

AIMEE ERICKSON

# PLEIN AIR GEAR AND MATERIALS REFERENCE LIST

---

## FOR OIL PAINTERS

This is a reference list, a starting point only, for everything you need if you're just starting out and want to build your kit. You could just go down this list and buy everything on it and you'd have a workable setup for doing 8x10 paintings. However, there are many options beyond what's linked here, and every setup has limitations and advantages, and as you find out what you like and dislike you will be able to make better-informed decisions for yourself. There are also many accessories and customizations which are up to the individual painter.

[POCHADE BOX](#) Artwork essentials EZ-air or EZ-travel. If you want, an [UMBRELLA](#).

[TRIPOD](#) Mefoto BackPacker Classic

[SOLVENT CAN](#) MyLifeUnit 6.6 oz stainless

**SUPPORTS** 8x10"

[Option 1](#) Ampersand 1/8" smooth gessoed masonite panels

[Option 2](#) very thin, lightweight panels from Multimedia Artboard, with primed linen already adhered. Select the 8x10" size. You'll also need a [single board](#) to clip these to (they are not quite rigid enough on their own) using [binder clips](#).

[PANEL CARRIER](#) by Raymar, select the one for 8x10" panels

[TRAVEL CASE](#) for brushes and paints

[GAMSOL](#) 8 oz (don't try to fly with this—buy when you get there)

[BAG](#) a backpack, roller bag, or whatever you like. (This one may be sold out.)

[SKETCHBOOK](#) Moleskine Heavy Sketch *or any other sketchbook*. Seal each page with a single coat of [shellac](#) so you can oil paint in it. (The Moleskine Heavy Sketch paper is heavily sized and I *might* secretly paint in it without the shellac.)

[PAINT, PALETTE KNIFE, AND BRUSHES](#)



## TRAVEL EASEL SETUP

A **folding palette/panel** holder, also sometimes called a *pochade* box, on a **collapsible tripod** is usually going to end up being lighter weight than a French easel. The one I use was made by the now-defunct Open Box M, but there are many really good versions still made. We may be in the golden age of travel easels, in fact, as artists design and market various solutions for the same problem. Here's what I recommend.

## PALETTE/PANEL HOLDER, AKA POCHADE BOX

[Artwork Essential's line of pochades](#) come in a range of sizes (you may be familiar with this as the EASyL). The 8x10 or 10x12 models are perfect for traveling fairly light. Check the limits for panel size and plan to paint on panels that work with your box. If you want to use a glass or plastic insert for the palette you can, but the wood itself functions just fine and will get smooth and shiny if cleaned with linseed oil. You can accelerate the road to glassiness by sanding the wood with 400 grit sandpaper.

## TRIPOD

- Pochade boxes are made to attach to a photography tripod using a bracket that comes with the tripod. There are three main considerations for tripods: weight, stability (these tend to be in inverse proportions), and size when packed. The heavier your box is, the heavier-duty your tripod needs to be to prevent things from getting all wobbly. Another thing to think about: if you're a very tall person, make sure you get a tripod that extends tall enough to put your panel up in front of you—best not be crouched over while painting. Tripods that are shorter when folded can be packed in the bag with the rest of your gear; longer tripods have to be strapped to the outside or carried separately. I like having everything in one wheeled bag (more on that later). For the pochade boxes listed above I recommend the Mefoto BackPacker Classic Tripod or the Benro FSL09AN00 Slim Travel Tripod (Aluminum). If your box is bigger or you plan to attach a lot of accessories, you may want something heavier. With my 11x14 box I use the Benro A2690T, which has a 13lb capacity and has the kind of plate release I prefer. The current version is the Benro Tripster Travel Tripod (MFR #FTR09AB00GBLK).

## PAINTS

- Titanium-Zinc White (or any opaque white)

- Cadmium Lemon
- Quinacridone Red
- Phthalo blue (Gamblin's 1980 series, it's weaker)
- Black (any black will do)

## BRUSHES

- Princeton Aspen 6500 flat no. 6 or similar
- Princeton Aspen 6500 flat no. 4 or similar

## PALETTE KNIFE

A palette knife, or painting knife, can be used for mixing and for applying paint. A three-inch offset blade with a long, graceful shape is the most versatile. Keep it clean: scrape dried paint off with a razor blade.

- Liquitex Painting Knife. Small, no. 13

## SOLVENT & MEDIUM

A **solvent** (turpentine, traditionally) dissolves and thins wet paint; we use it to clean brushes and only in small quantities as a medium. Use odorless solvent

- Gamsol or turpenoid.

Use a stainless brush washer with a basket and a gasket lid that clamps on (or make your own).

A **medium** is used to change the consistency of the paint.

- Gamblin's Solvent-Free Gel

## SUPPORTS

HOW-TO VIDEOS, available on YouTube:

[How to take decent photos of artwork on your phone](#)

[How to shellac paper for oil painting](#)