

DRAWING WHITE FUR

IN PASTEL PENCILS

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WELCOME!

BEFORE WE BEGIN...

MATERIALS

You don't need the full list of pencils to enjoy this tutorial but you may find them useful. You can find the materials list in this book along with my trusted suppliers, (I am not sponsored by any of the mentioned companies or brands).

YOUR STUDIO

Struggling to find a place to draw? The kitchen table is perfect for this tutorial, you won't need lots of space to create this drawing and you don't need a fancy easel either!

VIDEOS OR WORKBOOK?

Both! These tutorials are designed to be done with the online videos and the support of this workbook. Pause the video, rewatch it and find the pencils for every step written down in here, too.

USE OF THE WORKSHOP

This material is only for the use of the subscription holder only. Sharing the workshop in any way is forbidden without the express permission of Emily Rose.

NOW, LET'S GET DRAWING, ENJOY!

WHITE FUR

INTRO

Whites are tricky. Very tricky. You may think initially that it would surely be easier than colour; there's less to do and only a few pencils to use. However, this is exactly the problem; there isn't much to play with and a lot to describe.

We are very limited tonally, (light and dark or black and white), for the top details with only a few pencils. So, we are going to rely on both the underpainting and, warms and cools to give us dimension.



WHITE FUR

EXAMPLES

Let's begin by looking at some examples and seeing what we can draw from them before we even start. This is a really useful thing to get used to doing; study a piece of work or your reference photo and pull out the obvious first.

You'll be amazed how much we see and forget to put into our work, however, if you were asked to describe something you would probably tell us more than you have drawn. Let me show you...



WHITE FUR

EXAMPLES

Blue shadows

Warm midtones

Close-toned shadows and midtones

Bright warm biased highlights

sharp edges between 'mids' and highlights

light through the wings = warm, not bright & soft transitions



WHITE FUR

EXAMPLES

Edges between highlight and midtone are defined, the shaded edges are softer.

Warm midtones

Close-toned shadows and midtones

Bright warm biased highlights

Blue shadows



WHITE FUR

EXAMPLES

Close-toned
shadows and
midtones

Heavily relying
on oranges and
blue/greys to
show form

Bright warm
biased highlights

Blue shadows

details in the
shadows and
the midtones are
very close in
tone to the
underpainting



WHITE FUR

Less tonal
modelling in the
highlights, more
in the shadows

Bright warm
biased highlights

Close-toned
highlights

Blue shadows

Blue shadows
are directly
contrasted by
the yellow and
pink warm
highlights



The lit edges are
sharp and
defined next to
the paper. The
shadow edges
are much softer

WHITE FUR

HOW TO USE THESE IDEAS

Alright, so you have probably realised that the same themes crop up from painting to painting. I'm not going to pretend that every painting is totally different from the last and a product of my imagination because it isn't the case!

With realism, you need these key principles to lead you and that is what will take your work from amateur to professional – plus a little practice, too.

We are now going to go through each element step by step so that you can use them properly in your drawings. It's one thing to know an idea, but you need to understand it to properly use a method or technique and really make it work.



LESSON FOCUS

DRAWING WHITES - THE UNDERPAINTING

The first task is: an underpainting which gives us enough structure that we have a good shape, but, it isn't so dark that the white hairs are going to mix into it.

You can find out about underpainting thickness and how it affects the following layers in the beginner's technique class; it's worth a look!

If we make a pastel underpainting very thick, it will smudge together nice and easily and will cover the tooth of the paper fully so that we can't see the paper anymore. This is good for some drawings, however, with a white animal we need more of the tooth of the card available.

If the underpainting is very thick and smooth, we will end up with the top details mixing into it and becoming grey or brown. To avoid this, I firstly consider my photo and then choose a colour of card which is going to help me. That way, I can allow the card to show through the underpainting and not ruin the drawing.

LESSON FOCUS

THE UNDERPAINTING & CARD COLOUR

I work on Clairefontaine pastelpmat board or paper and this comes in a variety of colours. To help me choose which is the right one for a drawing I have to consider a few things:

- Is the subject overall a 'warm' or a 'cool' temperature?
- Is the subject well lit?
- Is it outdoors?
- Is the skin showing through the fur and if so, is it dark?

These questions will help me choose the correct paper, let's look at a few examples.



LESSON FOCUS

THE UNDERPAINTING & CARD COLOUR



- Is the subject overall a 'warm' or a 'cool' temperature?

Overall, this is a warm subject even though the shadows have a blue reflection in them. If you look, you can see the support under this blue is actually warm.

- Is the subject well lit?

Partly, the highlight is strong and makes a 'found' edge in the photo. The bird itself is a soft midtone, only the legs and beak are dark.

- Is it outdoors?

Yes, but we can't see the sky and I intend to add reeds.

- Is the skin showing through the fur and if so, is it dark?

Not very much at all, the feathers are dense and light or midtone.

LESSON FOCUS

THE UNDERPAINTING & CARD COLOUR



Ok, so as the subject is overall very warm, a warm-toned card wouldn't hurt if it showed through, however, I could still use a cool card if I wanted to.

The subject is well lit and not dark apart from the legs. The lit edge is 'found' so needs to have enough contrast to show up; a light grey or white pastel paper wouldn't be dark enough to make this highlight look bright.

It is outdoors and I want to add reeds, so, a natural or neutral colour would work best as I don't like adding big backgrounds to my work.

Lastly, not much skin shows through, once again this tells me I need a light coloured card so that the whites I put down look thick and strong. All of this led me to the sand coloured paper!

LESSON FOCUS

THE UNDERPAINTING & CARD COLOUR



- Is the subject overall a 'warm' or a 'cool' temperature?

This is fairly neutral; the fur itself is a warm brown, however, the area in shadow is quite a flat brown. This whole photo is a bit 'boring and bland'.

- Is the subject well lit?

Partly, the highlight is strong but is backed by a warm tone which doesn't make it stand out much. The shadows are all very soft.

- Is it outdoors?

Yes and I intend to add grass!

- Is the skin showing through the fur and if so, is it dark?

Not very much, we have pink in the little ears, nose and eyelids but the rest is a dense fleece with lots of grey-browns.

LESSON FOCUS

THE UNDERPAINTING & CARD COLOUR



Overall, we have more warm than cool and quite a bit of neutral grey. A cooler card would help to add more variation in tone, a warmer card would give the opportunity to make the shadows much cooler.

The subject is well lit on one side but needs something to help contrast the highlight which is warmish – a cool background would help to maximise this contrast!

It's outdoors and a blue would add to this as I intend to add grass. Not very much of the skin is on show, however, the underpainting for the shaded areas can be fairly thick as the details are soft and grey, not white.

All of this tells me that the light grey paper would work to add more interest to this piece. The sand wouldn't have added much and might have made the study a little 'same same'.

UNDERPAINTING

THICKNESS



Next, we need to decide 'how much is too much'. With pastel pencils, you can only add so many layers before the card is fully saturated and can no longer hold anything else.

This is really important with whites as we have an added challenge: being that white is our lightest tone and anything else appears dark by contrast, a bit of card showing is very obvious.

As I have said, some card showing in certain areas isn't an issue; such as where the skin is visible. However, if the white is solid and bright, such as the highlight on the Egret, then it must be solid and pure to work.

UNDERPAINTING

THICKNESS - TIPS



- Keep the underpainting very thin so that there is enough 'tooth' to grab the white details.
- Don't press very hard with any pencil, even the white or you will get a cracked texture which is irreversible.
- Choose 'soft' pencils when you can; brands such as Cretacolour produce some very soft pencils which take to the paper easily.
- Use your finger to blend the underpainting as you can't rely on thick pastel for easy transitions.
- Draw a thick underpainting and begin to add details whilst adjust the underpainting. Aiming for a perfect start is likely to produce a too-thick layer which may need adjusting anyway.

LOST & FOUND

A QUICK GUIDE



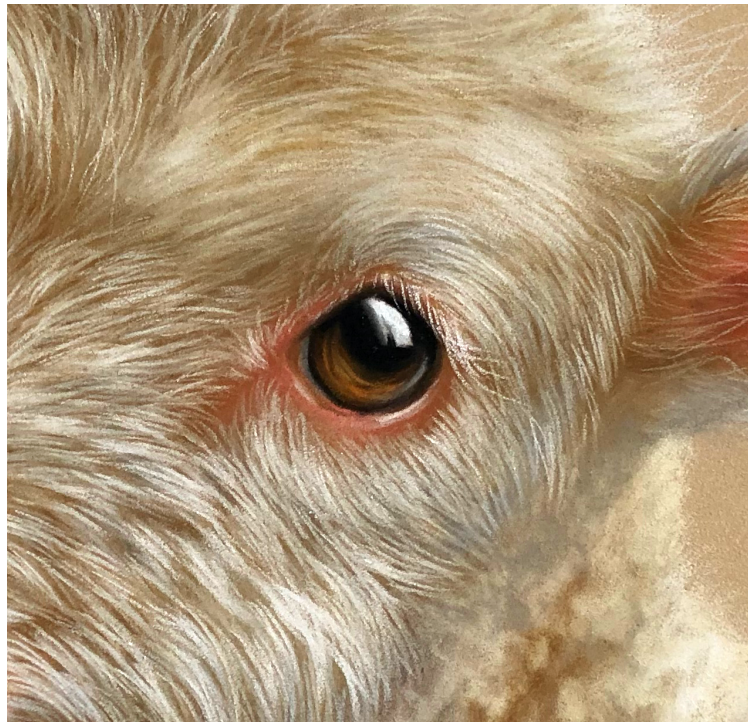
The above drawing shows a lot of outlining with a thick grey pastel – thick was a purposeful style choice, however, it serves as an excellent example here!

You don't want to need to outline your piece to make it 'show up'. This is why you need to pick the correct card colour to start with and always make sure it is dark enough that the white is properly bouncing against it.

Remember that white is as light as you can go, so, to make it shine out create the rest of the painting a bit duller, even if the photo says otherwise. Here, the mother is much darker which helps to add a delicacy to the lamb and direct our focus to her.

LOST & FOUND

A QUICK GUIDE



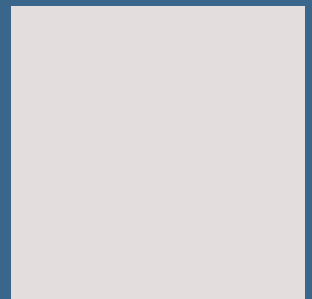
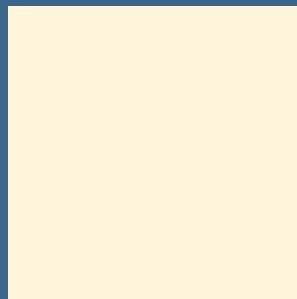
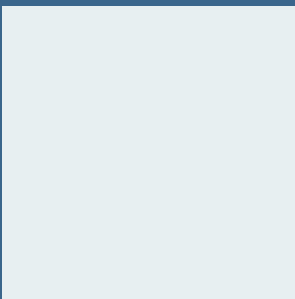
I then like to have the shadows softly transitioning into the board, this means that the focus remains on the beautiful white highlights. If the board was too light, we wouldn't be able to do this as the biggest contrast would be between the shadow and light paper.

It is always good to have a mix of soft edges and hard edges in your drawing – see my Beginner's Guide for more about this – and with whites you need to pay attention to this. For example, the reflection in his eye is very sharp here and this helps to reinforce the idea that it is the very brightest area. The jump from white to black is very dramatic and not at all softened.

LESSON FOCUS

DRAWING WHITES - HOT THEN COLD

Our next secret weapon on the journey to drawing whites is going to be colour temperature; warms and cools. See the squares below? They are all very similar tonally, however, one is more grey, one more grey-blue and the other ivory. Their colour temperature becomes their distinguishing feature and we will be taking advantage of this difference between them.



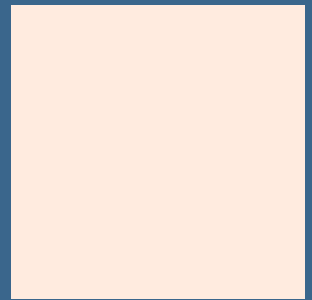
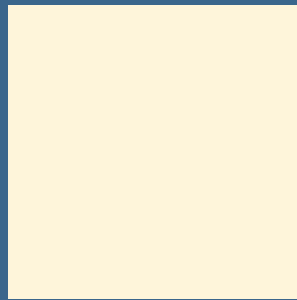
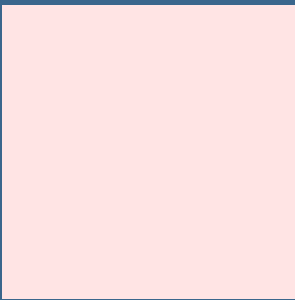
You can see that I have mainly used the yellows in the highlights and the blues in the shadows – often the shadows which are actually catching a little reflection of the sky from the ground, making them cool.

However, can we use these the other way around?

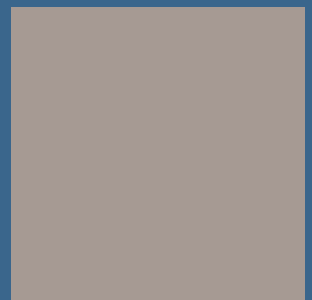
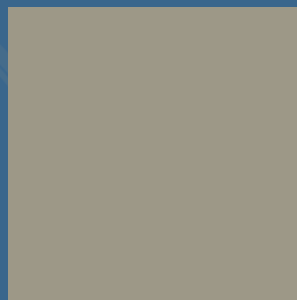
LESSON FOCUS

DRAWING WHITES - HOT THEN COLD

You can use these colours the other way around, however, I don't find it to produce as good results. If we are going to make the shadows warm we will lose the delicate ivories and pinks:



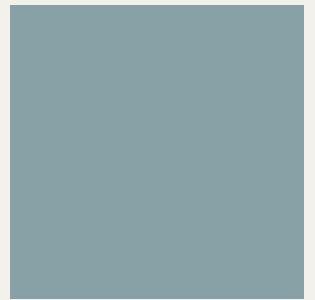
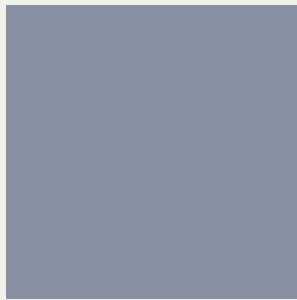
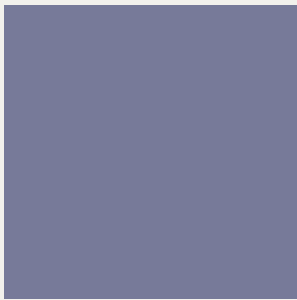
When these colours are made darker they aren't as pretty!



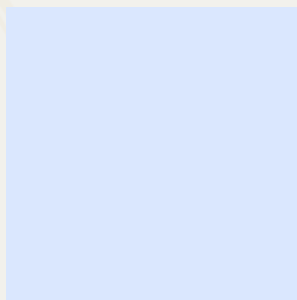
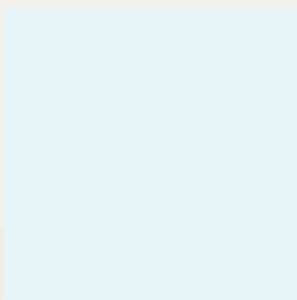
LESSON FOCUS

DRAWING WHITES - HOT THEN COLD

However, the blue is more universal and works well as a grey. Because blue is a darker colour naturally than yellow, we can retain more colour as we go darker. We, of course, do need to add some grey to avoid a blue bird or lamb, but we still get nice colours than the muddy/dirty browns:



The blue is also very nice as ice-greys and I do use some of these gently within in shaded areas as detail. If I then tap the details with a clean finger, they mix into the dark grey underpainting and aren't too bright.



EXPOSURE

THE MAGIC KEY

Lastly, in the lamb tutorial, we talk about exposure which is a critical element in every drawing but especially when you're working with white.

In short, it is to do with working with limited tones and making these describe lots of detail with relatively few pencils.

If you'd like to find out more and follow the lamb tutorial as well, you can find it on my website. You can buy it as an individual class, or, you can become a member and do every class available!

