

## How to use Gatorboard®\* with Fredrix Watercolor Canvas Pads and Rolls:

- Attach dry watercolor canvas to Gatorboard by smoothing the canvas out flat on the Gatorboard which is slightly larger than the piece of canvas.
- Using a regular desk stapler, opened up, staple in the middle of each side of the canvas very close to the edge, while stretching the canvas with your hands toward the location where you will put in the next staple.
- Continue stapling and stretching the canvas until all four sides have been stapled down – with staples approximately one inch apart all the way around the edges.
- Watercolor paints may be applied to the stretched canvas using either wet on wet or wet on dry techniques.

\* Gatorboard® is available from most art supply dealers. Regular foam core is too soft, and will not work with this technique. If you cannot get Gatorboard, you may tape the canvas to an alternate waterproof surface although stapling works best with canvas.

For more information about  
Fredrix® Watercolor Canvas, go to:  
[www.fredrixartistcanvas.com](http://www.fredrixartistcanvas.com)

# Fredrix® Watercolor Canvas Tips and Techniques

by Anne Brodie Hill (ASMA, GWS)

## Fredrix® Watercolor Canvas™ Tips & Techniques

by Anne Brodie Hill

ASMA, GWS

# Q

### What is Watercolor Canvas?

Fredrix® Watercolor Canvas is an authentic 100% woven cotton artist canvas with a special coating that performs similar to a cold press or rough watercolor paper, yet it provides a distinctive look that can only be achieved on canvas. Fredrix Watercolor Canvas will accept all watermedia and mixed media techniques. For example, transparent and opaque watercolors, acrylic and watercolor inks, fluid acrylics, and watercolor pencils. Fredrix Watercolor Canvas will also work with traditional acrylic paints in different viscosities.

### History of Fredrix®

Fredrix has been making artist canvas since 1868. Fredrix is the world's leading brand and offers the broadest range of artist canvas available, anywhere. For more information about Fredrix, go to [www.fredrixartistcanvas.com](http://www.fredrixartistcanvas.com).

## Advantages of Watercolor Canvas:

- 1. Archival Quality** - Fredrix Watercolor Artist Canvas is manufactured with acid-free materials and is guaranteed to be 100% Archival Quality.
- 2. No Buckling** - Fredrix Watercolor Canvas on stretcher strips and Fredrix Watercolor Archival Boards will not buckle like watercolor paper when wet. Watercolor canvas rolls and pads, which come in various sizes, can be cut to any size and should be stapled (or taped with painter's tape) either wet or dry to a ¾ inch thick Gatorboard® to prevent buckling (see note below about Gatorboard).
- 3. Lifting Pigments** - Watercolor washes can be lifted (removed) by simply wetting the area to be removed with a damp brush or moist cloth, and then blotting or brushing the color off. Therefore, mistakes can be easily corrected, or you may wash over the complete image and start over!
- 4. Highlights or "Whites" Recovered** - Miskit can be used on the watercolor canvas, or you can (simply and easily) remove the pigment by wetting the area to be made white with a damp brush and blotting or drying the area with a tissue or paper towel.
- 5. Durable** - Fredrix Watercolor Canvas will not tear like paper does, therefore scratching or scraping the surface will not harm the canvas, and removing the canvas from supports (like Gatorboard and stretchers) will not damage your artwork.

**6. Watermedia and Mixed Media** - Fredrix Watercolor Canvas will perform similar to watercolor paper when adding layers of paints (acrylic washes work best) and other media. Some watercolor pigments will "lift" when applying glazes of color.

**7. Collage Techniques** - Acrylic matte medium or acrylic gel medium may be used as a glue for collage work (follow directions on bottle of medium). Apply the medium to the surface of the canvas (may remove watercolor paint from surface of canvas – brush gently) and to the piece of collage material and apply the collage piece to canvas. Canvas may take longer to dry than paper.

**8. Tape** - Painter's tape can be used to attach canvas sheets to Gatorboard - and will not tear canvas when removed. However, stapling generally works better than tape.

**9. Wet on Wet Technique** - Fredrix Watercolor Canvas can be brushed with water on one side (or both sides), and will perform like wet watercolor paper. The canvas will stay damp longer than paper, so some experimentation may be necessary. The pre-stretched canvas and canvas boards will NOT buckle like paper. The canvas sheets will buckle, so we suggest that you staple or tape to Gatorboard.

**10. Wet on Dry Technique** - Watercolor paints can be applied to the dry canvas, as on paper, remembering that the canvas has a rough texture. And for stronger colors, use more concentrated paint. Also, be aware that pigment will "lift" if you go over the previously painted area with a "heavy hand". "Lifting" will not occur if you use fluid acrylics or waterproof inks.

**11. Large Sizes** - Fredrix Watercolor Canvas is available in large pads and boards in sizes up to 18"x24", pre-stretched canvas up to 24"x36" and in rolls 58" x 3yds and 58" x 6yds. These will work great for large paintings that previously could not be done in watercolor, and are ideal for mural work.

**12. Framing Without Glass** - If you wish to frame without a mat or glass (similar to an oil or acrylic painting), spray with a good quality UV finishing spray such as Krylon® or 3M® to protect the surface from damage. Then frame as you would any canvas.

**13. Framing With Glass (or Plexiglas®)** - Finished Fredrix Watercolor Canvas paintings can be framed as you would any watercolor (or watermedia) painting under a mat and glass or Plexiglas in a frame. At the present time, many watercolor societies will only accept painting on paper, framed with mat and Plexiglas or glass. Be sure and check with your society to see if a watercolor on canvas would be acceptable in their shows.

**14. Hang Without Frame, Mat or Glass** - Fredrix Watercolor Artist Canvas is available in Pads, Boards, Stretched and in Rolls. If you have purchased the pre-stretched version mounted on stretcher bars, you can paint on the edges and hang without a frame. Follow the UV spraying tips in #12.

**15. Plein Air** - Fredrix Watercolor stretched canvas and canvas boards are excellent for painting outdoors (plein air) in watercolor, especially since you will not need to bring any supports, as you would for watercolor paper. And, as stated before, NO buckling!