

Foundations of Drawing Materials List

Lacey Lewis School of Realist Art



Dividers

Sometimes called mechanical dividers or proportional dividers, this measuring tool is very similar to a compass that is used to draw circles with one very important difference: There is no wheel or bar connecting the legs of the divider. This allows you to quickly capture a measurement without having to take the time to adjust a wheel.



Graphite Pencils or Lead and Lead Holder

You will either need a few graphite pencils, or a lead holder and a few varieties of lead. Traditional wood graphite pencils will need to be sharpened with a sharpener that creates a long taper, or shaved back with an exacto blade or box cutter before sharpening the lead. Lead holders have the advantage of being able to extend the lead to create a long taper on it without having to first shave away the wood part of the pencil. This is further explained and demonstrated in the course content.



Sanding Block

These inexpensive sanding pads can be found at most art supply stores, but sanding blocks from the hardware store will work just as well. These can be used to create a long taper on graphite lead, graphite sticks, or vine, willow, and compressed charcoal.



Kneaded Eraser

Any brand, malleable gray eraser. This can be used to lighten shading by pressing, or erasing by rubbing. It's self cleaning and doesn't leave bits behind on the paper.



White Stick Eraser

I've always used Paper Mate's Tuff Stuff eraser, but it appears they sold the product to General's who is now selling a nearly identical stick eraser. Another brand is Tombow's Mono series of stick erasers that come in different sizes. Either way, you should get eraser sticks that look like the picture below, along with a matching holder. Aim for a 2-4mm eraser. The 6mm erasers I have encountered don't work as well and aren't as precise.



Blending Tools

Some useful tools for blending and smudging include large, fluffy paint brushes or make-up brushes, paper towels, chamois, and blending stumps. Avoid tortillions as the ridges tend to burnish materials into the paper. Instead, go for a soft blending stump, sometimes called a stomp.



This is a tortillion. Leave this at the art store.



DO Buy These! :-)

To the right is a blending stump or "stomp." Take this home with you!

Vine or Willow Charcoal

Either vine or willow is acceptable, and I have no preference for brand or hardness or softness. It should be relatively thin with a maximum width of about 1/4". This type of charcoal comes in square or round varieties and is often an irregular shape.



Compressed Charcoal

This type of charcoal is dark and velvety, and is typically in a uniform cylinder or square shaped stick. I have no brand preference but I suggest getting medium or soft compressed charcoal rather than a hard one.



Charcoal Pencils

I strongly prefer General's charcoal pencils since they seem to get less sticky than other brands. Get medium (2B), hard (HB) and extra hard (2H) but skip the soft and extra soft pencils as they are more difficult to sharpen without breakage.



White Charcoal

Again I prefer General's brand white charcoal pencil to avoid stickiness.



White Paper

You will need sketch or drawing paper for the graphite projects. Thinner paper is generally less forgiving, doesn't erase as well, and is easily marred. Keep this in mind when choosing a paper for a drawing you are investing a lot of time in. One suggestion is to buy a sketchbook or construction paper for practice, and a few sheets of heavier papers for more serious projects. I recommend trying hot press watercolor papers or Stonehenge drawing or printmaking papers.

Toned Papers

Just about any sturdy middle gray or tan paper will work. My favorite papers are Daler-Rowney Canford Card in Gunmetal Gray, and Canson Mi Tientes in Flannel Gray, Dark Gray, and Moonstone. It's better to choose large sheets that can be cut down as needed rather than a paper that is too small.



Drawing Board

I recommend getting an 18" x 24" smooth sheet of masonite/hardboard along with some clips or masking tape, rather than purchasing a drawing board with permanently attached clips and a handle, which tend to get in the way of drawing. I purchase mine from Blick Art Materials but hardboard is also available at hardware stores.

Easel

While it can be a little weird to get used to at first, it's incredibly helpful for many reasons to work at an easel. The one pictured at right is available across multiple brands and should cost around \$40. It packs up small if you prefer to store it when not in use, is lightweight, and easily transported. I use these in my own studio as well.



Other Useful Items

T-square or triangles for right angles

Ruler

Paper towels

Masking or artist's tape

String that is not stretchy for measuring

Wooden skewers or knitting needles for measuring or sighting