

Drawing a Finch *by Ann Buchau*

This is a simple guide for those new to drawing. You can use this guide to draw anything from a photo. The most important thing is to stay loose and have fun! [Watch this quick tutorial of the drawing.](#)

Material list:

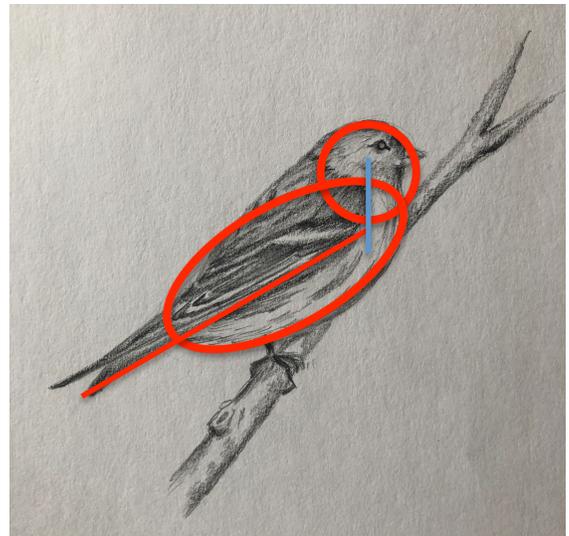
- Reference photo
- Pencils in soft and hard lead to create a wide range of shading. (see tips)
- Pencil sharpener and/or sandpaper
- Kneaded eraser

Set up:

1. When working with graphite or black and white, it's best to make a gray scale photocopy so that you can remove color distraction and allow the brain to focus on the picture's shapes and values.
2. If possible, make the reference picture the same size of your final drawing. Tape your picture and paper on a board side by side. This makes it easier to glance back and forth from your reference picture to your drawing without losing information or having to constantly refocus and adjust for proportions and scale.

Find shapes and lines

3. Using your brain and eyes as your primary tool, begin by using a hard pencil, (2h or H) to place light lines on your paper to indicate the top and bottom and width of your subject. You can also use transfer paper, grids and rulers, but it's best to train your brain to see lines, shapes and proportions relative to each other.
4. Start by creating the foundation and structure of the drawing through lines and shapes, don't get caught up in the details yet. (much like building a house, the foundation is what will define the structure)
5. Work main lines in the beginning; try not to get absorbed in the details. Hold your pencil on an angle over the reference photo and look for imaginary lines and shapes that cross and connect to create the structure.
6. Seeing shapes and lines prevents the brain from interjecting previously stored symbols or ideas of what it thinks it should look like.



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Find Values

7. After the structure is made look for the lines that create shapes that separate values -- the light from the shadows. Using an HB or F pencil, start by creating a middle value to help define the feeling of mass. Don't rush.
8. Squint to help see the variation of the values, look for various shapes in the drawing to help refine shadow shapes in the drawing.
9. Next, use a 4 or 6B pencil and locate the darkest areas and begin to shade – stay flexible and focus on the shapes of the structure and the shadows.
10. Once the structure is solid, you can begin to refine and add details. (similar to sculpture, you start with the basic shape and structure before you get into any details.

Tips

1. To start, don't work too small or too big.
2. Although you can use any pencil, using a wide range of pencils avoids damaging your paper by needing to press too hard to create deeper values. If you are beginning, select pencils between 4H and 6B.



- use 2H-9H pencils to create light lines for the initial line and reference shapes
 - use F or HB to create medium values (HB is like your average No. 2 school pencil)
 - use B -9B to create dark values
3. Step away from your work from time to time to view. You can also turn it upside down or use a mirror to check for mistakes. After a while your brain gets used to seeing your mistakes and this forces the brain to see what it doesn't want to see.