

STEP-BY-STEP TUTORIAL



FOREST LOG

Watercolor Tutorial by Kiara
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Forest Log

In this tutorial we're going to paint a fallen forest log with striking light across it. The purpose of this tutorial is to play around with the unique techniques and characteristics of watercolor – wet-in-wet, dry brushing, lifting, glazing, and the medium's transparency. This tutorial is ideal for complete beginners who love to paint nature and forest scenes with a whimsical touch. I hope you will enjoy playing with your paint!



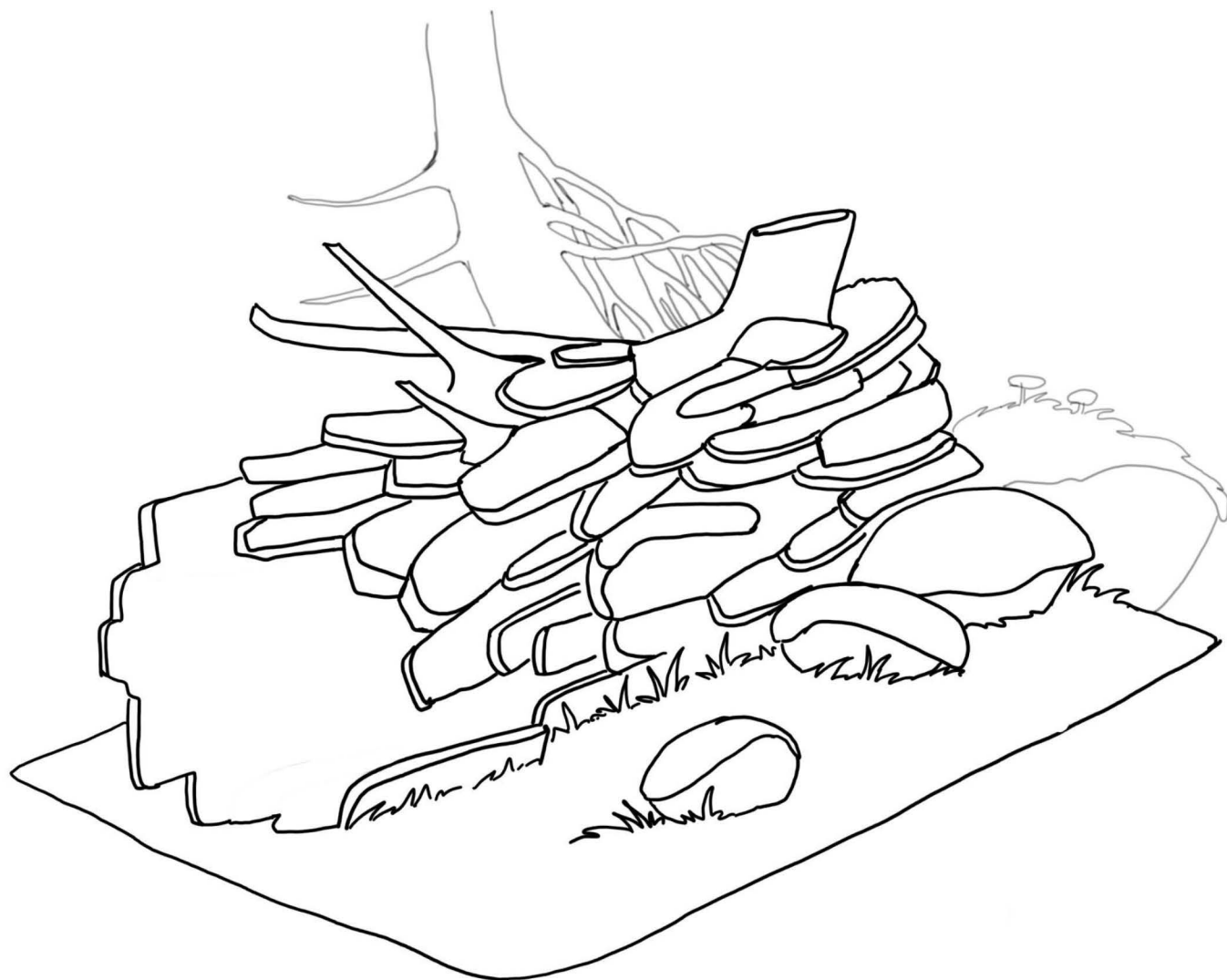
Colors

The following list of colors are from the Prime Art Iris Watercolor range.

- ☒ Gamboge
- ☒ Cerulean Blue
- ☒ Burnt Sienna
- ☒ Deep Blue
- ☒ Sap Green
- ☒ Deep Green
- ☒ Payne's Grey
- ☒ Yellow Ochre

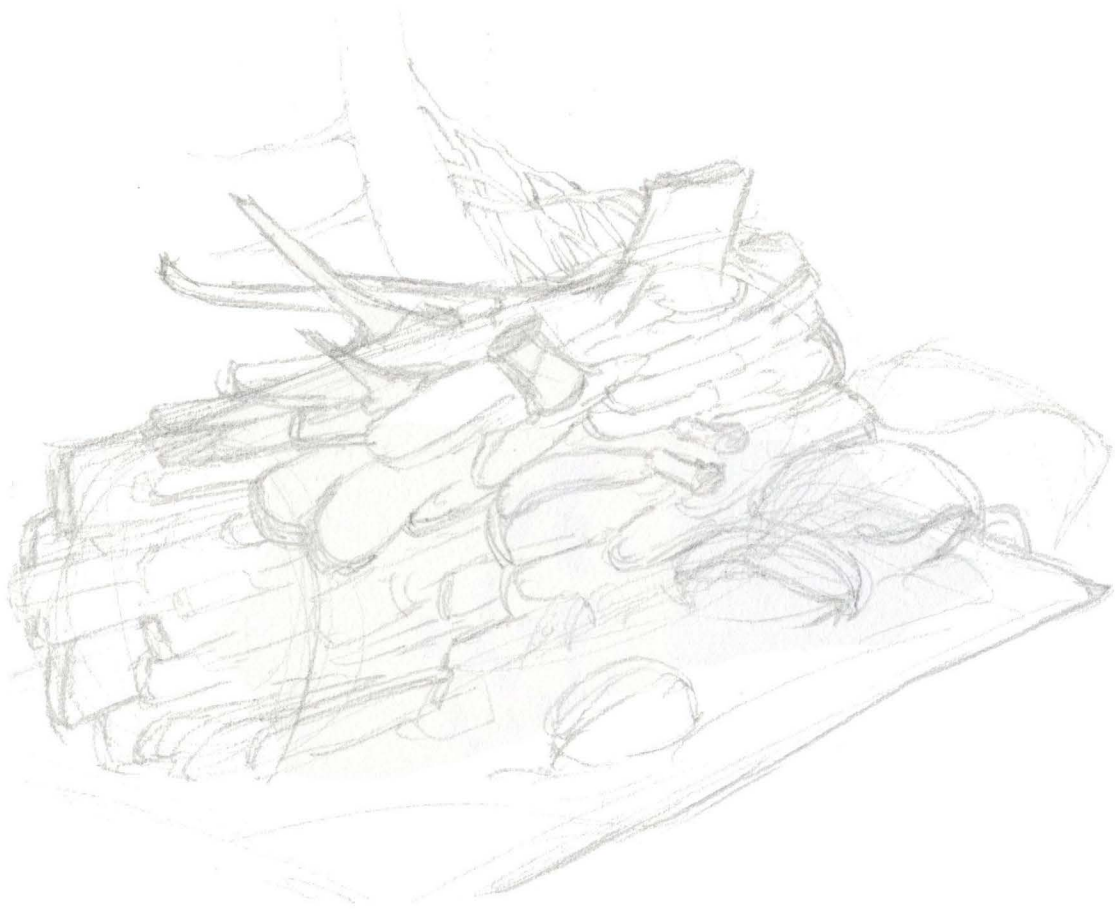
Step 1: Drawing Template

Print out the following drawing template or use my sketch as a reference to draw your own log.



Sketch

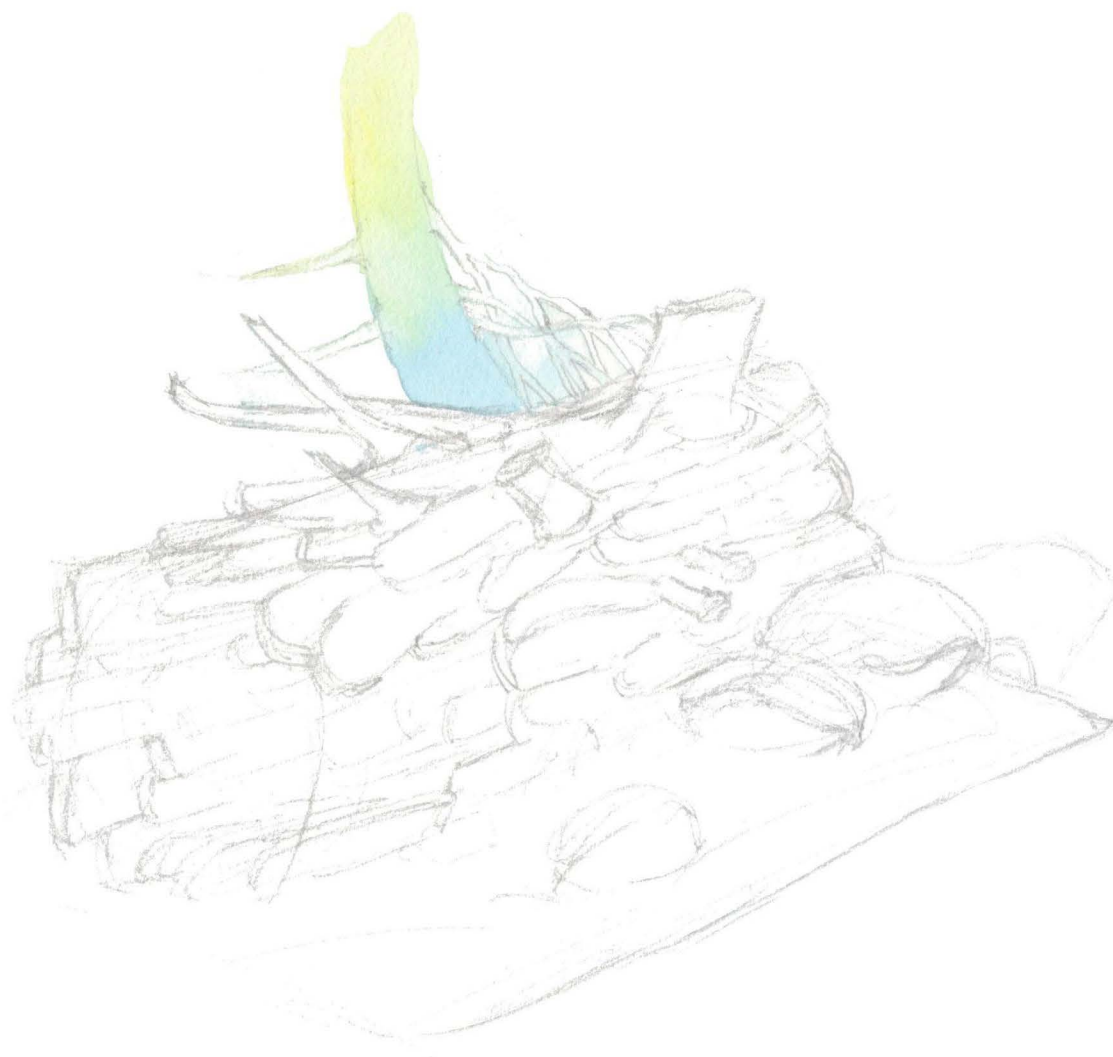
Here's my sketch for reference:



Thumbnail

I drew this thumbnail of the log to imagine where I want the light and shadows to go before applying paint. Try drawing a quick thumbnail similarly to understand where to paint the light.

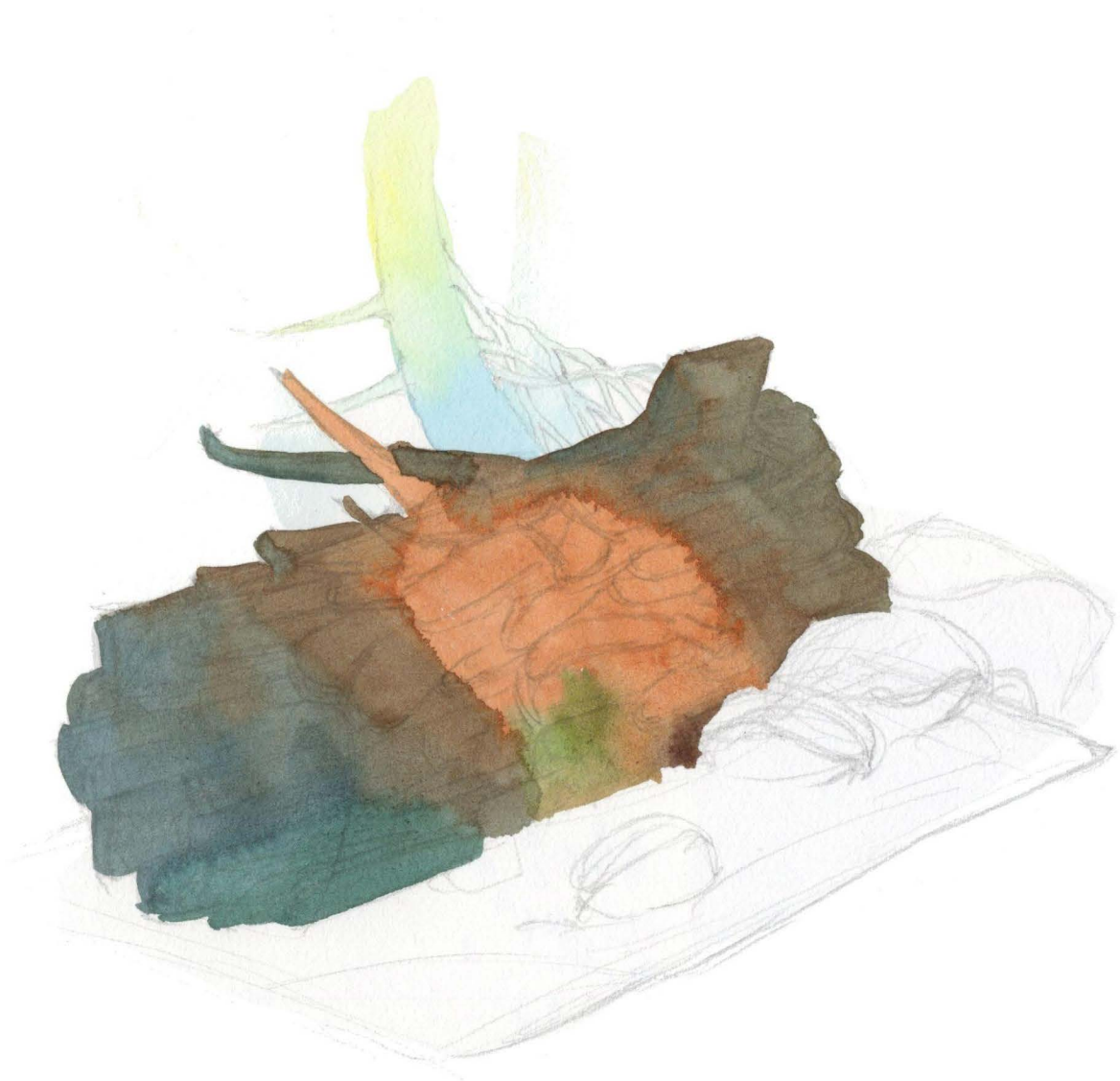




Step 2: Paint the forest background

In this step we're going to paint the background elements using a lot of water and very little pigment (paint). First raise your sketchbook or paper at a slight angle, so that the water will flow downwards and create a smooth gradient. Now dip your paintbrush in water thoroughly, and mix a tiny smudge of Gamboge on your brush. Apply this watery color on the page at the top of the tree, and let the color dribble down the page, forming a "bead" of water. Apply the next color, Cerulean Blue, directly over that "bead" of water to create a smooth transition.

Let the paint dry thoroughly before moving on to the next step.



Step 3: The log and the light

In this step we're going to work quite quickly to take advantage of the paint while it's still wet. Start with Burnt Sienna and apply it loosely on the middle of the log where the main area of light will go. Now working quickly with the wet Burnt Sienna, quickly mix the Burnt Sienna on your palette with a touch of Deep Blue to create a darker shade of brown, and apply that to the log on either side of the middle light spot. Then add more Deep Blue to the mixture so that the color looks more blue than brown, and dab that in the log on the furthestmost left side. While all that paint is still wet, clean your brush then dab spots of Sap Green in the wet Burnt

Sienna or wherever you imagine there to be moss. Let the colors of the light and shadow seep together and mix. Watch the watercolor do its thing.

Let the paint dry thoroughly.



Step 4: The Ground

Now we can move on to the ground! First mix Sap Green and a little bit of Gamboge and apply this color to the middle of the ground area, in line with the light parts of the log.

Quickly, while the green is still wet, mix Deep Green and a little bit of Deep Blue into that Sap Green and apply it on either side of the light spots, similar to how you painted the log. Clean your brush and add Deep Blue to the furthestmost left hand side of the ground, where it looks the bluest.

While the paint on the ground is still drying, clean your brush and mix a new color: dark brown with Burnt Sienna + Deep Blue. Use this color to now outline or draw the individual pieces of the wood on the log.



Step 5: The Rocks

Now let's paint the rocks. Use Sap Green + a bit of Gamboge and paint the mossy top of the rocks. While the paint is still wet, add a smidgen of Payne's Grey to the mixture to get a dark

green and dab this color at the bottom of the moss cover. Also use this color for the rock in the shadow but still on the ground. Now clean your brush and mix Yellow Ochre + a touch of Payne's Grey to paint the body of the rock itself below the moss. Only use this color for the rocks in the light. For the rock in the shadow use Payne's Grey + a little bit of Deep Blue.

While the paint on the rocks is drying, let's paint the lonesome rock that seems to disappear in the background. Use a lot of water on the brush, and mix even more water into some Deep Green paint and paint the mossy top of the rock. Then transition this color with water into Deep Blue and then Cerulean Blue for the rock itself (similar to the tree in the background).

Lastly for this step, mix Payne's Grey + a bit of Burnt Sienna for a very deep, dark brown, using a small amount of water. Use this color for the inside of the log. Let the paint create interesting textures.

Let all these layers dry thoroughly before moving on to the next step.



Step 6: Log Textures

In this step, mix dark brown using Burnt Sienna + Payne's Grey to carefully draw some lines on the wood for texture, as well as the individual pieces. Draw in thicker lines on the upper parts where a shadow would be casted.

Glaze another layer of Payne's Grey + Burnt Sienna to darken the color inside the log even more.

We're almost done with this piece of the forest! The only thing left to do is ...



Step 7: The Details

Now use a fairly dry brush (very little water) and draw some grass and leaf shapes on the shadow parts of the ground using Deep Green + a little bit of Payne's Grey. You can go crazy with the details if you enjoy it - add mushrooms, add large leaves, add more sticks on the ground. Whatever you like! Also use this color to darken the edges of the floor, creating a little bit more dimension to the piece.

While that's drying, use Sap Green + a bit of water, and then glaze this color over the log to paint textures of moss.

And that's the finished log! Of course, you can still go ahead and try painting this log at different times of day, or add more details in the background, or on the ground. Maybe mushrooms?

THANK YOU

I hope this guide brought you inspiration and motivation to enjoy gouache. If you'd like to explore more guides like these on topics like *gouache painting, fantasy landscapes, drawing, artists on social media, art business, and sketchbooks*, then check out my other books, courses, and video tutorial packs in the series, available on my website and [Patreon](#):

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