

# Drawing Tips

## Research your picture or know your subject inside-out.

- As you develop your skills, try to draw from life or a really good photograph. Illustrations or paintings are alright, but these are always interpretations and may be stylised.
- Find the best angle. Use library books, reference books or find images on the internet.
- Know what the subject looks like from all sides if you can. Often grass or stones obscure the view of paws and other parts (like the tail). So find out what it looks like and know your subject inside-out.
- Know the colour and all the little details of your subject. Note that in photos, “flash” photography can affect colour and the appearance of fur.

## Get back to basics.

- Always start by sketching some construction lines and shapes. This will help define the composition, scale and, most importantly, the proportions of your picture.
- Use a pencil and sketch VERY LIGHTLY.
- Tracing (using tracing paper) is always a good way to warm up. I like tracing, especially for kids, as their “eye to hand” coordination doesn’t know the lines of “the subject” yet. In my mind it’s a great way to start - but don’t press too hard.

## Build the picture up.

- Start shaping and sculpting your picture.
- Add little details.
- Slowly sketch up and highlight the features.
- Still keep your pencil sketching lightly and build it up slowly.
- Always keep checking your REFERENCE. In professional drawing, or a “still-life” sitting, a talented artist will look more at the subject than at their sketch. It’s like “letting your hand do all the drawing”.

## Now go for it!

- Start to INK OVER your pencil drawing or sketch.
- NOW it really counts! So make decisions, ink in the outlines and add any other fine details.
- Keep “sculpting” your picture or just “trace over” your under-drawing.
- The idea here is to keep improving it without overworking it.

## Finally colour it!

- Rub out your pencil lines and colour it with your favourite coloured pens, watercolours or coloured pencils.
- Depending on the colour media you may have to finally touch up some ink lines to complete your illustration.