



Brush Strokes



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PRECURSOR OF CHRISTMAS

Are you ready? Have you painted your Christmas card yet? Subjects are everywhere. The trees are swiftly losing their leaves to show us their shapes so that we can imagine Christmas decorations adorning them.

Snow hasn't appeared in the South, but our imagination is always fertile—seeing decorations appear on trees we see in our mind's eye and in our neighborhoods.

Get your brushes out including your masking fluid so you can block snow on evergreens. When you lift off the masking fluid you will have good Christmas snow. It's all in the shapes. Below on the right is a painting I prepared for classes wishing to paint snow scenes. This tree is painted first with masking fluid. When that dries, the trunk of the tree and the natural color of the tree in winter are painted in.

The painting to the right was skillfully painted by Penny Reazor using the order listed above to paint the tree. You can see how effective it is. Penny even painted the snow shapes to make them appear more round and mounded.

TIMING IS EVERYTHING

Now that you know how to make a snow scene, let's see how well you do. And soon!

Most of my students know about "negative" painting, and if this is a new word for you, let me define it. You can see the bare trees in the "Waiting for Spring" painting and you have to know Penny to be able to realize that she did negative painting around the snow on the tree limbs. While the painting was large and had not been reduced by the camera, the trees were larger as well and Penny merely painted underneath each limb and then painted up to the limb with whatever color was to surround it. This takes skill and a strongly controlled hand and fingers.

When you have painted your Christmas scene using whatever scene you can think of illustrating winter and a house or barn with a Christmas wreath on it, try the above methods. You will be amazed by the results.

Many painters don't like using masking fluid but my method of painting the tree shown here was effective with the use of this medium. When I took off the masking fluid I could see it would never have happened without that. I also needed to paint a glaze on the snow in order to have the limbs really look like branches with snow on them.



"Waiting for Spring" by Penny Reazor

