

Drawing an Expressive Portrait



Online drawing workshop with Jody Graham.

Learn to draw unique expressive portraits.

Easy to follow techniques to develop drawing skills.

For beginners and intermediate students.

Expected duration of workshop 3 – 6hours

Image Jody Graham *Resolute* charcoal on paper 76 x 56cm Photo credit Graeme Wienand

For beginners watch all videos, starting at **Before you Begin**, through to **Step 1 - 6**, use the knowledge gained in these videos to assist you with the **Drawing Project Series** in this course.

For intermediate students who already understand the basics of drawing a portrait, use the **Drawing Project Series** as a starting point to develop a suite of sensitive expressive drawings.

Workshop duration – this online workshop can be done at your own pace. The minimum suggested time requirement is 3 hours. It's recommended to take longer to repeat, enjoy and fine tune drawing techniques showcases here.

Suggested materials

2B, 4B or 6B pencil

A4 Paper

Eraser

Sharpening knife and or sharpener.

Optional – other pencils, pens, charcoals or similar to draw with and other supports, including larger scale paper or similar.



Tips to remember throughout the course

- These videos are a guide only, modify to suit your approach, style and subject.
- **Videos in this course are made under 1 minute for uploading efficiency. It's not necessary to be as quick as demonstrated, take your time and enjoy.**
- Work loosely.
- It can help to imagine what's under the skin, the structure of the skull.
- Work big shapes first before you get to the details.
- Common mistakes can be made by placing eyes higher on the head, with eye and neck spacing too close, thin or wide.
- Previous line work will add a history of mark making to a drawing.
- Different tooth papers give different results. Practice on a few different paper surfaces to discover what appeals to you.

Instructions for detailing a portrait to further assist you in Step 1 – 4 and the Drawing Project Series.

Eyebrows & Eyes

Look at the eyebrow shape and how they sit on the face and use the guideline to draw them on. Repeat this with the eyes, keep the eyes simple, make the lashes, iris and pupil dark and block in as one. Keep the lower lid lighter.

Nose

Draw the nostrils and shadow under the nose to indicate nose shape. Slightly suggest sides of the nose to show nose shape and width.

Mouth

Follow the centre guideline of head shape and indicate a 'v' at top of the mouth under nose shadow line.
The centreline of the lips is where the top and bottom lip meet. Look at the shape of this line on your sitter and place on your lip guideline, under 'v' mark.
The bottom lip is best defined using a shadow under it.

Chin and Jawline

It's easy to underestimate the size of the chin, look carefully below the bottom lip line at the distance to the bottom of the chin, mark new line over your existing chin construction lines.
Place shadow under the chin to separate chin from neck.
Look either side of the chin to determine shape and size of the jaw relative to the rest of the face and neck.

Ears

Keep the ears simple, like all other facial features in early stages of drawing.
The ears should sit between the eye and bottom of the nose.



Neck

Look at your portrait and put neck lines in. Be careful not to make the neck more narrow or thicker than it is. Mark the neck and shoulder lines in as they connect with the head and face. Look at where neck and shoulder lines are in relation to the chin, jaw and mouth.

Hair

It's often better to understand hair as a big mass or none at all, if your sitter is bald. Look at the borders of the hair, the hairline and how the hair sits around the face. Mark these points on your portrait.



Tips on getting a likeness to your portrait sitter.

If your portrait is not like your sitter go back and look at the basics again. Compare your drawing to the face you see. Look at key features, have you over emphasised or played down the shape of them. It's important to know little details on a person's face are significant. For example, does their mouth turn up at the corners, do they have frown lines, does their hair take up a lot of their face?

Image – Jody Graham self-portrait pen and ink on paper (straight lines only, non-dominant hand)
Photo credit – Graeme Wienand.

Before you Begin

Sharpening, holding and making marks with a pencil.

Video Intro | (Intro_Expressive_Portrait_Sharpening_Pencil.mov)

To put yourself in a good position to draw well, sharpen your pencils and practice making marks. If you are using another medium like charcoal, it's a good idea to see what marks you can make before you start.

Make large expressive marks by holding the pencil loosely at the back and move your whole arm back and forth to achieve big broad lines.

Experiment with line pressure and the position you hold the pencil, notice how tone changes with different amounts of pressure and the position you hold the pencil.

Practice moving the pencil around and up and down, use it on the side and the tip.

It's important to find out what your pencil can do and worth spending 5 to 10 minutes or more to discover how many varied marks you can make.



Step 1 – 4

Loose expressive guide to drawing a portrait face on.

Step 1 Simple portrait guideline

Video 1 | (1_Expressive_Portrait_Simple_Portrait.mov)

Optional putting a coloured shape down before drawing portrait.

- Mark top and bottom of the head
- Loosely draw a head shape
- Mark halfway on the head shape, then halfway again in lower half of head, then halfway again and put a centreline down the middle.
- Loosely put in position of the eyes on the first halfway mark. They are approximately an eyes width apart.
- Mark in semi-circle to indicate the bottom of the nose and a 'V' below the end of the nose for the top of the lips.
- At this point you can put a simple line to suggest in-between the lips and approximate bottom point of the chin.

Step 2 – Add facial features

Video 2 | (2_Expressive_Portrait_Simple_Portrait.mov)

Loosely mark in position of the eyebrows, pupils, iris.

- Mark in the top lip line and suggest line between lips and under bottom lip.
- The iris usually lines up with the corners of the mouth.
- Tip, the direction of the corners of the mouth can help determine the mood of your portrait, Such as happy, sad, cross, indifferent.
- Add the ears, which usually start at eye level and go to just below the nose.
- Loosely block in hair shape and eyelashes across the iris.

Step 3 – Adding neck, shoulders

Video 3 | (3_Expressive_Portrait_Neck_Shoulders.mov)

- Put marks to indicate the neck and shoulders.
- Add garment at this point
- Start to put more shape and definition into features.

Step 4 – Adding more tone and definition

Video 4 | (4_Expressive_Portrait_Tone_Definition.mov)

- Add some tone to other parts of the face that usually have shadow. Under the chin, nose, bottom lip, eyes. Tip – add tone lightly to face and gradually build up with more observation to the face you are drawing.
- Darken eyebrows, eyelashes, eyes, bottom of the nose and lips

