

Self Portrait

Oil pastels

Look in a mirror. You are going to draw your self-portrait on a velour paper, using a color pencil. Then you will color it with oil pastels. Pick a color of the paper sheet. Any color will work. Use a similar color for your pencil.

Use very fine lines as this type of paper is not forgiving for too much erasing.

Drawing from observation is different than drawing from a photograph. If it helps - use a wet-erase marker to draw the axis and the main construction lines directly on a mirror.



Part I. Drawing

Start your portrait from looking in a mirror and positioning your head so you feel comfortable. You are going to look back and forth between a mirror and your drawing paper. Eventually, your muscles will "remember" the position of your head.

Look at your face and think how it is different from an antique statue: how big the eyes are, how close they are, how big is the forehead, how wide or narrow the face is, how big is the mouth, how big or small is the chin, etc.

Please refer to Classic Facial Proportions handout for detailed information.



Place the center line according to the tilt angle of your head. Define the size of the head. Follow the steps of drawing classic facial proportions, just make adjustments to your personal proportions. Keep in mind the "Thirds rule" as you laying out the features.

Divide the lower third of the face into three parts. Position the mouth line. Now you have most of your construction lines completed: you have a "face layout" ready for adding details.

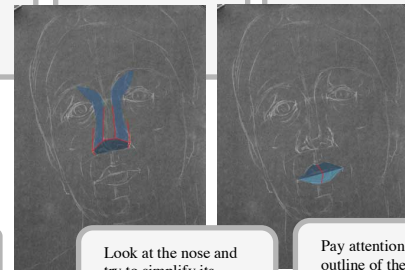
Place the eyes outlines onto the eye line. Measure the distance between the eyes.

Divide the space between the eyes into 3 parts - position the nose there. If your head is not in the straight front view - you have to measure these three parts as they are not even.

Draw the upper lip, the lower lip, and the corners of the mouth. See how long is your mouth line in relation to existing elements (like eyes).

The ears usually fit within the middle third of the face: between the eye brow line and the nose line.

Please note: If your head is turned - the center axis line will follow the form of the face (the yellow line).



Part II. Coloring

Now you are ready for coloring. There are 3 steps to the coloring: apply shadows, apply highlights, add details



Look at the nose and try to simplify its form: You should be able to see at least 4 sides of the nose: top (middle) side, left, right, and bottom.

Pay attention to the outline of the lips. Stay away from drawing "leaf" shapes for lips. Their form is much more complex.

Place the eyes outlines onto the eye line. Measure the distance between the eyes.

Shadows: Pick a color to fill in the shaded areas. Cool colors work good - blues, purples, greens. Use a tip of a pastel for more intense and detailed shading. Use a side of a pastel to shade larger areas with softer shadows.

Apply shadows to all dark areas. Use different pressure to achieve wider range of dark values.

Highlights Pick a lighter color (not WHITE) and apply all highlights and light values.

Add color variations in shaded areas and lit areas. Start defining details. Do not outline facial features!

Pick a set of colors that you are going to use for your portrait. Use a pastel of a color that matches your paper to correct coloring mistakes (remember - you cannot erase oil pastels) - just color over your mistakes.

