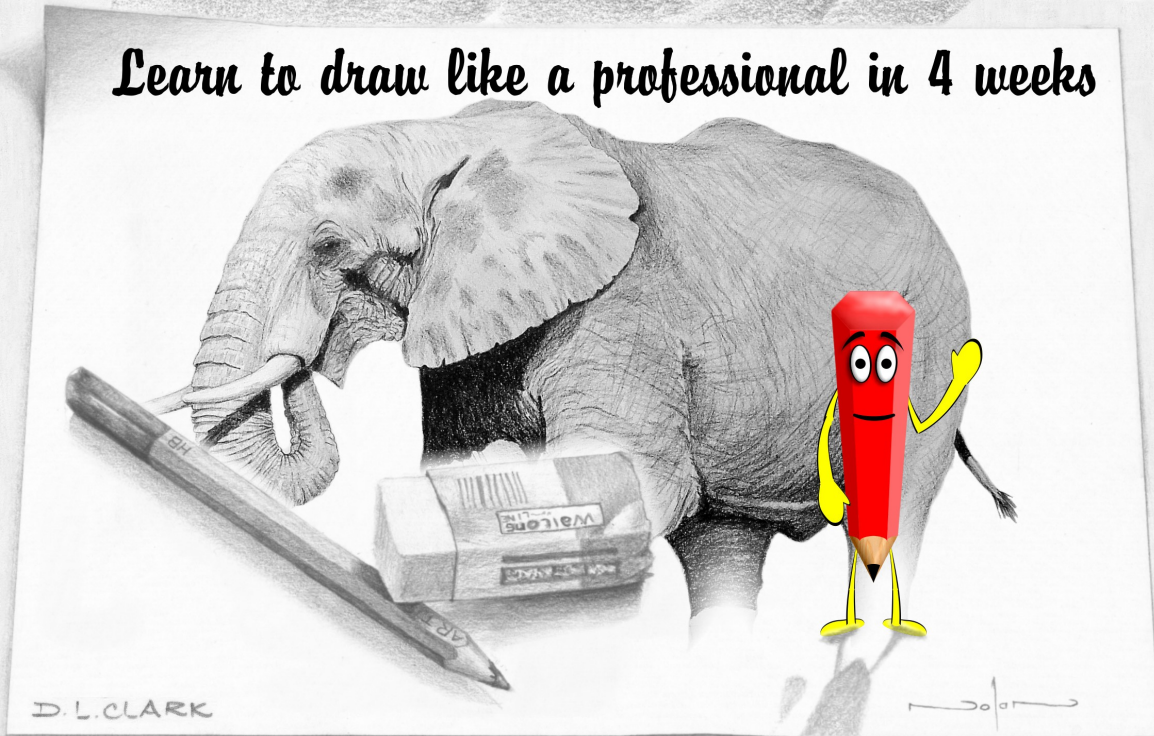


# LET'S DRAW

*Learn to draw like a professional in 4 weeks*



*Equipment      Composition      Flowers      Outdoors*  
*Transfer Techniques      Drawing Techniques      Landscapes*  
*Practical Demonstrations      Perspective      Vanishing Points      Still Lifes*  
*Heaps of reference material      Animals      and much more*



Suitable for Beginner to Intermediate Artists



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Artists and Authors

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Nolan Clark

<http://www.paintbasket.com>

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Lets Draw – Learn to Draw in 4 Weeks  
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You May :

Make photo copies of the reference material in this manual in order to draw your own version of it. Sign and Sell the artwork produced from following the course as long as you credit The Paint Basket in the final drawing by adding "Original from [paintbasket.com](http://www.paintbasket.com)" underneath your signature. The course and artwork remains our intellectual property and copyright.

## About the Artists



### **Dennis L Clark**

Dennis has been drawing since he was a child and has never stopped since. In 1987 he started teaching art at his studio in South Africa. Shortly afterwards he developed the “Beginners Pencil Drawing course” which has since been followed by thousands of lucky South Africans.

Over the years he has continually improved the course as new techniques and teaching methods are developed, culminating into one of the best pencil drawing course available.

Dennis’ favourite subjects to draw are birds and animals.



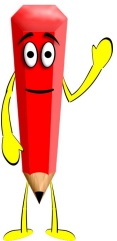
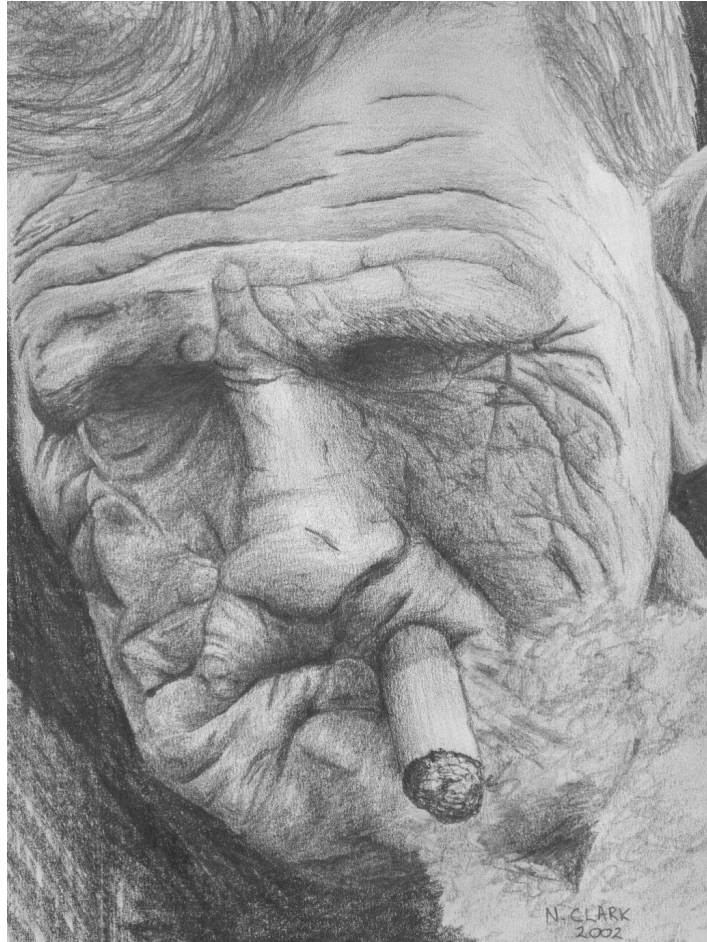


## Nolan Clark

Nolan started out his art career on this very course and has never looked back. In 2000 he joined Dennis at The Paint Basket and opened his own art teaching studio. Over the years the original “Beginners Pencil Drawing course” has always been one of Nolan’s favourite classes to conduct.

In 2010 Dennis and Nolan decided to completely revamp the course and you are looking at the result, which they are sure you will be delighted with.

Nolan’s favourite subjects to draw are still life and landscapes.



## Woody

Our mischievous little assistant who usually does more harm than good, but he is extremely passionate about pencil drawing – we suspect it’s because every drawing he does is part of him, but we are not sure, maybe it just runs in the family?

## Introduction

Welcome and thank you for joining the course. Over the next four weeks you will learn a great new hobby which can earn you a decent income too.

Pencil drawing is the foundation of all forms of art and it is essential that every artist masters the ability to draw in pencil if they want their art to flourish.

So why is pencil drawing so important?

Pencil drawing teaches you two basic skills : observation and eye hand co-ordination. Two skills we all take for granted that we have that ability, but once we start to draw we realise that these two skills actually need a lot more practice before we can master them.

Once we have mastered them though, the world never looks the same ever again. Without fail every single student that starts to paint or draw for the first time notices after a short while that they are looking at the world around them “through different eyes”. Suddenly sunsets look more vibrant, clouds more beautiful, we start noticing the myriad of greens in the same trees we have been driving past for years, we start noticing the subtle colours in shadows, infused light and the list goes on....

This effect is our observation skills coming to life.

Then we also find that things like drawing a complex scene – which we wouldn't even have dreamt of attempting before – becomes not so difficult after all, maybe still a little out of proportion in the beginning, but that also improves the more we draw because we are busy practicing our eye hand co-ordination.

Learning to draw is like learning to ride a bicycle!

The actual drawing work really is easy. We will be teaching you the simple techniques required to draw absolutely anything in this course and we are sure you will agree after following the course that the techniques themselves are surprisingly easy. What will make the difference between your drawings looking average and stunning is the amount of practice you put in.

When you learnt to ride a bicycle you started with the side wheels on to get a feel for riding, then the side wheels were lifted slightly so you had to rely a bit more on your balance. After that one of the side wheels were removed, then the next...and before you knew it you were able to ride without even holding the handle bars. Amazingly, even if you haven't climbed onto a bicycle for years, you can still immediately climb on and ride. You don't have to start with the side wheels again.

The same happens with pencil drawing, it is a skill that takes practice and perseverance to master, the more you practice and persevere; the sooner you master the skill. A skill you will retain for life!

You have already taken the most important step towards being able to draw – you have taken action and bought this course. All you need to do now is keep that momentum going and continue to take action by doing the exercises in the course and then some.

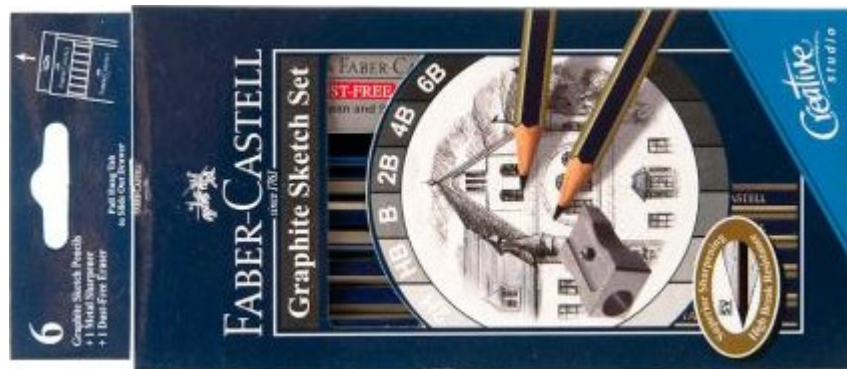
We have added all the tricks of the trade we know to ensure that your learning process is as short and simple as possible, so enjoy the journey. Soon you will be the envy of all your friends!

Enjoy  
Dennis and Nolan

## Equipment

We can't go into battle if we don't have the correct ammunition or equipment, so let's start off by looking at the equipment we will be using to draw.

### Pencils



Chances are you are well familiar with only one single pencil at this point – the HB (or if you live in the US, the #2 pencil). The truth is that you get a large variety of pencils. So let's first look at how a pencil is made.



[Ctrl click to Watch YouTube Video](#)

The lead inside the pencil is not made of lead anymore, but out of a graphite composition. The graphite composite allow us to make pencils of different hardness. As we are so used to talking about the lead of a pencil, we will stick to this habit here too :-)

The harder the lead, the softer / lighter the mark on the paper, the softer the lead, the darker the mark it leaves on the paper. This allows us to create all the different tones (shades) we need to draw a lifelike picture.

In order to know what lead is in the pencil you are drawing with there are two numbering systems that are used. The European and the American numbering systems.

Here is a conversion chart for our US based students :

|   |          |                   |                |
|---|----------|-------------------|----------------|
| <b>American Grading</b>   | <b>➔</b> | <b>1 2 2½ 3 4</b> |                |
| <b>Darker</b>   |          |                   | <b>Lighter</b> |
| <b>9B 8B 7B 6B 5B 4B 3B 2B B HB F H 2H 3H 4H 5H 6H 7H 8H 9H</b> |          |                   |                |

In the European system the B denotes Black, H means Hard and F means fine.

In order to draw properly you will need most of these pencils. At the end of this chapter you will find our recommended list of pencils. Most of these pencils will need to be bought at your local art supplier as general stationery stores don't usually stock them.



Then I also like to use a mechanical pencil with a standard HB lead in it for fine detail.

### **Paper**

We get many different types of paper we can use in pencil drawing. Some have a rougher grain, some are thicker, some are different colours and then we also get different sizes of paper too. Paper is graded in grams per meter squared (gsm or g/m<sup>2</sup>). Standard bond (photocopy paper) is 80gsm and the board used for business cards is usually around 300gsm. That should give you an idea of thicknesses vs their gsm weights. For this course we will be using standard 80gsm bond paper, but you are welcome to experiment with other papers too.

Obviously paper that has a grain in it will give you a rougher texture and that can create some really nice effects in your drawings. Just remember when using rougher papers that you should not try to get perfectly graduated shadings as this will not only be difficult because of the grain of the paper, but also make you lose the whole effect of the roughness of the paper.

We don't recommend any papers that have been coated.

When drawing in order to sell we also recommend that you buy PH neutral or archival quality papers to ensure the longevity of the artwork. Also buy thicker paper 120gsm plus to reduce the effects of pencil pressure as well as warping from humidity and moisture.

Art stores stock lovely sketch books of cartridge paper which are ideal for the drawings you want to sell / keep forever.

## Erasers



All erasers are not created equal. You get different erasers for different purposes. The two most common erasers are white and pink. The pink erasers are harder and tend to not only leave marks on the paper, but also damage the grain of the paper. In drawing you would need to use a soft eraser formulated for pencil drawing. These are always white in colour, but you will still need to be careful as the cheaper brands also tend to be too hard. We recommend the Steadtler Mars Plastic eraser or similar.



Then you also get a kneadable / pliable eraser which we use for erasing in hard to reach places or for erasing custom shapes. The eraser is like a putty, so you break off a piece, shape it and press it onto the area you want to erase. As you can't rub like a normal eraser the lifting power of the kneadable eraser isn't as good, but it still comes in handy every now and again. I bought mine over 10 years ago and I haven't even used a third of it yet, so if you do decide to buy one, then it should last you for years.

## Sharpener



A decent quality pencil sharpener is essential as the cheap ones don't shave the wood or the lead accurately and tend to break the point. Buy a decent sharpener, even testing it in the shop first to ensure you don't buy a dud sharpener ;-)



## Rulers



You would need a variety of rulers as we use each for different purposes. Steel rulers are used for trimming paper and plastic rulers are used for measuring, drawing lines, etc.

It is nice to have 2 steel rulers – a 600mm and a 300mm long ruler. For the plastic rulers I try to use the see through ones as far as possible as it helps with positioning the ruler accurately on the drawing. I recommend one 600mm ruler and at least two 300mm rulers.



A handy ruler to have is a flexible ruler. You don't use it often, but it is very handy for drawing smooth flowing lines. You will get these rulers at good art suppliers or a drafting equipment supplier.

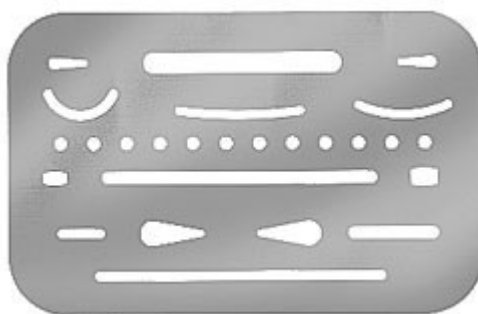
## Masking Tape



We use paper masking tape for various tasks, so you would need a roll of that too. Just a word of advice when buying masking tape – some manufacturers use stronger glue than others. We are looking for a masking tape that can be removed from the paper without damaging the paper, so you would need to test the brands available to see which works best for you. I like to test the stickiness of the glue in the shop before buying. I test by sticking a piece to the back of my hand. It shouldn't hurt when I take it off.

If you do buy a roll that is too sticky, you can first stick the masking tape to a lint free cloth, like a pair of jeans, a few times before using it on your drawing. This will reduce the tackiness of the glue.

## Erasing Shields



Erasing shields help you to accurately erase areas of your drawing, like the highlights in the eye, or when you want to erase a shape and leave a sharp separation between the erased area and the masked area. You get a huge variety of erasing shields with all sorts of interesting shapes cut out of them. I recommend at least one with a variety of holes, curves and slots in it. Mine is shown above.

## Knives

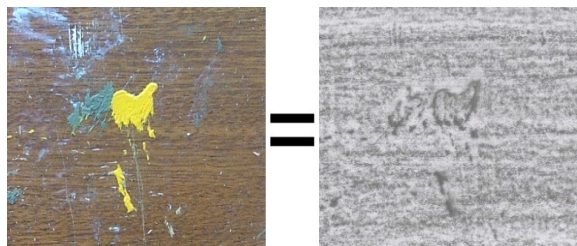


We use two different knives in pencil drawing, a carpet knife and a craft knife. The carpet knife is used for trimming paper and sharpening your pencils. The craft knife can also be used for trimming you paper, but I mostly use it for trimming my eraser and for cutting out custom erasing masks.

**Drawing Surface** (let's just call it a table for clarity's sake, so we don't confuse it with the paper we are drawing on)

Not technically a piece of equipment, but in drawing, the table you work on can have a dramatic effect on the final outcome of the drawing. This can be good or bad as we will see shortly.

More often than not you will want to ensure that the table you are drawing on is 100% smooth as any tiny blemish or bump in the table surface can transfer into a big mark on your drawing as you rub over that area. You can see this in the picture below :



For this reason I always place a few sheets of paper underneath my drawing paper to ensure that any imperfections in the table surface don't affect my final drawing.

The few sheets of paper underneath my drawing paper also softens the drawing surface so you are less inclined to damage the tooth of your drawing paper when drawing with hard pencils or shading very dark areas.

In an ideal world you would draw on a piece of glass for a perfectly smooth surface, but sometimes, as with using different grain papers, we actually want the drawing surface to be rough. An example of this would be to draw on a wood surface so that the grain of the wood shows in the final drawing. To ensure a consistent texture, you usually need to use masking tape to stick the drawing paper in place so it doesn't move while drawing otherwise you end up with lines in your drawing from the surface that don't match / are not continuous, etc.

## **Ergonomics**

To ensure that you stay fresh and comfortable while drawing it is important to get the ergonomics of your drawing area correct.

### **Lighting**

Ensure the lighting is constant / even across the entire drawing surface (now you can see why I called it a table earlier because now we are talking about the paper we are drawing on. ;-)

If the lighting is uneven it becomes very difficult to judge the tonal values (lights and darks) in your drawing. The same goes for your reference material, you also want an even lighting on that too.

Next you want the light to be shining from the correct direction. The correct direction would be from the right if you are left handed or from the left if you are right handed so that any shadow falls below your leading arm and not on the area you are currently drawing.

If drawing at night, try to work under fluorescent lighting or globes rated as close to sunlight as possible.

### **Drawing Surface (Table)**

Make sure the table is at the correct height in relation to the chair. You want your arms to be at a 90 degree angle when sitting on the chair and resting your lower arms on the table. That will ensure the least strain on you back and arms.

The angle you draw at can also affect how comfortably you draw. Some, like myself, prefer to draw on a horizontal surface, while others prefer the page to be at a slightly raised angle (like when using an easel or drawing board), yet others prefer the paper to be perfectly upright. You will have to experiment to see what is most comfortable for you.

### **Equipment**

Place your pencils either above the paper or to the right (if you are left handed, to the left). This way they are always within easy reach. I like to place my pencils in order too, from dark to light. Then when I use a pencil, I put it back in the same place. This saves me from rummaging through them every time I am looking for a specific pencil.

My eraser lies to the right of my pencils as I use that often too.

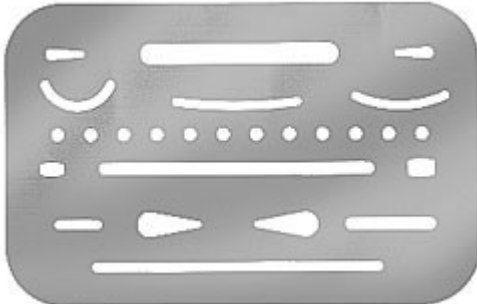
The rest of the equipment I place above the pencils as I don't mind reaching for them as they are not used that often.

### **Coffee**

If you are anything like me, you can't draw without a fresh cup of coffee close at hand. The problem is that one small slip and you can ruin a drawing you have just spent hours on, so I have a special place for my coffee : I am right handed so I place the coffee well above my paper and well to the left of the paper, so I can't bump it by mistake. When I pick the cup up to take a sip, I pick the it up with my left hand and move it to the left of the paper and never directly over the paper. That way I know I will never get a drop falling onto the paper either. I have learnt this lesson the hard way so you don't have to ;-)

Okay, that will do for today, I will leave you to rush off to the store to go and get your equipment. Tomorrow I will show you how to sharpen your pencils correctly, then we will learn about some of the common strokes we use in drawing: see you then.

On the next page is our recommended shopping list for this course:

| <b>ESSENTIALS (Note : US students – get the equivalent)</b> |   |           |  |
|---|---|-----------|--|
| Item  | Details   | Qty       | Where                                    |
| Pencils   | 9B, 6B, 4B, 2B, B, HB, H, 2H wooden pencils   | 1 of each | Art supplier                             |
|   | Mechanical Pencil   | 1         | Stationery store                         |
|   | HB refill pack for mechanical pencil  | 1         | Stationery store                         |
| Eraser  | Staedtler Mars or similar soft plastic eraser   | 1         | Stationery store or art supplier         |
| Paper   | ream 80gsm bond (photocopy paper)   | 1         | Stationery store                         |
| Rulers  | 600mm steel ruler   | 1         | Hardware store                           |
|   | 300mm steel ruler   |           | Hardware store                           |
|   | 600mm clear plastic ruler   | 1         | Art supplier                             |
|   | 300mm clear plastic ruler   | 2         | Stationery store                         |
| Knives  | Carpet Knife  | 1         | Hardware store                           |
|   | Craft Knife   |           | Stationery store                         |
| Tape  | Masking Tape  | 1 roll    | Stationery store                         |
| <b>NICE TO HAVE</b>   |   |           |  |
| Erasers   | Kneadable Eraser  | 1         | Art supplier                             |
| Masks   | Steel mask with different size holes, curves and slots.<br>This is what mine looks like to give you an idea : |           | Art supplier or<br>Drafting supply store |
|   |                            |           |  |
| Rulers  | Flexible Ruler – minimum length of 16”  |           | Drafting supply store                    |