

John Baselmans

'Drawing courses'



Curaçao, 2008

These courses were written by John Baselmans
Drawings and illustrations are from the hand of John Baselmans

I hope that you will be one of a new generation of artists.
With thanks to all those people who have supported me.

Copyrights

I won't put all the usual 'don'ts' here, but I hope that you respect my work.
At least let me know when you use any part from this book.
For my address, please visit my website <http://www.johnbaselmans.com>
There you can also find other free courses and explanations of my drawings.
Thank you.

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Course 3
Part 1



‘Pencil drawing’

**A GOLDEN RULE:
DO NOT GIVE UP**

Keep drawing from your heart and from your soul.

Introduction

So, we know the basics of seeing and materials.

Let's start with our first medium: the pencil. Using this technique enables you to learn and work out everything you want. It is the cheapest, but also the most all-round medium.

What you learn in this course, you will use over and over for the next 50 years!

Because, from today until the last drawing you will ever make, you need to work with this medium.

Sketches with pencil are the first impressions on paper. It is an easy medium.

With a pencil and a piece of paper, you can draw. You need nothing else.

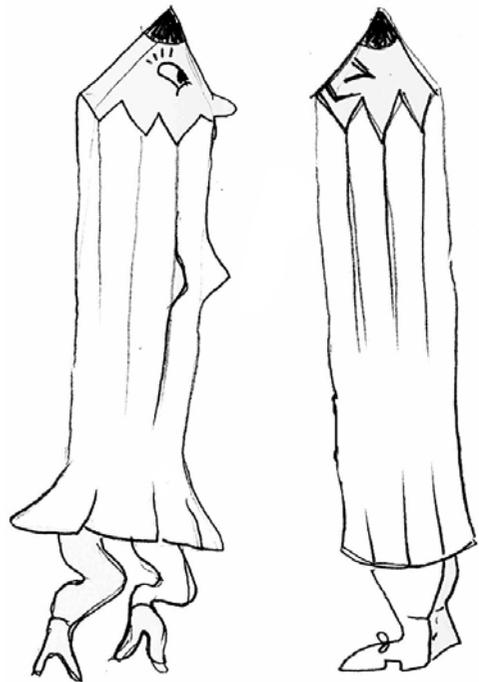
All my drawings start with a few lines in pencil.

I use the pencil to put the basic lines on paper, so that I can see if everything is balanced and if the composition is right.

A bad start always ends up in a bad drawing.

If the first lines do not match, forget it. Your drawing will be a mess.

In my eyes, this medium is the top of all mediums and it is still one of the easiest.



Session 1

What you need

Not much, like I told you in the beginning.

An HB, B or B2 pencil and a sketchbook, that's it! Let us do our first lesson.

Session 2

Material

First of all, let me tell you something more about the differences in materials. In the 'Materials' course, I mentioned some differences between graphite and charcoal, carbon and color pencils. I told you about different pencils and colors. I do not think it is relevant to go deeper in this matter. Below is a short history and some differences between types of papers. This may be elaborated upon in another course.

Pencil history

The first graphite pencil was made in 1662. It was made from gum, resin and glue. This mixture was pressed into grooves cut in wood, usually cedar. In England, in 1761 pencils were made from a mixture of one part sulfur and two parts graphite. This was replaced later by a mixture of clay, graphite, water and paste, which was hardened by baking and pressed into wood grooves.

Paper

Thin, thick, smooth, ivory, board, rough, watercolor; every paper can be used successfully with pencil drawing. You can choose from sketchbooks, layout pads, inexpensive paper, Bristol board, watercolor paper and ingress paper.

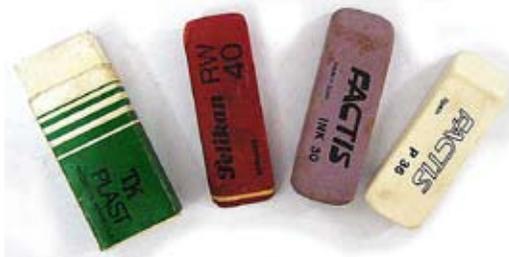
I told you in another lesson that the choice is personal. The more you draw, the sooner you will find your own kind of paper and pencils. Let your feelings talk, listen to them and use the materials you feel comfortable with.



Session 3

Equipment

Eraser



We do not need one in the beginning.
The best way to learn is to see your own mistakes by practicing and working spontaneously. Consider learning from your mistakes as rule number one to progress.

Knives, blades and sharpener

Knives and blades are for another course.
This technique is not available in this course.
But we need a sharpener. The pencils need to be sharp and have long points. Sharpening a pencil can also be done with a sharp knife.



Fixatives

To conserve your drawing for the future, you need a fixative. Buy a good brand. Fixatives are also available in bottles.



Pencil extender

This is a metal holder that enables you to work with partly used pencils. It gives you more and better control over your pencil. Some lines are better made with a shorter pencil.



Session 4

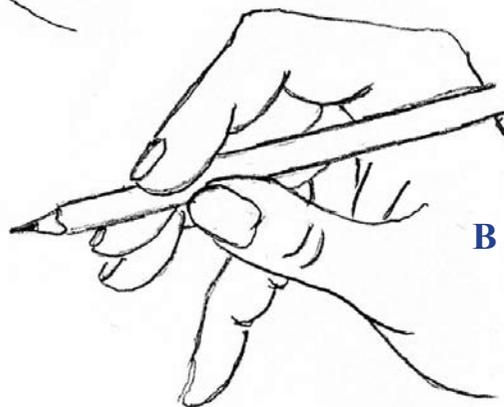
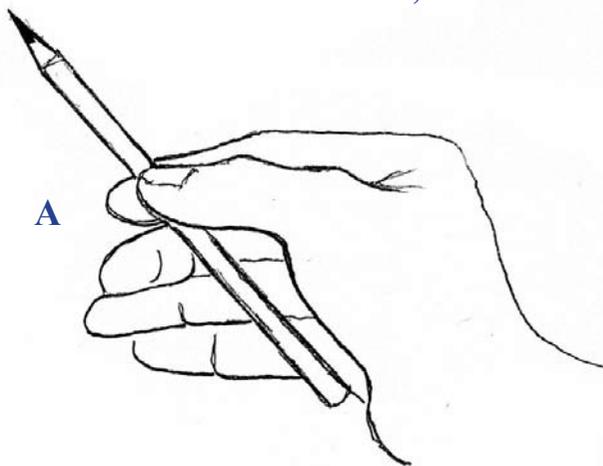
Holding a pencil

A pencil can be a writing tool, but for us it is a tool for putting our mind on paper. On this page, I will show you the different ways to hold a pencil. These are the basics and if you are comfortable holding your pencil in a different way, no problem.

A. Small marks from resting your hand on the paper.

B. You can draw from your elbow or shoulder.

C. Think about the hand, it must be comfortable and relaxed.



Session 5

Basic strokes.

Example 1



Left strokes are made with an H5 pencil.



Right strokes are made with a B5 pencil.

Example 2



Cross-hatching

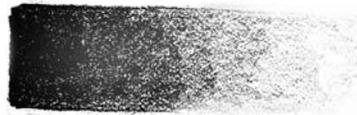


Smooth



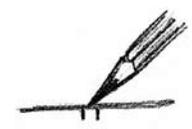
Example 3

Shading and rubbing



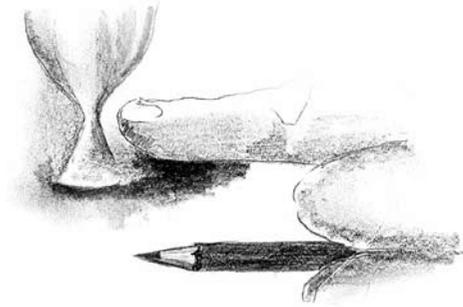
Example 4

You can see in these drawings that the smaller the angle of your pencil, the wider the resulting line.



Example 5

Also use your fingers to get smooth lines.



Session 6

Our official start

Learning to draw is a matter of practice, observation and using your eyes. Do not be afraid to make mistakes. This course will be the beginning of a new part of your life.

Useful tips

Always carry a sketchbook and pencil with you, so you can draw whenever you think you have an important image for your paper.

Buying expensive equipment does not mean you will be a better artist. Be critical of yourself.

If a drawing looks wrong, start a new one, a second one, a third one and so on.

Work with colors if you feel like, the effects may be surprising.

Find your own way of drawing. Everyone has his personal style.

What is sketching?

- Putting a few lines on paper fast. This can be done with pencil or charcoal.
- Use your fingers to get gray tones on paper quickly.
- Blend the lines with your thumb.
- Experiment with different papers and pencils.



Session 7

Composition

Most important lesson: Ask yourself, where to put your lines.

‘Which piece of landscape, detail or object is important to me and what shall I draw?’

The answer is: Start with some outlines and then find the best composition. Once you have found the right one, work out the drawing in more detail. If your feelings tell you ‘this is not the right angle or object’, start with a new setup and when you are satisfied, start with the drawing.

Important rule

What makes a good artist, is his originality.
He tries to draw what no one has ever done before.
He breaks rules.

Will you be the next one?

Every human being is unique.
Think of yourself as different from everyone else and keep expressing yourself in your own way.



