1. **Save your whites.** Just do it, Go carefully around what you want to be white.

The better you get at watercolor, the more this is a workable answer. It just doesn’t serve you always.

1. **Blotting** paper: apply a wet wash, immediately use a Kleenex to print a cloud (s) into paper. Using Paper towels can result in printing back a texture unplanned.
2. **Use a masking fluid**. There are several brands and styles and application methods.

Maskoid, Winsor Newton, Cheap Joe’s American Journey, Holbein Masque Pen, Marker -size nibs vary.

Apply with a toothpick, an “ugly brush’ (Cheap Joe’s catalogue), toothbrush, cheap brush, application cap, as a marker. Print it with a mat board scrap.

Hints\* if it spills or gets where you do not want it to be. Stop, let it dry. Rub it away dry with the rubble Masking eraser.

1. **Tape:** white artist’s tape. Blue tape, Green tape, masking tape.

Tapes have adhesive qualities that differ, experiment, test, try and take notes. I like white artists tape. I have used blue painter’s tape. I have used masking tape, don’t, it’s cheaper, and it can pull paper up with it as you are finalizing your art piece. It is not worth it.

Hint, Scissors or X-acto knife could be used for a specific shape. I prefer a torn edge to show only- think tree trunks. You can still add a thin layer of masking to adhere tape more securely. One can burnish down tape so it sticks well and paint does not seep under tape.

1. **Wax**, crayon, candle- you can do this, it essentially stays forever. Batik, melted wax or wax paper also possible.
2. **Rubber Cement,** cheap, older medium, still around, brush inside lid. Not best answer, but could give texture you would like.
3. **Stencil/ Mr. Clean eraser**, create your own simple cut out. It can be a stencil cut from an index card or a plastic Mylar sheet. Wet the sponge, wring it out, scrub over stencil while holding stencil flat and still. Or use a metal eraser shield for small highlights.
4. **X-acto knife,** reclaim whites; use a flat blade single side razor blade or a blade itself out of the handle. Water skid marks, edges of leaves, to coax a white area back up, there are many ways it can work.
5. **Lifting medium,** made by several manufacturers. Paint the paper with a wash of medium, let dry, it can buckle paper. Paint with watercolor. Let it dry. Work to lift colors used. Work with a Kleenex and a damp brush, scrubbing where you want changes. Winsor Newton brand suggests using it even in layers.
6. **Fritsch Scrubber** – (Cheap Joe’s catalog). It is a brush not used for painting, but rather as an eraser. Be careful, you can scrub a hole into 140 lb. paper.
7. **Fabric brush**, white synthetic, soft bristles. It works like Fritsch, softer, easier, less paper abrasion.
8. **Chinese white, Gouache paint, Pro White, Acrylic paint,** tiny areas can be reclaimed. Sometimes you really want pink or baby blue, mix any color with the watercolor to achieve that opaque area. (Not transparent)
9. **Colored pencils, watercolor pencils, watercolor sticks**- work wet dry or both.
10. Use a stencil- newspaper edge torn, tag board or plastic cut to a shape, one can brush paint over top surface quickly or spray with a few pumps from a Holbein fine mister spray bottle. Remove masking stencil. A newspaper stencil can keep the paper protected white you use a toothbrush to add splatter texture to one area.
11. Cut dry watercolor image and reapply to a new sheet. Or, place clean or painted details as a **collage.**
12. **Tissue paper** or other collage as a return to white or light colors. Use a 1ply of a napkin. **Yes** glue with tissue paper or Kleenex can be used.
13. **Watercolor ground**, repair a picture with a layer or two of a white medium. Allow it to dry for 24 hours or more. Repaint as if new paper. (Daniel Smith)
14. **Combine** strategies to get desired affects.
15. **Scrap back** in a wet wash with a palette knife or a chiseled brush handle.
16. **Thirsty brush**, use a paper towel in your hand and wet a clean brush, scrub an area, try to life paint with a Kleenex as you soften areas. Have a stiffer, synthetic brush, scrub, lift. Clouds can be created with this technique. This can be done from a wet wash or from a dry area.
17. Take the painting to a **clean bath tub** and soak it overnight. Work color off the whole surface with your hand. Let dry, start again. Blot with towel or paper.

Some ways have more success than others. Some take more time, cost more money, or require special products. Having a bag of tricks can offer a solution to a multilayered composition.

One does not always finish with a raw white surface, you may later wish to paint color where you preserved white paper earlier. Masking areas should be cleanly removed and still likely painted back into some for a softer, more refined surface.

I hope this helps.