

Calm Water and Reflections

Whatever is dark on dry land will be lighter in the water.

Whatever is light on dry land will be darker in the water.

Colors become less saturated in water reflections. Even white will need to be grayed down in the water.

Details are left out. Only the basic smudges of color are needed.

Avoid all hard edges in water reflections.

Because water is denser than air, it will absorb light. Therefore do not repeat the same value of the sky in the water reflections. Water will almost always be darker than the sky it is mirroring.



What happens to value and color when water is reflected

Value:

The value range narrows. . .

Mid values have the least amount of change but get slightly darker.

The lights get slightly darker.

The darks get slightly lighter.

You don't paint the dark darks or light lights.

Color:

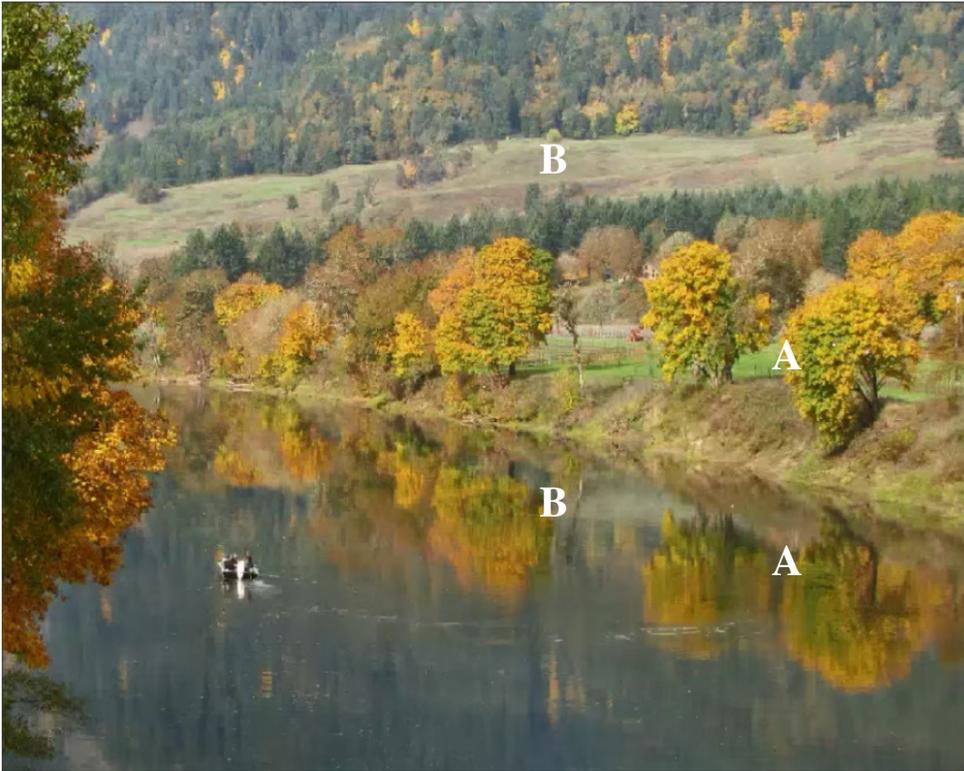
Again the color value gets darker. In addition color gets slightly more de saturated/less intense and like atmospheric perspective still applies. The water is warmer in color temperature when it is closer to you.

What happens to angles

Angles get mirrored. If something is leaning to the left we use the same angle except lean it to the right. It's a mirrored effect.

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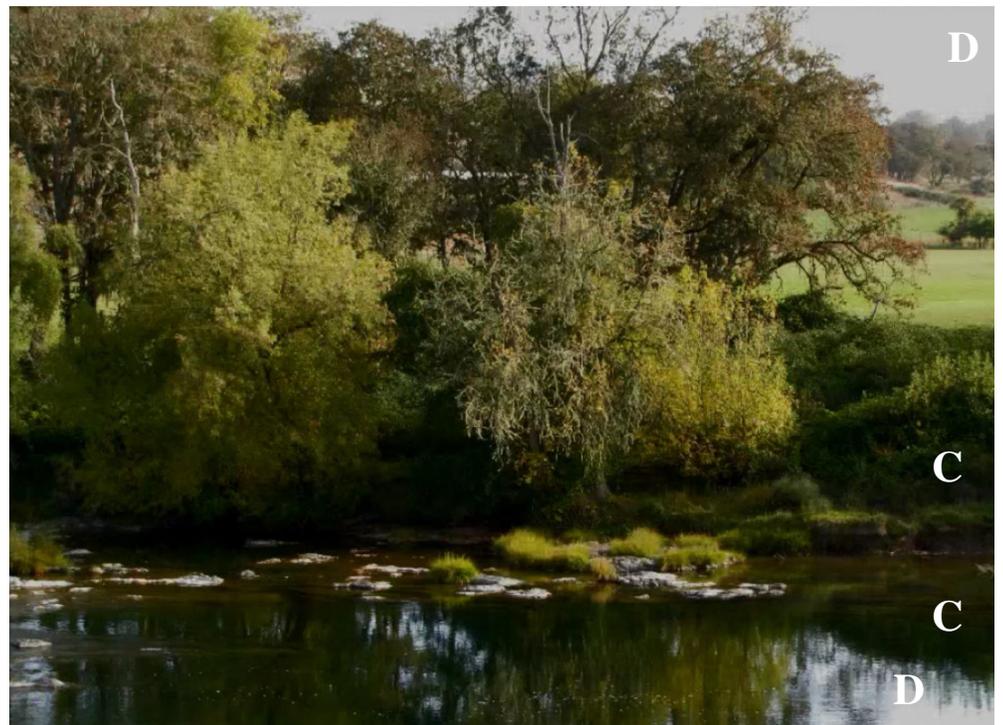
Size and placement/near vs. far from the waterline



A. Items close to the waterline are the same size. Notice the tree on the bank and reflected in the water is pretty much the same size.

B. As things get further from the waterline and depending if on a slope or not the size and placement starts to change. See The lighter green hill labeled “B” where it reflects in the water. If it wasn’t on a sloped plane (hill) it wouldn’t show in the water at all.

C. Is a pretty steep incline and levels off onto a grassy ground plane. The grass doesn’t show at all. Noticed it’s missing in the reflection and D. The sky shows instead.



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Items close to the waterline are the same size.

As things get further from the waterline and depending if on a slope or not the size and placement starts to change. Something we see might not be reflected in the water. Just remember to observe and don't just assume it is a mirrored image.

