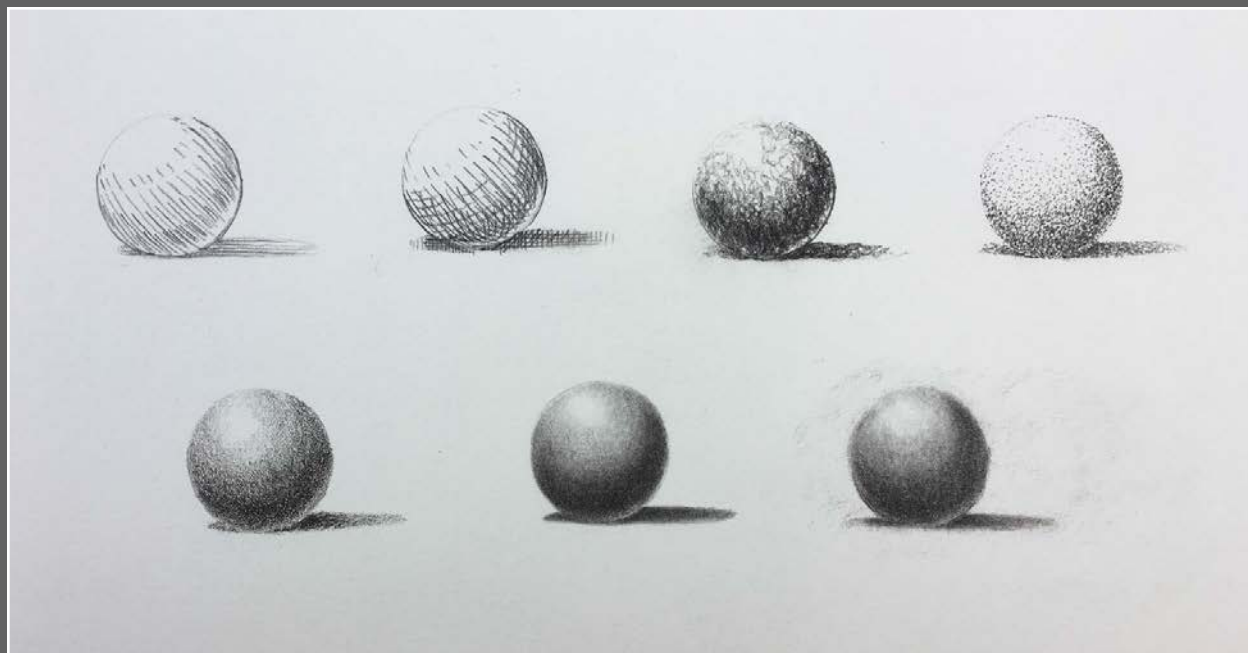


Mark Making and Blending

In this module, we'll take a look at mark making with graphite. We'll explore several different grips for holding your pencil which leads to greater variety in the mark. We'll also look at several graphite drawing techniques including hatching, cross hatching, scribbling, stippling, circling, blending, and rendering.



Gripping the Pencil

Traditional Grip

The traditional grip is the most common way to hold a pencil. For most of us, it is the grip we learned when we first started to write.

With this grip, the tip of the pencil is used to make marks which provides the artist with a great deal of control. This makes this grip great for developing the details in a drawing.



Drumstick Grip

As the name implies, the pencil is held as a drumstick, between the forefinger and the thumb. The pencil is supported by the middle finger.

With this grip, the side of the tip of the pencil creates the marks. More of the graphite is transferred to the surface, producing a bit more texture.

Since most of the motion with this grip originates from the wrist or elbow, it is best suited for larger drawings.



Paint Brush Grip

With this grip, the pencil is held as a paint brush. The positioning of the fingers and hand is similar to that of a traditional grip except the pencil is held further down the shaft.

You may find that you must support your hand with your pinky finger as you make marks with this grip.

This grip produces lighter marks but you may find that you lose a bit of control.

Tip Heavy or Overhand Grip

With this grip, the forefinger is placed over the tip of the pencil while the fingers support the shaft. This grip produces dark and deliberate marks and provides the artist with a surprising amount of control. Even though the forefinger is placed over the tip, the marks made with this grip are the result of the side of pencil making contact with the surface.

This grip is best suited when working on an elevated surface or an easel.



Inverted Grip

With this grip, the pencil is held towards the end of the shaft with the tip of the pencil pointing back towards the artist. The pencil is held between the forefinger and the thumb while the remaining fingers support the front portion of the shaft.

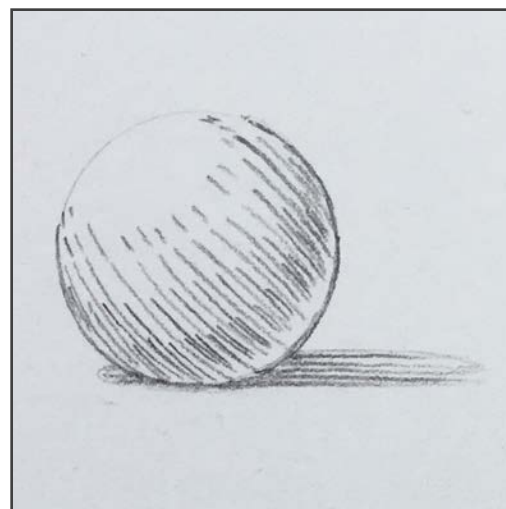
While some control over the mark is sacrificed, this grip may lead to some interesting mark making - especially if you are trying to create some variety.



Graphite Application Techniques

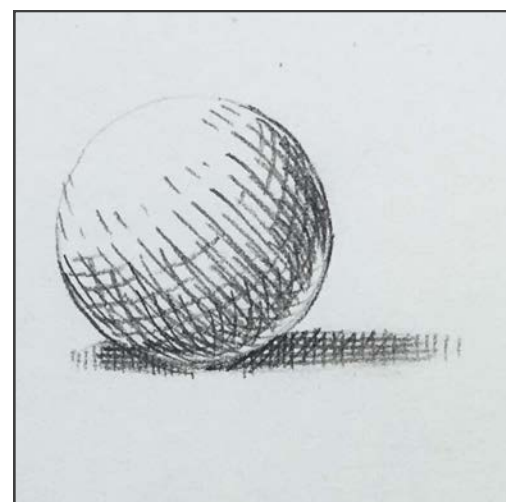
Hatching

Hatching is a method of developing tone and form through the use of lines that do not intersect one another. The closer that lines are placed, the darker the perceived tone. Leaving more space between lines results in lighter values. For rounded objects, the lines may curve slightly around the form - following the contours of the object.



Cross Hatching

Cross hatching uses intersecting lines to develop the tone and form of the subject. Like with hatching, the more concentrated the lines, the darker the value. As lines are added to the subject, they should flow over the contours of the form. For rounded objects, the line should curve slightly.



Random Lines or Scribbling

Of the application techniques discussed, this is the fastest. Random or scribbled lines are quickly overlapped to develop the tone and form of the subject. The greater the concentration of lines overlapped, the darker the value that is perceived. We can also adjust the amount of pressure placed on the pencil to affect the darkness of the value added.



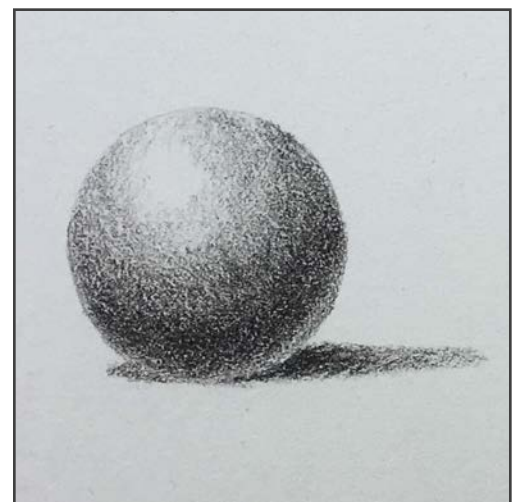
Stippling

Stippling relies on countless dots to develop the tone and illusion of form. The more dots that are added to an area, the darker the perceived value. This method is the most time consuming but provides the artist with a great deal of control over the development of the value. Stippling is mostly used with high contrast mediums such as ink, but it can be useful in some graphite drawings.



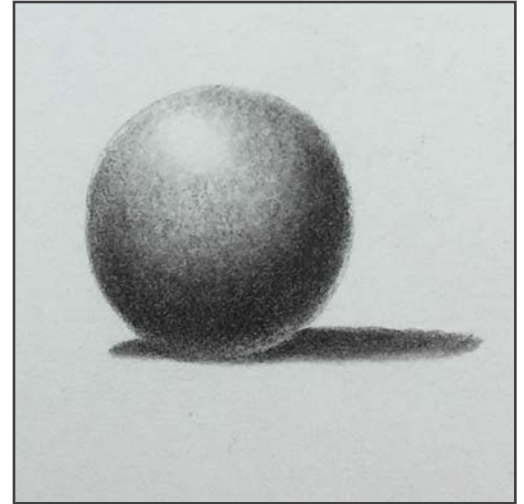
Circling

With this technique, small circular strokes are made with the tip of the pencil. The pressure placed on the pencil is adjusted to create areas of darker or lighter value. By shading with small circular strokes, a smooth transition of tone and value can be achieved while preserving the texture of the paper.



Blending

Blending begins by developing the tone of the subject by circling or adding the graphite by adjusting the amount of pressure placed on the pencil. With values in place, a blending stump is used to work the graphite into the tooth or texture of the paper. This action removes much of the texture produced by the tooth of the paper, resulting in a smoother transition of tone.



Rendering

Rendering occurs when some or all of the tone of the subject is developed by removing media from the surface. Graphite may be applied to the surface initially before removing it to develop the highlights and mid tones. “Rendering”, as a term, is often used to describe the process of drawing in general and is usually the result of a combination of techniques including circling, blending, and erasing.

