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Drawing, A Skill Anyone Can Learn

Some people mistakenly believe that art is about free and innovative self-expression; however, if you do not know how to *draw*, you will not be able to express yourself creatively. You simply cannot share ideas or concepts visually if you cannot draw.

Drawing is a skill that anyone can learn

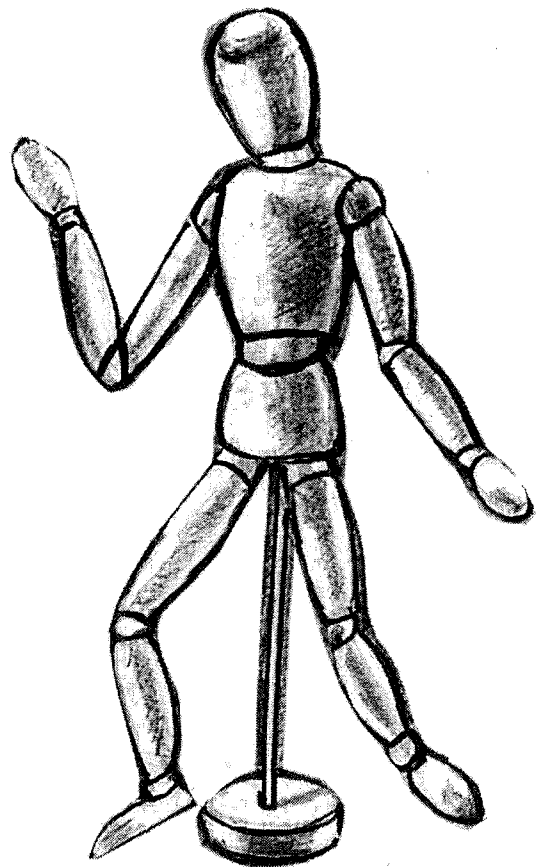
When you were taught how to read, write, and do arithmetic, you were given specific materials from which to learn. You were taught the rules of phonics, shown the right way to print letters, and given the basic steps in solving math problems. You were given an organized system of exercises to help you master those skills, and you had to do practice drills.

Drawing is a discipline

It requires observation combined with eye-to-hand coordination. As you look carefully at the things you are attempting to draw, you see certain details that you may have never noticed before. In a way, drawing helps you to rediscover the world around you.

“Good art” is a result of plenty of practice and serious study: the more you draw, the better you will get at it. Just like playing a musical instrument, engaging in sports, or figuring out complicated math problems, you must invest time and concentrated effort to become proficient. The better you get at drawing, the more you will enjoy art.

The amount of God-given talent added to how much effort you put into your work will determine how far you can go. This workbook was written to help you learn to draw, so that you will be able to communicate visual knowledge and exchange visual ideas in a visual language. Hopefully you will enjoy yourself in the process.



Gather Your Supplies

Your drawing experience will be enhanced by the quality of materials you purchase. Be discriminating about the drawing supplies you select. All the ability in the world will get lost in the frustration of working with poor quality materials. For the best result, invest in premium quality art supplies. Supplies can be purchased at any local art supply center or craft store. For mail order art suppliers see listing in appendix B. Take good care of your tools and they should serve you well.

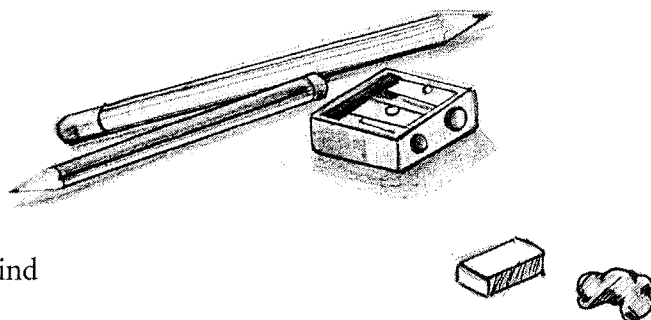
Pencils

The pencil is your most basic tool. A variety of effects are created by using different grades (hardness or softness) of pencils. Collect several of them to work with. Pencils are marked with numbers and letters to indicate how hard or soft the “lead” is. (It is not really lead; it is graphite and clay.) H is a hard lead which shows up light. 10H is the hardest or lightest pencil. B is a soft lead which shows up dark, and 9B is the softest or darkest pencil.

Note: A good selection of pencils would include; a 4B, 2B, HB, and 2H. You may also like to try an ebony pencil for darkness.

Eraser

A kneadable putty eraser is an important tool. It starts out as a small square of blue or gray which is soft and pliable and it can be molded into any shape to fit your purpose. A pink rubber eraser is not as good to use because it leaves a lot of itself behind and often tears up your drawing surface.



Erasers are not always used to rub out mistakes. They are also used for softening tones, as well as highlighting specific areas. Your initial drawing should always be light, which will enable you to draw over wrongly placed lines with new lines followed by shading or darker values. Try not to erase until you have almost finished your drawing.

Pencil Sharpener

Pencils perform better when they are sharp. Keep a little hand sharpener nearby to maintain a uniform point as you draw. The most resilient ones are made of metal. You may like to keep a strip of sandpaper handy to sharpen your point. Just roll the pencil between your fingers with the lead rubbing on the sandpaper.

Paper

Paper comes in different thicknesses, called weights, commonly classified as rough, medium, or smooth. For detailed pencil drawings, smooth paper is best. Off-white pulpwood paper, known as newsprint, is economical and is sufficient for practice drawings. Drawings you want to save should be done on white, medium to smooth paper. A nine inch by twelve inch sketch book would be a good choice for the exercises in this workbook. It is also a good idea to carry a smaller sketchbook with you—you never know when you might see something you want to draw.

Ruler

It is often helpful to use a ruler to check to see if your lines are straight or parallel. Some people are inclined to slant their drawings; the straight edge can be used as a guide to correct this tendency.

Paper Stump

Sometimes a “paper stump” is used for shading (smearing or smudging). It is not absolutely necessary to have one when drawing with pencils. You can use your finger or a tissue to spread the graphite around.

Note: You may want to keep a clean sheet of paper between your hand and your drawing to prevent unwanted smearing and smudging.

Drawing Board

A drawing board is like a portable desk that provides a flat smooth surface for supporting your paper. You can use an oversized clipboard or a lightweight piece of wood if your sketchbook does not have a stiff enough back.

Getting the Most from This Workbook

- Read *all* the instructions before you begin drawing.
- Do each and every exercise in the order they are given. *Do not* skip exercises!
- Always draw from what is in front of you. *Do not* copy from the drawn examples!
- Always keep your art supplies neat and orderly.

And whatever you do, do heartily, as if it was for the Lord....

Colossians 3:20