

Mastering Soft Pastels

Kevin Scully

2nd - 4th Sep 2026

Wednesday to Friday

Pastel is a versatile medium that can be used to create detailed drawings, as well as lively and spontaneous paintings. A variety of subjects will be covered and may include still life, landscapes, seascapes, and portraits. Colour harmony and composition will feature strongly in our approach to using this exciting medium. A variety of techniques will be covered, and you will be introduced to the different sorts of pastels available on the market and the variety of papers and surfaces to choose from.

Description

You will be shown several established techniques including blending, layering, scumbling, glazing, and hatching. There are no hard and fast rules covering the use of soft pastels but there are some techniques that work better than others. We will also discuss the different materials available and how they can be used to best effect. You will also be shown the best ways in which pastel paintings can be protected and framed. There will be several paintings on display in a wide range of styles and techniques to inspire you. There will also be demonstrations throughout the three days, and you can be assured of plenty of individual attention. We will be working from photographs, and all reference material will be provided but please feel free to bring along any images that you would like to work from. At the end of the course, you will be equipped with the skills and techniques needed to produce some exciting work, and the confidence to use what you have learned when producing further paintings of your own.

Please bring with you

Soft Pastels:

A selection of as many soft pastels as you can muster. Try to include some neutral colours as well. Pastels sold in sets tend to contain too many bright primary colours. These brands are particularly good:

Unison
Sennelier
Schmincke
Jackson's
Art Spectrum

Inscribe (economy) Pastel Paper:

A selection of pastel papers in a range of colours, excluding white. There are many brands available, but I favour the Canson Mi-Teintes range. There are other brands available sold in pads, but make sure that they don't contain too many light colours. Mid-tone, neutral colours are a much better basis for creating a painting or drawing. We will be working at roughly A4/A3 sizes. If you want to push the boat out you could always try pastel card, which is more expensive but good to work on. Available brands include:

Sennelier
Canson Touch

Course Location:

CIM Business Centre Cookham

Moor Hall
Cookham
Maidenhead
Berkshire SL6 9QH

Wednesday	
9.15am	Students arrive (coffee available)
9.30am	Teaching session
12.45-1.45	Lunch for all
1.45-5pm	Teaching session
6.45 for 7pm	Dinner for residents
Thursday	
7-9.00am	Breakfast for residents
9.30am	Teaching session
12.45-1.45	Lunch for all
1.45-5pm	Teaching session
6.45 for 7pm	Dinner for residents
Friday	
7-9.00am	Breakfast for residents
9.30am	Teaching session
12.45-1.45	Lunch for all
1.45-5pm	Last teaching session

Art Spectrum Other Materials:

Paper stump or torchon

Putty rubber

Sandpaper block

Craft knife or scalpel

Stiff brush for removing pastel - a stencil brush, or an old hog hair oil painting brush is ideal

Small spray can of fixative

Masking tape

Paper towel or tissues

Baby wipes


Some old clothes or an apron


Level


Suitable for all levels

About Kevin Scully

Kevin Scully is a professional artist, writer, illustrator, and tutor. He trained at Wimbledon School of Art and is an experienced teacher in drawing and painting in all mediums. He has excellent interpersonal skills and is an inspirational and patient teacher. Kevin is enthusiastic and creative, using demonstrations and one-to-one tuition to help students gain confidence and develop as individuals. He teaches drawing and painting in watercolours, oils, pastels, and acrylics. He has National Diplomas in Art & Design, Calligraphy, RHS Garden Design, and a 'City & Guilds Teaching Certificate'. Examples of his work can be found at www.kevinscully.co.uk

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