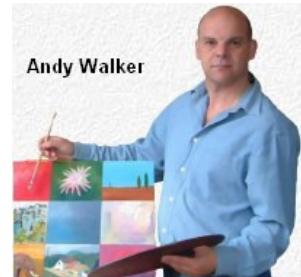


## Hints and Tips to improve your drawing and painting.



# The colour of SHADOWS

Shadows can sometimes seem daunting to paint, and many of us have ruined good paintings by adding dark and gloomy heavy black shadows. But if you understand a few simple principles, then shadows become a delight and one of the elements that can bring real life to a picture. Here below are five of these principles.

### 1. never use black or paynes grey

One of the surest ways of ruining a good painting is to use either black or a flat grey for your shadows. This is the colour that shadows often appear to be in photographs, but this is just what the camera sees and is not their true colour at all.

In reality all shadows have some colour, and in our painting we need to emphasise this. By enhancing the colours we make sure that our shadows are never dull and lifeless.



### 2. keep shadows transparent

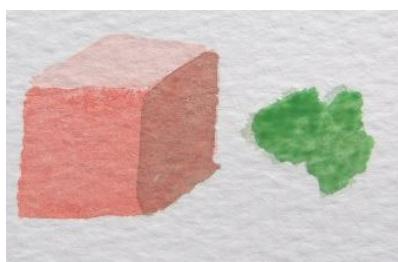
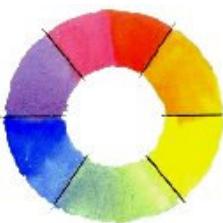
It is important to make sure that the shadow is just a transparent layer through which the colour of the object can be seen. This is easily done in watercolour by keeping the paint thin, and in oils by glazing. What this does is to blend the colour of the shadow with that of the object, making the whole thing look more natural.



### 3. use ultramarine blue + cadmium red

This combination of colours makes a nicely transparent and dull purple which is perfect for producing a shadow cast by the yellow sun.

Start by mixing a pool of thin ultramarine blue and then add a small amount of cadmium red to it. Test it out on a scrap of paper and adjust it as necessary before painting it onto the object.



### 4. use the complementary colour

Another way of creating the shadow colour is to use the complementary colour of the object in shade. This is the colour from the opposite side of the colour wheel, so for example green is opposite red and so a touch of green added to red will produce a shadow colour for the red.

### 5. mix warm and cool colours

Finally, try to vary the colours within your shadow, so as to prevent them from being flat and boring. Most shadows will also have some reflected light in them from objects that are nearby, and this light will have its own colour.

So for instance the shadow on an apple will contain some reflected light from the table it is sitting on. A shadow cast by the eave of a roof will be purple on the wall where it is cast by the sun, and yet will have some warm colour in it where it is directly under the roof and is picking up light from the ground. It is especially important to vary the shadow colours in large shadows to stop them looking flat and lifeless.

