

The Girl with the Pearl Earring

“Learn to Watercolor” Project

Instructions

This watercoloring lesson introduces the art of Dutch Baroque artist Jan Vermeer (1632-1675). Following a step-by-step approach, you'll learn basic watercolor painting techniques as you recreate his masterpiece *The Girl with a Pearl Earring* (1665).

Step 1

Start by sketching the girl. If you would like to get right to painting, you can simply print this page onto watercolor paper.



Step 2

Paint the girl’s coat with a wet-on-dry wash (wet brush on dry paper). Your watercolor paint should be a golden brown, and your brush should be very wet. Remember to paint quickly to avoid streaking.

Step 3

Paint the scarf with two more wet-on-dry washes (wet brush on dry paper) with a watered-down gray/blue watercolor paint and a pale yellow watercolor paint.

Step 4

Paint the face with a wet-on-wet wash (wet paper with wet brush). Wet the all of the face and neck (except for the eyes) with clean water. Then, add a bit of color and spread it around. If you don’t already have a good color for the face, you can make it with red and yellow.

Step 5

Your painting is almost finished. It’s time to add glazes to your painting. These thin, transparent layers of paint that you will apply over the dried layers you have already painted, will add depth to your artwork. With quick, spontaneous brush strokes, add a darker blue and a golden brown to the scarf, and a darker golden brown to the coat. That’s it!

Congratulations!

If your watercolor painting didn't turn out as well as you hoped, try painting it again. Every talent takes time to master. If you apply yourself, you will be great!

Your Model →

