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# Mix Media: Selecting your material

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Paper, paintbrushes, soft rags, drawing board? Using several techniques is like reasoning in the plural. And becoming attached to the peculiarities of each medium!

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## 1. Paper

All dry techniques (pastels, charcoal, sanguine, art chalk?) are very well suited to drawing paper. Choose white or colored: it comes in a wide range of shades, so you harmonize them or, on the contrary contrast them.

There are also papers specially designed for mixed techniques allowing you to combine wet techniques on a single support (watercolors, acrylics, gouache) using all kinds of dry techniques.

### Tip: Smooth or rough side?

Some drawing papers have two sides, each with a different grain:

- use the smooth side for work calling for fineness and precision,
- save the textured side for graphic effects that need to hold material.

## 2. Other supports

Recycled, abrasive, and Kraft paper, cardboard, wood and even canvas afford endless possibilities. All of them will react differently to drawing and stumping on a dry medium, and to the use of certain wet media. The rice paper/ink combination, for example, produces nice results.



## 3. Paintbrushes

Make sure to have tools dedicated to each technique.

**Tip:** watercolor paintbrushes are suitable both for working with water (paint, ink washes, diluted dry media)? and for stumping pastels and art chalk.

## 4. Drawing board

A drawing board is indispensable for stretching paper intended for wet media, as well as for optimizing your chances to do clean work. Fingerprints on the edges of the work are among the main enemies of the artist!

- Select a smooth board to keep its texture from affecting your piece, and one that is bigger than your paper. When varnished, it will hold fewer powdery particles.
- With practice, you will come to appreciate how comfortable variable tilt drawing tables are.
- Some charcoal enthusiasts work vertically on an easel, helping to get rid of extra drawing material.

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## 5. And also...

### Essentials

- Sponges, soft rags and cotton wads: for the effects they produce, and to keep both your piece and the dry media clean.
- A selection of stumps: these are pointed rolls of paper, and come in various thicknesses. Expect to use one per color.
- A classical soft eraser and a kneaded eraser, which absorbs the particles of drawing material.
- Some blotters and paper for shielding certain areas while working.
- A pencil sharpener or a utility knife, practical for sharpening pastels or reducing them to powder. Sharpeners, made from strips of sandpaper attached to a support, serve the same purpose.
- A pen for working with ink.

### Originals?

- An airbrush for spraying acrylic paint.
- A paint roller can help spread washes.

### "Extras" for pros

- Sculpt material, such as modeling paste and oil pastels, for example, with a utility knife, a painting knife? or even with your fingers!
- Place a sheet of baize under the paper you're going to use for ink: it absorbs moisture? without absorbing colors!
- Use a fixative for volatile media (pastels, charcoal, etc.) : that way, you can superimpose layers without mixing them.
- Your best stumping tools remain? your fingers! Provided you use a different one for each medium and each color? and wipe them off regularly.

### Suggested products

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Creating first and foremost calls for being methodical? and working with dry media requires impeccable cleanliness without fail. Acquiring the right gestures will give you a leg up!

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