

Drawing Supplies

Here are the drawing supplies that I recommend and use throughout this course.
(Scroll down for a note on material substitutions.)

Strathmore 400 Series Drawing Paper



Drawing Board



Painter's Tape or Binder Clips
(for attaching your paper to your drawing board)



General's Charcoal Pencils (HB, 2B, 4B, 6B)



A Kneaded Eraser



Vine or Willow Charcoal

(This is optional, and I explain why in Lesson 3.7. If you do decide to use vine charcoal, you won't need it until Module 3.)



An Inexpensive Paintbrush



A Mahl Stick

(A sturdy ruler or curtain rod will work just as well! I talk more about this tool and how to use it in the [How to Hold and Control Your Pencil](#) video.)

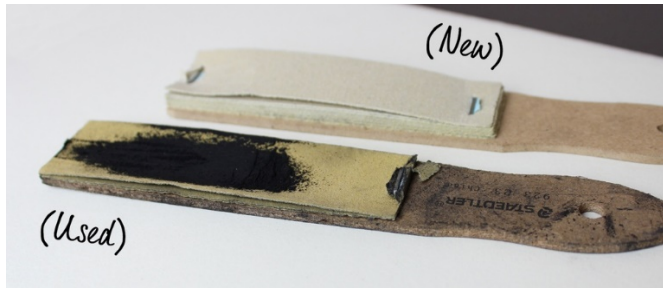


For sharpening drawing pencils:

A Single-Edge Razor Blade or X-Acto Knife



A Sandpaddle Sharpener



A Kneaded Eraser



A Dustbin



Material Substitutions

At the time of writing this, much of the world is locked down, attempting to flatten the curve of the Covid-19 virus.

In this unprecedented time, think of the materials listed above as the 'ideal scenario'. If you have access to them, or can acquire them easily and safely - fantastic. If not, there are some options.

1.

Material: Sturdy Drawing Board.

Substitution: I have used a few sheets of layered foamcore before! Really all you need is a smooth, sturdy drawing surface.

2.

Material: Charcoal pencils.

Substitution: Graphite or mechanical pencils.

I use charcoal pencils throughout this course because charcoal darkens to a pitch black, which I need for the background of my flower drawing. However, the techniques and strategies taught in this course are 100% applicable to drawing with graphite pencils.

The one issue you will run into if you use graphite is that you will not achieve the light-absorbing darkness that charcoal can provide. (Graphite also produces a 'shine' or 'glare', which artists tend to either love or hate.)

If you only have graphite pencils, you can still absolutely benefit from this course. (Or even a mechanical pencil! In the Introductions video, the eye I draw in the timelapse video clip is with an everyday mechanical pencil.)

In fact, it would be a phenomenal exercise to try this drawing in graphite, and in charcoal later on when you have the materials. You would have such a thorough understanding of the differences between the properties of graphite and charcoal, and an opinion on which you prefer after such an exercise!

All that to say: If you don't have charcoal, don't despair! It might just be a wonderful learning opportunity.

3.

Material: Strathmore 400 Drawing Paper.

Substitution: Any other drawing paper, or printer paper if that's all you have!

The paper I recommend, Strathmore 400 Drawing Paper, is a smooth, medium-weight paper that can withstand several layers of charcoal, and lots of erasing. This is one of my personal favorite drawing papers, but you are welcome to substitute this with either another smooth

Only have printer paper around?

It won't be an issue for the first 2 modules. However, once you get to the shading and rendering stages (Modules 3 and 4), you may begin to see the paper degrade. It will only make you appreciate drawing paper more when you're able to get it again!

4.

Material: Sandpaddle Sharpener.

Substitution: A sandpaddle sharpener makes the pencil-sharpening process easier. You don't absolutely need one, but most of my students prefer to have it. You can also make a sandpaddle sharpener very simply by stapling a piece of sandpaper onto a wooden block!

5.

Material: Kneaded Eraser.

Substitution: A regular eraser (just not the pink one attached to the bottom of a pencil – those tend to be terrible and smudge everything).

Kneaded erasers are amazing because they can be shaped into various forms, allowing you to erase in various ways - you can flatten the kneaded eraser and use it to erase a large area, or shape it into a sharp edge and create a line, almost like a 'reverse pencil'. However, a 'normal' eraser will certainly do if that's all that you have.

6.

Material: Vine or Willow Charcoal.

Substitution: Simply removing this material will not be a problem, or you can make charcoal powder.

Vine or willow charcoal is already listed as an optional material (which I explain in Lesson 3.7 in the course). However, if you want to use it and don't have access to it, you can substitute it with charcoal powder, or make your own version of charcoal powder. You can find instructions on how to do that on this page:

<https://www.thedrawingsource.com/toned-paper.html>

(Scroll down to 'Materials Used' and read the paragraph on General's Charcoal Powder.)

A Final Note on Drawing Supplies

Having 'ideal drawing materials' certainly makes the drawing process smoother, and often improves the end result. However, we do what we can with what we have, especially at a time like this!

If you have any questions about material substitutions, please feel free to email me at marina@thedrawingsource.com