

## *The Four Treasures of A Studio*

The four treasures of a Chinese scholar's studio are **paper, brush, ink stick, and ink stone.**

**Paper:** Chinese practice painting on Xuan Paper that is renowned for being soft and fine textured, suitable for conveying the artistic expression of both Chinese calligraphy and painting.



**Brush:** The brushes are classified by their softness or stiffness. Soft brushes are usually made from sheep or goat hairs, and mainly used for flower, leaves and animals --- wherever a soft and wide stroke is required. Firm or stiffer brushes are often described as ‘wolf’, actually may use ferret, bear, horse tail or fox hair. They are used to

paint branches, stems, trees, calligraphy, and anything that requires strength. You will need two or three brushes to start with.

**Ink Stick:** Traditional Chinese ink was usually solidified into ink sticks for easier transport and preservation. The ink stick is the unique pigment used for Chinese brush



painting and calligraphy. The raw materials of ink stick are pine, oil, lacquer etc. A good ink stick can produce beautiful shades of ink density.

**Ink Stone:** The ink stone is literally a stone mortar for the grinding and containment of ink. Even a small amount of water could be applied to the end of an ink stick, and that end would be ground with the flat surface of the ink stone. A larger quantity of ink could be ground from a small pool of water placed on the ink stone. Water could be stored in a water-holding cavity on the ink stone itself.



\* *Video tutorial: Grinding ink on an ink stone:*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zi3JJ6ZBwDc>

**Accessories:** Chinese painting tools may also include penholder (brush rest), brush pot, water dropper, ink box, paperweight, seal, seal box, and so on.

### Chinese Painting Accessories

		
Brush Hanger	Brush Pot	Water Dropper
		
Ink Box	Paperweight	Seal