pencils give different and interesting effects. A putty rubber is useful to remove marks accurately and not damage the surface of the paper too much.



Charcoal and Conte crayon



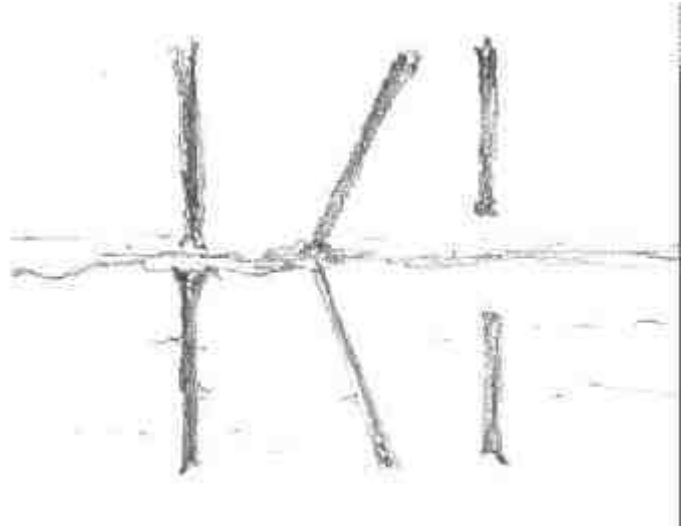
A selection of pencils and pens, a watercolour pencil, water soluble graphite, charcoal, sketching graphite pencil and three pens, black size 5, black size 1 and sepia coloured size 5. These pens are suitable for line work and are waterproof.



Pen and Ink on watercolour

Reflections

An object which is upright in water has a reflection of the same length and the reflection of an object which is leaning away from the viewer appears shorter. Reflections of light objects are always a little darker. Reflections obey the rules of perspective, they recede into the distance and appear smaller and more closely spaced.



Sky and clouds

The colour of the sky is often reflected in the clouds. When you look at a sky the horizon is paler. Clouds have shadows. Cumulus clouds are fluffy and white, the tops tend to have a sharp edge and a flat bottom. Cirrus are streaky and layered, cumulus thunderstorm. As clouds recede they become paler and smaller and are still subject to the rules of perspective.



Clouds grow smaller as they recede



This picture could be used, crop the bottom third



Composition

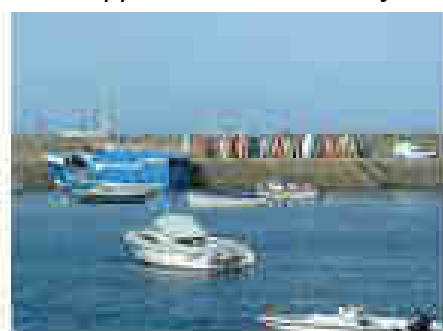


Cut two "L" shapes in a piece of card and use them to make a picture finder. Hold the cards up at arms length and move them in and out and up and down till you are happy with the image shown within. I use card with a light and dark side which, when flipped over, will assist when considering the colour of the mount.

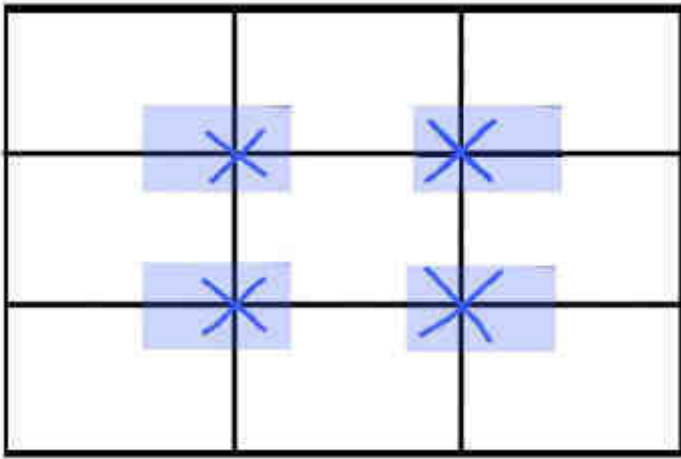
If you have people or things moving in your picture consider whether you want them moving into the image this is more pleasing to the eye than if they are moving out of it. Consider where the horizon line is, usually one third up or down the page. Things bang in the middle of the page can look unnatural.



The first image is the one shot, the second has been cropped with the subject walking out of frame and the third cropped to show the subject more clearly. The background is fussy but this can be altered.



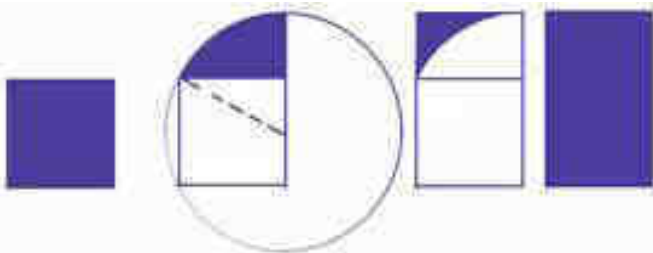
The boats image on the left has some potential but it needed to be cropped, then components moved to improve the composition. The multi coloured dingies were what caught my eye.



Place your focal point somewhere near these blue areas the rule of thirds applies.

A balanced composition can also be achieved if you divide the image into thirds, two vertical and two horizontal lines equally spaced on the page. Where the lines meet is a good place to put your focal point.

Golden Section



- 1 Draw a square.
- 2 Draw a line from the midpoint of the side of the square to the opposite corner as the radius, construct an arc that will define the extent of the new rectangle
- 3 Using the endpoints of the arc, complete the rectangle.

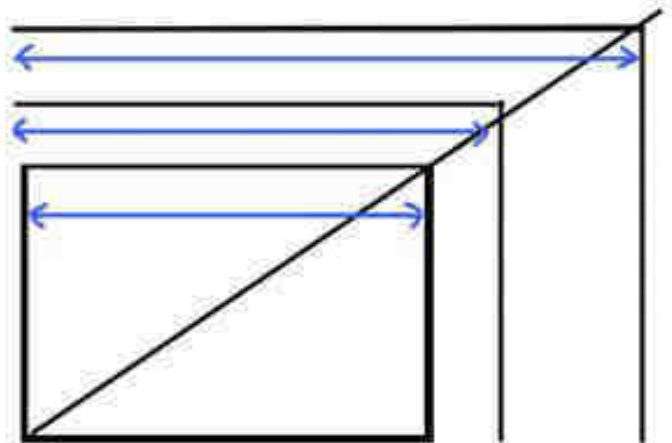


This is the proportion recognized since antiquity as the Golden Section. In nature this rule crops up again and again. The inside of a snail's shell follows this principle it creates balance.



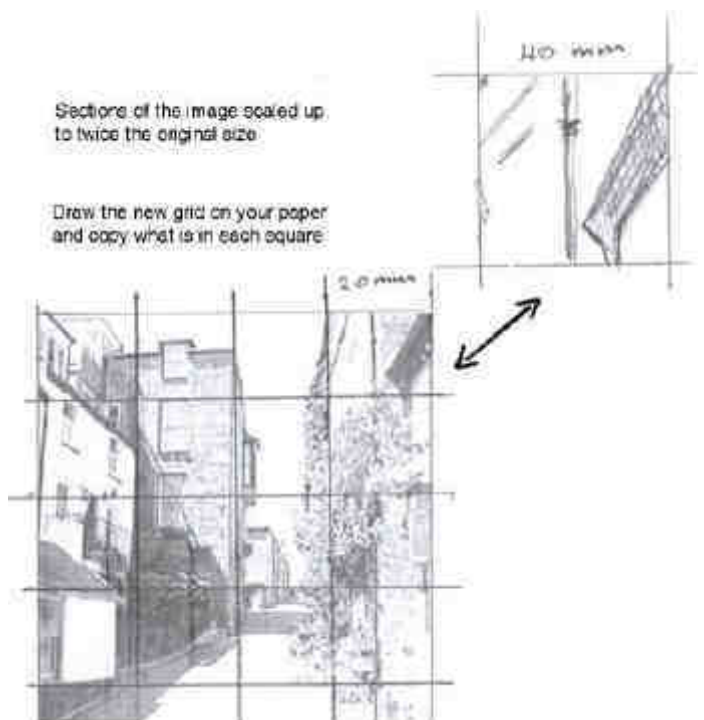
Scale up an image

Place your original image at the bottom left on a piece of paper and draw a line diagonally across the page from corner to corner. Draw a line across the page from the bottom left corner of your image to the top right corner of the large sheet. Where the line meets the edge of the paper draw a vertical line down and horizontal line across. The new size will be an exact proportion of the original.



Enlarging an image using drawn squares and enlarging a page from one corner to the other

You can also draw vertical and horizontal lines on the original (or tracing paper) and scale up the measurements and reproduce the squares on another piece of paper. When you study what is in each square on the original it is easier to transpose those marks onto the larger work.



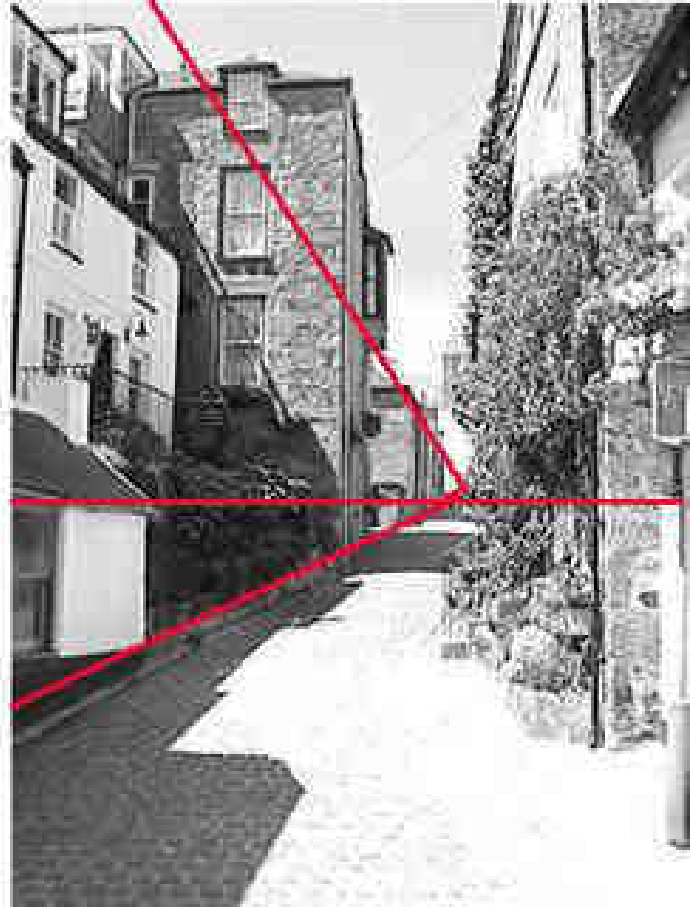


Image of St. Ives with strong perspective and tone

Tone

If you have scanned your work or taken a photo, take a look at it in black and white (alongside a copy of the colour original if possible). This is a very effective way of judging tone. If in doubt, take a look at it upside down. The brain automatically fills in areas if it recognises the shape or subject. When upside down, you will notice any errors or negative shapes which may need attention. Looking at your painting in a mirror also has the same effect.

Perspective

There are two kinds, linear and aerial. Linear the further away the item is smaller it is. Aerial lighter tones make things recede and darker tones bring them forward. In a landscape the distance is often a grey/blue which is a cool colour and things nearby are often warmer and richer in colour. A vanishing point is the central point where, if you are looking straight ahead of you, the lines converge on the horizon.

To find your eye level hold a pencil horizontally at arms length in front of your eyes.



Take a journey through a painting with a starting point and an end point



The fence blocks the eye and the path takes the viewer straight through the picture.

Taking a Journey

The composition should invite the eye into the image, to take a journey round it and end up at the desired place. You can add and take away components in a picture to achieve this. Artists have been using the "Z" shape to achieve this. Take a look at the image below, the fence stops the eye entering the picture, there is also a fence post which dominates the scene. The picture on the right of the pathway takes the eye straight through the picture without taking the journey round it.

When is it finished?

If in doubt, stop. Step back and take a look, maybe leave it a few days or weeks then

go back to it. Don't ever think it's not good enough, often with a fresh eye things look different. If you find yourself fiddling there's a good chance it's finished.

Last but not least

Take a look at your picture with a mount round it, it makes all the difference. A mount is usually in a colour which compliments the painting and the bottom part of the mount is slightly wider than the top, left and right hand sides. This is because if all the sides were the same the image would look like it's "dropping out" of the bottom of the frame. Note how the image is painted on the sides of the box canvass as shown in the image below.

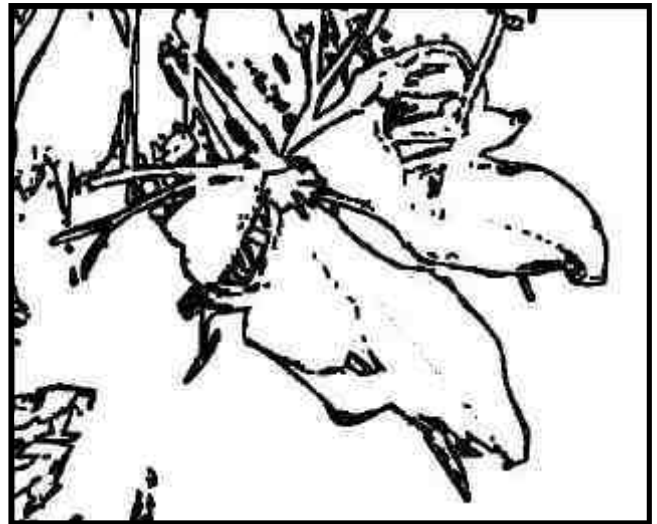


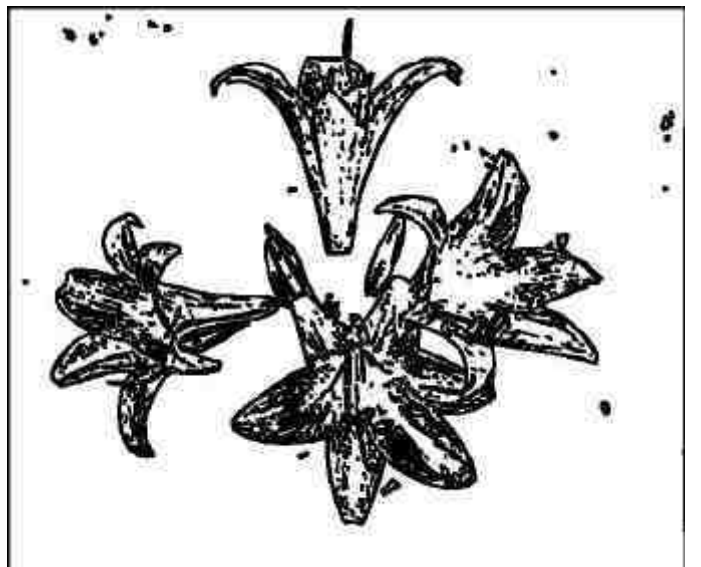
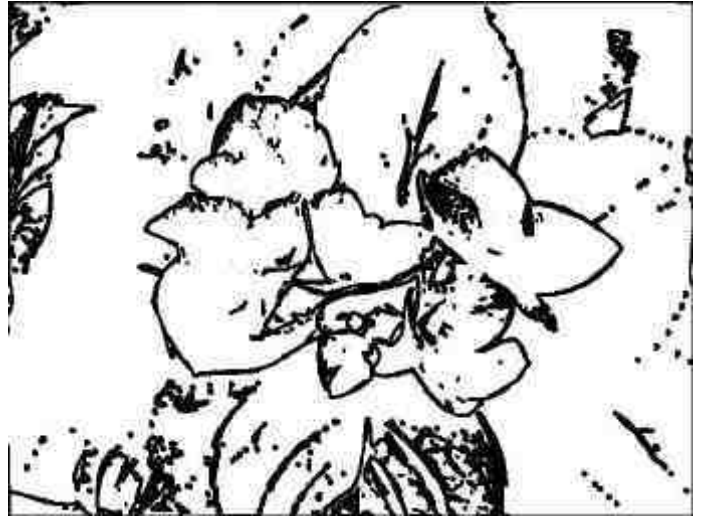
Above: The frame can change the characteristics of the painting from ornate (left), simple and plain (centre) and more modern (right). Suitable for watercolours or acrylics.

Left: Canvas box frame suitable for acrylics.

Templates

Use these templates freely. To resize the images copy them and paste into your software package or print print off and photocopy them.



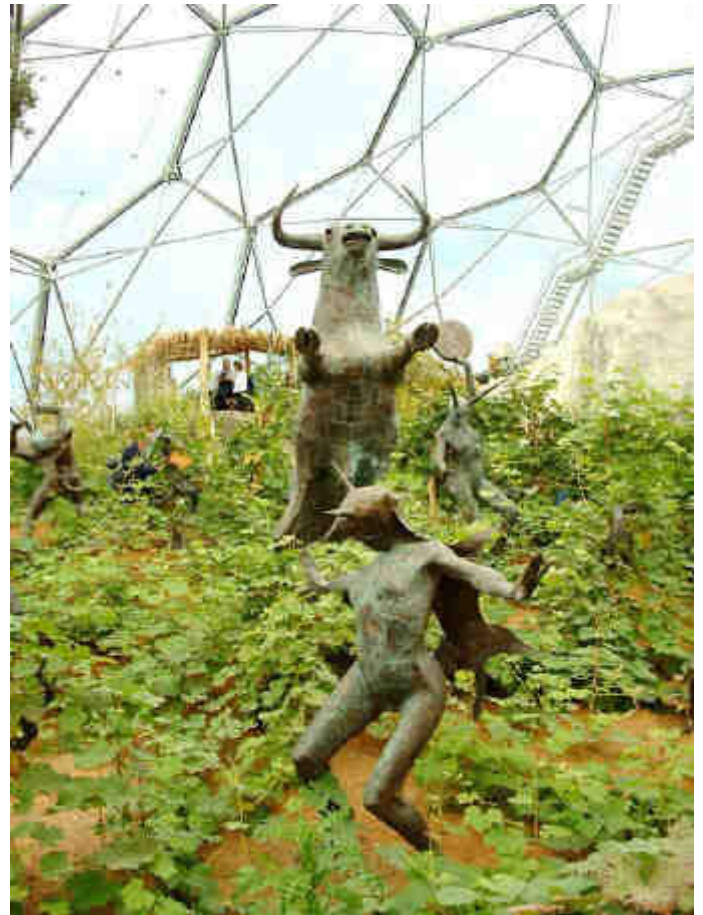


Scenes around the Westcountry



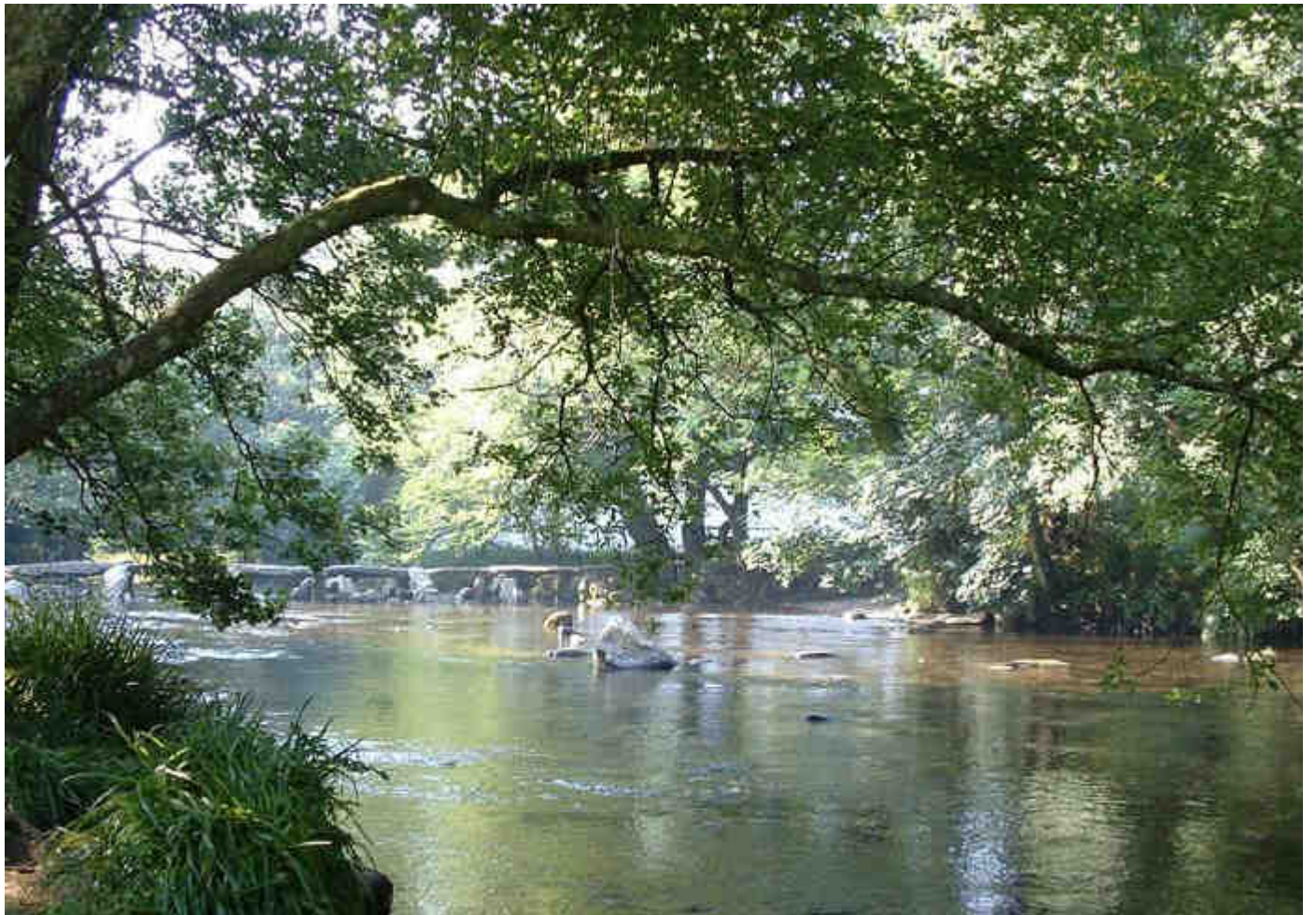




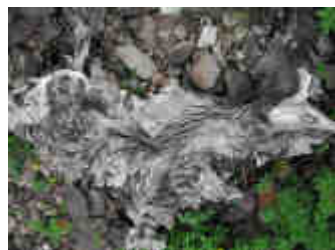
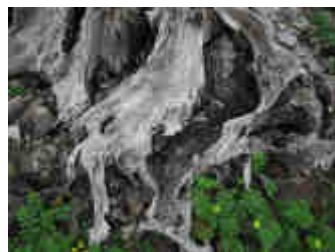
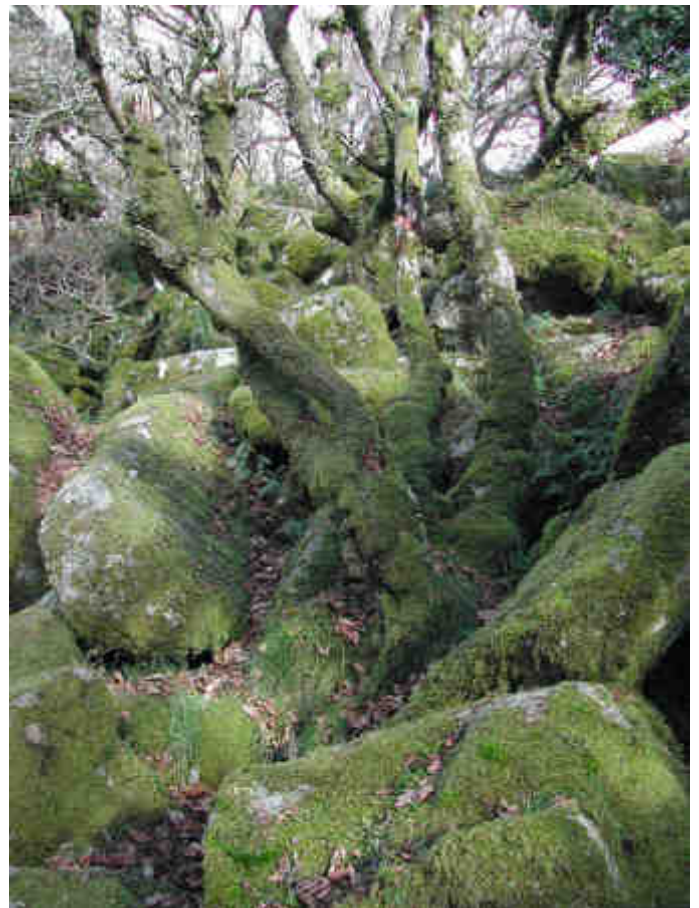












Shows and livestock and wildlife

















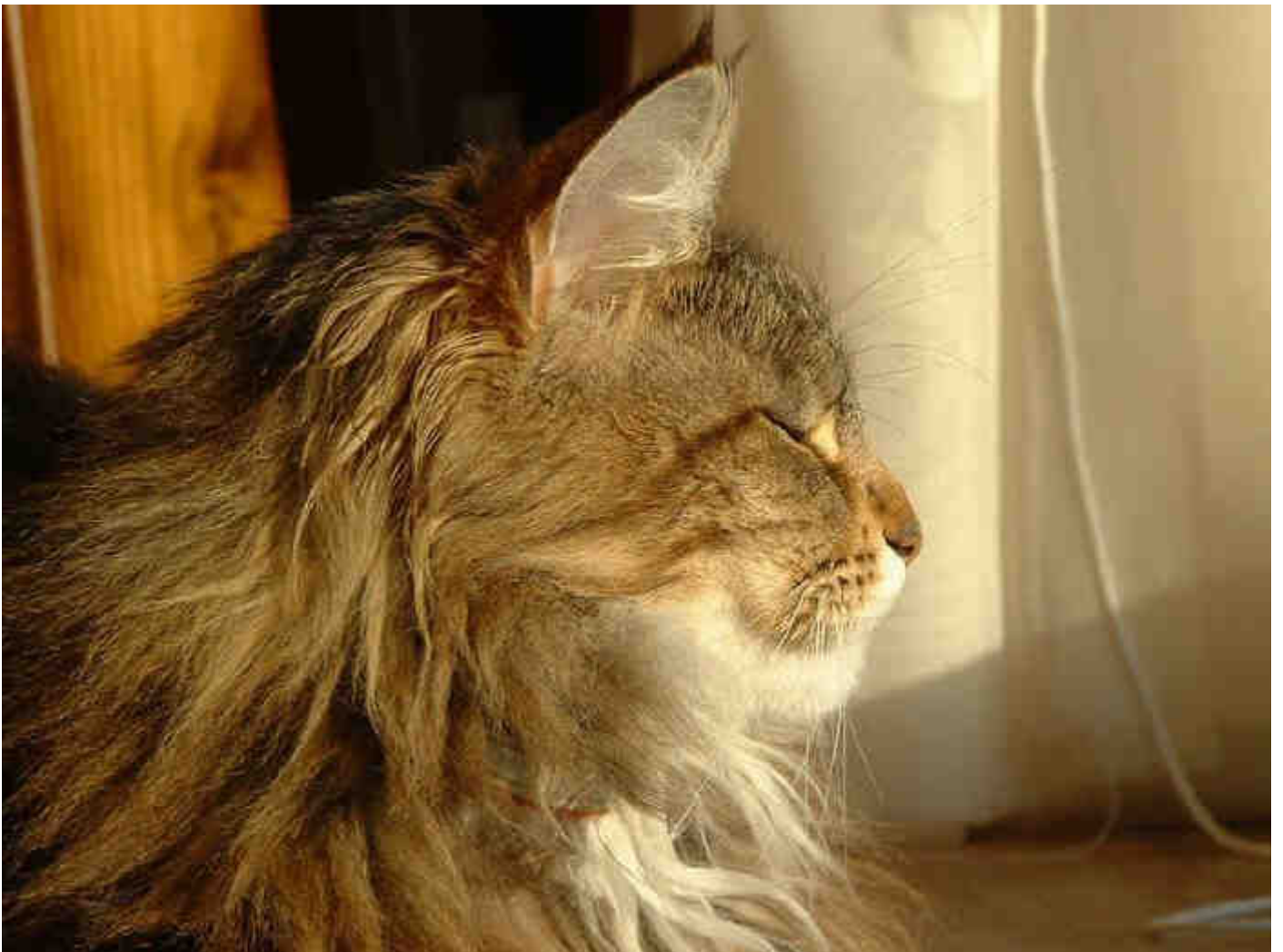
















Thank you for more images go to www.ruralworking.co.uk