

# Art Thief



Kids: Steal these tips from a professional artist

## Heist #6 THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE AND DRAW WHAT YOU LIKE

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### Tool time

Today we examine the basic tools in the Art Thief's toolbox.



### 12" ruler and T square

The dollar-store plastic ruler works very well for pen and pencil drawings because the transparent plastic lets you see the paper beneath, allowing for more accurate line placement. Turn it upside down when using a felt-tip and you will never smear your line because the edge is floating slightly above the paper.

The tiny T square can be used on the edge of your sketchbook for perfect parallel or perpendicular lines.



### Kneaded eraser

When art thieves are instructed to "gently" or "partially" erase guidelines, the kneaded eraser is the best tool. Artists avoid hard rubber erasers because they can damage the paper surface and make smooth pen lines impossible.

Kneaded erasers are also fun to play with while you're waiting for ink or paint to dry.



### Sketchbook

Sketchbooks come in a wide variety of styles, prices and sizes. Look for smooth white paper that seems reasonably sturdy. I recommend a sketchbook that is small enough to be easily carried in a backpack. You can

choose from spiral-bound which lies flat when open, or book bindery, which is nearly indestructible even after repeated page turns.

Less expensive sketch pads are fine as long as the paper is not made of newsprint.

### Pencils

It's best to have a variety of pencils handy before starting a heist. A soft one with a dull point is best to rough in your drawing. You may want to add detail later with a sharper pencil. For fine lines, I like inexpensive mechanical pencils that are available at the grocery store.

Beautiful effects can be achieved in colored pencil. Crayola and Prang brands are adequate. Prismacolor pencils are excellent.



### Markers

There are many brands of fine-point felt-tips available. Choose a good quality "permanent" felt-tip for your fine black lines. Permanent markers don't bleed when exposed to wet media. Sharpie and Micron are excellent, but others are good, too.

Inexpensive broad-tip colored markers work nicely for putting solid areas of color on your drawing.



### Brushes

You will want at least one flat brush (size 8 or 10) and two or three round brushes in different sizes. Look for multipurpose brushes that have some "spring." (Try bending the bristles against the palm of your hand and let go. You want a brush that springs quickly back to its original shape.)

#### 3 tips for brushes:

- 1) It's tempting, but **never** let your brushes sit in water.
- 2) **Always** clean your brushes with soap and water after use.
- 3) Choose a brush that's a size **bigger** than you think you need.



### Watercolors

Bright, semimoist oval pans of watercolors are readily available and are of surprisingly good quality. Either the 8-pan or the 16-pan set will work well for our heists. The brush provided will not be very good.

### Acrylic paint

Acrylic paint is probably the most versatile art media. It can be applied as thin washes or as thick, buttery strokes of color. It works equally well for painting solid color blocks as for softly-modeled forms.

Acrylics need to be kept moist, so have a spray bottle handy to mist your pallet as you paint. For solid areas, a shader (flat brush) will work best.



## This week: DRAW WHATEVER YOU LIKE

What artistic ideas are percolating in your brain? A kitten? A motorcycle? A monster? This week, put one of those ideas on paper and send it to us. You could win a sketchbook.

Next week: Draw an alligator