

10-Phases To Incredible Artistic Growth

Phase #1: Developing Foundational Art Skills + 2D Sketching

- Understand basic drawing supplies
- Practice holding pencils for drawing, moving your entire arm and drawing on slanted surfaces with basic drills (lines and shapes)
- Start developing your observation skills and hand-eye coordination via recreating shapes and proportions freehand
- Learn to simplify objects/subjects as simple 2D shapes or combinations of simple shapes
- Practice with the 4-Quadrant Method and the envelope technique to develop successful block-ins and outline sketches

Phase #2: 3D Form + Perspective

- Understand and practice Linear Perspective (1, 2 and 3 Point Perspective), first using grids to draw basic forms and later for simple scenes such as simple cityscapes, interiors of rooms, etc.
- Learn to draw cubes, rectangular prisms, cylinders and spheres from different angles/perspectives (everything around you can be simplified into one of these forms or combos of these forms-compound objects)
- Once Linear Perspective has been covered, practice Informal Perspective *How to draw a house tutorial
- Continue using the 4-Quadrant Method and the envelope technique, but now acknowledge what you're drawing as having mass and volume
- Make sure you're drawing using both reference photos and direct observation

Phase #3: Light Behavior + Shading

- Understand the relationship between 3D form, light and value
- Learn about light behavior, and light and shadow areas to develop in drawings for realistic shading

- In greyscale (or with one single color), practice developing realistic shading by pinpointing lights, midtones and darks in reference photos or objects you have in front of you in real life, and making them happen in your drawings
- Understand the difference between edges and outlines, as well as gradual transitions between values and hard/sharp edges
- Develop your ability to create gradual transitions between values when drawing by varying pressure control
- Practice using different pencil grades for successful shading

Phase #4: Color Theory + Exploring First Painting Medium

- Learn Color Theory (Color Wheel, Color Temperature, Color Schemes)
- Start developing your ability to mix colors successfully
- Learn about basic painting supplies and what makes your painting medium different from other mediums
- Practice holding a paintbrush properly, water control, and basic techniques (ex. Watercolor- 3 basic washes and brush strokes)
- Start painting simple objects like flowers or simple illustrations with little-to-no background
- Follow basic tutorials and use resources that are beginner level

Phase #5: Commit to 1-3 Drawing + Painting Medium(s) + Start With Fuller Paintings

- Start with paintings or fuller pieces that have multiple elements and backgrounds (but still have a level of simplicity to them)
- Still life arrangements or simple nature scenes are a great way to continue honing basic techniques while starting to bring in the knowledge you've gained on the fundamentals
- Continue following tutorials (beginner to intermediate level), making sure that you're bringing in your understanding of perspective, form, light behavior and value
- Start looking for feedback
- Continue with your habit of sketching (even if it's quicker sketches of objects)

Phase #6: Learn About Composition + Analyze Successful Artwork

- Research past artistic movements and the evolution of art styles throughout history
- Analyze other artists' use of Elements and Principles of Art
- Use Feldman's 4-Step Method of Critiquing to analyze both art from the past, as well as more contemporary pieces to understand what makes visual compositions successful
- Take notes on what you want to take to your own work
- Artist studies could be a great type of practice to incorporate in this phase

Phase #7: Start Creating Original Art

- Start using your own concepts, ideas, and reference photos to create original art
- Working with still life is very helpful because you have greater control and it's an easy way that you can continue developing your eye for composition
- You can still follow tutorials in this phase to continue improving your techniques
- Continue getting feedback on your work

Phase #8: Choose a Subject + Developing a Project Mentality

- Choose a subject or two you want to commit to *at least short term* (landscapes, portraits, abstract, still life, etc.) and create original art focusing on these subjects
- Get to know your own creative process (from prep phase, to production of final piece, how you like doing your self-evaluation/obtaining feedback, and how you move on to establishing objectives for future pieces)

- Implement **Incubation Periods** where you limit your consumption of media
- Create more than you consume!
- Trust your own ideas and see them through
- Don't be afraid for projects to fail

Phase #9: Delve Deeper into Specific Fundamentals + Use More Advanced Resources to Improve Your Work

- Now that you've taken note of your weaknesses or areas of improvement in your specific medium and subject, look for resources (courses, books, workshops) that will help you improve
- Delve deeper into specific fundamentals that'll help you improve, such as Anatomy (humans or animals), Perspective, Color, Light, etc.
- Start building up a solid library of more advanced resources that you can continue coming back to in order to continue improving

Phase #10: Developing Your Art Style + Creating Your First Body of Work

- Focus on developing your first body of work using your mediums of choice and based on the subject(s) you're interested in most
- This body of work can be made up of smaller sketches and explorations, to larger/more finalized paintings
- Analyze your work to find common threads (how you use Elements and Principles of Art, your tools/supplies, the process you like going through, etc.)
- Take notes on your findings, continue honing what you're loving in your work, and changing/improving what you don't
- Continue working in cycles, bringing in your project mentality, setting specific objectives for future projects or series, as well as continuing with self-evaluation and obtaining feedback