# Barnes Atelier

Materials Guide

Never Blame Your Tools.

One thing we adhere to as artists and promote to our students, is the concept of buying, and using top quality materials from the very outset of one's training. Even when expense is of great concern, we advocate purchasing fewer products of a higher quality, rather than several of less so. The last thing one wants is to spend days, weeks, or sometimes months on a project, only to be let down by the *scratchiness of a pencil*, or the *bumps in one's paper*, or the *excess absorption of one's canvas*, or the *dullness of one's paint colour.* Anything worth doing is worth doing properly — and that means using the right tools.
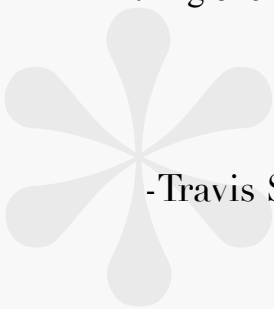
-Travis Seymour | Director of Studies

Micro Eraser

This 'pen' eraser is used to get in those hard to reach areas and to clean up edges of the drawing for razor sharp lines. It is extendable and refillable and can be bought in various diameter widths. We use the 2mm round ones.

Kneadable Putty Eraser

The jack-of-all-trades putty rubber eraser. We use the Faber-Castell 'grey' one — it's not sticky or gummy, and holds any shape. You can erase with strength or subtlety depending on how you use it.

Graphite Pencils

The absolute best graphite pencil around. We use Staedtler Mars Lumograph 2B and HB. They're robust and withstand breakage while at the same time have a buttery smooth texture when using.

Carbon Pencils

Carbon pencils combine the advantages of graphite pencils (sharp lines) and charcoal (rich black lines) and are easily sharpened and can fit in your standard pencil case. We use them to increase the range of desired tone and to create accents in our graphite drawings.

Utility Knife

The utility knife is used for carving away the wood from the graphite(or carbon) shaft within the pencil itself — exposing more of the drawing component, which is then sharpened to a workable point.

Sandpaper Pad

Sandpaper is an effective way to create a point on charcoal and drawing pencils. It is also a simple way to control the angle of the point on your pencil.

Clutch Pencil

Clutch pencils are a wonderful addition to the drawing arsenal as they are easily sharpened and transportable. The Faber-Castell feels light in the hand compared to others and feels most like a traditional pencil. 'Leads' can be purchased separately and interchanged for different desired hardness.

Lead Pointer Tub Sharpener

This Staedtler Lead Pointer Tub is a rotary sharpener for 2mm leads. It comes with a large tub to hold lead shavings and a pad to clean the leads after sharpening (no mess!). It can sharpen leads on their own or whilst in a mechanical pencil and automatically stops when the lead is sufficiently sharpened.

Sketch Pad

An all-around versatile and strong weighted paper great for working in graphite. The medium surface is still quite smooth with some tooth. We use this for most of our drawing exercises, with the Canson Mi-Teintes for working with carbon and chalk.
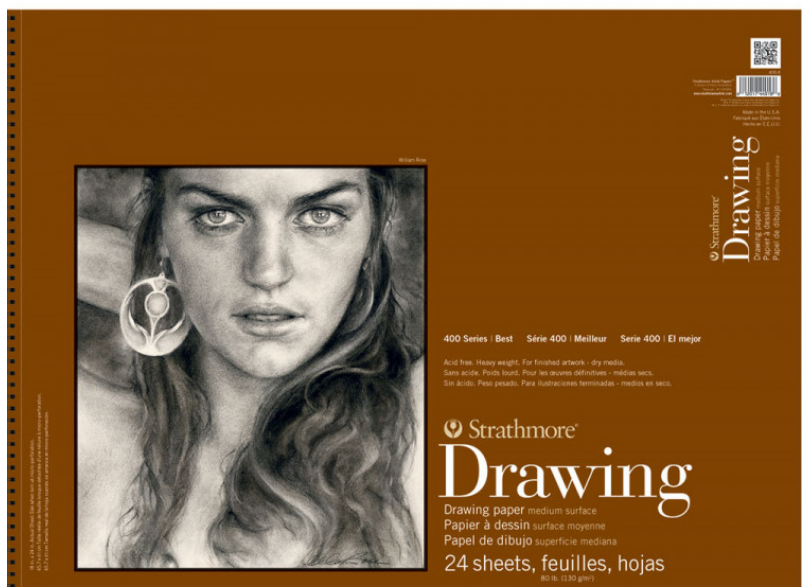
Canson Mi-Teintes

This classic French paper has a mottled texture on one side and a flat surface on the other (we use the flat side), both equally suitable for pastel, oil pastel, charcoal, chalk, pencil, watercolour, and acrylic. It is a heavyweight paper with a high cotton rag content (66%) to ensure long life without deterioration.

Nitram Fine Art Charcoal

Nitram Charcoal is produced using a unique process that maintains the wood's cell structure to increase durability and prevent breakage. Unlike willow and vine, Nitram is not brittle and is less prone to breakage. We use for increasing range of tone and adding accents to drawings.

White Chalk

Chalk sticks can be sharpened in any standard pencil sharpener, just as well as chalk pencils can. Intermediate students use chalk to act as the 'light' on toned paper drawings — a process which helps prepares them for learning to paint.

Oil Paint

We primarily use Old Holland oil paints for their high pigment-to-oil ratio. They are very chromatic, long-lasting, and consistently smooth to work with. Additionally we use Michael Harding and Vasari paints as notable alternatives.
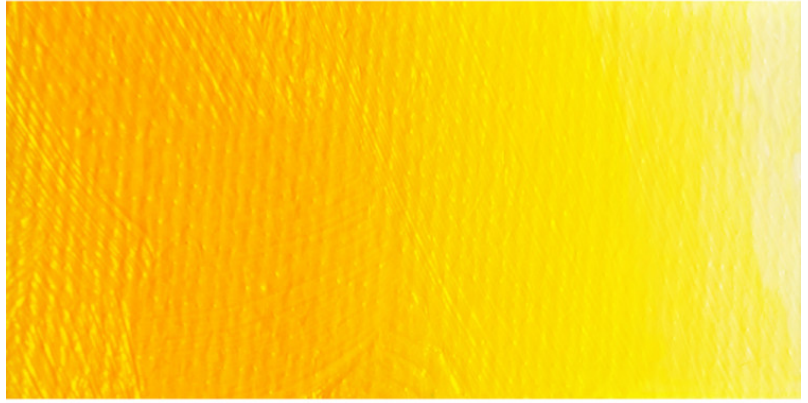
Paint Brushes

We use Rosemary & Co. Chungking Bristles, Ebony Filberts & Pure Kolinsky Sables, as well as the Nova Synthetic series from Da Vinci. The filbert brush is effective and giving distinctive brush strokes with the ability for gradients. The rounds/riggers are used for smaller details.

Refined Linseed Oil

Alkali refining linseed oil produces a light, white wine-coloured oil which is thought to yellow less over time than linseed oils that have not been refined.

13 Odourless Spirits

The 'Sansodor' low odour solvent from Winsor & Newton has very little smell at all. It's great for using as part of your paint medium and equally robust enough to clean one's brushes.

14 Claessens Linen

This Belgian linen is wonderful to paint on. Single or double primed(preferable), we use variations No.13 & 15. No.13 has a finer weave for smaller paintings, No.15 a medium weave for larger pieces.

15 Canvas Pliers

Canvas pliers help stretch the canvas(linen) around support bars. Buying a roll of canvas and stretcher supports as needed, is a long-term cost effective strategy. The Holbein No. 5 canvas pliers are the absolute best. Don't buy anything cheaper - you'll regret it.

Brush Washer

These stainless steel air-tight brush washers hold the Sansodor solvent and help with removing any excess paint from the brush after a wiping with a rag. The metal sieve sits above the bottom of the container to allow sediment to fall and leave clear solvent above for next use.

Artist Dipper / Medium Cups

These sealable metal containers hold one's oil painting 'medium' and are meant to be clipped on to the edge of the palette for easy access. They have a rubberised seal to help keep air tight when not in use.

Bottle Dropper Glass Pipette

These are used to contain a pre-mixed oil painting medium for quick use. They can be labeled for easy reference, and can dispense accurate amounts as needed.

Studio Easel

16

Art school easels can take a beating…
The Mabef M09 h-frame studio easel is
nothing short of amazing. Solid
construction, small footprint, and handy
tray make it perfect for the studio.

Mahl Stick

17

A mahl stick is a tool for artists (not
just painters) used for supporting the
'working' hand — the one that's
holding the paintbrush or pencil etc. It
helps steady the hand when working in
detail. Can be bought ready-made or
constructed independently.

Palette

18

There are several different types of
palette one can use. We like the more
traditional, balanced, treated-with-
several-layers-of-linseed-oil-and-
shellac sort of palette - like the one
from Zecchi art shop in Florence, you
will want to hold on to this palette
forever.

16 Palette Knife

Palette knives come in many different shapes and sizes and can serve several different purposes. For us though it's purely for mixing paint on the palette so we use a knife with a slightly broad face that is neither too long nor short in length.

17 Aluminium Paint Tubes

Aluminium paint tubes are part of our paint mixing process beginning with the neutral grey 'string'. Students create 9 different shades of grey that are neutralised(neither too cool nor too warm in temperature) and individually tubed up for future use. This process is also used for colour where mass quantities of a certain colour will be required — i.e. backgrounds.

18 Brush Cleaner & Other Things

'The Masters Brush Cleaner' — the best soap for your brush.
Other things we frequently us are **plumb lines** for judging vertical axes, **knitting needles** for measuring lengths and widths, **binoculars** for seeing details from far away, **cap/visor** for shielding light from one's eyes.

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