

## Colored Pencil II

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### Materials

#### Pencils

Colored pencils come in different grades of soft and hard. Soft are better for the dense, saturated values this class promotes; hard, for precise details. I use Caran d'Ache's Luminance 6901 for the soft and Tombow's Irotijen for the hard. But there is no need to require both here, especially when you're still deciding if pencils are your preferred medium. So, I'm recommending **Faber-Castell's Polychromos** pencils as a very good all-around compromise. (Caran d'Ache's Pablo pencils are comparable, and Prismacolors are acceptable, just not as long-lasting.) A 24-pencil Polychromos set costs \$42.23 on the DickBlick website (it cost \$25.23 the last time this class was offered), 36 costs \$51.45, and 60, \$85.00. Do shop around. They're frequently on sale at significant discounts. In general, more is better. But don't feel you can't start with even a 12-pencil set and add to your collection as needed. If you do start with less, however, count on having to mix and blend more of your colors—not a bad skill, by any means.

If you already have a set by another manufacturer, **keep using them**, but make sure they'll be able to perform as required. The first set of exercises will let you know soon enough. See the "Coloured Pencil Brands" page on Pencil-Topics' UK website (<https://www.pencil-topics.co.uk/pencil-brands.html>) for additional information.

#### Paper

**Canson Mi-Teintes** papers are the recommended paper of choice, but only because the class assumes you'll want to work on colored papers. That may not be the case, however. Your specimen may work better against a white background—in which case, stick with Canson Mi-Teintes, anyway. It has many virtues in addition to coming in a wide variety of colors (50 in all). Individual sheets measure 19 x 25." Pads come in 9 x 12" and 12 x 16" sizes, each one with a few colors from which to choose.

It appears Clairefontaine's Pastelmat papers would also work; indeed, they might even be exceptional. But I have no experience working with them. If you'd like to be the first on our block to try them out, feel free to do so. Stonehenge's Legion Drawing paper is another option, and so is Strathmore's 400 Series Mixed Media vellum surface papers, albeit with far fewer colors to choose from. One request: please, no black paper. That's for another time. (But do check out Rhonda Nass's use of the same.)

**If you didn't take the introductory Colored Pencil I class**, you'll need a 9 x 12" pad of Strathmore's Colored Pencil paper, as well.

## Everything Else

1. Some means of organizing your pencils if you're not going to leave them in their packaging. I use Global Art's leather cases. I've also seen mailing tubes glued together—not portable, but handy for your home studio.
2. Traditional graphite pencils for the initial drawing. 2B is my go-to pencil, but I have others, as well. I would think a 2H, an HB, and a 2B would be enough.
3. Tortillions—short, pencil-like tubes of pressed paper used for blending and softening. They're useful, but not before you've gotten layering down first.
4. Pencil sharpener. I swear by two—Xacto's KS wall-mounted sharpener for a quick, efficient, clean cut, and Carl Angel's No. 5 table-top sharpener for the same result. Either one will do. I bought both only because I had the Xacto wall-mount sharpener before I knew I would need a portable one for classes.
5. A kneaded eraser and (optional) Sakura Color Products Corp. SumoGrip eraser
6. Tombow Mono Zero Elastomer Eraser—or a similar product
7. Artist tape, archival quality
8. Backing board for taping down your paper while working on your drawing. I use Ampersand's Museum Series 1/8" flat hardboard.
9. Protective sheet to cover your work during storage. I use Bienfang's Parchment 100 Tracing Paper.
10. Pencil extender. Derwent has a package of two, one that can hold standard-size pencils and one for thicker, Caran d'Ache-size pencils. Make sure the extender you choose can in fact hold your pencils.
11. Embossing stylus tools. These are useful for certain special cases, eg., drawing leaf veins. Wet Paint has an inexpensive (\$6.19) 3-pack set of soft-grip embossing styluses, one stylus at each end—and hence, six in all.
12. A soft cosmetic brush for removing excess bits from the drawing surface. Much better than whisking with your hand or blowing. (Thank you *pencil-topics uk!*)
13. Brush and Pencil's Advanced Colored Pencil Textured Fixative. You might want to wait on this until you see it in operation.

## Websites

As you might expect, a Google search for “how to draw with colored pencils” will churn up A LOT! DO NOT GO DOWN THIS RABBIT HOLE! Pick one, if you must. My not-often-consulted-but-useful-when-I-do site is <https://www.pencil-topics.co.uk/>.

## Books

“Of making many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh,” Ecclesiastes 12:12. What's more, I firmly believe that learning by doing is the best kind of learning. That said, here are three titles even so:

Ann Swan, *Botanical Portraits with Colored Pencils*, Barron's Educational Series (in the US; Collins published the UK edition), 2010.

Janie Gildow and Barbara Benedetti Newton, *Colored Pencil Solution Book: Tips and Techniques for Winning Results*, North Light Books, 2000.

Alyona Nickelsen, *Colored Pencil Painting Portraits*, Watson-Guptyl, 2017.

And, of course, the ASBA's *A Comprehensive Guide to Botanical Art Techniques*, ed. Carol Woodin and Robin A. Jess, Timber Press, 2020, is superb on all fronts, including the chapter on colored pencils by Libby Kyer, Jeanne Reiner, Karen Coleman and Tammy McEntee.