



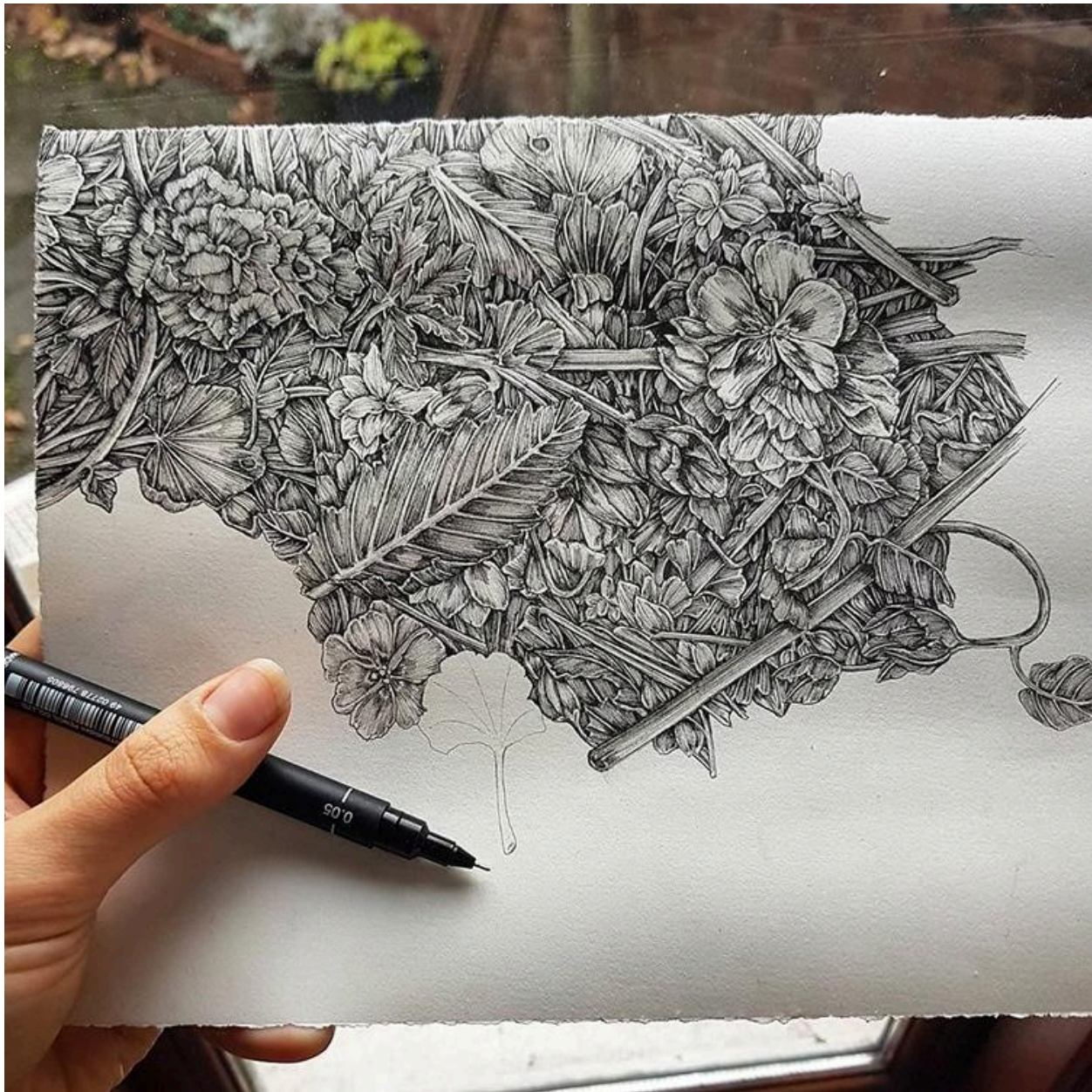
# Drawing Techniques to Master

Drawing is one of the most basic ways to exercise your creativity. Whether you're using a pencil, pen, crayon, or even your fingers, the skills you gain from the activity translate to many different media. Learning the fundamentals is simple to do, but like all art, they require a lot of practice to master. But once you do, you'll have the ability to create images you're truly proud of.

There are standard drawing techniques that you need to be familiar with as you put pencil to paper. Some are so basic that you've probably used them before without even realizing it.



**Back and forth:** When we say *basic*, this is what we're talking about. This approach challenges you to move your drawing utensil back and forth across the paper in an even, level motion. Depending on how much pressure you apply, the darker your drawing will appear.





**Hatching:** Hatching involves making tiny lines on your page. Make sure that each mark is parallel to the other. Lines that are close together will look darker, while lines further apart will indicate highlights.

**Cross Hatching:** This technique is the logical extension to hatching. But instead of creating a series of parallel lines, have your marks intersect one another in a cross-like formation.



**Scribble:** Scribbling allows your hand the opportunity to fly across the page. Move your pencil in a random formation—no precise marks necessary. The more you scrawl all over an area, the darker it will look. (Notice the white scribble lines! These could be carved in with a scratching tool to make an indent in the paper which would leave a white line.)





**Stippling:** For those who love meticulous processes, this one's for you. Stippling involves making a countless amount of tiny dots on your paper. Like all other approaches, the closer the dots, the darker the drawing.



**Blending:** If you're using charcoal or pencil, try blending them. To do so, begin with the back-and-forth technique to cover your paper, and then rub the medium into it. You can use your finger, a blending stick (aka **tortillon**), or a soft **chamois cloth**. Another option for blending is to experiment with **powdered graphite** and use a paintbrush to gradually blend and build up tone.





# Things to Remember as You Draw

Once you've got the essentials down, there are a couple of things to keep in mind as you practice these basic drawing techniques.

**Start light.** When you're beginning to sketch, make light marks on your paper. That way, if you make a mistake, they are easier to erase (if you're using a pencil). It also allows you to gradually build your tone and shadows.



**Line weight is important.** Things that are darker or thicker will be interpreted as having a greater visual weight than a light-colored or thin line. As you draw, consider what area of your subject is shaded or is “anchoring” your composition. You’ll want to focus on making deep shadows or extra thick lines—or both. But if you’re trying to communicate a highlight, however, keep things light and delicate.

**Finally, Don’t be afraid to mix it up—literally.** Variety is the spice of life, so don’t be afraid to mix a couple of the basic techniques into your artwork. One way could be to draw the details of someone’s face in hatching and cross-hatching, while their hair is done using the back-and-forth approach. There’ll be much more visual interest that way.

