

# DAVID RANKIN WATERCOLOR WORKSHOP TRAINING

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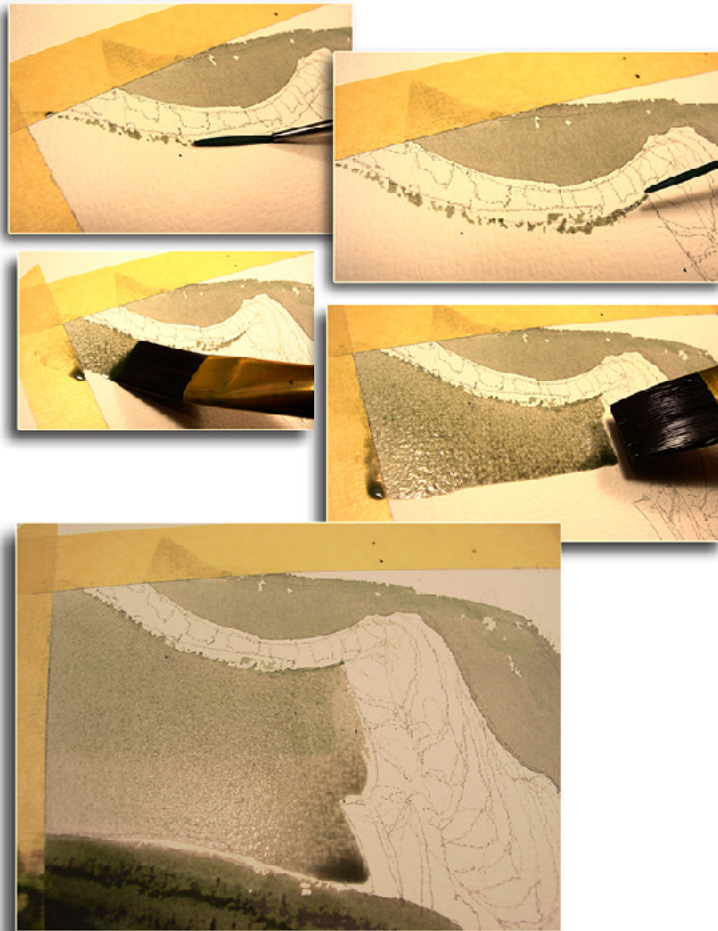
David refers to himself as a **Watercolor Trainer**, in that he actually trains artists in both basic, as well as advanced brushwork and procedures that make Transparent Watercolor much easier... with more enjoyable visual results.

## A Broken-Edge Wash

This unique watercolor skill requires a combination of skills. And each skill can be practiced individually so that they can be enhanced, refined, and mastered.

### Creating a "Broken-Edge Wash"

This requires several distinct skills... the ability to create the initial **broken-edged** brushstroke... followed immediately by either an **Even Wash**... a **Graded Wash**... or a **2-Color Blend**... etc.

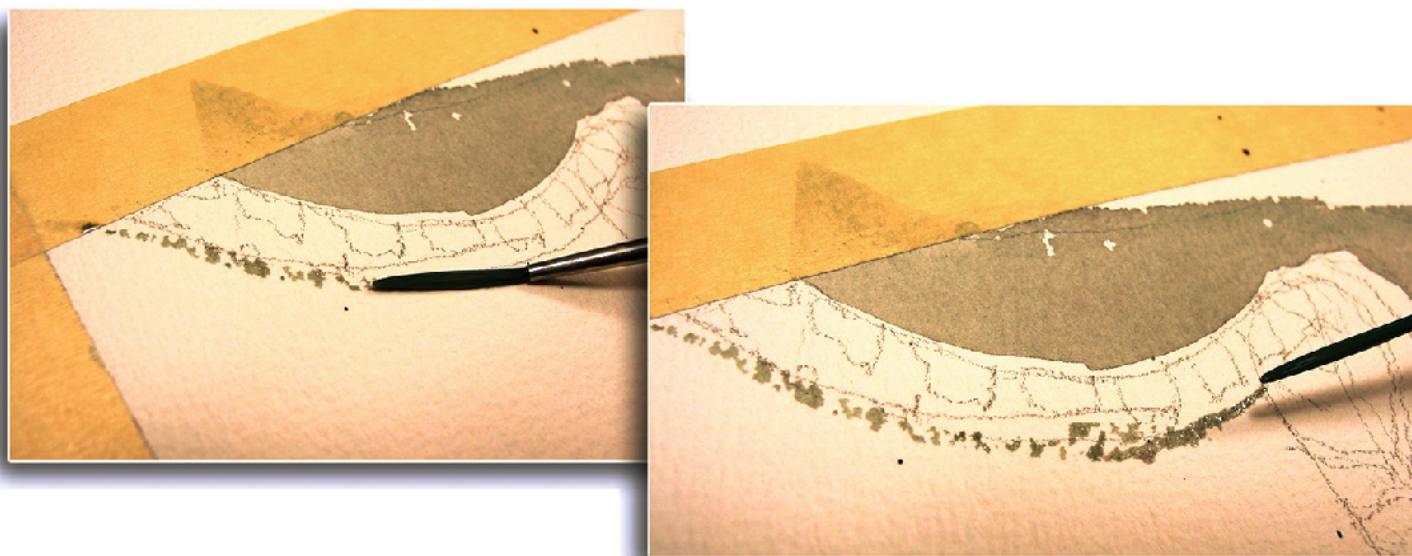


"Tiger Ridge - Ranthambhore India • 10" x 16" - Transparent Watercolor on Arches 140lb. Rough

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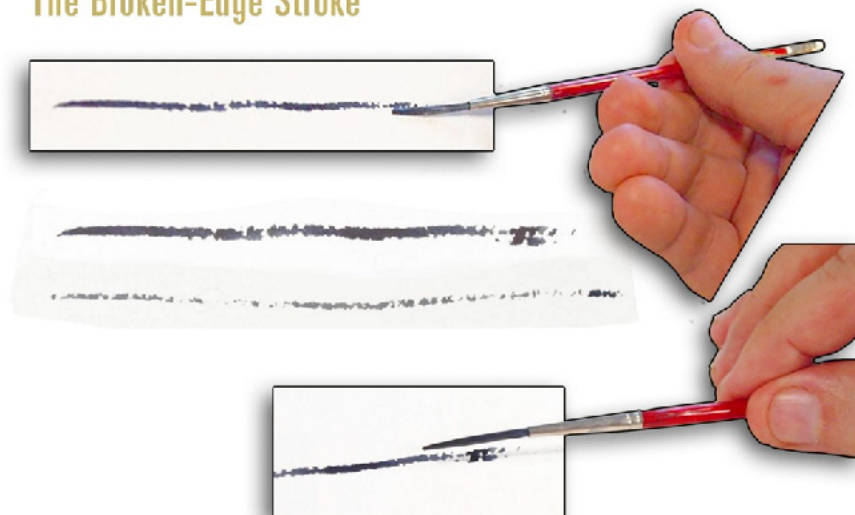
**Broken-Edge Wash** - Focus on the tiger's tail in the finished painting. Can you see how the upper edge of the tail has a very sharp clean edge? That *edge* is created with what I refer to as a "Cutting Stroke", the result of which should look very clean and sharp... like it's been cut with an Exacto knife. But the bottom edge of the tiger's tail looks ragged & uneven. That's because a tiger's tail "is"... smooth and clean on top... but ragged, rough, and uneven on the bottom.



To paint that bottom edge quickly & elegantly you need **two things...** the ability to create a "Broken-Edge Brushstroke"... and... rough watercolor paper. These two images show the creation of the initial "Broken-edge brushstroke"... created by filling a Rigger Brush with wet pigment... laying it horizontally on the paper... and dragging it lightly over the rough paper... creating the lovely **broken-edged brushstroke** that you see here.

**The Broken-Edge Brushstroke...** created with a Rigger Brush... is relatively easy to do as long as you make sure you lay the brush over onto its side... and drag the belly of the brush lightly over the rough surface of the paper. When done correctly it looks like this... with broken edges that sparkle.

## The Broken-Edge Stroke



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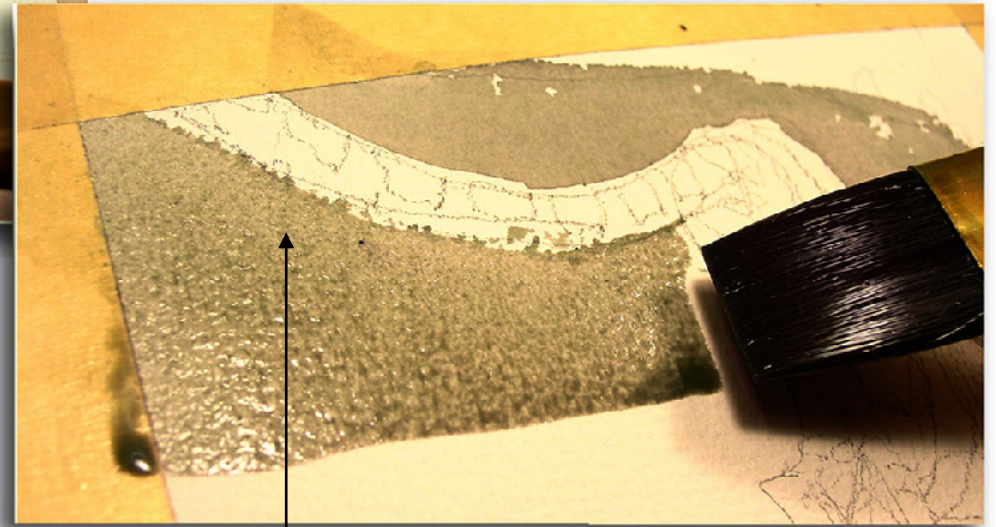
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Switch brushes quickly. Once you've create this broken-edged brushstroke you have to switch to a bigger brush quickly... in my case I use Steven Quiller's 1" Wash Brush ( 7010 ).



**Connecting a Broken-Edge Wash** - The trick here is to create that Broken-Edge Brushstroke... then quickly switch to the larger wash brush... and connect the wash to that brush stroke as shown in these photos.

**As you start the wash** Notice how I just touch the upper right corner of the wash brush to that still-wet Broken-Edge Brushstroke. Because that Broken-Edge Brushstroke is still wet... all you have to do is just touch it and the broken edge merges instantly into the wet wash stroke.



**Drag that upper tip corner of the wet 1" wash brush... right along that initial broken-edge brushstroke. And look at how easy and beautiful this effect is! Look at this lovely wash that is now extending right out from that broken edge... Fabulous!**

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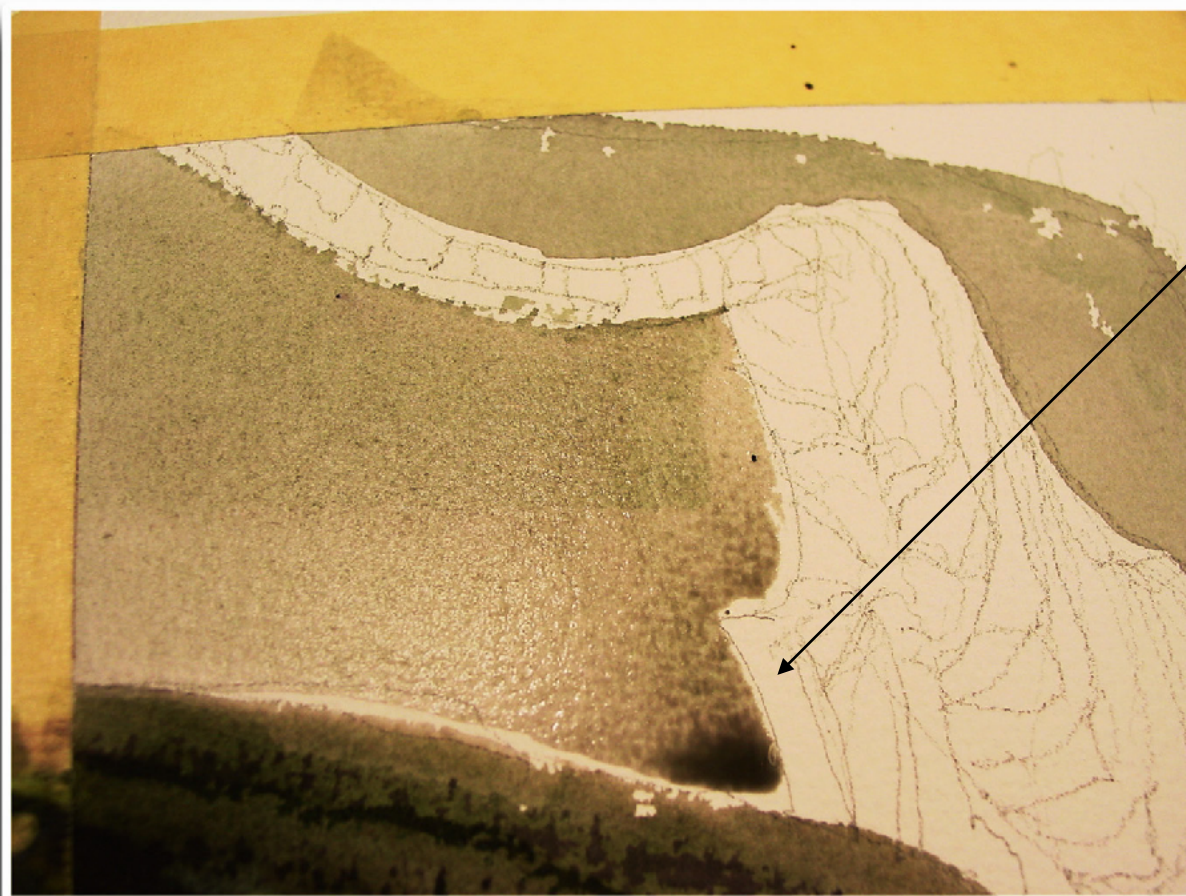
**Techniques like this...** where you are combining 2 or more specific brushstrokes and their respective visual effects together quickly... must be executed correctly in order to create the proper overall visual effect.

**When you do this correctly...** you will see this wonderful visual effect... where the original broken brushstroke merges perfectly *into the wash*... creating this elegant wash... with this lovely broken edge.

**A few more points...**

**What I am showing you here is how to create a Broken-Edged Wash.** But in addition... this wash is also an **Even Wash**.

That's because it has an even tonal value from top to bottom and left to right. There are in fact several ways to create an *Even Wash*. This particular one... is what we also call a **"Beaded Wash"**.



**The Bead.** You can still see the last remnants of the wet pool of paint gathered there at the bottom of the tiger's leg.

That's what is known as **the Bead**.

**So Many Names?...** I know... I use so many names for such a seemingly tiny area of the painting. The reason is that I use precise names to describe the overall uniqueness and visual effect of each particular Wash. I call this a **Broken-Edge Wash** because of how the one edge of the wash has this lovely broken edge quality that is so easy to create on rough paper.

**But it is also an Even Wash...** As we see in it's finished quality... the wash is even in tone all over. No streaks... blotches... or imperfections... just one lovely even tone.

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**And... I also refer to it as a Gravity Wash** I use this name to help us define a key factor in how it is created. In Transparent Watercolor... we need to use and understand how Gravity effects the paint. With the upper edge of our Watercolor Block raised about 1-2"... this slight elevation increases the Gravitational Pull on the liquid paint... forcing it to gather into a pool along the bottom edges of the brushwork. Hence this is also known as a **Beaded Wash**!

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## Gravity Washes

In watercolor there are 2 different kinds of wash techniques... those that use gravity to run a blend... and those done on a flat surface. It is not enough that you try these a couple times and move on... you must actually master these procedures if you have any hope of getting past the intermediate level of achievement.

### The Beaded Even Wash Recipe

This is the most common wash technique in watercolor. With this procedure you can run an even wash of color over small or large areas of a painting. Prop your watercolor block at a 45° angle. This is enough gravity to force the paint & water to flow downwards and gather at the bottom edge of the brushstroke.

#### Step 1

**This is most important...** Raise your watercolor block about 45° to increase the force of gravity on your paint. Load your brush with paint & water... then start a wide brushstroke across the top inch or so of the painting area. If the paint & water *does not* gather quickly at the bottom edge... forming what we call a *bead*... add more water & paint, and stroke back & forth until it does form a bead.

#### Step 2

Once you've established a bead of paint... refill your brush with paint and begin laying down overlapping *Deep Strokes* of paint back & forth as you move downwards across the area. Overlap each brushstroke by 1/2 to 3/4 of the tip of the brush.

**Crucial!** To create this Even Wash...

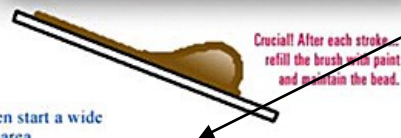
- ✓ You must establish the bead first.
- ✓ You must overlap each stroke.
- ✓ You must use the Deep Penetrating Stroke.
- ✓ And you must work fast!
- If you dawdle... the paint will streak.
- If you press down too hard, or loose the bead as you go... the wash will streak.

*This is a skill that you must perfect!*

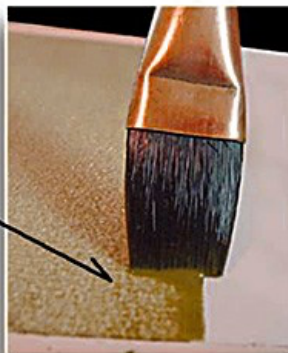


#### The Bead

Look for this pooling of paint at the bottom of the stroke. It must form this bead... or the blending action of gravity will not create an even blend!



**Crucial!** After each stroke... refill the brush with paint and maintain the bead.



#### Step 3

Continue overlapping your vertical *Deep Penetrating Strokes* of paint back & forth across the sheet with a light touch. If your brush is bending you're pressing too hard, and your wash will streak. Work your way down to the bottom, and right over the bottom edge of the tape.

#### Step 4

Gravity moves the bead down the sheet. You move the bead lower with each overlapping brushstroke. As you run off of the bottom edge, gravity will continue to pool the paint right along the bottom tape edge. And if you don't soak up this pooling... it will "blossom" back up into the wash! Swirl your brush in clean water vigorously... then squeeze any water out of the brush between paper towels so that the brush is dry & clean. Then lightly drag the shoulder of the brush along this bottom edge and lightly absorb this bottom bead of pooled paint.

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## Watercolor Wash Skills

**These images** show examples of this same *Even Wash* that I used under the tiger's tail. The Gray Study above is an actual Training Recipe I use in Workshops to practice the brushwork skills used in making an *Even Wash*. The painting is from my last expedition into the Ganges Himalayas of North India. That is an *Even Wash* up there in the sky. But while we're at it... notice those large cast shadows falling over the mountains on the right. Those are a totally different kind of wash effect... done in a totally different way... and having Soft Edges rather than sharp ones.

**A Broken-Edged Wash** - A Watercolor Wash with a broken outer edge at either the beginning or end... or both.

**An Even Wash** - A wash with the same even value... no blotches... no streaks.

**A Beaded Wash** - Washes that use Gravity so that the liquid paint gathers into a slightly pool along the lower edges of the brushstrokes.

**A Gravity Wash** - Watercolor Washes created using Gravity in the process.

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**As Watercolor Painters...** it is up to each one of us to gradually expand, refine, and perfect our imaging skills... our ability to create the vast number of elegant visual effects that Transparent Watercolor makes possible.



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Basic Even Wash

