



PART 1: Introduction & Basics

In Part 1 we will start by going over some of the basic supplies we need to get started. It is best to be as efficient as possible, that way we only carry the supplies we need and are not overwhelmed with trying to decide which to use for what. We will also take a look at a few fundamental mechanics of drawing. The way we hold our drawing instrument can significantly affect our sketching experience and being able to make slight adjustments in how we control it will enable us to take on different challenges more easily. Lastly, we will take a look at watercolor and discuss a few helpful tips to keep in mind that will help to make it less intimidating.

OUTLINE

- Materials
- Drawing Mechanics
- Drawing with Ink and pencil
- Drawing with Ink Only
- Watercolor Basics

MATERIALS

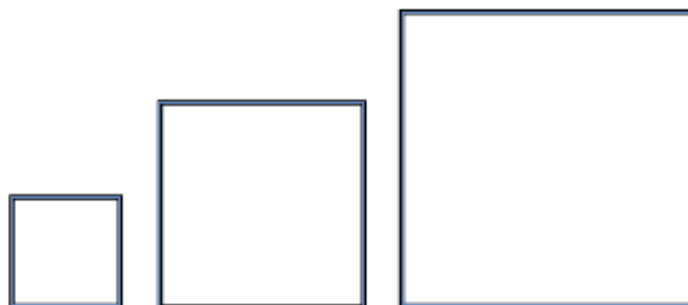
- Strathmore 300 Series Bristol Smooth Pad (9" x 12")
- Strathmore 300 Series Cold Press 140lb Watercolor Pad (9" x 12")
- Optional: Strathmore Travel Series Watercolor Journals (great for Urban Sketching – 5.5"x8" or 7"x10")
- Lyra HB Graphite Pencil
- Daler-Rowney [Aquafine Watercolor Travel Set](#)
- Sakura Pigma Micron 005
- Sakura Pigma Micron 03



EXERCISES

Drawing Mechanics

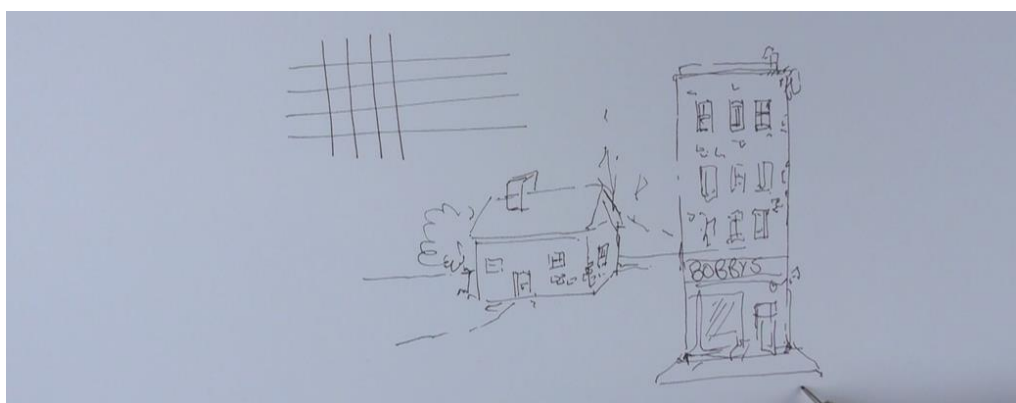
On Bristol paper, draw a grid of parallel and vertical lines across each square. Square sizes: small 0.5 x 0.5 inches; medium 1.25 x 1.25 inches; and large 2 x 2 inches. This exercise enables you to practice making adjustments based on the size of the area of drawing, as well as to practice consistency in make parallel horizontal and vertical lines of varying lengths.



You'll use tighter lines and strokes in the smallest box, and loosen up as you move to the larger boxes. When making larger drawings, the movement comes from your entire arm, versus just the hand/fingers. Loosen up your grip and rehearse the movement before making your mark so it will be very smooth and steady.

Drawing Lines

Drawing lines, especially vertical and horizontal lines, is essential to Urban Sketching. These two lines hold together buildings, trees, roads, etc, as you're drawing perspective. If vertical and horizontal lines aren't stable, your whole drawing will feel unbalanced. You don't necessarily need a ruler or straight edge and I recommend practicing drawing straight lines freehand. One useful technique is to draw dots at the beginning of the line, in the middle and at the end, then you're just rehearsing connecting the dots. If your lines wobble a bit, that's fine. Wobbly lines can add character and convey a sense of life and movement.



Drawing with Ink Only

Create two drawings on Bristol paper from the same scene or reference image: One done with a pencil under-drawing and the other done with ink only. This exercise highlights the pros and cons of both approaches and enables us to see which works best for the experience we want or for a given type of scene or subject. For the ink-only drawing, use dots to mark landmarks and to serve as markers for measurements and proportion. This will help to lessen much of the anxiety we may experience when making marks we can't erase or undo.

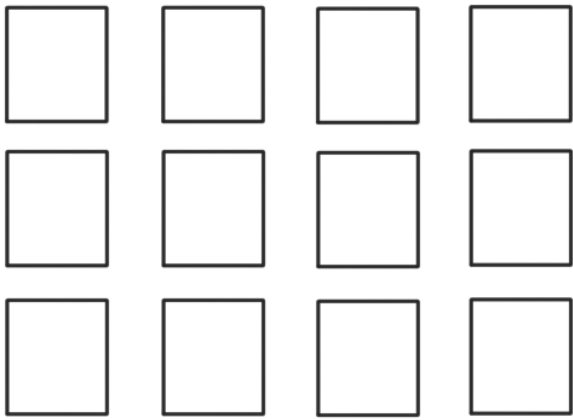


Watercolor

When doing Urban Sketching with watercolor (not just ink), it's essential to use the right paper. Watercolor paper that is at least 140lb (300gsm) is best to hold up to many layers.

Challenge yourself to form a basic palette of no more than 12-14 colors. Place your colors into the categories of reds, blues, yellows, greens, earth colors, and neutrals. The main goal is to be able to have or mix the main colors of the color wheel at varying levels of saturation and value. It may be necessary to have one or two convenience colors. These are colors that may not give you much mixing power, but are used so often that it would be an inconvenience to mix them each time.

Use watercolor paper (not bristol) when adding wet media to your piece.



Helpful steps when learning to apply watercolor to Urban Sketching pieces:

1. Always keep a small piece of scrap paper that you can use to test your color mixes. Make sure you're happy with the color mix before applying it to your piece.
2. Take the time to really look at the scene and simplify the colors, values and saturations that you see. It's never necessary to try to recreate every color you see in front of you. Usually one or two colors from your palette can be used or mixed, and don't get overwhelmed by every color you see.
3. Make a general plan of how you will use the colors that you have to match or account for the colors you see. What mixes and combinations will you have to use? What layers will you have to apply? Do you need to remove certain colors you're seeing? This helps foster a sense of spontaneity and help you recreate your version of what you're observing.