Ultimate Guide to Watercolor Paper: Types, Textures, and Weights

Watercolor paper is the foundation of every painting you create. The right paper holds your pigments, absorbs your water, and gives your brushstrokes the texture they need to come alive. The wrong paper will fight you at every turn. This guide covers everything you need to know about watercolor paper: the three types, the three textures, the three weights, and how to choose the right combination for your work.

Cold Press

Cold press is the most popular watercolor paper texture. It has a medium tooth that holds pigment well while allowing smooth brushstrokes. The surface is neither too rough nor too smooth, making it the universal choice for most watercolor techniques.