

A photograph of a watercolor studio setup. In the foreground, a wooden table holds a piece of white paper with a light blue and pink watercolor wash. Two brushes with wooden handles and silver ferrules lie on the paper. To the right, a glass jar filled with water holds several brushes. In the background, a window shows a blurred view of green foliage. The text "Foundations of Watercolor - Week Four" and "Bringing It All Together" is overlaid in the center.

Foundations of Watercolor - Week Four

Bringing It All Together

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Today we will...

- Work from your own photo reference
- Make your own decisions regarding techniques
- Use everything you've learned

This is your painting.



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What You've Learned

- Brush control (tip vs. belly)
- Water control (tea → butter)
- Flat & graded washes
- Wet-on-wet / wet-on-dry
- Color mixing
- Negative painting
- Layering

Today we use ALL of it.

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Choosing a Photo

Look for:

- Strong light/shadow
- Simple composition
- One focal point

Avoid:

- Too busy
- Flat lighting

Simplify

What can you leave out?

- Combine shapes
- Ignore small details
- Start big

Paint **impressions**, not everything.

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The Brush Does the Work

One Stroke, Many Possibilities

How you hold the brush changes everything:

- Tip = control
- Back = looseness
- Turn = thin → thick

Load two colors:

- One on each side

“Don’t force it. Guide it.”

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Light Sketch

- Keep it minimal
- Only main shapes
- Very light pencil

Too much drawing = overpainting

First Wash

Start LIGHT

- Tea consistency
- Large areas
- Save whites

You can't go lighter later

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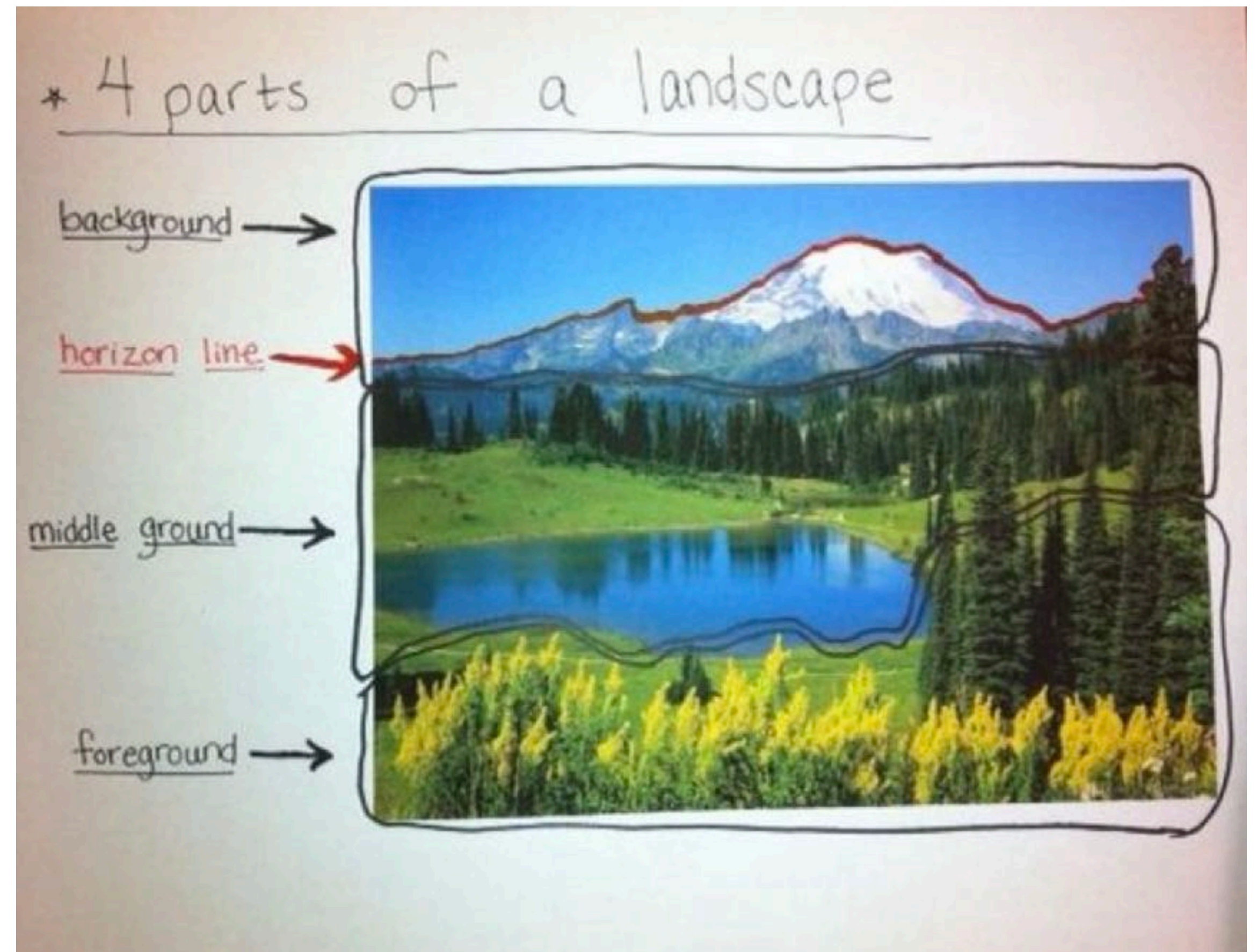
Build Layers

Build your painting gradually.

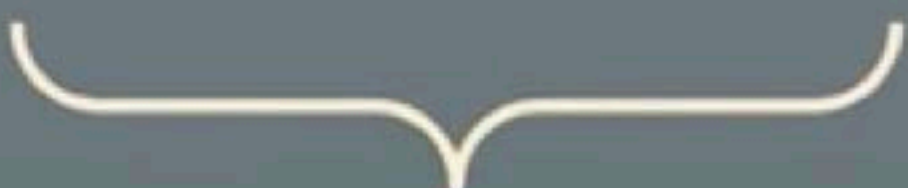
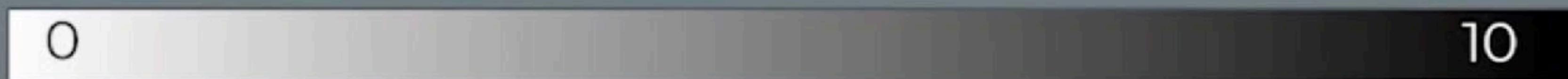
Add mid-tones.

Let each layer dry.

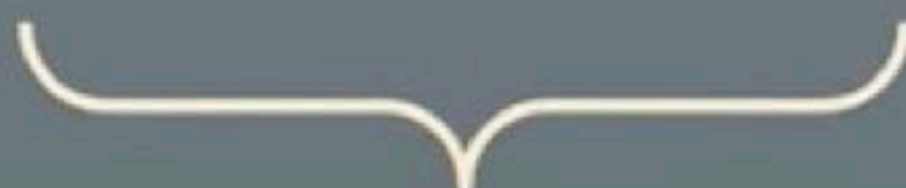
Begin defining shapes.



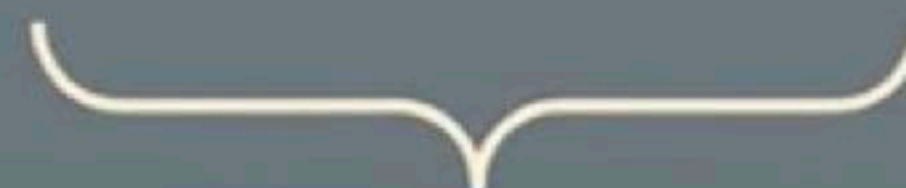
Depth comes from layering, not detail.



0-3



4-7



8-10

Lights

Mid-Tones

Darks

Stage 1

Stage 2

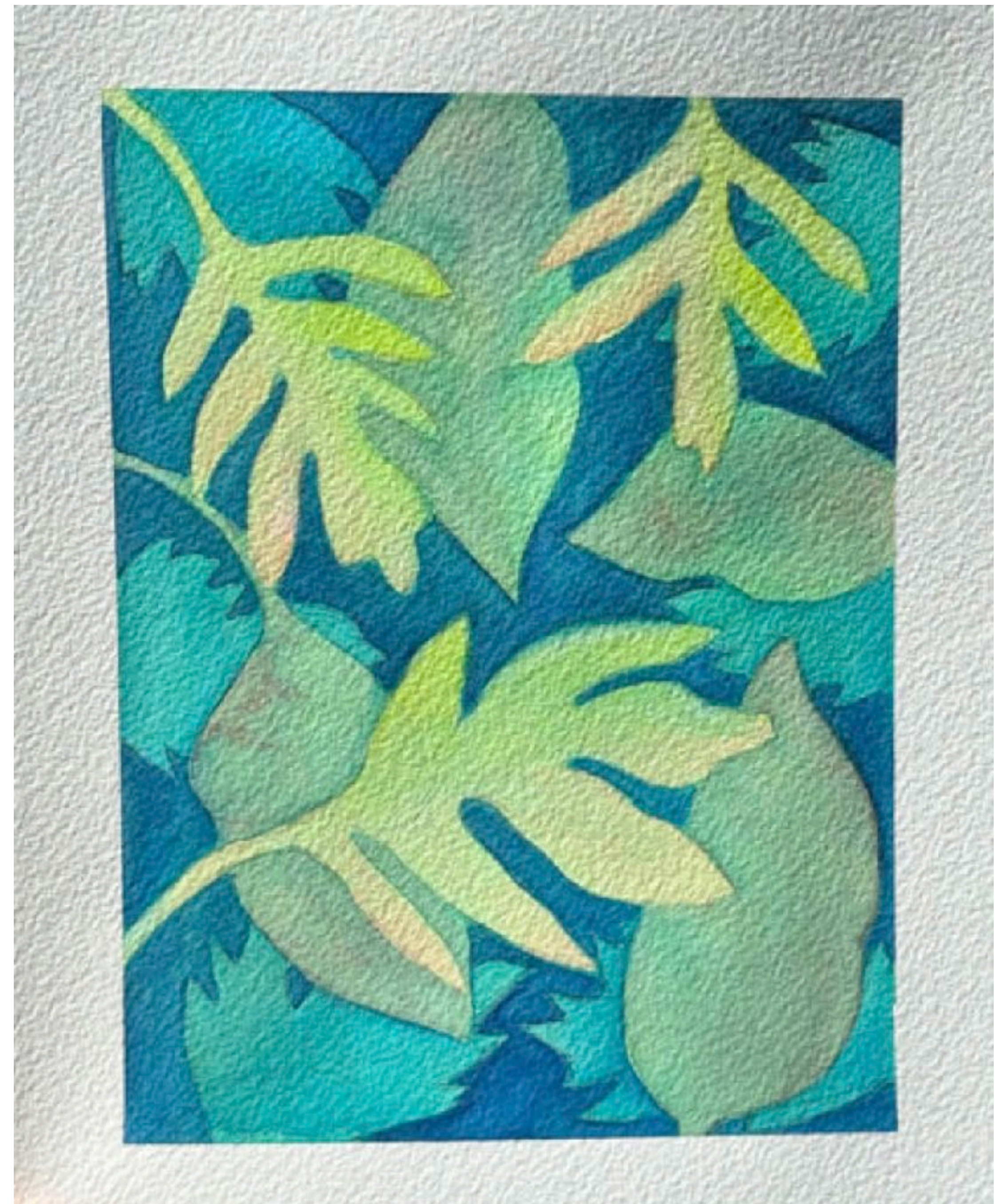
Stage 3

Negative Painting

Paint around shapes:

- Leaves
- Petals
- Highlights

You reveal the subject



Details & Focus

Now slow down:

- Add darker values
- Sharpen focal point
- Vary edges



Not everything needs detail

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Glazing/Washes

Changing the Mood

A transparent wash can shift feeling:

- Warm → sunlight, energy
- Cool → calm, distance

Use very light wash

Apply to dry paper

Same painting. Different mood.

Creating Harmony

A glaze can unify:

- Softens transitions
- Connects colors
- Creates cohesion

One layer can bring it together

Building Depth

Layer transparent color:

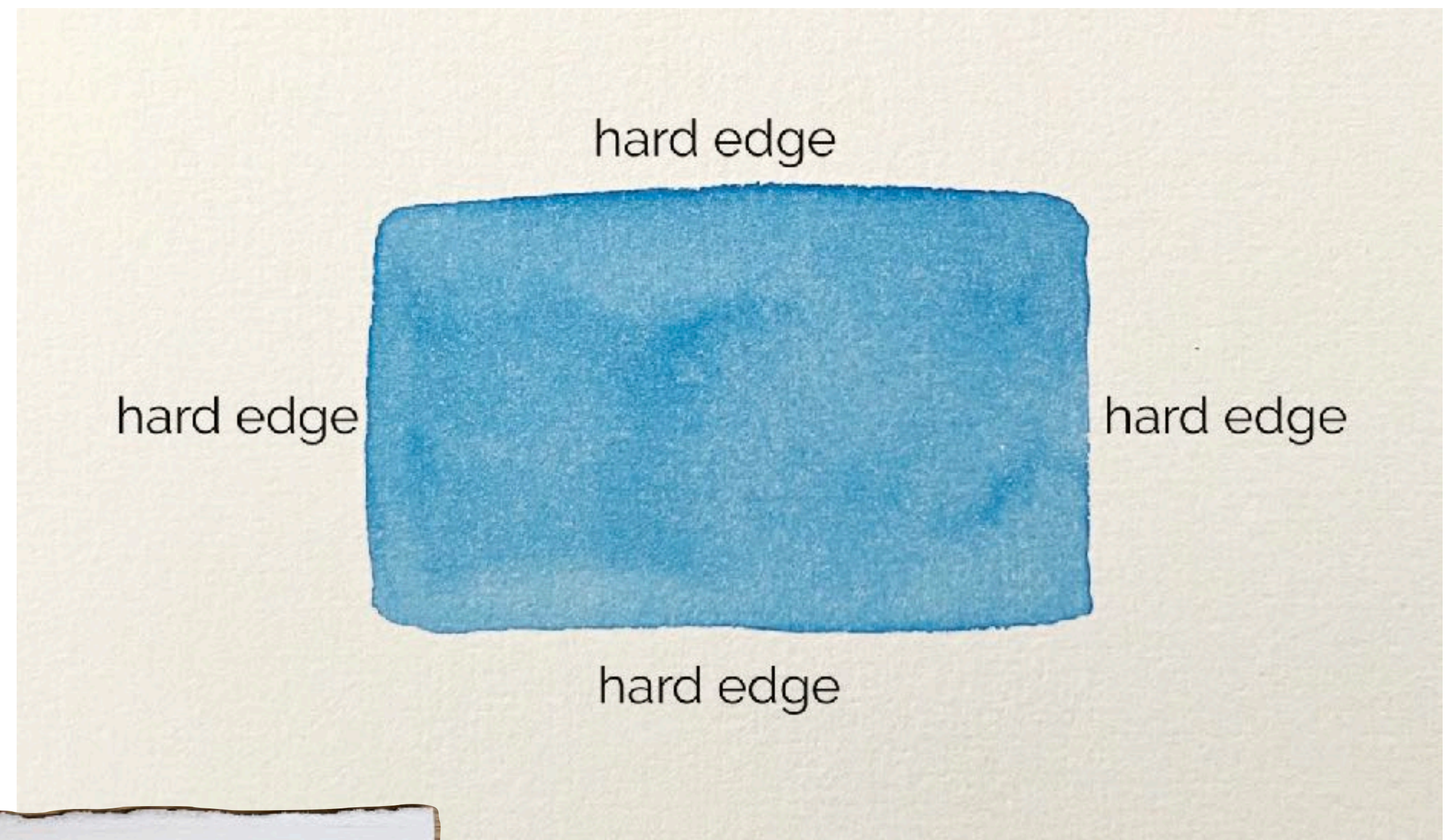
- Deepens without mud
- Builds richness
- Keeps luminosity

Depth = layers, not heavier paint

Edges Matter

- Soft edges → background
- Crisp edges → focal point

Contrast creates attention



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Studio Time

Choose photo

Sketch

First wash

Build layers

Add focus

Let areas dry.

Do not overwork.

Step back often.

Trust the process.

When to Stop

- Focal point is clear
- Values are balanced
- More won't improve it

👉 Overworking is the risk

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STUDIO