

Intro to Carbon Dust Materials List

Botanical Artists Guild of Southern California • LA Arboretum

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If you have any questions about any of the materials, please feel free to contact me at the email address above.

This workshop will use five different categories of materials:

- Mandatory or strongly recommended.
- Optional, but might be useful or you might want to try (see the notes below).
- Completely optional, weird, experimental—you may or may not want to try, but we’ll demonstrate in class.
- Shared among all of us in the workshop.
- Supplied in your very own goody bag to use during the workshop and take home. ***(Look for the bold, green italic type below.)***
You do not need to purchase these specialty supplies before the workshop (but of course you’re welcome to do so if you would like.)

The table below lists the “Mandatory” and “Optional” supplies side-by-side. You’ll be able to learn about carbon dust with only the supplies in the goody bag, but please bring the additional “mandatory” supplies and any personal favorites from the list below.

None of the products or links listed below are endorsements, and I certainly don’t receive any benefit for mentioning them. They’re provided here for reference. This is simply a glimpse into my cabinets and drawers of the supplies I’ve tried and found useful or have an opinion about. What works for you is best. Feel free to use your favorite online vendors or be sure to support our few remaining brick-and-mortar art supply shops so they will continue to survive!

Mandatory/Strongly Recommended (equivalents ok)	Optional
<p>Pencils: Carbon: Wolff’s Carbon Pencils: (I typically have two–three of each of the following). Be sure each pencil says “Wolff’s Carbon” on it! (Wolff’s also makes graphite pencils.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B <i>(1 in your goody bag)</i> • 2B <i>(1 in your goody bag)</i> • 4B <i>(1 in your goody bag)</i> • 6B <p>Graphite: (for initial drawings and transfer) Your favorite—one will do, although I usually draw with the carbon pencils directly.</p>	<p>Optional pencils: Lyra Rembrandt Carbon: some art supply stores carry an extensive line of Lyra instead of Wolff’s. The Lyra come in a “jumbo” width, so be aware if you only have the “normal” pencil sharpener hole.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H • 2B Extra Dark • 3B <p>General’s Carbon Sketch Pencil</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faber-Castell Pitt Pastel White, and/or Derwent Drawing, Chinese White 7200 • General’s Charcoal White pencil <i>(1 in your goody bag)</i>
<p>Sharpener(s), sandpapers, etc. Used for traditional sharpening or creating carbon dust.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your favorite pencil shapener. • Xacto knife (my favorite is a #11 blade, but any will do). Can also be used as a drawing tool or to correct mistakes. • Fine sandpaper (sandpaper block https://www.dickblick.com/products/sandpaper-block/; OR, sandpaper (800 grit or finer—automotive or “fine finish”); AND/OR, emery boards. <i>(Some small pieces of sandpaper will be in your goody bag.)</i> 	<p>Optional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bard Parker Scalpel Blade handle with No. 10 or No. 15 blade • Emery boards; glass or metal emery boards (sustainability). • More elaborate sharpening tools (NOTE: I have not tried this one, https://www.amazon.com/Raffine-Artist-Reusable-Metal-File/dp/B095FNKS5M) • Slice Ceramic Knives (can also be used as a drawing tool or to correct mistakes): https://www.sliceproducts.com/collections/precision-knives; Craft Knife, https://www.dickblick.com/products/slice-ceramic-craft-knife/ and/or Slice Ceramic Precision Cutter, https://www.dickblick.com/products/slice-ceramic-precision-cutter/

<p>Surface(s): Choose one favorite you're comfortable using, or more if you want to experiment</p> <p>Film: If you're a fan of film: Dura-Lar .005 two-sided matte film;</p> <p>AND/OR</p> <p>Drawing paper(s), and/or Watercolor paper(s) (140lb, hot press), and/or clay board. Professional grade is a must. You want a smooth surface so that the paper texture won't show, but with enough tooth to "grab and hold" the carbon;</p> <p>AND/OR</p> <p>YUPO Medium https://www.dickblick.com/products/legion-yupo-synthetic-paper-pads/ or YUPO Heavy https://www.dickblick.com/products/legion-yupo-synthetic-paper-pads/</p> <p>YUPO White is preferred (translucent is also available);</p> <p>AND/OR</p> <p>Experimental papers, such as Hahnemuhle Velour Paper (if you like a really "grabby" surface) or Yasutomo Mineral Paper.</p> <p><i>(Small pieces—4" x 6" or larger—of Dura-Lar, watercolor paper, mineral paper and possibly more will be in your goody bag)</i></p> <p>Tracing paper (for sketching and transferring). If you're using film or mineral paper, cheap white paper or board to slide under your art.</p> <p>Paper to protect your drawing surface (for example, tracing paper, cheap bond paper, glassine sheets, whatever you usually use for this purpose), OR Parchment paper (the kitchen kind) to protect your work (my favorite!) <i>(a piece of parchment will be in your goody bag)</i></p> <p>Sketchbook/notepad</p>	<p>Optional surface(s):</p> <p>Film: Cronaflex (If you, or someone you know, has an ancient stash. It's no longer made.) H&E Herculene Matte Drafting Film is another tried and true film, but difficult to find and expensive.</p> <p>These days, Dura-Lar is widely available and great for film lovers. Be sure to get the matte film. It's also sold in a clear acetate—carbon dust will not adhere to the clear products.</p> <p>Premium drawing papers (professional grade, not student grade)</p> <p>Premium drawing papers for pastels</p> <p>Toned drawing papers (e.g., light grey, light colors)</p> <p>Sanded or velour papers for charcoal and pastels (can be tricky to use, but can give some interesting effects (examples include: Hahnemühle Velour Paper, https://www.dickblick.com/products/hahnemuhle-premium-velour-paper/ or Mi-Teintes Touch, https://www.dickblick.com/products/canson-mi-teintes-touch-sanded-papers/</p> <p>Yasutomo Mineral Paper is translucent, but whiter than film. It's a nice surface for film-lovers that has the benefit of a brighter, whiter "color," https://www.dickblick.com/products/yasutomo-mineral-paper-artist-pad/</p>
<p>Brushes: <u>To be used forever more only for carbon or graphite.</u> <i>(at least one small brush will be in your goody bag)</i></p> <p>Round and flat brushes in a variety of sizes. Natural is wonderful, but can be expensive; synthetics work well. Great brush finds can be had in the "bargain bin". Just a few to start is fine.</p> <p>Round, with good, sharp points, in a variety of sizes: 00, 1, 2, 4. If covering a huge area, sizes 6, and 8 are handy.</p> <p>Flat, (optional cat's tongue and sword) in a variety of sizes: 1/8", 1/4", 1, 2, 4. If covering a huge area, 1/2" or 6 or 8 are great.</p>	<p>Additional optional brushes:</p> <p><u>To be used forever more only for carbon or graphite.</u></p> <p>Double Ended Colour Shapers, https://www.dickblick.com/products/double-ended-colour-shapers/</p> <p>Pan pastel brushes.</p> <p>Your favorite watercolor "correcting" brushes. (Never to use with watercolor again.)</p> <p>Worn-out, bristly or weird brushes to create textures.</p>

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<p>Eraser(s):</p> <p>Blu-tak. I prefer the original blue (they also have white). Can be found everywhere now, including WalMart, etc. https://www.amazon.com/Bostik-Multipurpose-Reusable-Adhesive-Non-Toxic/dp/B0001OZL70/ref=sr_1_7?keywords=blu%2Btack&qid=1706648744&sr=8-7&th=1</p> <p>OR Kneaded eraser (I prefer using the Blu-tak as a substitute for a kneaded eraser). <i>(There will be some Blu-Tak in your goody bag.)</i></p> <p>Tombow Mono eraser (or equivalent) (Mono Zero refillable), https://www.dickblick.com/products/tombow-mono-eraser/</p> <p>Various click-style erasers: Staedler-Mars white plastic and click-style erasers, OR, General's Factic Mechanical.</p>	<p>Optional eraser(s):</p> <p>Electric eraser (with white plastic eraser fill). WARNING: be very careful! It's easy to damage your surface!</p> <p>Westcott Erasing Shield, (not an eraser, but definitely useful!), https://www.dickblick.com/products/westcott-erasing-shield/</p>
<p>Blenders and other applicators:</p> <p>Chamois (small), approximately 5" x 7". https://www.dickblick.com/products/natural-artist-chamois/ Check the package to see if it needs to be washed before first use. <i>(There will be a small piece of pre-washed chamois in your goody bag.)</i></p> <p>Tortillions, OR blending stumps, various sizes, AND/OR Q-tips. <i>(A few gray blending stumps and a Pan Pastel Sofft Tools mini applicator will be in your goody bag.)</i></p> <p>T-shirt scrap, clean, preferably white. <i>(In your goody bag.)</i></p>	<p>Optional blenders and other applicators:</p> <p>Pastel blending brushes (for example, Sennelier Le Pastelliste) in a variety of sizes, 4, 8, 12. https://www.dickblick.com/products/sennelier-le-pastelliste-brushes/?fromSearch=%2Fsearch%2F%3Fsearchword%3DBlender</p> <p>Double Ended Colour Shapers, https://www.dickblick.com/products/double-ended-colour-shapers/</p> <p>Additional Pan Pastel Sofft Tools, https://www.dickblick.com/products/panpastel-sofft-tools/?fromSearch=%2Fsearch%2F%3Fsearchword%3D-Blender</p> <p>Make up sponges and make up foam applicators.</p> <p>Paper towels or facial tissue (make sure they do NOT contain lotion). <i>(Supplied in the classroom.)</i></p>

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Other:

Small lidded container(s) for the dust. Any will do, including old mint tins, etc. I strongly recommend, however, using containers with a screw-top lid or an easy opening lid. Little containers with strong snap top lids keep the dust safe and secure, but are a sure-fire way for me to spray black carbon dust all over everything when I try to open them. *(In your goody bag to get started. If you have tiny sample jam jars, those are my favorites.)*

Good task lighting.

Cotton glove to keep surface clean, eliminate hand oils.

White artist's tape, or your preference.

Drawing board.

Mirror, for checking for black dust on your face before leaving the studio :-)) Trust me on this one.

SUBJECT:

We'll talk about different types of subjects. You may already have something in mind, in which case it's great to come with your subject and any preliminary sketches and drawings you might have done.

Carbon dust can be used to illustrate anything, but it immediately lends itself to soft, velvety surfaces, matte tonal values, or wet, shiny surfaces, such as internal organs depicted in old anatomy and medical illustrations.

Optional other:

Your favorite watercolors, pan pastels, pastels, colored pencils with all the bits and pieces you like to use with them.

Grafix Frisket Film, low tack masking film, <https://www.dickblick.com/products/grafix-all-purpose-frisket-film/?fromSearch=%2Fsearch%2F%3Fsearchword%3Dgrafix%20frisket%20film> AND/OR removable tape. *(In your goody bag.)*

Nitrile gloves to keep hands clean while sanding carbon. *(In your goody bag.)*

Mask (Any mask that you wore during the pandemic is good safety to wear when sanding/creating carbon dust if you prefer).

Pop up hand wipes.

Optional other, experimental:

Workable Fixative, or fine mist atomizer bottle for alcohol (In the olden days, they used a mouth atomizer to blow a mist of alcohol!) I tend not to use either, but we'll discuss if and when an application might be useful. We will NOT use fixative in the classroom, but will have a can to share if anyone would like to use it.

Black ink or lamp black watercolor.

White gouache, and/or Pro White, or Titanium White (PW4) watercolor (tube).

Japan Sakura Gelly Roll 05 pen, white.

Charcoal powder.

Schminke Liquid Charcoal, (NOTE: I have not yet tried these—these fall in that “experimental” category). <https://www.dickblick.com/products/schminke-liquid-charcoal/?fromSearch=%2Fsearch%2F%3Fsearchword%3Dliquid%20charcoal>

Small porcelain palette and water container for mixing and using carbon dust wet. OR use the piece of YUPO *(in your goodyt bag.)*

Instant coffee, damp coffee grounds, damp tea bags or damp tea. Do not bring to the workshop. Instructions will be sent to all participants well in advance if you would like to try this experimental, fun technique.