

Welcome to Drawing from LINE to LIFE



Exploring the process of creating art, choosing drawing supplies, and preparing your pencils for drawing

This lesson has three sections:

- Enriching Your Life with Drawing
- Pencils, Equipment, and Paper Required
- Preparing Your Pencils

Enriching Your Life with Drawing

Most beginners to drawing have a lot of desire to become creative. The act of creating art has two major components:

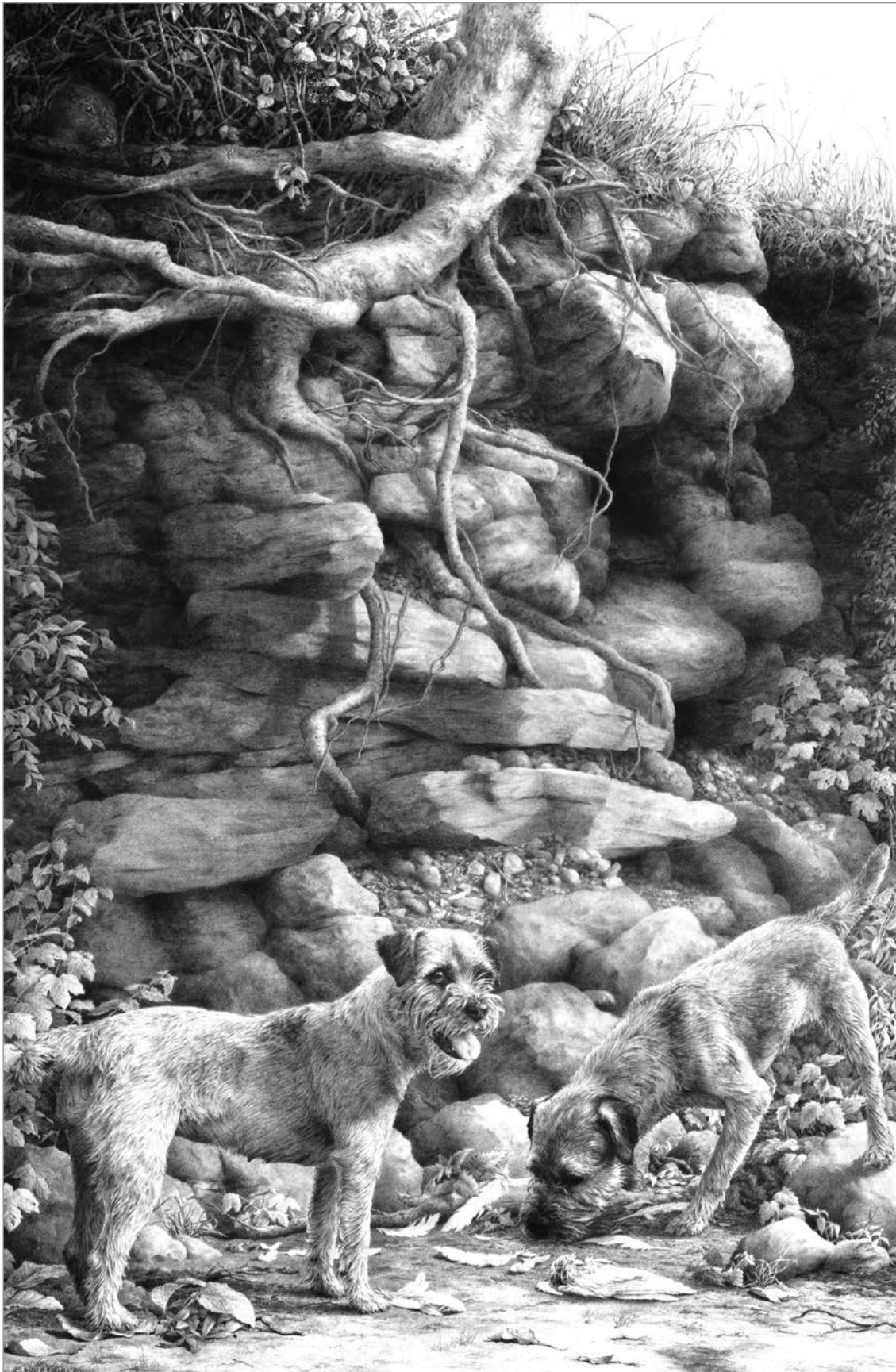
1. The technical ability and manual dexterity to draw line and tone.
2. The mental ability to draw from your imagination and memory.

The second component of creating art is greatly improved by learning the first. Many beginners initially become frustrated trying to draw from their imagination and memory. They soon discover that learning technical skills first enables them to successfully recreate an experience and/or capture a memory.

As you build up your arsenal of techniques, you find yourself looking ever deeper into the world around you. Where you once saw a tree as merely a recognizable organic object, you now begin to wonder how you might draw it.

You begin to notice how the foliage forms rounded masses that are three-dimensional with bright and shaded sides. You see how the light casts shadows on the masses below and appears through gaps, throwing the internal structure of branches into silhouette.

Figure 1



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In brief: you learn to “see” instead of look. Over time, that newly acquired information will be stored away – waiting the day you need to draw on it for your landscape study.

Persevere! You will learn to experience the world as you have never experienced it before.

It’s been my experience that the technical skills have to be learned first, and that takes practice. But that practice will pay dividends, as your hand and eye co-ordination will gradually improve until you are finally able to draw without having to think about technique at all. Your thoughts eventually travel down your arm, into your hand, and through your pencil onto paper.

Practice is essential. Regular practice is even better. Set aside a time, daily or weekly, that is “your time”. Schedule this practice for times when you are free of distractions and can concentrate on your work.

You may have heard of artists entering “another state”? It’s true – and wonderful! The world ceases to exist, time stops, hearing shuts down, peace reigns. When you achieve this “super concentration” you’ll understand why you won’t want to be disturbed.

Allow four to six hours a week. It doesn’t really matter if that’s an hour each evening or all day Sunday. If you decide on a single hour, you’ll soon notice that time passes quickly and becomes two hours without you realizing it!

Figure 2



Many years ago, here in the UK, I was an Amway distributor.

Having my own business taught me that my time was much better spent doing and learning than sitting around watching TV.

To this day I watch very little TV and prefer to live my own life instead of living through the fictional lives of others.

I encourage you to make time to learn new skills, especially those offered here at *Drawspace*, as they have the potential to change and enrich your life!

Pencils, Equipment, and Paper Required

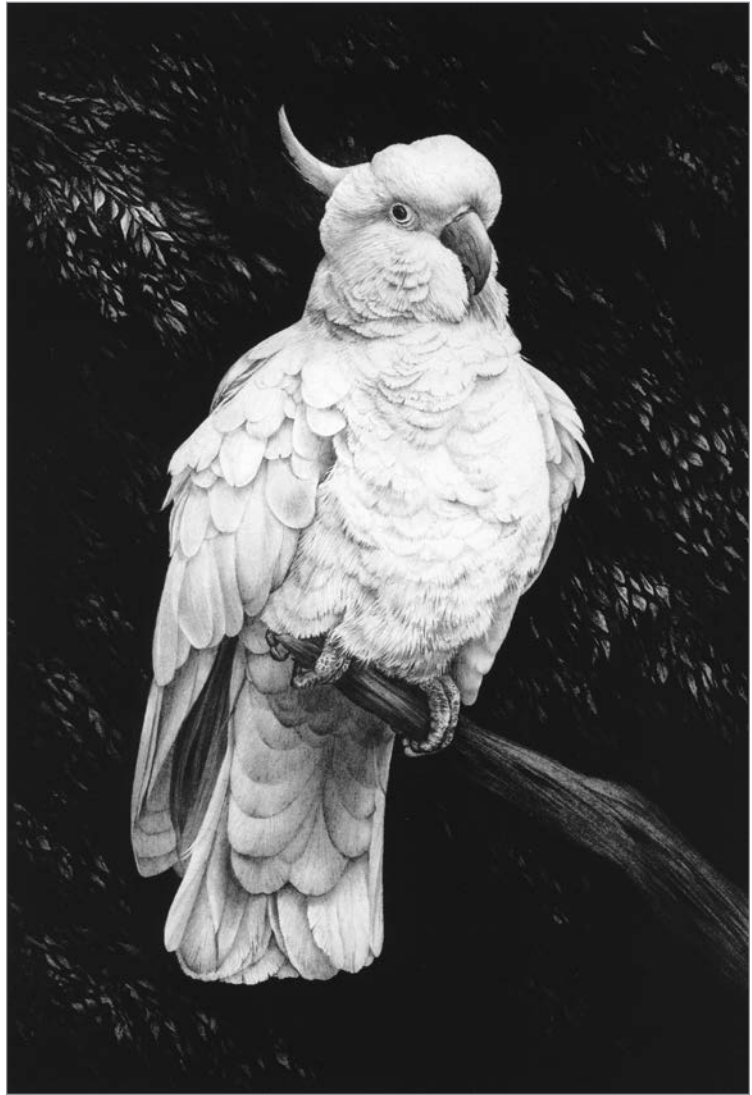
Good quality 4B, 2B, HB, 2H and 4H grades of pencils should meet all your drawing requirements (B = black; HB = neutral; H = hard).

Keep in mind that each grade of pencil is capable of overlapping the tones achievable by those either side of it. For example, a lightly applied HB can reproduce the darker tones of its neighboring H grade, and heavily applied 2H will supply the remaining lighter tones of H.

Any brand will do. I prefer to use Staedtler pencils for their consistency and quality. I use 2B, HB and 2H extensively in my work. Harder grades, such as 6H, I usually reserve for specialized tasks. Very soft grades, such as 6B or 9B work well for large, loose drawings. For the type of work I do, I never use these grades, because they are too coarse for fine detailed drawings.

Graphite pencils obtain their different grades (degree of hardness) by being mixed with clay – the more clay, the harder the grade and the lighter the achievable tones. For example, 6B has a far greater graphite content than 6H, which contains much more clay. This means 6H has a very fine composition but 6B has large grains of graphite – too large for fine details.

Figure 3



6B and softer grades blunt easily, crumble under pressure, and usually fail to fill the paper's tooth (the holes and troughs in the texture of paper that hold graphite in place).

Following is a list of additional supplies you will need for these lessons:

- Vinyl art eraser
- Kneaded eraser or, if possible, Blu-Tack
- Staedtler, Pentel, Alvin, or similar “click” eraser (with cylindrical vinyl core)
- Pencil sharpener
- Craft knife, scalpel or safety razor blade (not essential)
- Toilet tissue and paper kitchen towels
- Paper – approximately letter size

Almost any medium to heavy weight paper will do. Try to stay away from paper that has more texture than medium watercolor paper. A very smooth, white paper/card is excellent for creating drawings with fine details.

Preparing Your Pencils

Are your pencils ready to use? Well sharpened to a good conical point? Excellent! Except that if you begin drawing with that point it will quickly blunt and may even snap.

To sharpen your pencils correctly:

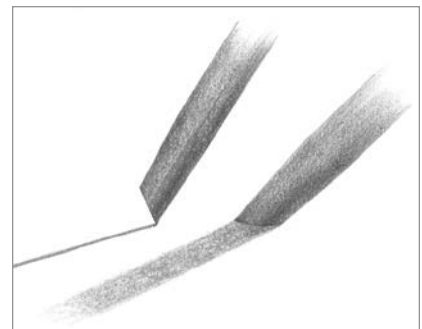
1. Start with your middle-of-the-range HB and a scrap of drawing paper. Hold your pencil vertically and place its point on the paper.
2. Rotate your pencil in your fingers so you can see the writing or HB grade mark.
3. Lower the pencil until it's at your normal handwriting angle.
4. Begin to rub the point on paper. Your goal is to wear the graphite to a flat face (called a *chisel point*). Refer to the slightly exaggerated drawing in Figure 4.

If you always hold your pencils with the writing visible, you'll know exactly where the flat face on the point is. I use the pocket clip on my clutch pencils in the same manner.

Figure 4



Figure 5



Do the same to your other points, too – the advantages are worth the effort.

You now have a point that will:

- not snap (unless you apply really excessive force).
- allow you to apply flat tone without a hint of hard edge.
- permit the drawing of fine, sharp lines without constant re-sharpening.

A simple rotation is all that's needed to switch from the flat face to the sharp edge.

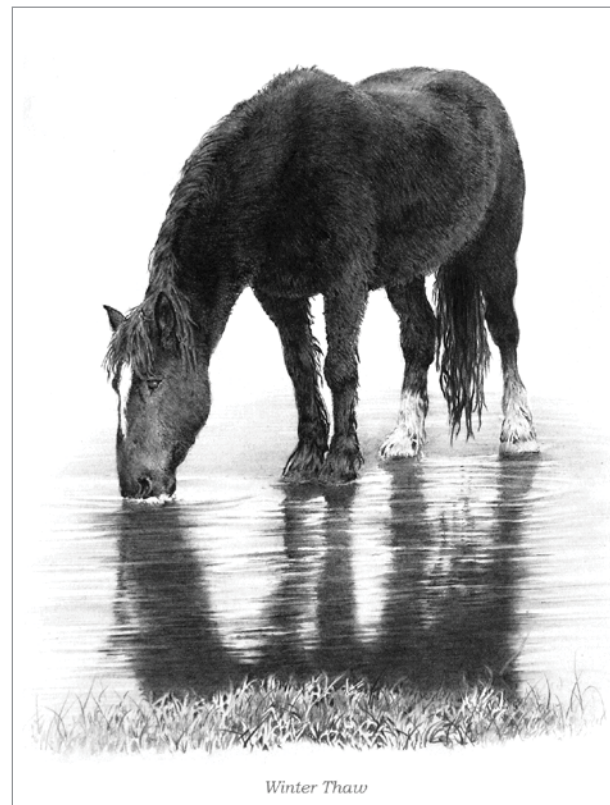
And every time you use the flat face you automatically sharpen the edge.

Happy drawing!

Cheers.....

Mike

Figure 6



Winter Thaw

Drawing from Line to Life

by Mike Sibley

- Foreword by renowned artist David Shepherd
- Over 280 pages of pencil drawing tips, tutorials, demonstrations and much more...
- More than 625 illustrations
- Tools, techniques, methods
- Step-by-step instructions
- For the Novice and Advanced student
- From pure line drawing through to near-reality

Based on Mike's experience of over 30 years as a professional artist and graphite pencil specialist.

www.SibleyFineArt.com/pencil-drawing-book.htm

If you're a graphite artist or an artist who wants to learn more about how to construct a drawing, a book like this is a jewel. This is the book I have been waiting for... a book where a life-long artist performs a magical brain-dump into a format where you can reference it your whole life. So, if you were on the fence about this book think about it this way: this book can help you perfect your craft for a lifetime and amounts to a night out to a restaurant and a few drinks. Now ask yourself, which is going to stay with you after you wake up the next day?

>Rich Adams<

