



Graphite Pencil Drawing Supply Lists

Starter List: Basic supplies

Graphite drawing or sketching pencils

These come in grades and range from 9B (very soft) to 9H (very hard).

A good starter set would be HB, 2B and 4B.

You can buy drawing pencils in sets or individually.

[Derwent graphite sketching set-](#) at Blick.

Good hand held pencil sharpener

A small plastic one will do but make sure it brings your lead down to a *full long sharp point*.

[Kum Long Point Pencil Sharpener-](#) at Blick.

Kneaded Eraser

Soft malleable eraser that's very easy on the paper but still lifts graphite well.

I think several small individually wrapped erasers are more convenient than one large eraser.

[Prismacolor Kneaded Rubber Eraser-](#) at Blick.

Rectangular vinyl (plastic) eraser

Cleanly erases even very dark graphite.

[Faber-Castell Dust-Free Vinyl Eraser-](#) Blick.

Drawing Paper

Make sure the texture is not too rough (or your details will look rough) and not too slick (or the graphite won't stick to it well enough to make dark values.)

A tablet that is marked as "drawing paper" will probably work fine.

Get a good sized tablet. (At least 8.5 x 11) A tablet that has rings is much more useful than one with a bonded top or side.

If you are concerned about your drawings lasting for a while, look for "acid free" paper.

I like Canson Classic Cream Drawing Pad and Strathmore 400 Series Drawing Paper Pads best.

Intermediate List: After Basic Supplies.

Wider variety of pencils

To extend your range of pencils, add a 6B, 2H, and 4H. You will be able to make interesting value variations and textures with these grades.

"Stick" eraser

They come in a plastic body and you can sharpen the eraser's end into useful shapes, like a point or a wedge, to create special effects.

I like the Tuff Stuff eraser.

Paper Mate Tuff Stuff Eraser Stick- at Blick

Small sharp knife

Use it to shape vinyl erasers into better erasing tools.

Sharpen pencil tips into flat and angled chisel tips.

Blending tools

Stumps - rolled paper blender with a hard point.

Tortillons - ground gray paper formed into a stump shape. They are slightly softer than rolled paper stumps.

I prefer tortillons because the softer texture works well with graphite.

To save money, buy a package of mixed sizes.

Small flat angled brush - for blending and also shading techniques and textures.

Archival 100% cotton paper

To preserve your artwork.

Good for drawings that you intend to sell.

I like Stonehenge paper because it has a smooth surface and is very inexpensive.

Stonehenge Drawing Paper- at Blick.

Matte Fixative

Protective spray finish for your drawings.

Don't skimp on this. Your drawings are worth it, one can lasts a while, and it's not very expensive.

For graphite drawings, use the kind marked "archival," "matte finish" and "for pastels and charcoal."

Blick Matte Fixative- the store brand is the best buy and works fine.

Advanced List: Useful Tools

A Storage Box

To keep all your tools in.

I use a plastic tool box I bought at a hardware store. It was cheap and works great.

Small battery powered eraser

Use it to create textures and to erase very small details and highlights.

I use a Sukura. I've had it for 20+ years, used it on hundreds (thousands?) of drawings, and it's still working. At this point, I don't think the thing is ever going to die and I'll have to include it in my will.

Here is the venerable Sakura Cordless Electric Eraser- at Blick.

Mechanical pencils with 2mm leads and a hand held rotating point sharpener

These large leads come in several grades and sharpen to a long fine point quickly with a good sharpener.

I currently use Staedtler leads.

Use them to draw extremely small detail.

Be sure to get a sharpener that fits the mechanical barrel. (Information about which pencils it's for is usually on the back of the package.)

And here are the brands I use at Blick.

[Prismacolor Turquoise Lead Holder](#)

[Staedtler 2mm Leads](#)

[Alvin Rotary Lead Pointer](#)

Blow-bulb

To blow away graphite dust and eraser crumbs.

Look in the pharmacy in the "infant" section for a blow-bulb type of "nasal aspirator."

High quality archival 100% cotton paper

Arches smooth surface watercolor paper is preferred by many drawing artists including me. The surface works well for graphite and can take a lot of erasing and re-working.

[Arches Watercolor Pads](#)- at Blick.

Pastel brushes For Blending Graphite

I've never found brushes made specifically for graphite, but some pastel brushes work well.

Use them to blend and to apply powdered graphite.

This is the one I use - [Holbein Round Blender, Horse, 1/4"](#) - and it's pretty small, but my work is usually small, so it's perfect for me. There are other sizes and shapes, but I think the short round with stiffer bristles work best with graphite

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