

# How to Practice Drawing

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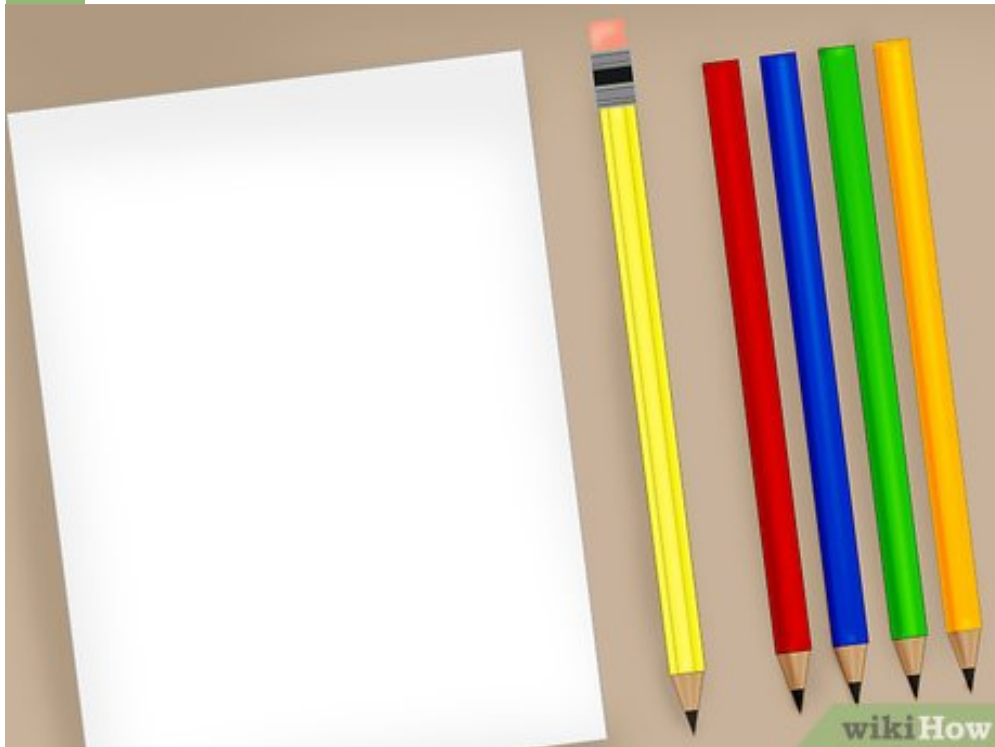
Co-authored by **Kelly Medford** and **12 contributors**

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Some people have a natural ability to draw well. Others have to work at it for years to get better. Do you like drawing, but want to build up your skills? Are you good, but want to get better? Like anything, the more you do it the better you'll be.

## Method 1

### Method 1 of 4: Preparing to Draw

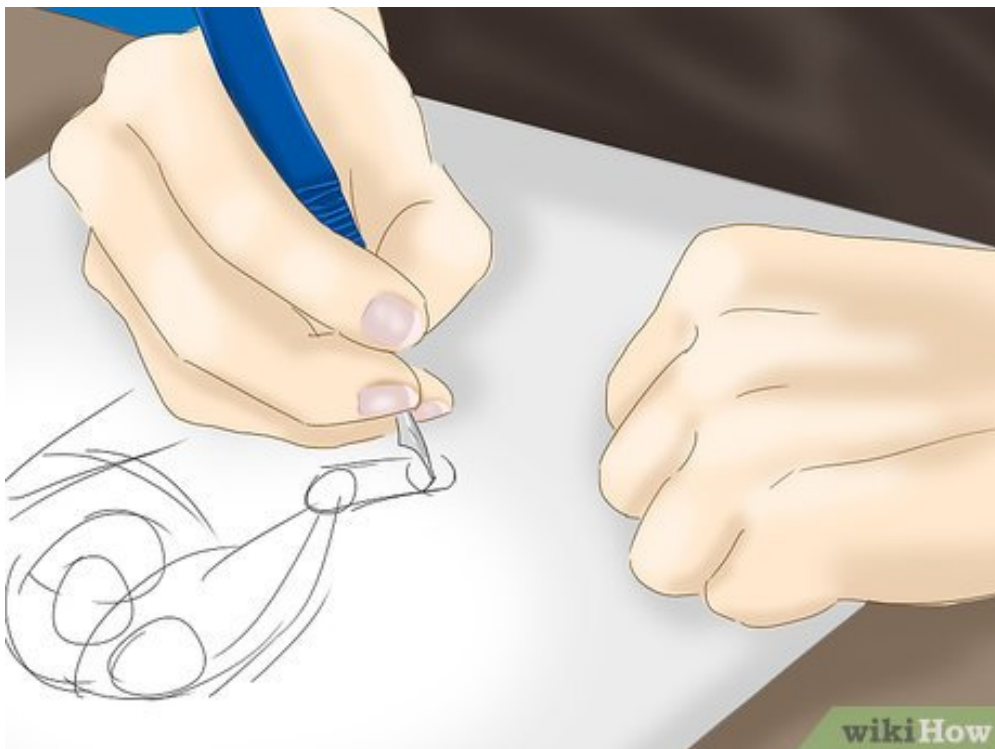


**1 Gather materials.** Are you doing a pencil drawing? Just scribbling? Generally, you'll want a piece of paper or a notebook. For a pencil drawing, just use a No. 2 since you are practicing. Also if you are using a pencil, get an eraser. If you would like to color, use markers, colored pencils, paints, pastels, or anything else you would like. Try to get thick drawing paper at an art supply or craft store. Canvas paper or a drawing pad is recommended, but if you're just learning you might want to start with regular sheet paper.



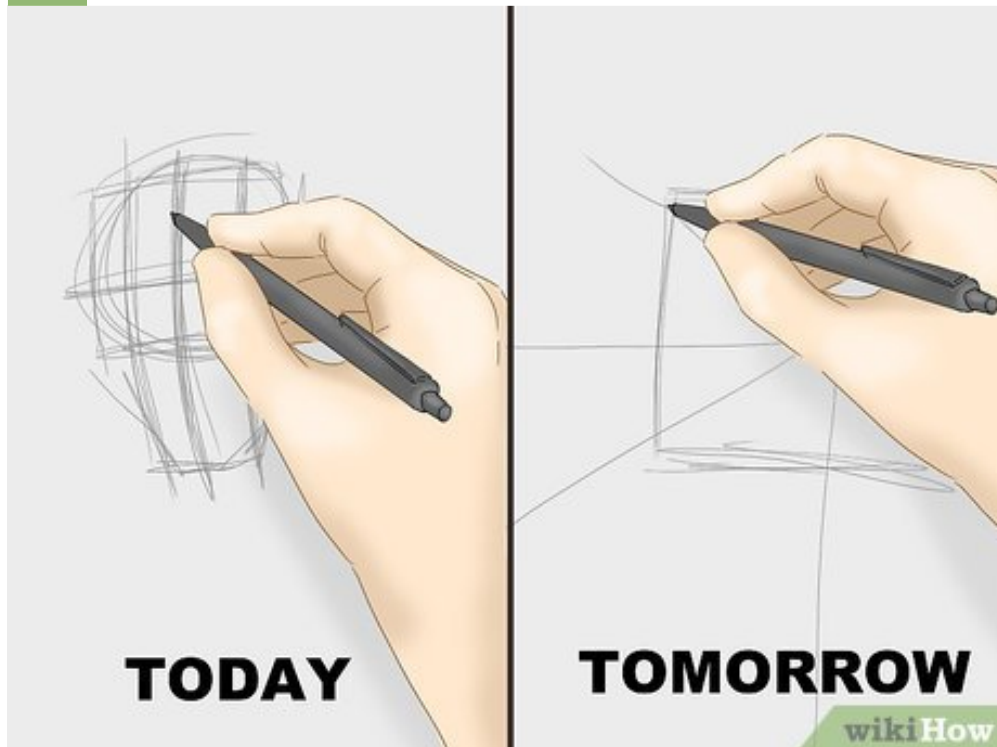
**2 Target specific drawing skills.** [1] Are you already good at drawing animals? Maybe you should focus on humans. If you're struggling with proportions you should try working on that during your practice. Figure out what it is that you want to improve so that you're not just drawing at random. Just drawing isn't necessarily going to make you better - you need targeted practice.

- Free drawing is fine too if you want to work on your ability to create in the moment. Graffiti artists often free draw for this reason.



**3 Devote some time to drawing.** Imagine going to the gym and doing five sit-ups and then leaving. You're not going to get in better shape doing that, and drawing for five minutes once a week probably won't help you out either. Try to commit some serious time to drawing if you want to get better. Twenty minutes four days a week isn't a huge time commitment but will be really beneficial.

## Method 2 of 4: Establishing a Routine



**1 Stay consistent.** The most important thing is that you keep drawing. Try to avoid falling into the trap of getting really into the activity for a few weeks and then tailing off. Make it a part of your daily routine.



**2 Choose a time every day when you draw.** Maybe it's in the morning right after you get up. You can try to draw scenes from your dreams, and it's a really relaxing way to start the morning. Maybe you prefer drawing in the evening before you go to bed. Whatever works, but choosing a time will help make establishing a routine easier.



**3 Draw for 20 or 30 minutes each session.** It's important to spend a decent amount of time drawing. Keep looking for new exercises and things to draw so you avoid getting bored. The more time you commit the better you'll be in the end.

Method  
3

### Method 3 of 4: Taking Classes

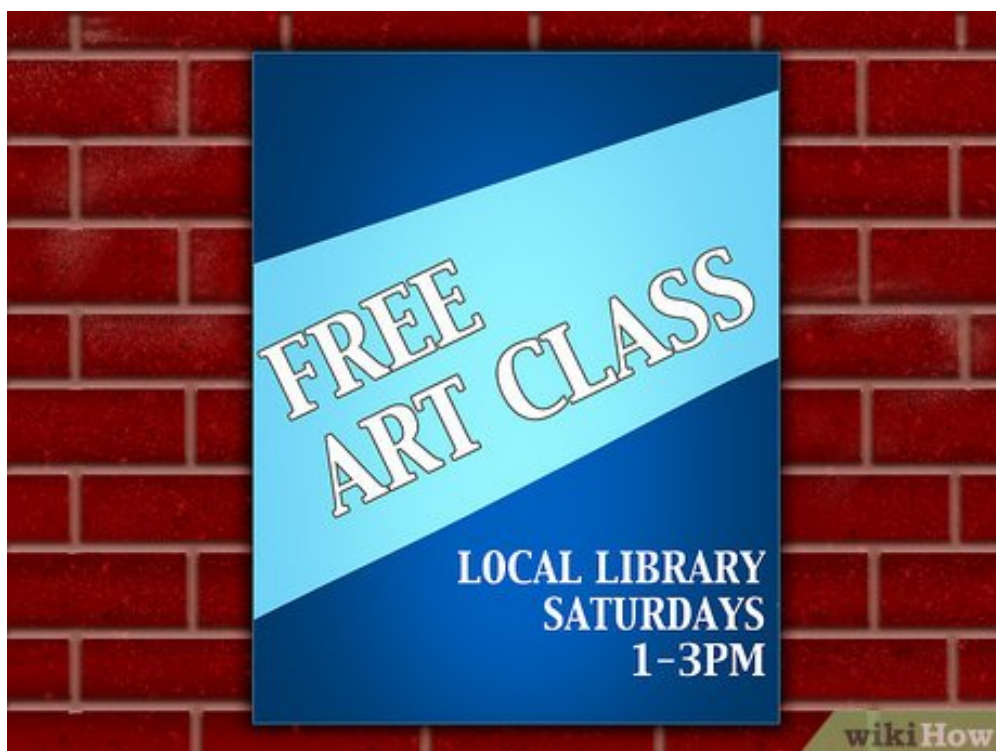


**1 Take a class at an art school.** Many local colleges allow people to enroll in single classes, but if you don't want to go that route there are plenty of private art schools around. Look for one in your area. This will help you regiment your time.





**2 Hire a private drawing tutor.** Try reaching out to local art teachers at colleges and high schools. They might have some free time and be willing to tutor you if you offer them a decent salary. Even if you only meet with them once a week for an hour they can help you focus your practice for the rest of the week. They'll be able to track your progress better than you can alone too.



**3 Look for free classes at local museums and galleries.** [2] Many galleries and museums have free art classes. You won't have as personalized experience but it won't cost you any money either. You often get to hang out in a museum at night and try to draw their exhibits too, which is pretty cool.

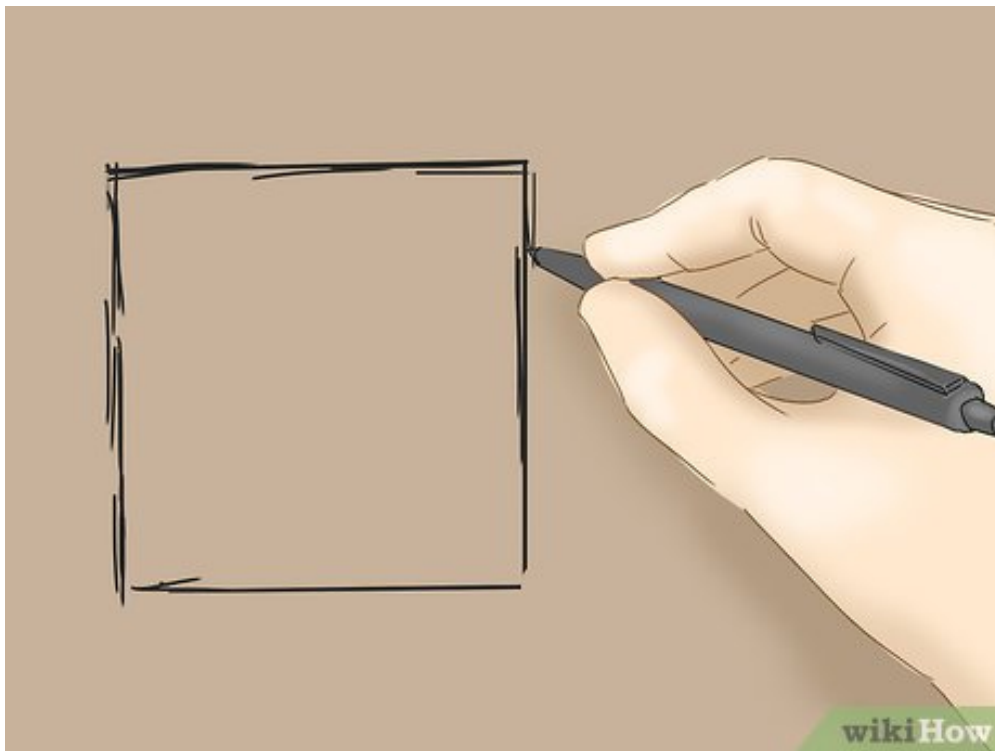
## Method 4 of 4: Practice on Your Own



- 1 Draw monsters and doodle.** Just scribble! Get your creative juices flowing this way. You'll actually start to observe how things come together, and you'll start to develop a steady hand. This will also help you hone your creativity because you'll be drawing all your own ideas.



- 2 Draw from direct observation.** This is a great way to learn how things fit together and how to draw common objects. Try to draw the couch in your living room, or the tree in your back yard, or anything else. It's probably best to start with objects rather than landscapes. Landscapes can be tough because you're dealing with perspective. However, it is completely up to you!



**3 Use short lines.** [3] Short lines make it much easier to draw straight lines, squares, and circles. It's much more natural for us to draw using short lines. Just try drawing using tiny dashes and you'll find that you have much more control over your pen or pencil.



**4 Practice proportions.** Try to see proportions everywhere. Compare the size of your fingers to the size of your hand, the size of your backpack to that fence off in the distance, etc. Start by drawing the simplest things you can think of, like a square house and a person standing next to it. Once you start to feel comfortable with basic proportions you can move on. [4]



**5 Draw snakes.** You don't like snakes? Well, too bad! Drawing snakes is a great way to help you practice drawing parallel and concurrent lines more effectively. It's a good way to free your hand. If you're finding it really difficult, start by drawing circles next to each other in the shape of a snake. Make the first circle the largest, and then each one smaller after that. Now draw parallel lines on the top and bottoms of all these circles. That's the idea behind drawing a snake. [5]



## Expert Q&A

### Question

How can I improve my drawing skills?



**Kelly Medford**  
Professional  
Artist  
Expert Answer

Practice doing things like blind contours where you look at something and draw it without looking at your paper. This can help you get better at drawing what you see rather than how you think something should look.

Helpful 7 Not Helpful 2

### Question

How do I start practicing my drawings?



**Kelly Medford**  
Professional  
Artist  
Expert Answer

Set aside some time to practice every day. You can draw what you see or work on specific skills like proportions.

Helpful 2 Not Helpful 2



#### Question

How do I know if a pencil is a no. 2?



**Spookyneighbour**  
Community Answer

Often in a set of tonal/artists pencils, they will be numbered at the top. These pencils don't have to be expensive - you can find them in supermarkets or discount stores, or better quality ones in art or stationary shops.

Helpful 10 Not Helpful 2

#### Question

Do I have to draw in 3D? I find it difficult.



Community Answer

3D isn't that hard. There are many easy ways to learn it. I myself started with letters and numbers, and watched a lot of videos on YouTube. Once you've got those down, try a simply object like an apple. Then practice drawing shadows. If you work at it enough, you'll definitely find that it gets easier.

Helpful 13 Not Helpful 2

#### Question

What if I can't get any better at drawing? I've been practicing for years!



**Tara Burke**  
Top Answerer

You may have just reached your full potential! But I find the best ways to improve are trying to copy simpler designs (like cartoons), working from still life, watching videos of other people's techniques, and doodling throughout the day. Art classes, if you've not already taken some, could help you explore new techniques that could lead to improvement.

Helpful 9 Not Helpful 3

#### Question

What apps can I get to improve my drawing?



**CaTsArEsOcUtE**  
Community Answer

Apps can't really improve your drawing, but practicing can help you get better. Some good apps for drawing practice are ibisPaint, SketchBook, and many more!

Helpful 3 Not Helpful 2



#### Tips

- Try adding lots of detail to make it interesting!
- Don't listen if someone says your drawing is bad! If you did your best, It cannot be bad. The best thing about art is that there are no rules.
- Don't get frustrated. Take a deep breath, and try again.

## References

1. ↑ [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/clara-lieu/ask-the-art-professor-wha\\_b\\_4651315.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/clara-lieu/ask-the-art-professor-wha_b_4651315.html)
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## About This Article



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Artist

This article was co-authored by **Kelly Medford**. Kelly Medford is an American painter based in Rome, Italy. She studied classical painting, drawing and printmaking both in the U.S. and in Italy. She works primarily en plein air on the streets of Rome, and also travels for private international collectors on commission. She founded Sketching Rome Tours in 2012 where she teaches sketchbook journaling to visitors of Rome. Kelly is a graduate of the Florence Academy of Art. This article has been viewed 41,590 times.

★★★★☆  
18 votes - 89%

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