

RENDERING TEXTURES IN GRAPHITE

SUPPLY LIST

Spring/Summer 2024

The Garden is not providing any materials for this course.

Below, find a list of some materials necessary for your practice as well as suggestions for specific brands and editions. All suggestions are based on the instructor's experiences, so keep yourself open to subverting the list. If you already have a good set of supplies, it is not necessary that you search for further variety only because of these recommendations.

1. Use a piece of parchment paper or paper towel under your hand to protect your drawing from your skin oils and humidity that can cockle the paper. Also, avoid speaking over the paper before, during and after drawing, as invisible saliva sprouts can cause yellow spots of contamination in the long run.

2. Pencils:

- 2.1. Graphite – (2H if possible) H, HB, 2B, 3B, 4B and 6B (7B if possible). Lately, Rogério's preference has become the Staedtler's edition named Lumograph Mars Black, which he highly recommends. Unlike traditional graphite though, these pencils feel a little waxy like chalk or charcoal pencils and feel unpleasant for many artists, hence this preference is quite personal. Their lead is thick and has a high proportion of carbon. They provide an intense shading with a matt finish, tending not to produce the undesired effect of glare, even after overlapping many layers. The range of gradations is limited though, with being HB the hardest, but the traditional H and/or 2H graphite can complement the set. Also, there is now the new edition from Faber-Castell named [Pitt Graphite Matt](#), with pencils that allegedly avoid the effect of glare in a very efficient way. Though Rogério has

never tested those, it is worth it to try them, but according to some colleagues, they feel just like Staedtler Black mentioned above.

- Regarding traditional graphite, keep in mind that different brands may present different standards, thus be alert not to purchase, without testing, HB and 2B pencils from different companies (or from different product lines of the same company) which might possibly present the same grade of shade. Good brands in order of Rogério's personal preference are
 - Staedtler
 - Lyra
 - Mitsubishi
 - Bruynzeel
 - Faber Castell
 - Caran D'Ache
 - Cretacolor
 - Koh-I-Noor
 - Derwent is a good and soft pencil, but the ones he has tested may have their lead's tip crumbling down while we work, thus leaving small pieces of graphite on the paper (that was long ago, this may have been improved lately). Do not take that into account, though, if you own and appreciate the Derwent pencils and want to use them, in which case you do not need to purchase new pencils.
- Rare has been the pencil, even among the best brands, which does not eventually present crystals that grit the paper while stopping to scribe. Some brands get better from time to time, some worse, and even the most expensive pencils may disappoint us. We should swatch constantly, rarely breaking relationships permanently with any brand.
- 2.2. One light-colored Faber Castell Polychromos pencil (like ivory, cream, or white – preferably the former ones, as white is too cold), or any similar pencil from the same brand or others.
- 2.3. A mechanical pencil 0.2 or 0.3 mm with a B or 2B graphite to be used for contours and details is not indispensable but is welcome.

3. Soft white eraser: Sakura high-quality FOAM or Pentel hi-polymer SOFT. Avoid Staedtler Mars plastic, for it causes excessive friction, harms the paper and usually crumbles off in pieces.

4. Kneaded eraser: Milan, Sanford Design, Cretacolor, Faber Castell, in order of Rogério's personal preference among the ones he knows. [Click here](#) for a demonstration of the use of a kneaded eraser. Remember to enable English subtitles.

5. Paper: section 2.4 of Rogério's free Graphite Guidebook ([download it here](#)) offers some quite detailed discussion addressing various aspects to be taken into account before making decisions regarding paper. There are many different companies producing several sorts of paper and each one has its own traits, advantages and disadvantages. Rogério's personal preference is the middle ground between textured and smooth papers. Good possibilities are the:

- Strathmore Bristol 300, 400 or 500 series (vellum or smooth surface – you would have to test them all to check which you prefer)
- Canson Graduate Bristol or XL Bristol – smooth or extra smooth
- Canson C à grain
- Hahnemühle Dessin Lana

But again, it is worth it to research whatever you have available in your country, swatch them, and learn about other artists' experiences. Remember to test both sides of each paper for they often present different surfaces.

Toned papers suggested are:

- Canson Graduate Multitechnique Gray or Canson Mi Teintes (the back face of both is smoother)
- Strathmore Toned Tan or Toned Gray, or any other toned paper of your preference

[Click here](#) to see how Rogério proceeds while swatching. Notice in the video that some textured papers cause spontaneous dark spots to arise, and this can become inevitable. This outcome can be out of control in such cases. The test on the front face of each paper is always followed in the video by the test on its back face. For Rogério, the better papers are those which provide a relatively even texture (without unexpected stains) when we apply graphite in a constant and uniform manner, as shown in the video.

6. Artistic Ball Burnishers (aka “embossers”): this is a tool that can be very helpful for grooving the paper with minimum damage. It is not essential for this course, as it can be replaced with a dry ballpoint pen or a polished dry metal tip, or even by a mechanical pencil without graphite. But of course, the ball burnisher is quite specific and it is coined precisely for the kind of maneuvers we want to make on the paper.

7. Desk sharpener: Rogério suggests Derwent, Derwent Super Point or Rapesco. You can also opt for using a snap-off cutter blade; [watch this](#) if you are not familiar with that use (enable English captions). But desk sharpeners are extremely efficient, safe and immensely time-saving.

8. Natural objects with attractive or intricate texture: a seed, a fruit, a vegetable, a densely nerved leaf or flower, a piece of bark, a piece of a twig, an insect, a shell, a rock, a nest, a bone, an animal skull, etc. Rogério recommends obtaining an object that you will be able to handle and draw from life rather than photos, which might often lead to misinterpretations of the object’s form. Besides that, if you were to use photos, you would be unable to look closer at it, turn it, or move the light to investigate its details. The texture may be any you prefer from thorny, hairy or woolly objects to ridged, grooved, bulged surfaces...or else objects presenting knobs, cavities, protrusions, etc.

Observation: We have plenty of stores selling good material, either via the internet or locally, and many artists share their experiences on websites and videos. Be careful though, because the experience of an artist with any given material can be thoroughly different from yours. Use their tips and advice, but trust only your own tests (that is, question Rogério’s tips too). Rogério has seen many artists disappointed with excellent

materials, himself included. Sometimes they have tested defective stuff or it is just that they do not find affinity with the results that some specific material provides. Different artists may either worship or curse the same exact material, thus do not be afraid of experimenting.

Some further helpful information on papers can be found [here](#).

Supply Resources:

- Plaza Art, 927 W. Grace St., Richmond, VA 23220, 804/359-5900
<http://www.plazaart.com/>
- <http://www.dickblick.com>
- <http://www.danielsmith.com>
- <http://www.cheapjoes.com>
- <http://www.amazon.com>