

# Painting a Back-lit Winter Scene in Watercolor

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1. Draw out the trees, mountain, and top of foreground in light pencil.
2. Mask out the snow on top of the front evergreen branches.
3. Do a color test to decide what colors you want to use for the under-painting. *Mix big puddles of the colors you want to use!*
4. Wet your paper front and back when masking fluid is dry, and apply the colors in a circular manner leaving a white or very light spot just off center. Spray to move the colors as needed, letting them blend and run off the edges creating a very light center, and darker sides and corners.
5. When the first wash is dry, paint the mountains and the lake in the background with a transparent wash of cobalt blue and/or any cool colors you are using in your background.
6. While the mountains and lake dry, paint in the cast shadows of the trees and create the foreground shadows using a darker version of the colors you used in your under-painting.
7. When the mountains and lake are dry, paint in the foliage under the masked out snow with a very dark green.
8. After the foliage has dried paint in the trunks of all the trees and add branches. (I use French Ultramarine Blue and Burnt Sienna for this step.) Make sure to blend in the trunks with the shadows you painted previously, so there are no hard edges at the bottom of the trees unless the tree bottom is obscured by a snow-bank.
9. When the painting is completely dry, remove the masking fluid, and with a light wash of cobalt blue, paint in the shadows on the snow where it meets the foliage. Don't worry that some of the paint from the foliage bleeds into the shadow color - it adds a nice touch to the shadows.
10. *Optional: with a damp brush or sponge gently lift out some sunrays from the lightest spot creating broken sunrays through the trees.*

