

Kids:  
Steal these  
tips from a  
professional  
artist

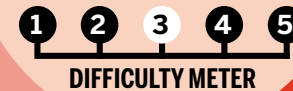


# Art Thief

Heist #12

## DRAW A CARDINAL

IN PENCIL AND WATERCOLOR



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### What you need

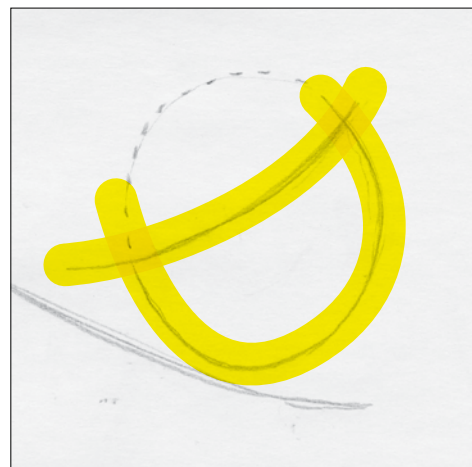
Pencil, eraser, watercolors or markers.

### A yearlong feathered friend

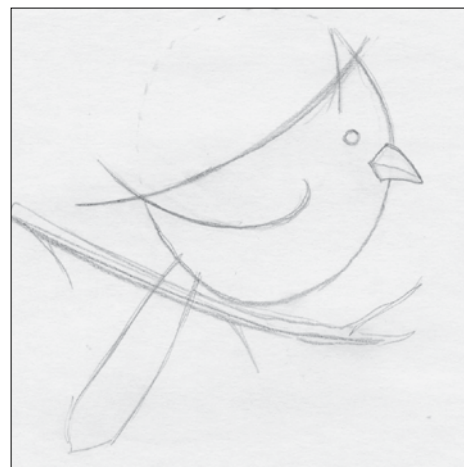
Have you ever looked out your window and seen a beautiful red bird resting on a nearby tree or porch railing? The male cardinal is easily identified by its brilliant color and the crest (pointed cap) atop its head. The female cardinal is also crested, but her plumage is duller. Both are beautiful songsters. While many songbirds of the Philadelphia region go south for the winter, the cardinal stays and can easily be attracted to neighborhood feeders. For these reasons, the cardinal is so beloved that seven states (Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, North Carolina, Ohio, Virginia and West Virginia) have named it their state bird!

Cardinals are omnivores; they eat seeds, insects and fruits. Their thick beaks are powerful enough to crack open hard seeds. Birds that eat only worms and insects, such as robins, have slender beaks. Another identifying feature of this backyard beauty is the black mask that extends between the eyes to below the beak.

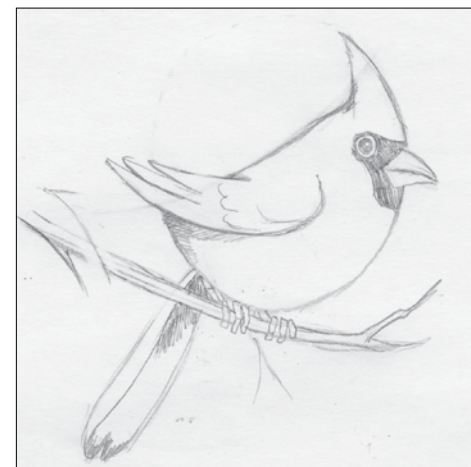
So, are you ready to draw him?



**1** Our cardinal is made up of a series of gentle arcs through or near an oval. You will notice that there are no straight lines in this drawing. At this point, the body of the bird will resemble a letter "D" that is tipped nearly over.



**2** The crest, wing and tail are also softly curved. The beak will be thick and curve downward. Add the eye and thicken the branch.



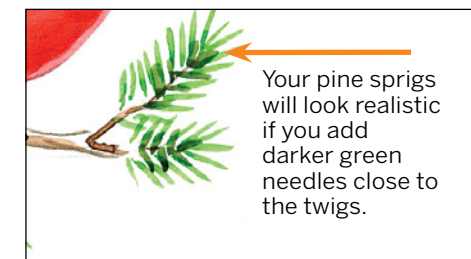
**3** Circle the darkened eye and extend the mask to surround the beak. Add feathers to the wing and tail. The legs are nearly hidden by the body but his six front toes can be seen wrapped around the branch. There are cast shadows beneath the wing and tail.



**4** The red paint was applied with a fairly wet brush. Practice loading your brush with paint, scraping off some of the excess liquid and testing your results on scrap paper before coloring the bird. The green, black, orange and brown were applied with a smaller brush that had more of the liquid scraped off.



**5** Leaving small areas of white on the branch and wing will add sparkle to your watercolor. Paint pointed things like the beak, crest and pine needles starting lightly at the point and increasing the pressure on the brush as you pull the paint away. Add a shadow beneath the bird and between his toes.



Your pine sprigs will look realistic if you add darker green needles close to the twigs.

### Are you new to watercolors?

If your watercolors are darker, lighter or not where you want them to be, don't worry. Wet paint takes a lot of practice to master, and even experts are often surprised by how the paper responds to the water. Often these "mistakes" turn out to be happy accidents that give the watercolor its characteristic "wet" look.