



Core Pencils

A list of pencils I use on a regular basis

Bonny
SNOWDON
ACADEMY

Coloured Pencils

Coloured Pencils, not to be confused with Pastel Pencils are all made from a mixture of wax and oils in different quantities. The different recipes used by the manufacturers are what bring unique qualities to each individual pencil.

Some pencils are hard and dry, and some softer and slightly 'sticky'. There is no right or wrong pencil for a subject it is purely down to personal preference and techniques.

You may find some pencils mix well together, you may find some work better on their own, but there are no hard and fast rules for using your pencils.



My Core List

I use a combination of different pencils, and for me it's mostly about how the pencils feel on the surface and with each other. Rarely is my choice for a pencil specifically about colour, however there are some pencils that have such a unique colour that I do use them purely for their pigment.

For my realism drawings I use:

- Faber Castell Polychromos
- Caran D'Ache Luminance
- Caran D'Ache Pablos
- Caran D'Ache Museum Aquarelle
- Derwent Drawings
- Derwent Lightfast
- Derwent Studios
- Holbeins

Please note this list is not exhaustive, and it will change from time to time. All the pencils are available to purchase in full sets.



Faber Castell Polychromos

Faber Castell Polychromos are marketed as oil-based pencils, however, because all pencils are made from a mixture of wax and oils I prefer to call them hard, dry pencils. They are beautifully made, and have a round barrel which is painted the same as the colour the pencil represents i.e. Pink Madder Lake

They keep a good sharp point due to being hard and are fabulous for details, and blending. They are less opaque than other brands, so work particularly well when drawing eyes as they are slightly more translucent.

Polychromos have a superb range of colours including 14 greys in cold and warm hues, they also have a good range of neutral colours so are extremely useful for animal and wildlife drawings.

Polychromos use the Blue Wool standard of testing lightfastness. With three stars being good lightfastness, two being moderate and one being poor.

Out of the 120 pencils, 102 are ***, 16 are ** and 2 are *



My favourite Polychromos

Creams and Yellows

Ivory
Cream
Light Yellow Ochre
Dark Naples Ochre
Light Yellow Glaze
Dark Cadmium Yellow

Pinks

Beige Red
Cinnamon
Pink Madder Lake
Light Purple Pink
Middle Purple Pink

Oranges

Burnt Ochre
Cadmium Orange
Dark Cadmium Orange
Orange Glaze
Terracotta
Sanguine

Reds

India Red
Dark Red
Middle Cadmium Red
Red Violet
Caput Mortuum
Caput Mortuum Violet
Burnt Carmine
Alizarin Crimson
Venetian Red

Violets

Purple Violet

Greens

Green Gold
Chromium Green Opaque
Earth Green
Leaf Green
Grass Green
Light Green
Emerald Green
Cobalt Green
Olive Green Yellowish
Hookers Green
Pine Green

Blues

Dark Indigo
Sky Blue
Light Ultramarine
Delft Blue
Helioblue-Reddish
Indanthrene Blue
Cobalt Blue
Light Cobalt Turquoise
Ultramarine
Cobalt Blue Greenish
Bluish Turquoise
Light Phthalo Blue

Browns

Red/Browns
Burnt Siena
Walnut Brown

Neutral Browns

Vandyke Brown
Nougat
Bistre

Yellow/Green Browns

Brown Ochre
Raw Umber

Greys and Black

Dark Sepia
Warm Grey i
Warm Grey ii
Warm Grey iii
Warm Grey iv
Warm Grey v
Warm Grey vi
Cold Grey i
Cold Grey ii
Cold Grey iii
Cold Grey iv
Cold Grey v
Cold Grey vi
Paynes Grey
Black

Caran D'Ache Luminance

Caran D'Ache Luminance are marketed as a wax based pencil. I prefer to call them soft and buttery pencils as they have a mixture of oils and waxes in their core.

They are extremely high-quality pencils, many refer to them as the Rolls Royce of pencils. Opaque, smooth and with a beautiful range of colours including Percent of solid colours.

Beautifully made with a round wooden barrel, the colour-coded end and the white lettering makes it easy to read the colour name and number.

There is a range of 100 colours and all of them are highly lightfast, with them going through rigorous testing, earning Luminance international ASTM D-6901 certification.



My favourite Luminance

% Colours

Sepia 10%

Sepia 50%

Warm Earth 5% (Was Dark Flesh)

Warm Earth 40% (Was Dark Flesh)

Raw Umber 10%

Brown Ochre 10%

Brown Ochre 50%

Burnt Sienna 10%

Burnt Ochre 10%

French Grey 10%

Warm Earth 70% (Was Dark Flesh)

White and Creams

White

Buff Titanium

Pink White

Butternut

Pinks

Violet Pink

Anthraquinoid Pink

Oranges

Burnt Ochre

Dark Cadmium Orange

Cornelian

Orange

Apricot

Reds

Scarlet

Carmine Lake

Crimson Aubergine

Crimson Alizarin (Hue)

Permanent Red

Violets

Ultramarine Violet

Violet Grey

Manganese Violet

Blues

Dark Indigo

Light Cobalt Blue

Greens

Dark Sap Green

Light Malachite Green

Grass Green

Browns

Red Browns

Burnt Sienna

Cassell Earth

Natural Russet

Perylene Brown

Neutral Browns

Sepia

Yellow/Green Browns

Raw Umber

Greys and Black

Paynes Grey

French Grey

Slate Grey

Black

Caran D'Ache Pablos

Caran D'Ache Pablos are marketed as an oil-based pencil. I prefer to call them hard, dry and velvety. They have a beautiful laydown and work brilliantly on pastelmat for smoothing and blending.

There are 120 colours in the Pablo range. Relatively lightfast with 45 being three star, 69 being two star and 6 being 1 star.

They are hexagonal in shape with a solid colour barrel that corresponds to the colour of the core.

The Pablo range have some unique colours that are very useful to have.



My Favourite Pablos

White and Creams

White

Cream

Pinks

Granite Rose

Oranges

Orangish Yellow

Apricot

Browns

Beige

Brownish Beige

Greys and Black

Charcoal Black

Ivory Black

Light Grey

Ash Grey

Cocoa

Steel Grey

Mouse Grey

Black

Caran D'Ache Museum Aquarelle

Caran D'Ache Museum Aquarelle pencils are water soluble pencils. In their dry form they are highly lightfast and opaque. They are soft, beautifully smooth pencils with a gorgeous hexagonal black barrel casing with the colour and name labelling on the end.

I tend to use these pencils as a dry pencil, the white occasionally wet for tiny bright highlights, but they are very expensive so I don't tend to use many colours in my tutorials.

White

White

Black

Ivory Black



Derwent Lightfast

The Derwent Lightfast pencils are manufactured as oil-based. I prefer to call them soft and smooth.

I tend to use the lightfast pencils for their colours mainly. I also like to add them later on in my layering process if I'm mixing them or use them on their own.

There are 100 colours all highly lightfast using the Blue Wool system.



My Favourite Lightfasts

White and Creams

White
Champagne
Wheat

Pinks

Oyster
Cinnamon
Dusky Pink (Was Flesh Pink)

Oranges

Flame
Sandstone
Persian Orange
Mars Orange

Reds

Scarlet
Venetian Red
Mars Black

Violets

Mars Violet
Taupe

Purple

Nightshade

Blue

Arctic
Midnight Black
Denim

Browns

VanDyke Brown
Sepia
Sienna
Ruby Earth
Brown Ochre

Greys and Black

Fossil Grey
Mist
Warm Grey
Granite
Black

Derwent Drawings

The Derwent Drawings are very fat soft pencils.

With 24 natural colours they are lightfast and great for larger areas of colour.

White

Chinese White

Blue

Solway Blue

Black

Ivory Black



Derwent Studios and Artists

The Derwent Studios are slim hard pencils with a hexagonal barrel

The range comes in 72 colours, however the lightfast ratings are disappointing

The Derwent Artists are the same core as the studios, but have a round barrel, and a slightly bigger core at 4mm rather than 3.4mm

The range comes in 120 colours, however the lightfast ratings are disappointing

Copper Beech
Raw Umber
Brown Ochre
Burnt Yellow Ochre
Chocolate
Venetian Red



Holbein

The Holbein pencil is a thing of beauty, a range of 150 incredible colours from brights to pastels. Manufactured in Japan they are expensive.

Very soft and creamy I would love to use these pencils all the time.

When it comes to their lightfastness I do not trust the information that is currently available so I choose to use my Holbeins purely for smoothing and blending rather than for colour lay down.

The colours I find useful for blending and smoothing are below.

My favourite colours

White

Soft White - this is particularly opaque but also a nightmare to sharpen - it even says on the barrel sharpen with a knife.

Ash Rose

Blossom

Beige

Ivory

Cork

Tan

Chocolate



If you'd like to continue learning new coloured pencil tips and techniques and keep developing your skills, these free tutorials are the perfect next steps...

[The 45-Minute Cat's Eye Challenge](#)

[The 40-Minute Dog's Nose Challenge](#)

[The 45-Minute Perfect Paws Challenge](#)

[3 Tips for Elevating Your Coloured Pencil Drawings](#)

[How to Layer with Coloured Pencils](#)

[How to Use the Subtraction Technique](#)

[How to Use the Indenting Technique](#)

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