



# VIRTUAL INSTRUCTION GUIDE

**Workshop:** *Introduction to Artist Pencils*

**Teaching Artist:** Allie Spicer

Learn how different artist pencils are used for various forms of mark-making. You will also be introduced to artist Armando Veve.



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## OBJECTIVES:

### You will learn:

- How to read drawing pencils by looking at the letter and number on the pencil
- About each pencil's use and application
- How mark-making, tool pressure and tool selection may create different types of sketch marks
- How to make marks using different pencils to advance your drawing ability
- Technical skills in order to build towards more advanced drawing techniques
- About the life and work of contemporary American artist Armando Veve

## MATERIALS:

- one set of artists' pencils
- three pieces of paper, any size



# DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING Methods

**Instruction is provided in text and video formats, available in both Spanish and English.**

You may also work by printing this art-making guide.

**YouTube can automatically create closed captions.**

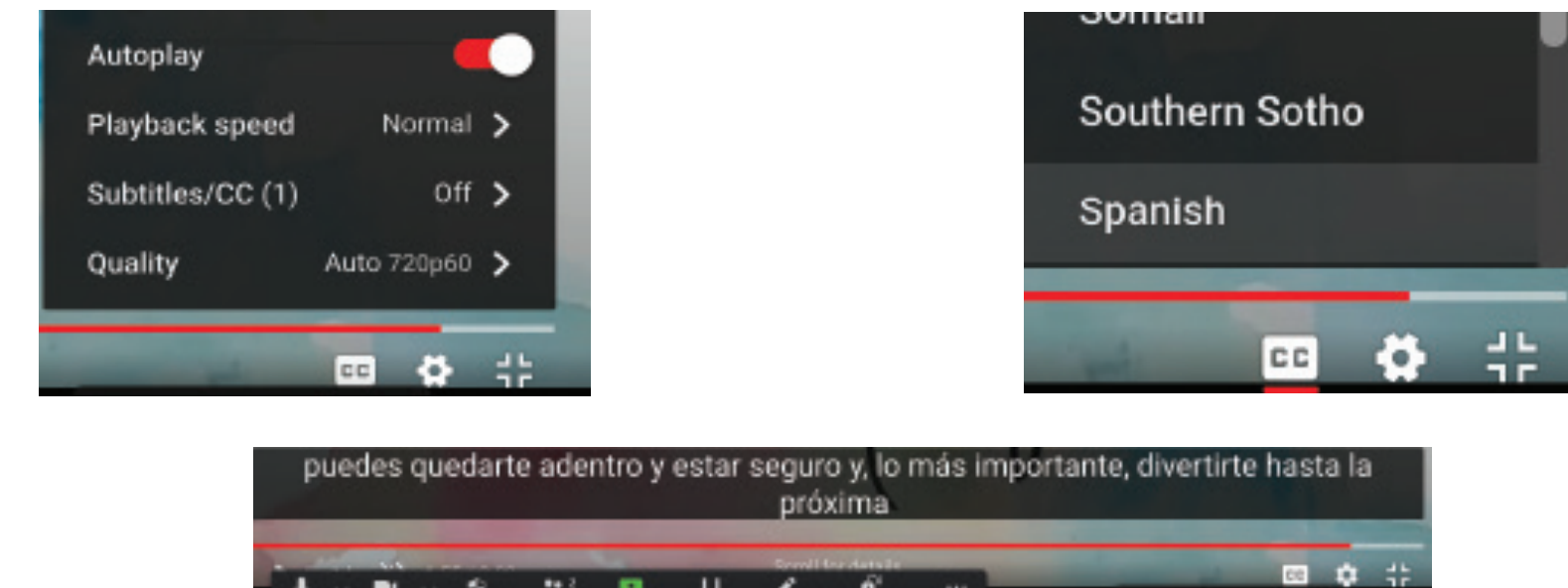


Click the [CC] button near the lower right corner of the viewer frame.

**Please note: captions are generated by algorithms, so their quality may vary.**

**Workshop Duration: 25-45 Minutes | ALL LEVELS**

A variety of language subtitles are available for each video.



- **If you need assistance with using the pencils, hand-over-hand interaction may be helpful.** You can ask a friend or family member to help you.
- **If you have sensory sensitivities, wearing gloves may be beneficial when using the pencils.**
- **Visual characteristics are not the only notable features of each pencil.** If you are visually impaired, you can instead focus on each pencil's feel, weight, and indentation characteristics.



## BACKGROUND/RESOURCES

You will be introduced to these artists, art histories, movements and/or concepts:

**Armando Veve:** A contemporary illustrator who creates *surreal* (strange, dream-like, or not seeming real) illustrations using a variety of artist pencils. His drawings demonstrate the way that different artist pencils can be used to achieve very distinct looks in artwork.

**B Pencil:** A less compressed, softer pencil. It makes darker, fuzzier lines.

**HB Pencil:** A standard pencil, similar to a **#2 pencil**.

**H Pencil:** A harder and compressed pencil. It makes lighter, finer marks. It also leaves an indent that you can feel on the paper.

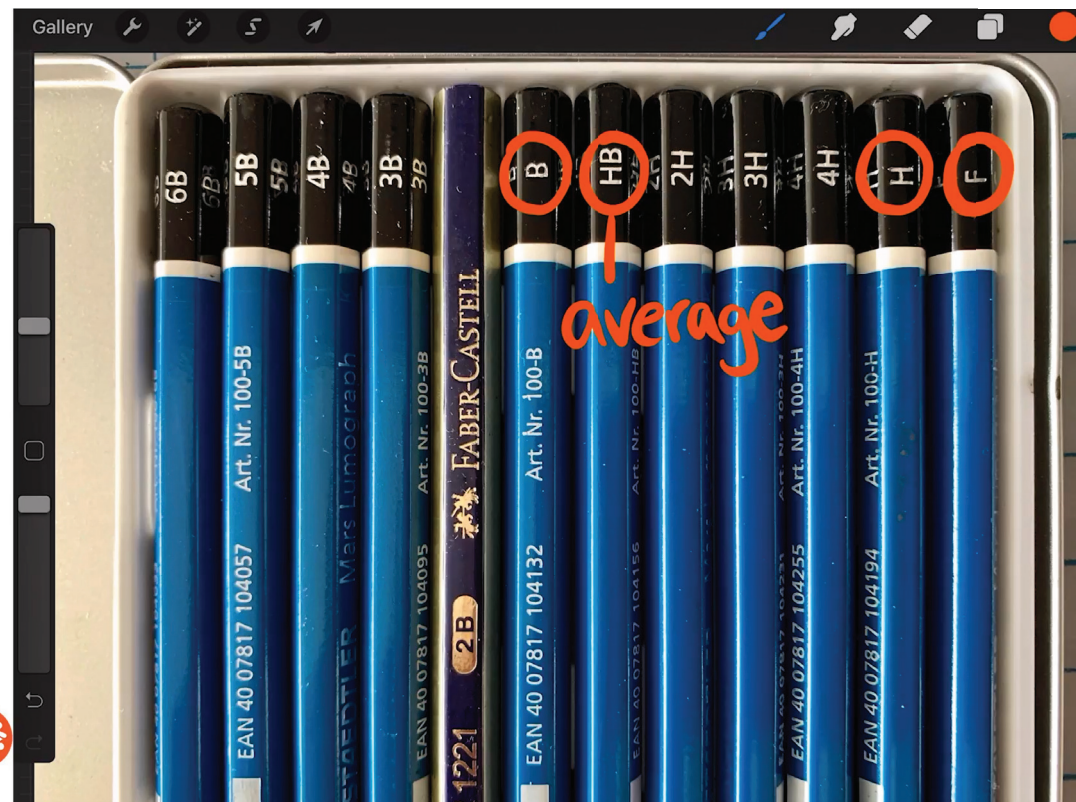


# INSTRUCTION:

## Today's Project: Artist Pencils



Today, we are going to learn how to read and use artist pencils.



**HB** is an average pencil. It's the most common American pencil used.

3 sheets of drawing paper

1 set of artist drawing pencils



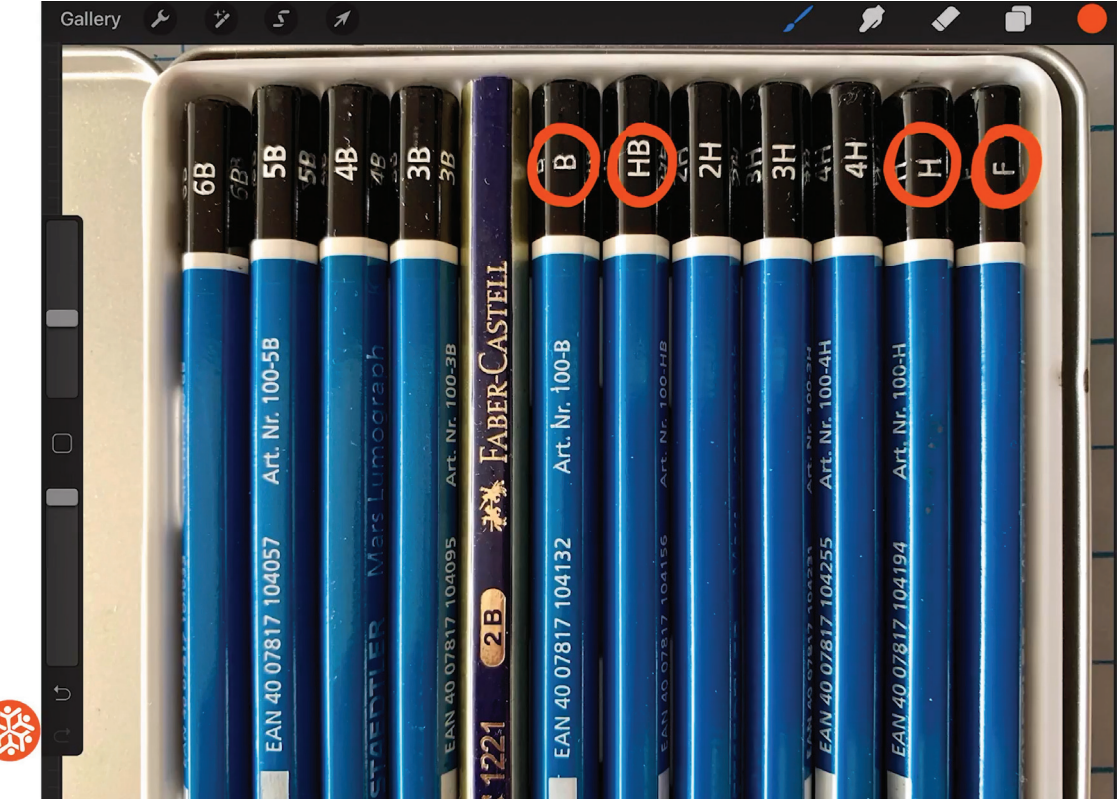
First, let's make sure we have our materials ready to go. You are going to need three sheets of paper to draw on, any size. You're also going to need a set of artist drawing pencils.



**H** stands for **hard**. These pencils create a hard line, and will usually leave an indent on the paper that you can actually feel. They are more difficult to erase because of this.



Now, let's learn how to read drawing pencils. Each drawing pencil has a letter, or letters: an **H**, **B**, **HB**, or **F**, on its side.



**B** stands for **babies**, and **babies are soft**. Therefore, B pencils are softer. They create darker and fuzzier marks.



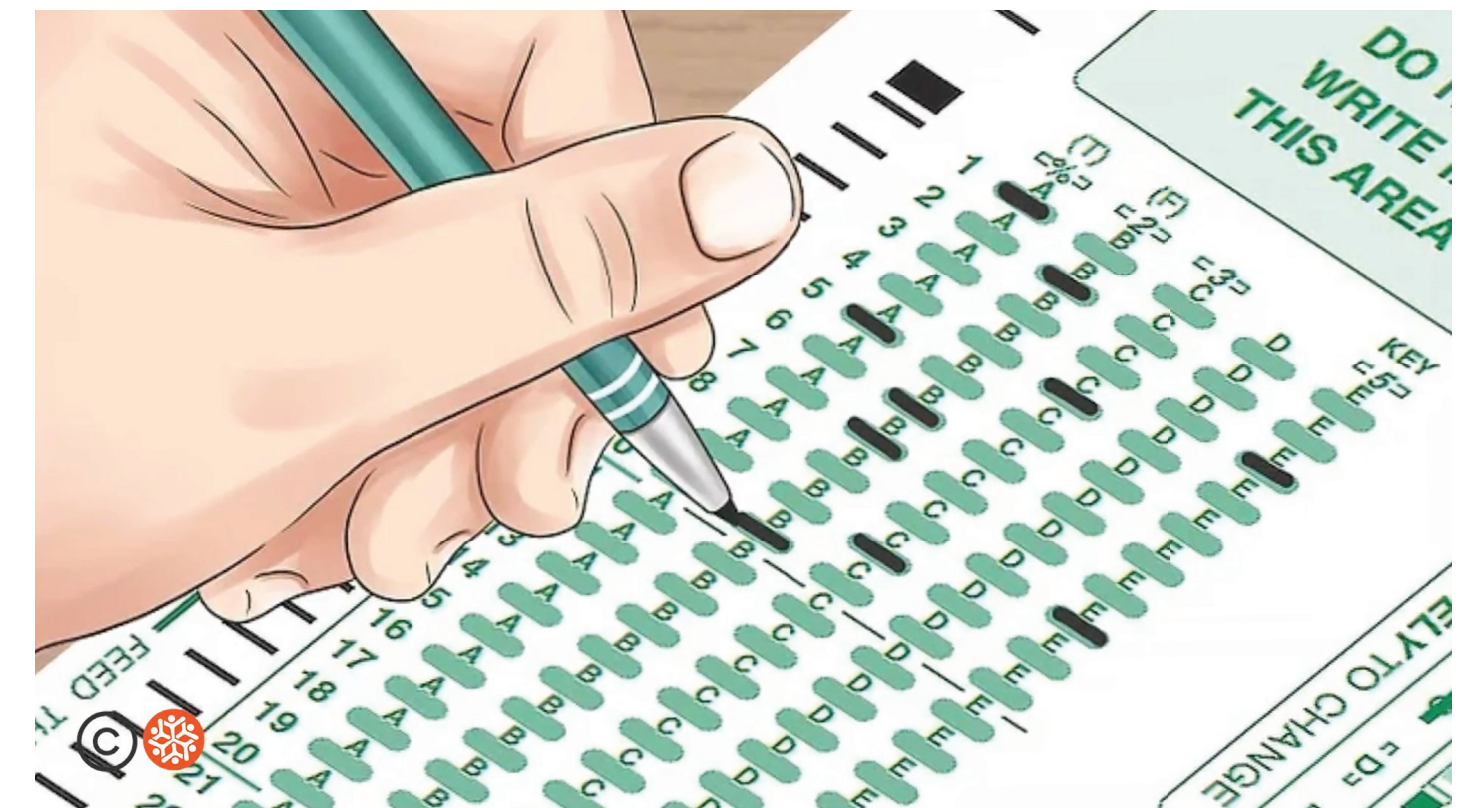
# INSTRUCTION CONTINUED:



**F stands for fine**, and usually falls between an HB pencil and an H pencil in terms of compression and mark-making.



Some pencils will also have a number alongside their letter. This is because the type of graphite inside the pencil covering has a weight assigned to it. This is due to the compression of the graphite.



For example: Have you ever taken a standardized test in school? The tests where you have to fill in small dots with your answers.



Do you recall your teacher asking you to take out a **#2 pencil**? Most American standard pencils are #2HB pencils.



The reason why your teacher asks you to use a #2 pencil is because machines called Scan-Trons grade your tests. The machines look for a specific weight of pencil in order for it to read your answers.



Armando Veve  
*A Rake's Progress*, 2016

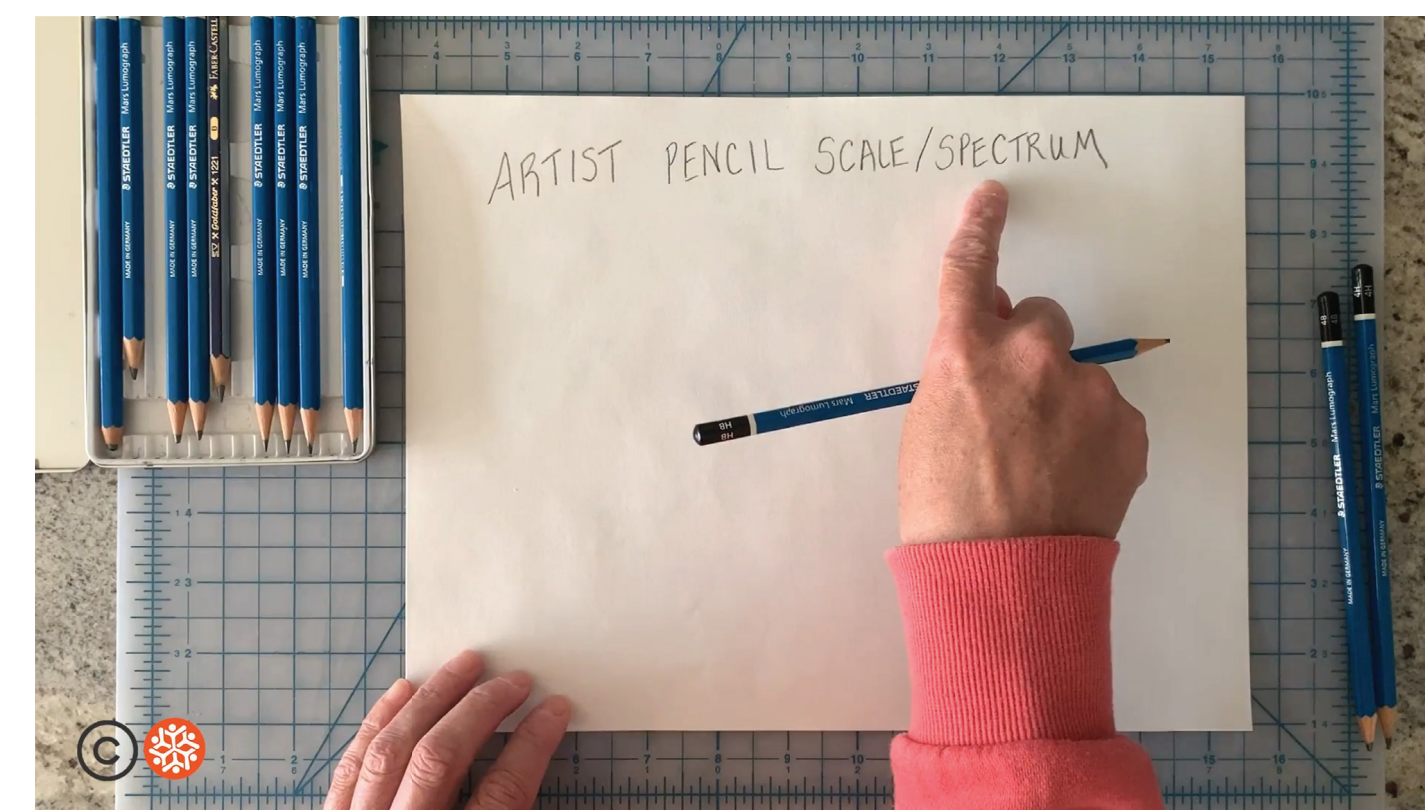
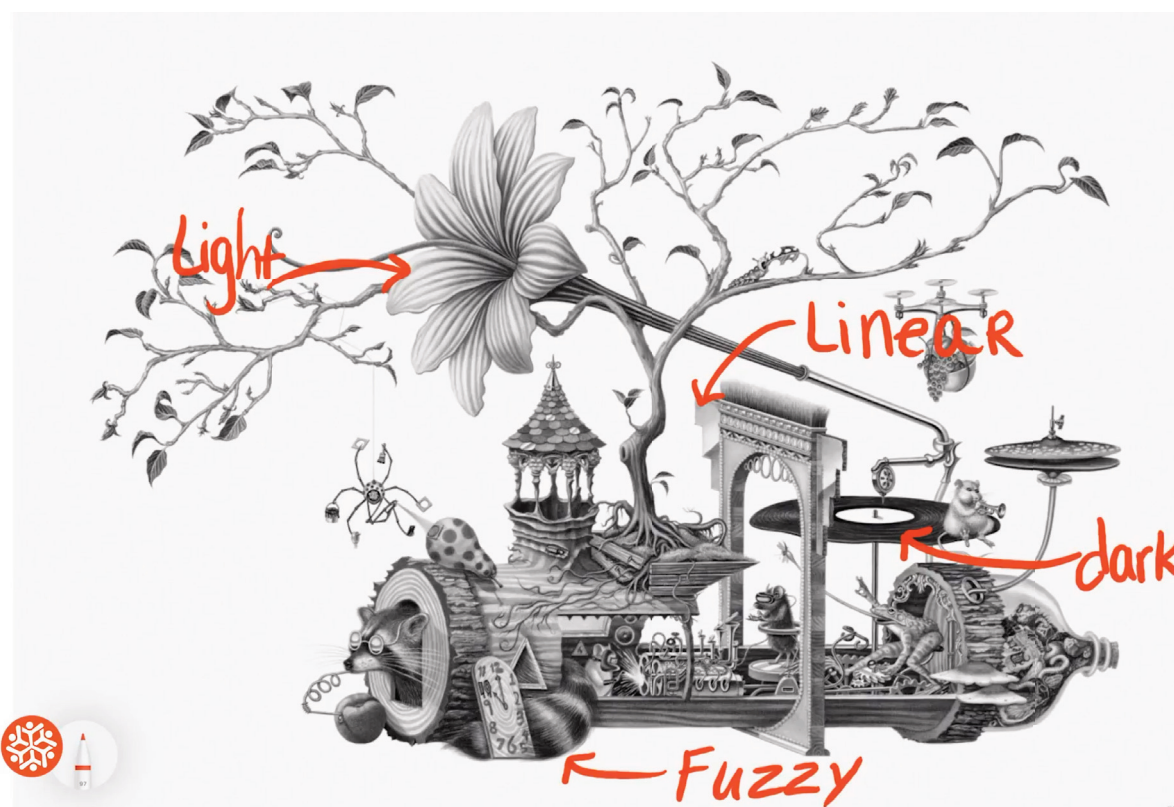
Let me introduce you to a contemporary illustrator, **Armando Veve**. He creates drawings of surreal scenes and constructions, though each element is rendered in realism.



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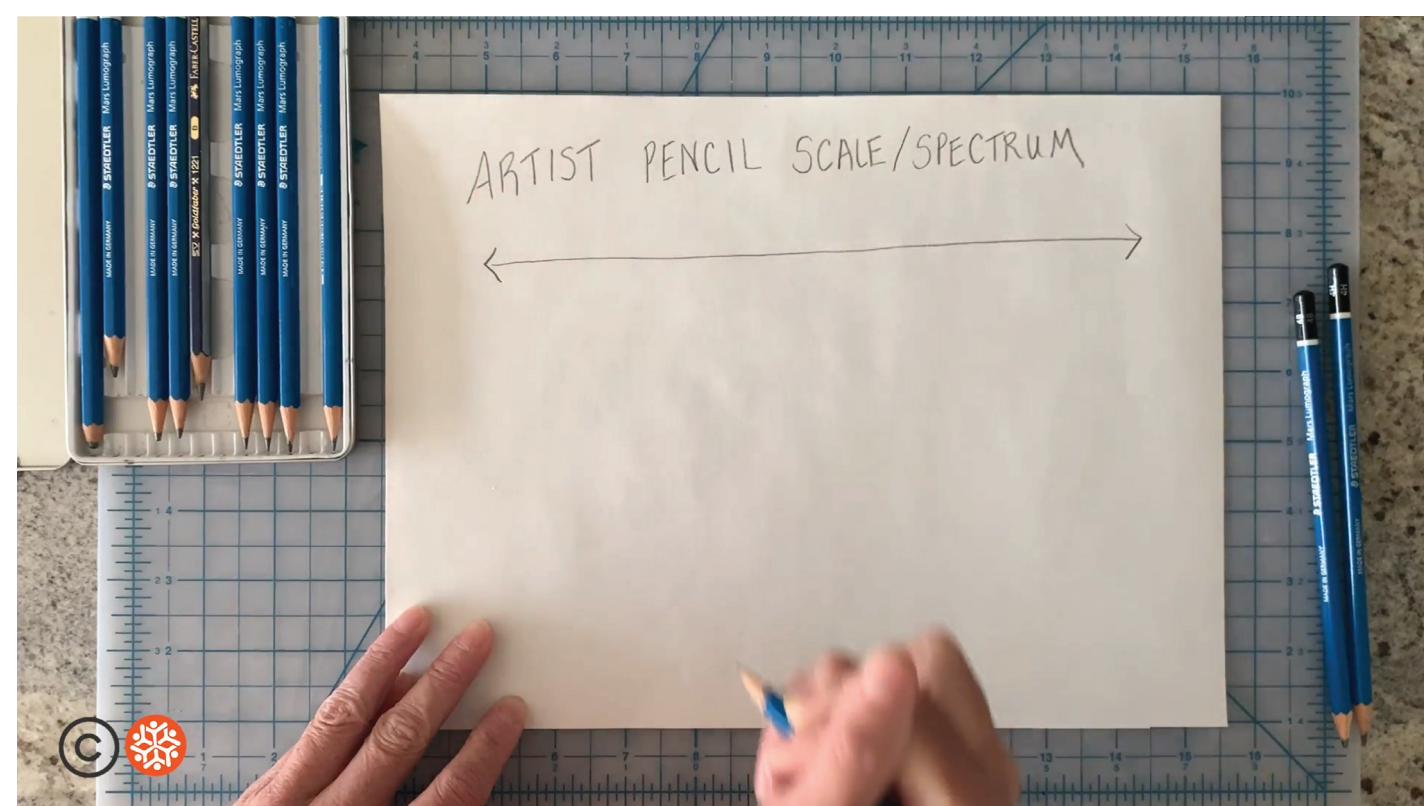
Armando Veve  
*Alchemy, 2017*



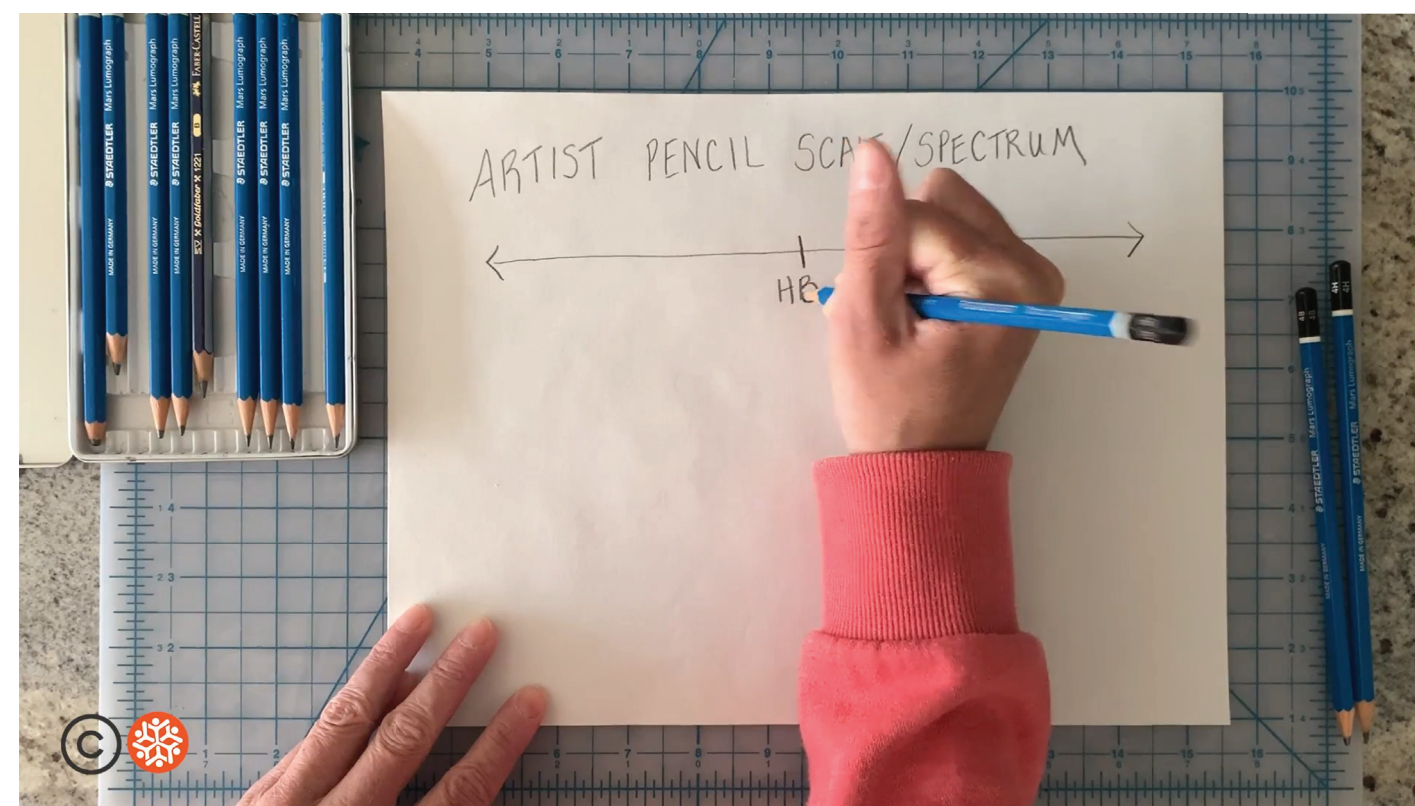
Art that is **surreal** doesn't always make rational sense, is strange and mysterious, and is unconventional. It is like a magical world, or a dream.

In these drawings of Armando Veve, we see his use of many different artist pencils to create many different types of marks. Some marks are fuzzy and some are very linear.

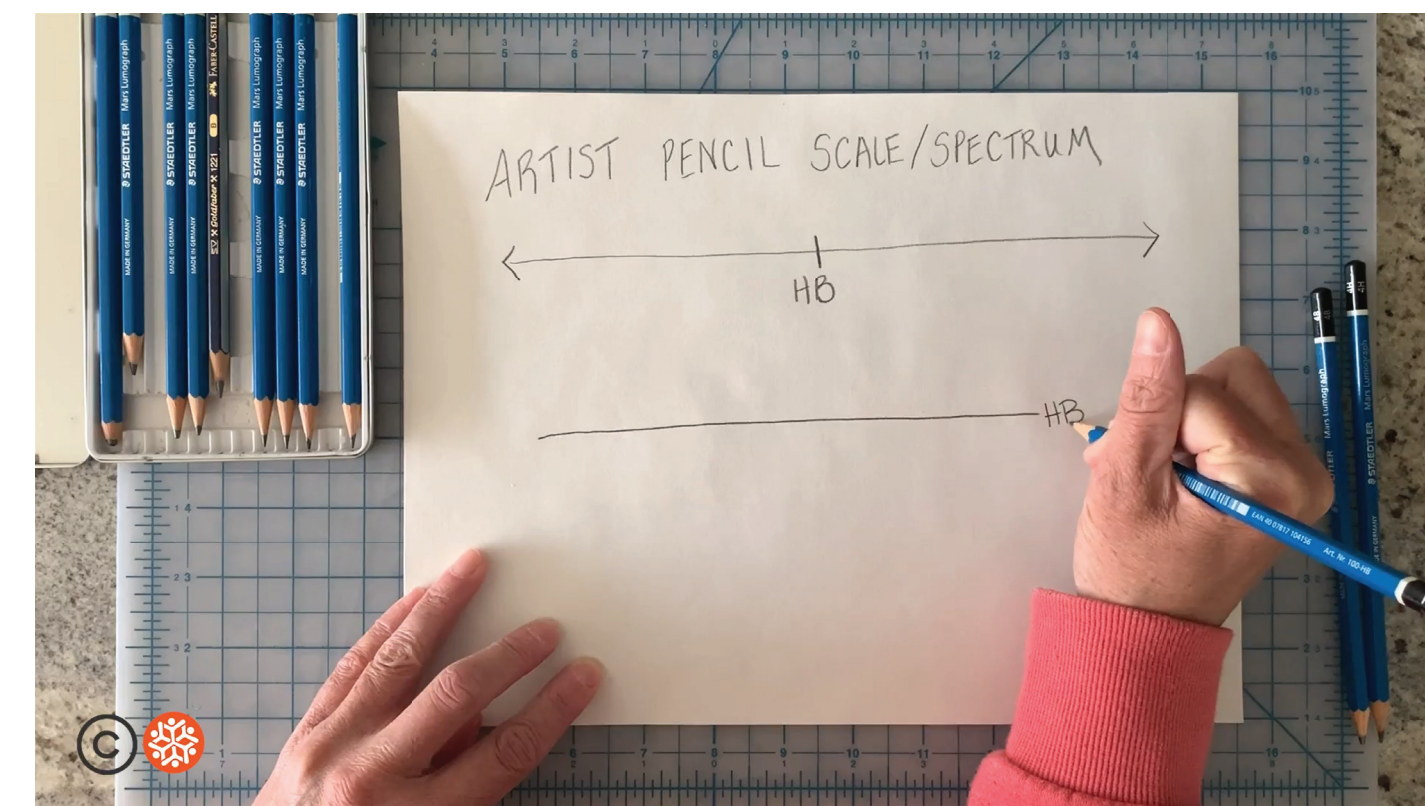
We'll now create our own guide, or drawing tool reference sheet. Drawing pencils exist on a spectrum. We are going to draw this spectrum so that we can reference it later.



With your paper longways, draw a horizontal line with an arrow at each of the ends, pointing to the right and to the left edge of your paper. Your line should be about 8 inches long.



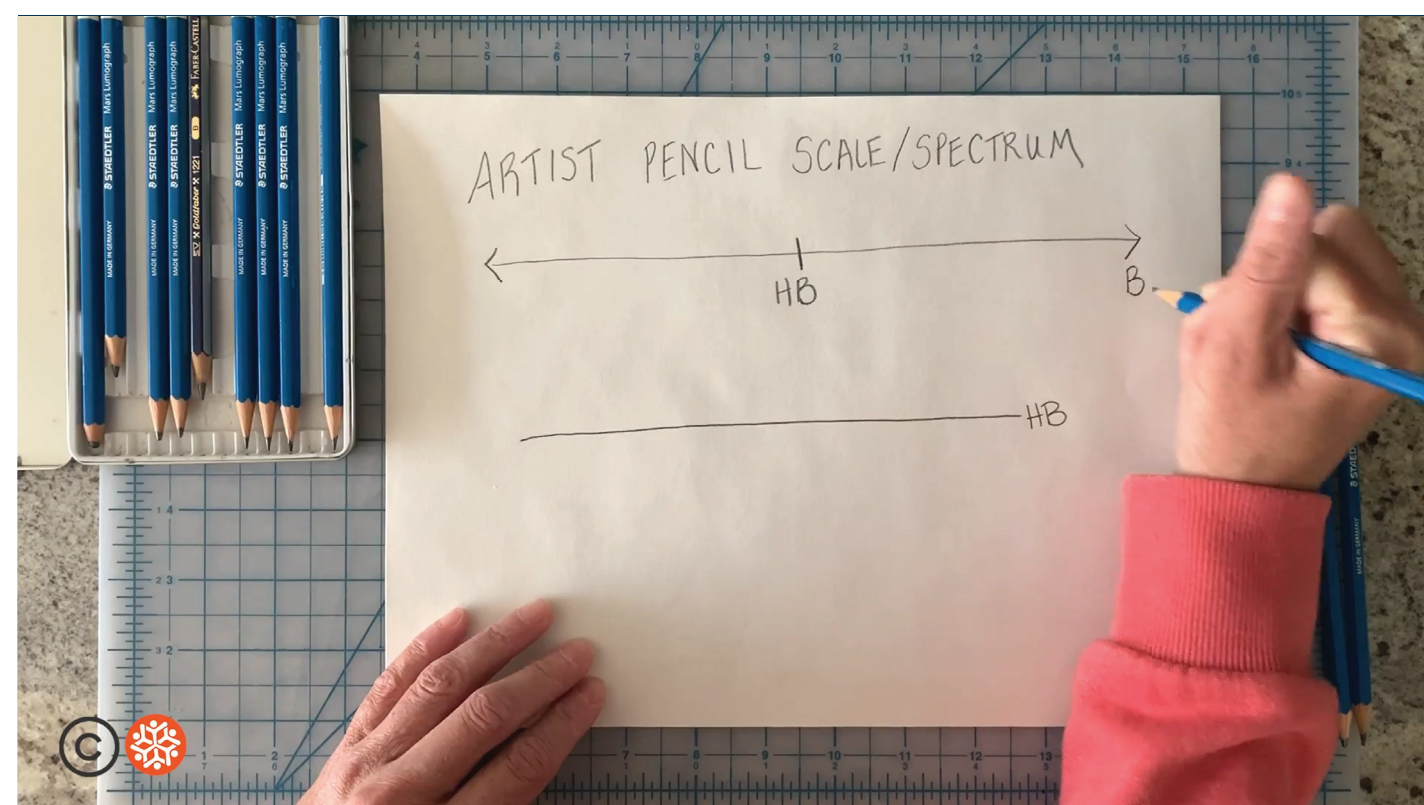
Next, in the middle of the spectrum, draw a notch mark up and down. Below the mark, write the letters "HB." HB pencils exist in the middle of the spectrum chart. This means the HB pencil is the most average pencil.



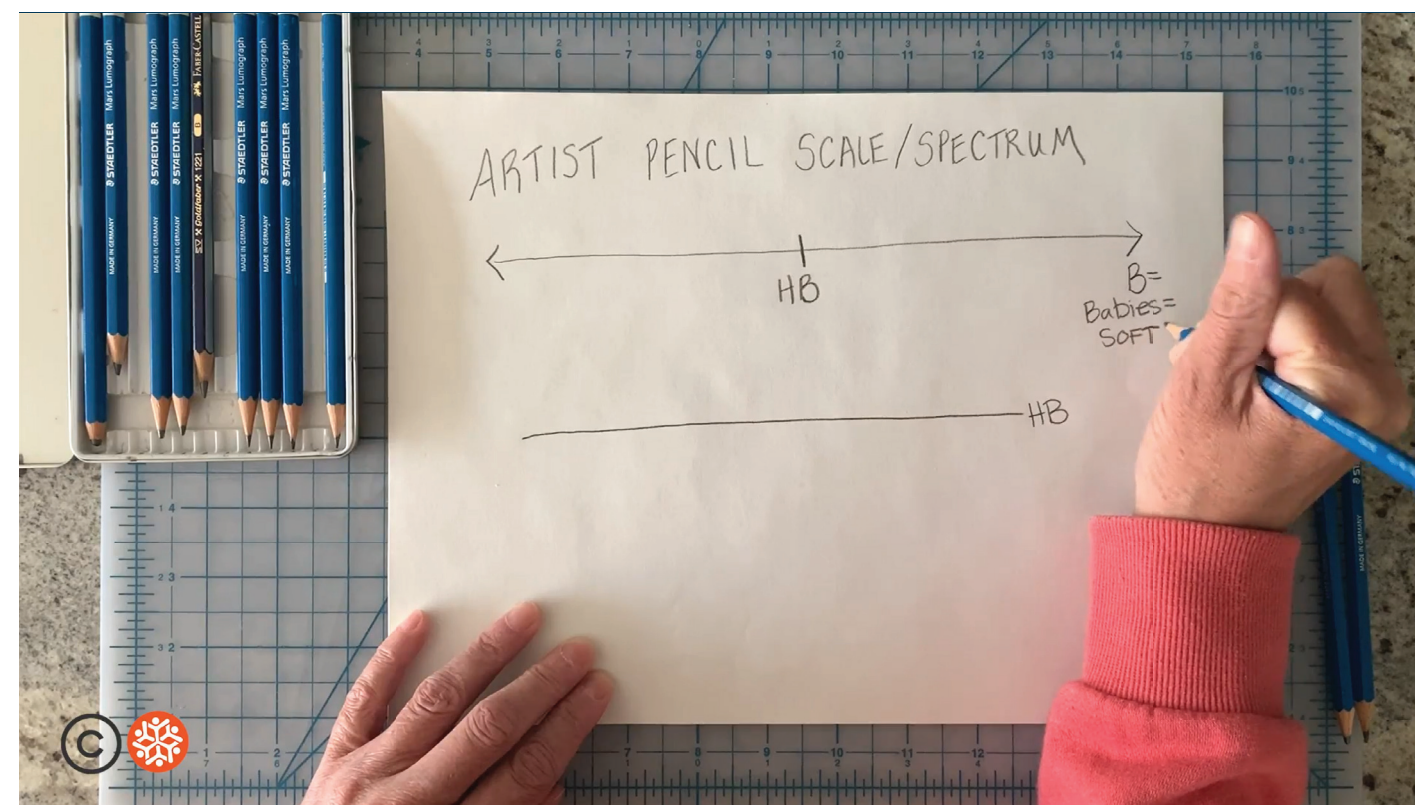
Make one horizontal line, about 5 inches below your spectrum, and mark it with the letters "HB" to the right. We will use this line later for comparison.



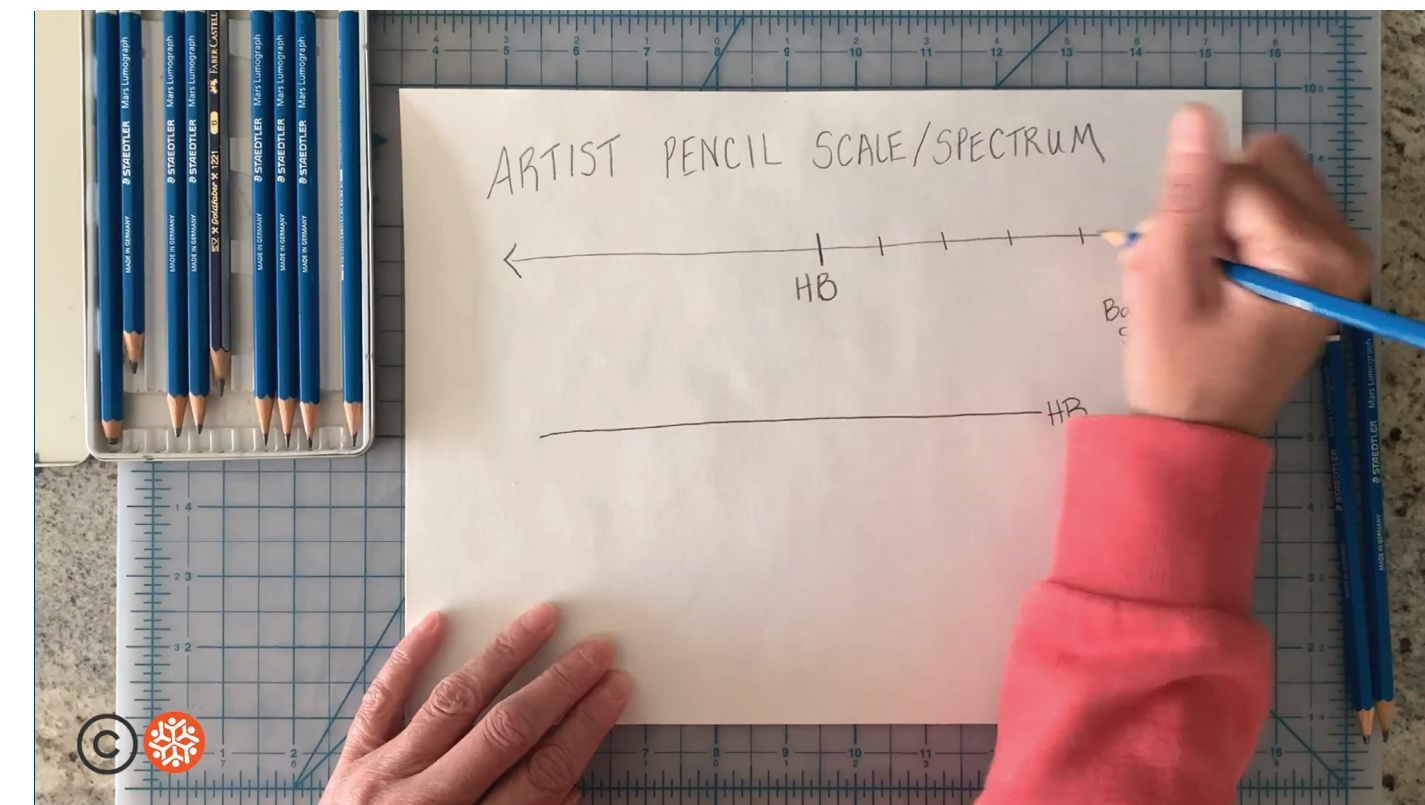
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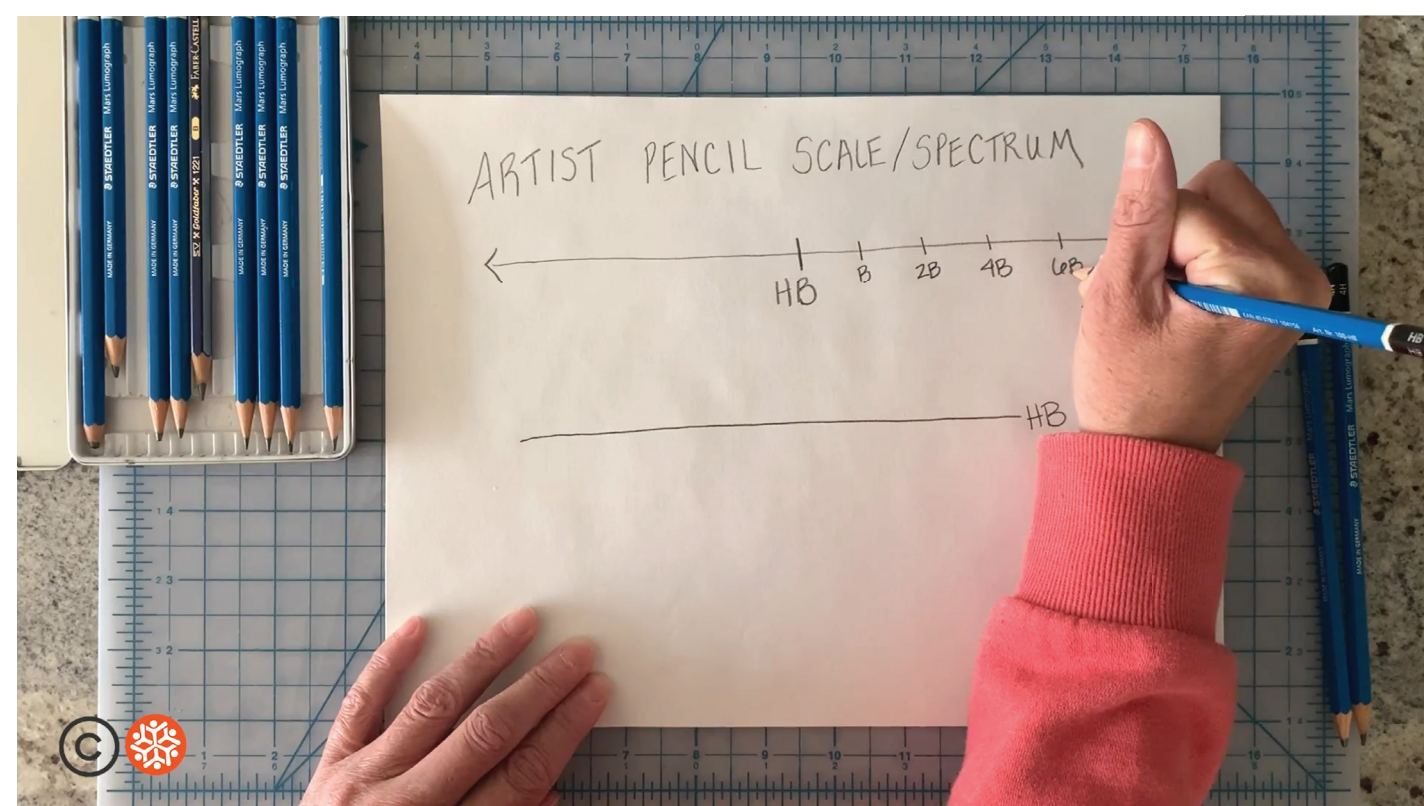
Now, we're going to talk about B pencils. Write the letter "B" to the right side of your right arrow.



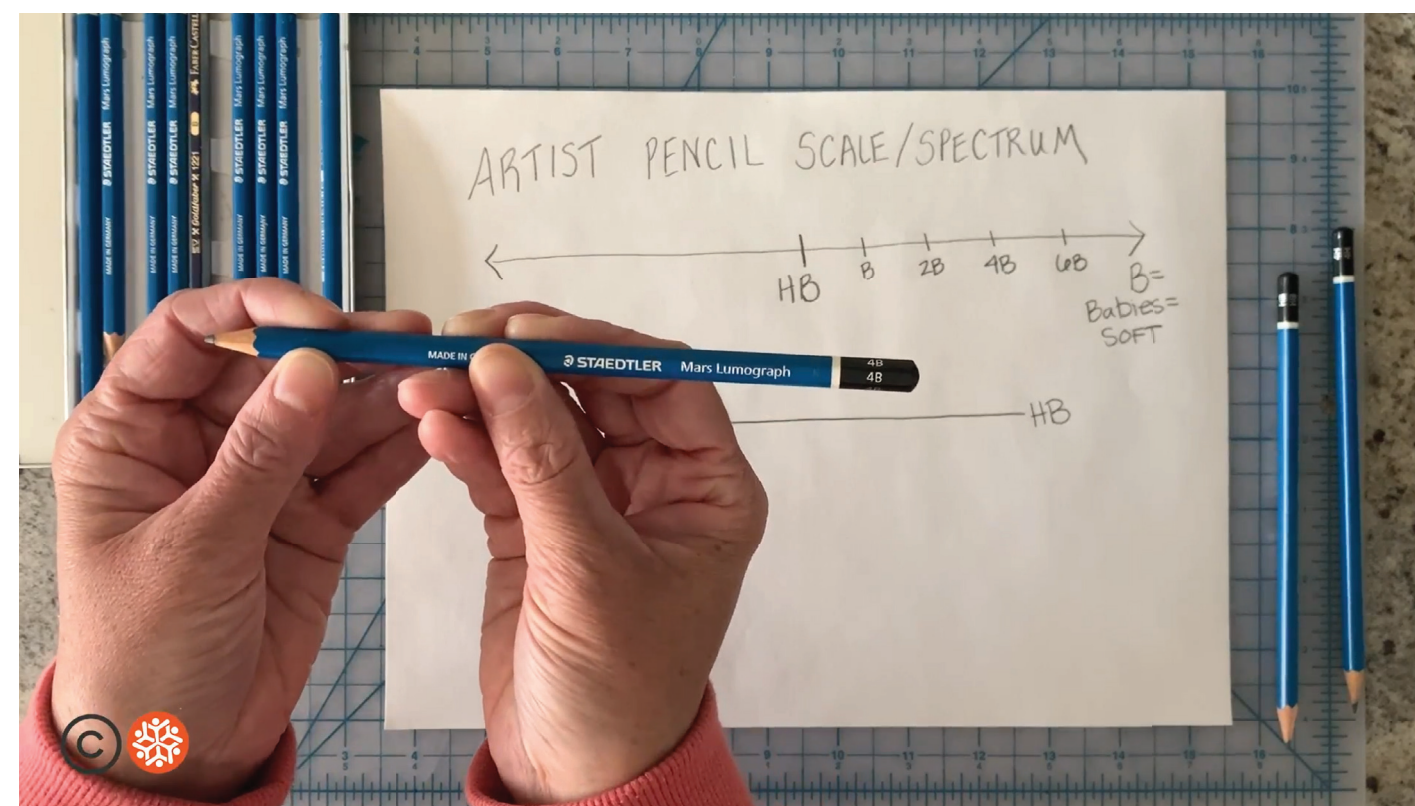
You can also write what B stands for to help you remember. "B = babies = soft."



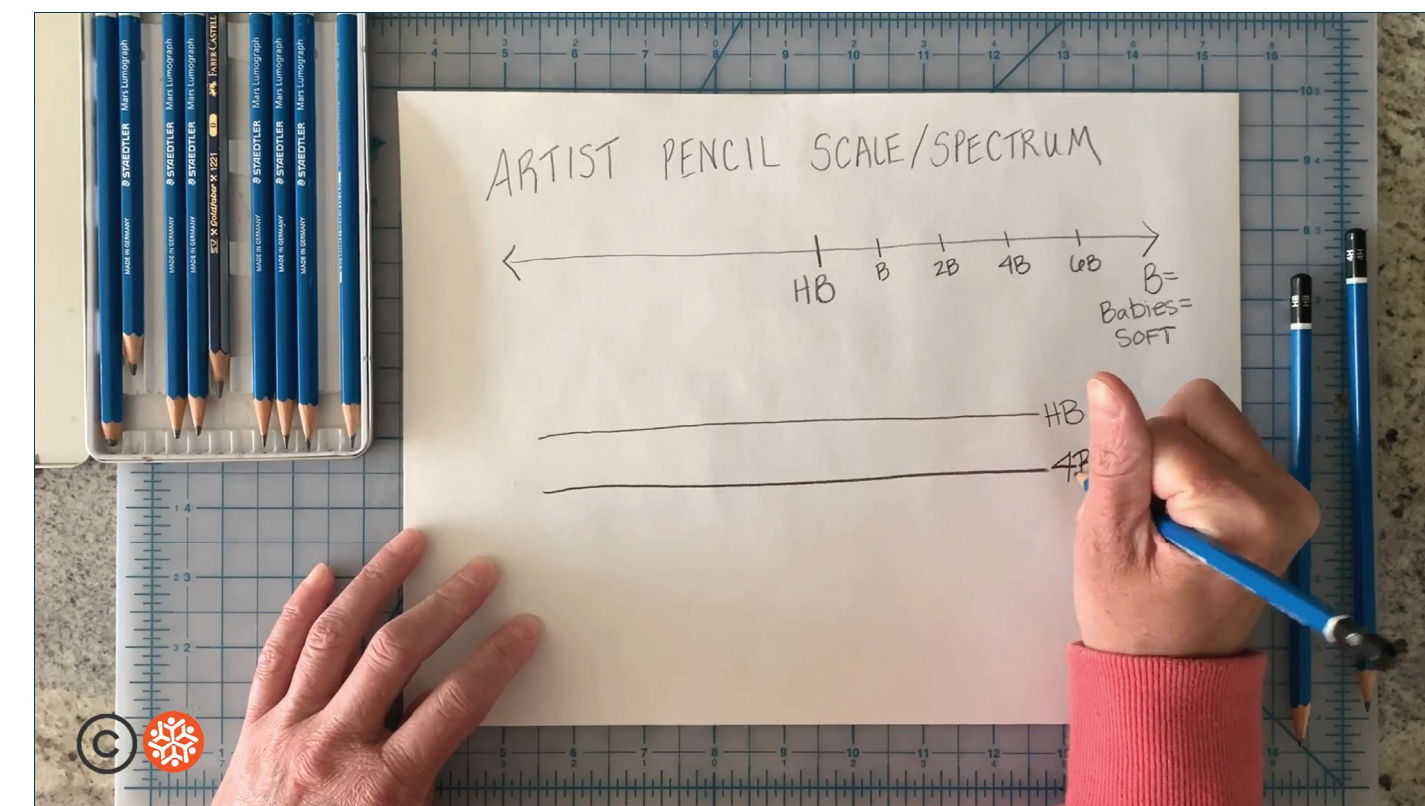
Between HB and your B arrow, make four notches equal distance apart. They don't have to be perfect!



Underneath each notch, label them B, 2B, 4B, and 6B, moving from left to right.



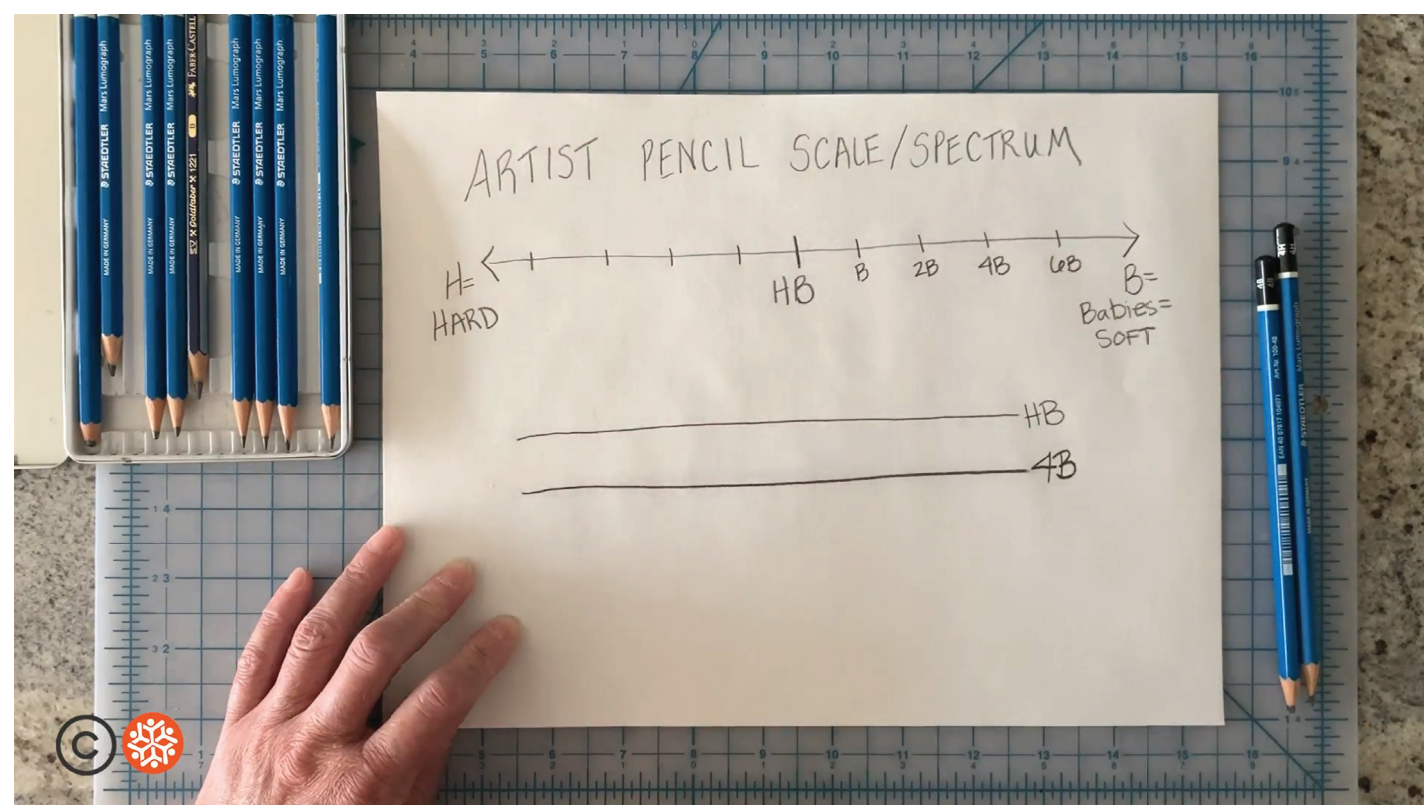
B pencils are less compressed, and make darker, fuzzier lines as you move up the spectrum from B, 2B, 4B, 6B, etc.



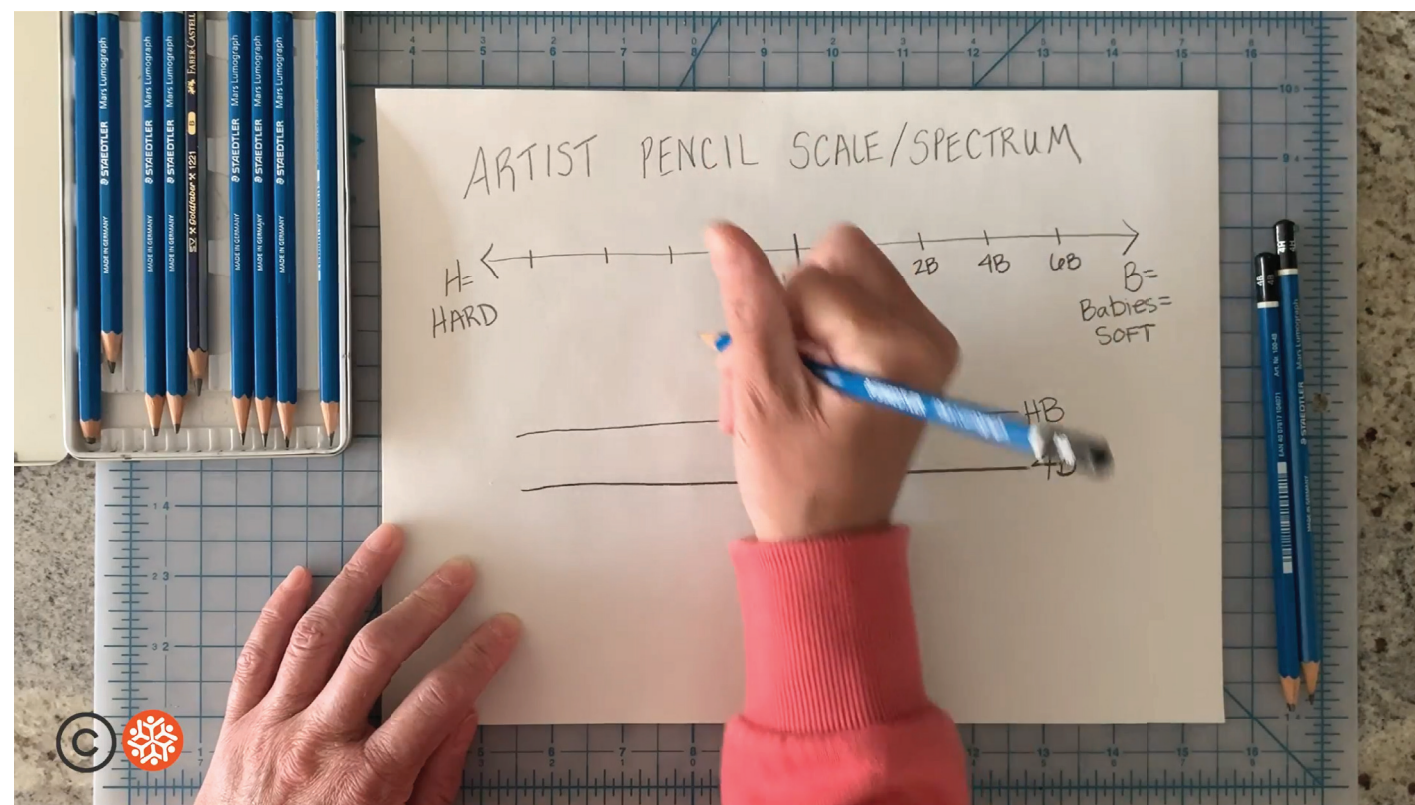
Now, try making a line with the 4B pencil below the HB line to see and feel the difference. 4B pencils are darker and create a fuzzier mark than the HB pencil. Notice that 4B pencils do not leave an indent in the paper.



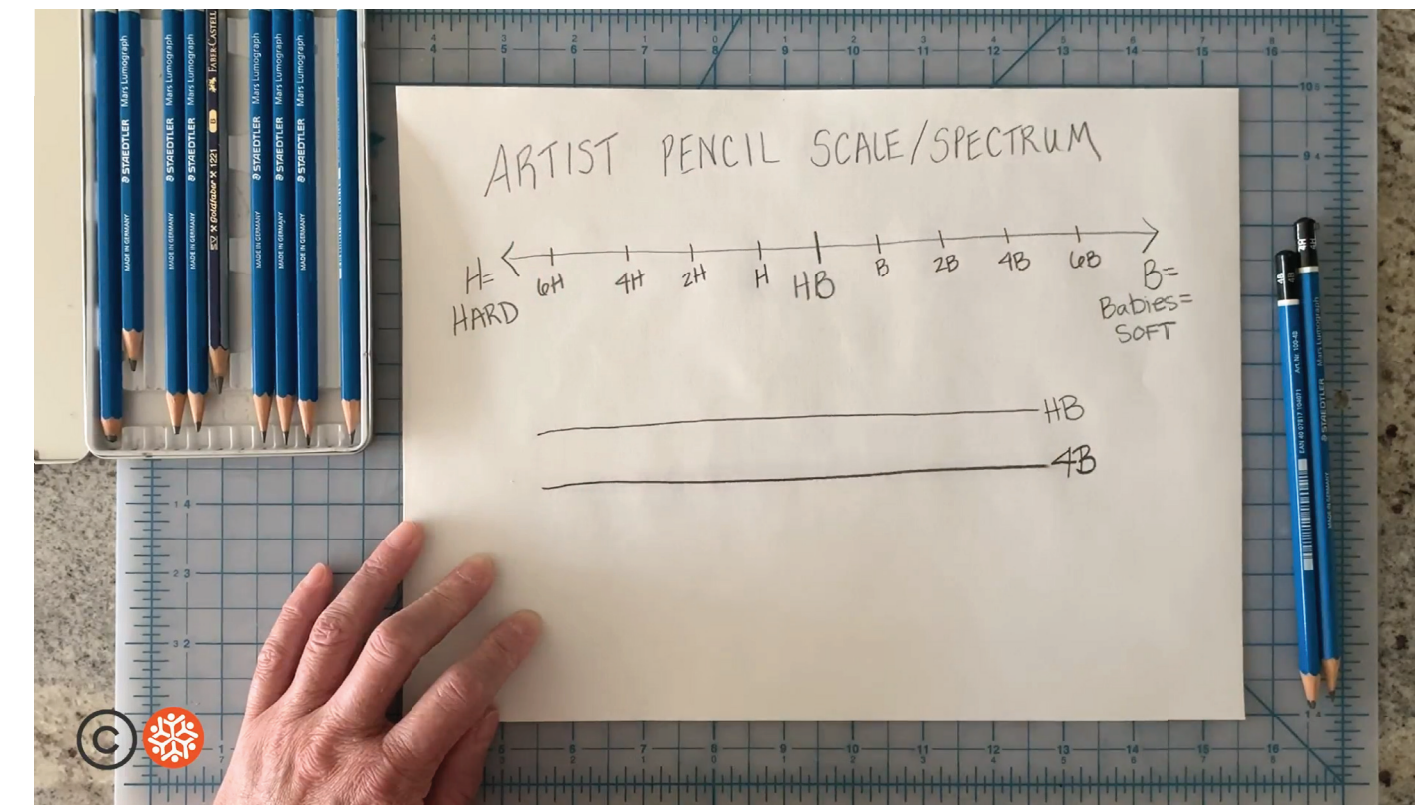
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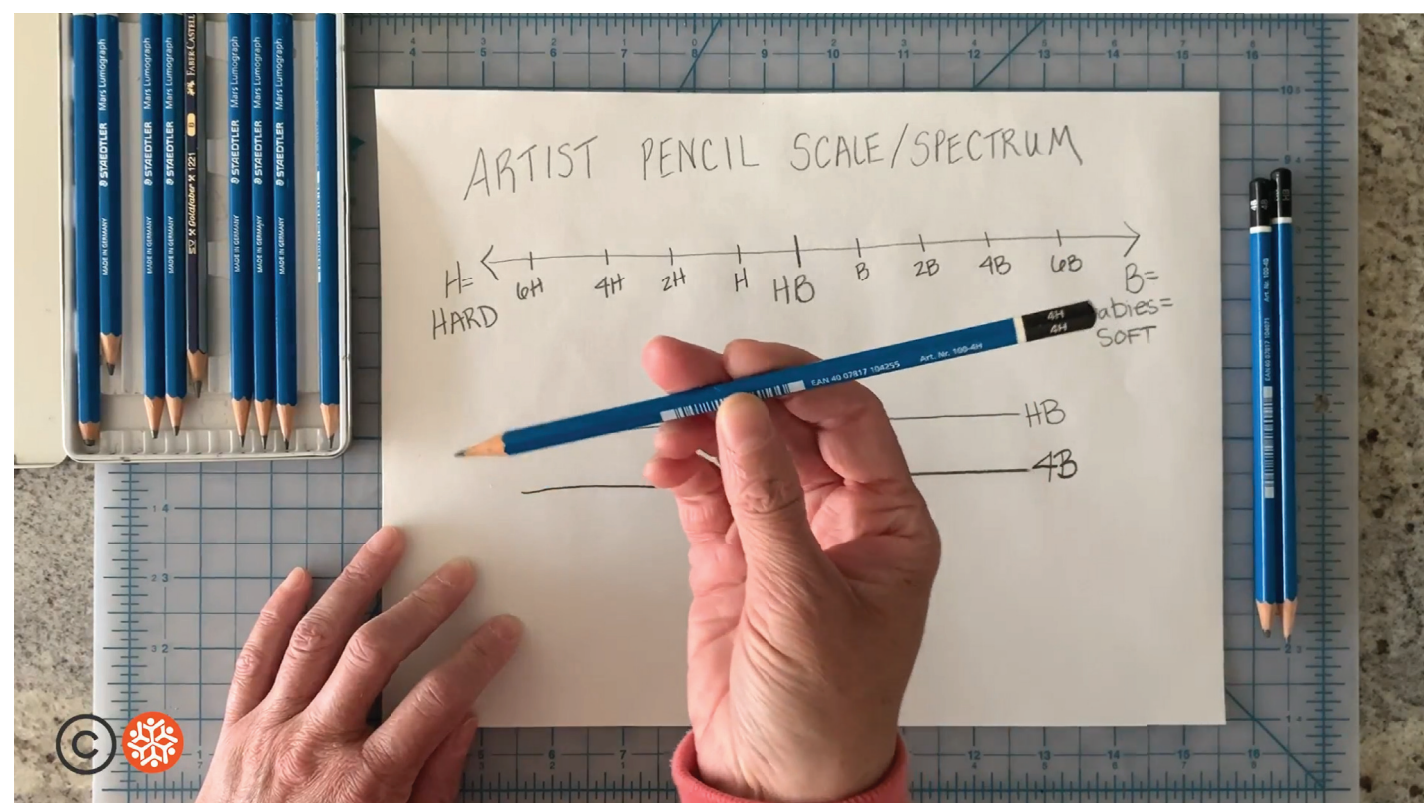
Next, let's go over H pencils. Write the letter "H" to the left of your left side arrow. You can also write "H = hard" to help you remember.



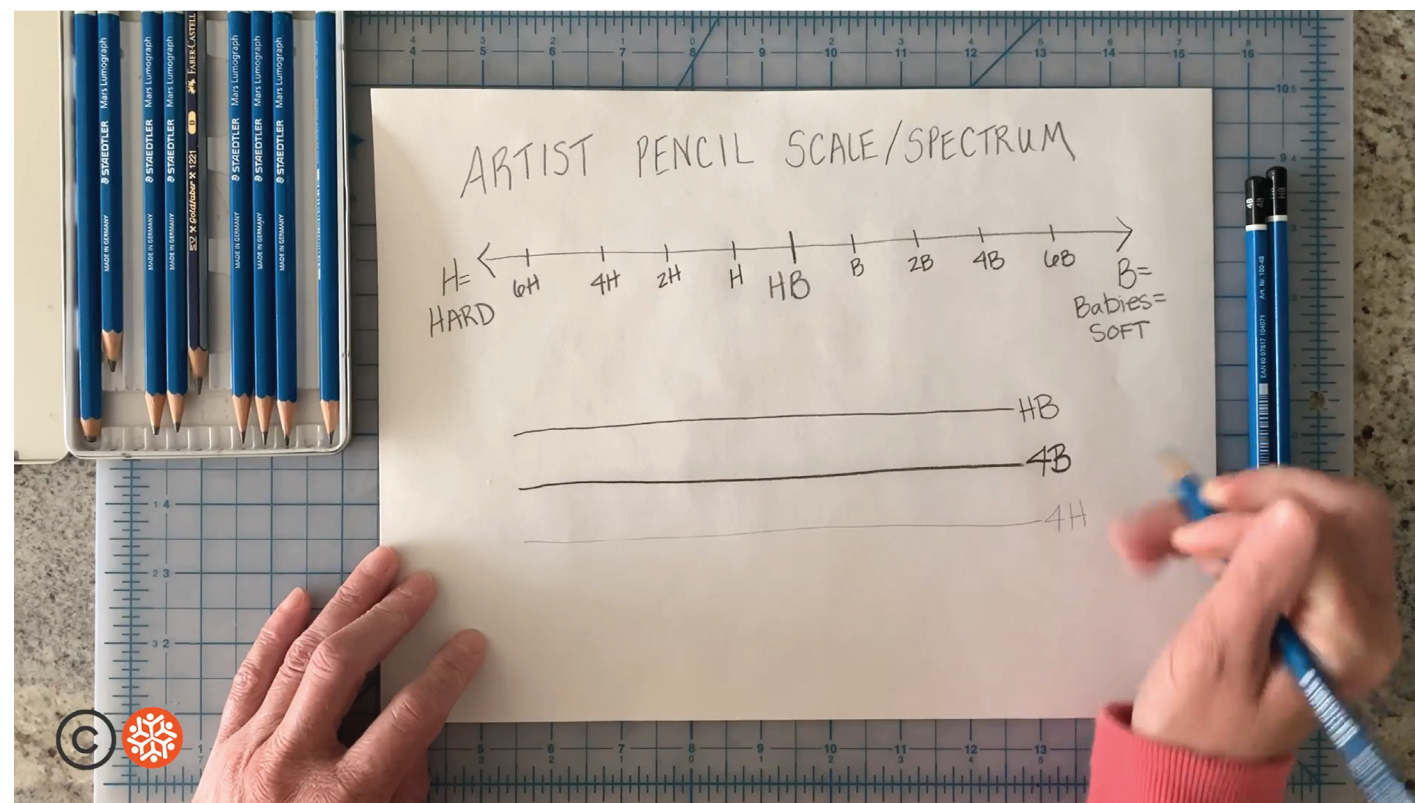
Between HB and your H arrow, make four notches equal distance apart. Again, they don't have to be perfect.



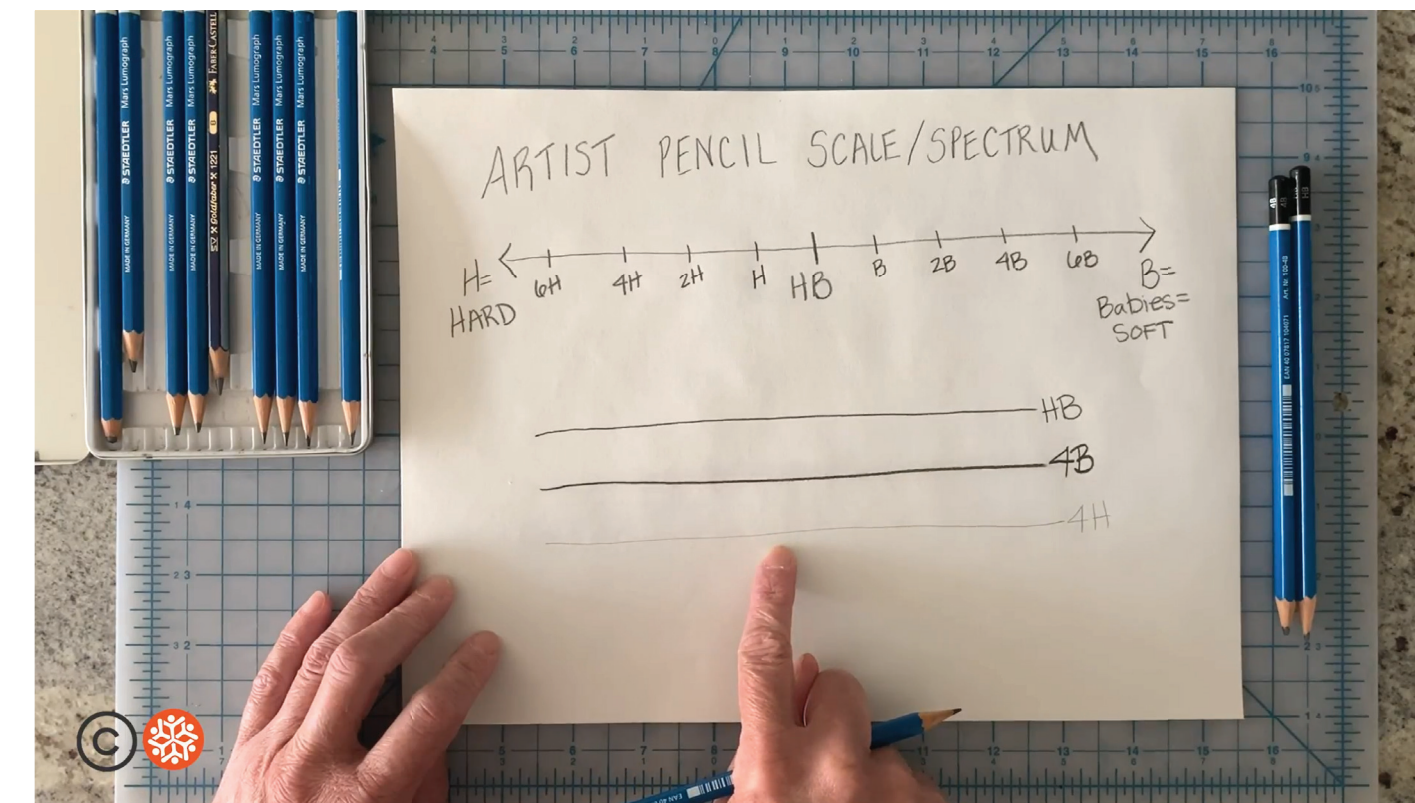
Underneath each notch, label them: H, 2H, 4H, 6H, moving from right to left this time.



H pencils are more compressed, making a lighter and finer mark. They will also leave an indent on the paper that you can feel.



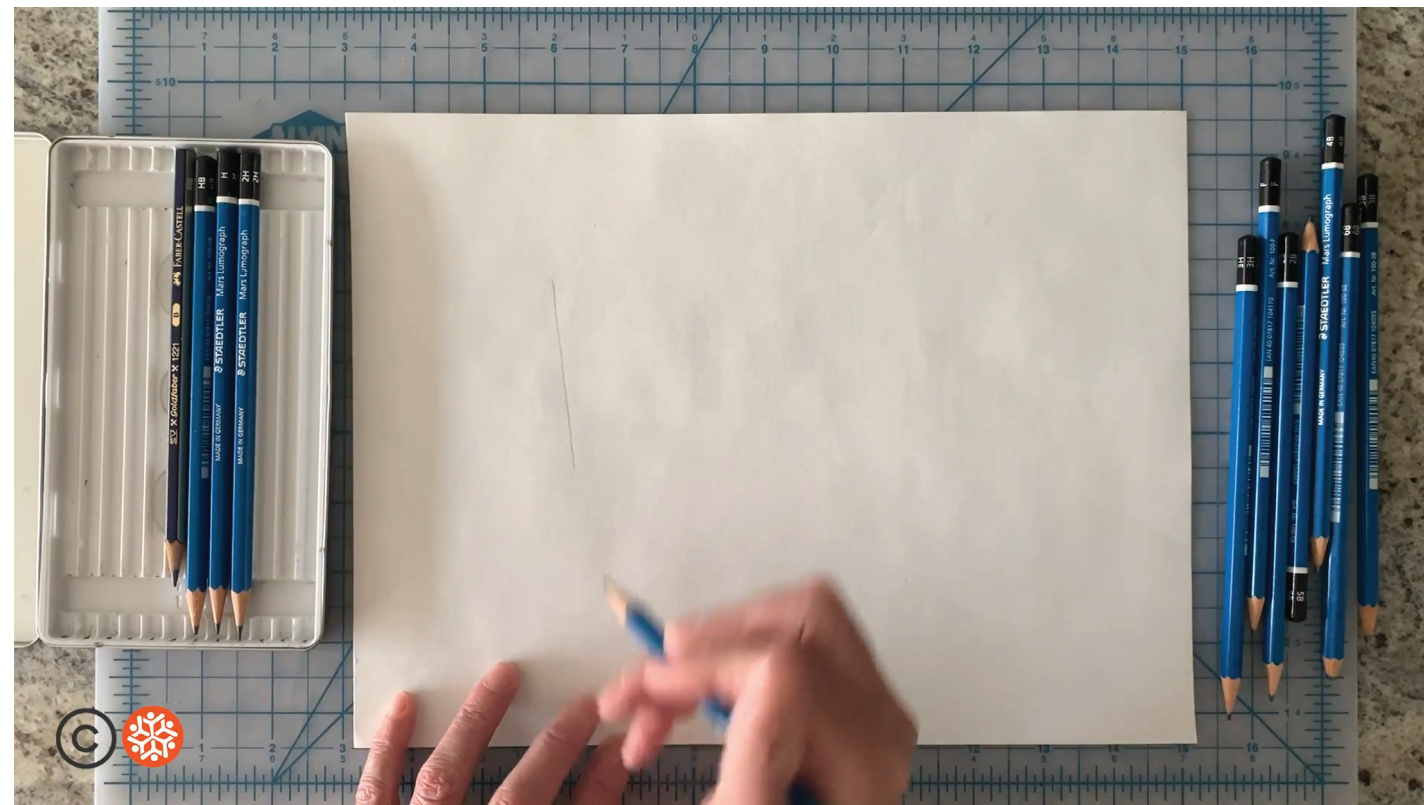
This effect increases as you move up the spectrum from H, 2H, 4H, to 6H. Make a line with the 4H pencil below your spectrum chart below the 4B line to see and feel the difference.



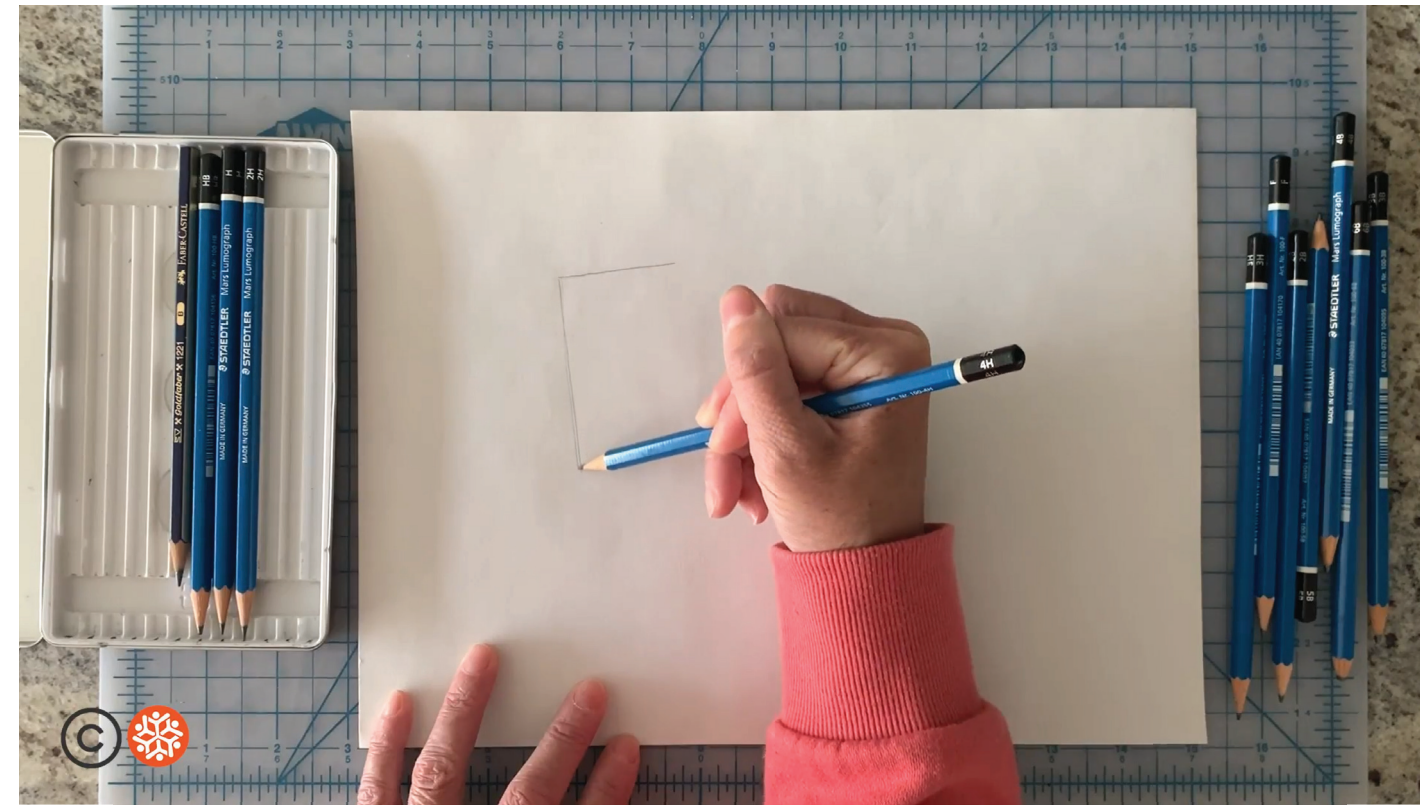
You can now observe the difference between the HB, 4H, and 4B pencils by comparing and contrasting the lines you've made.



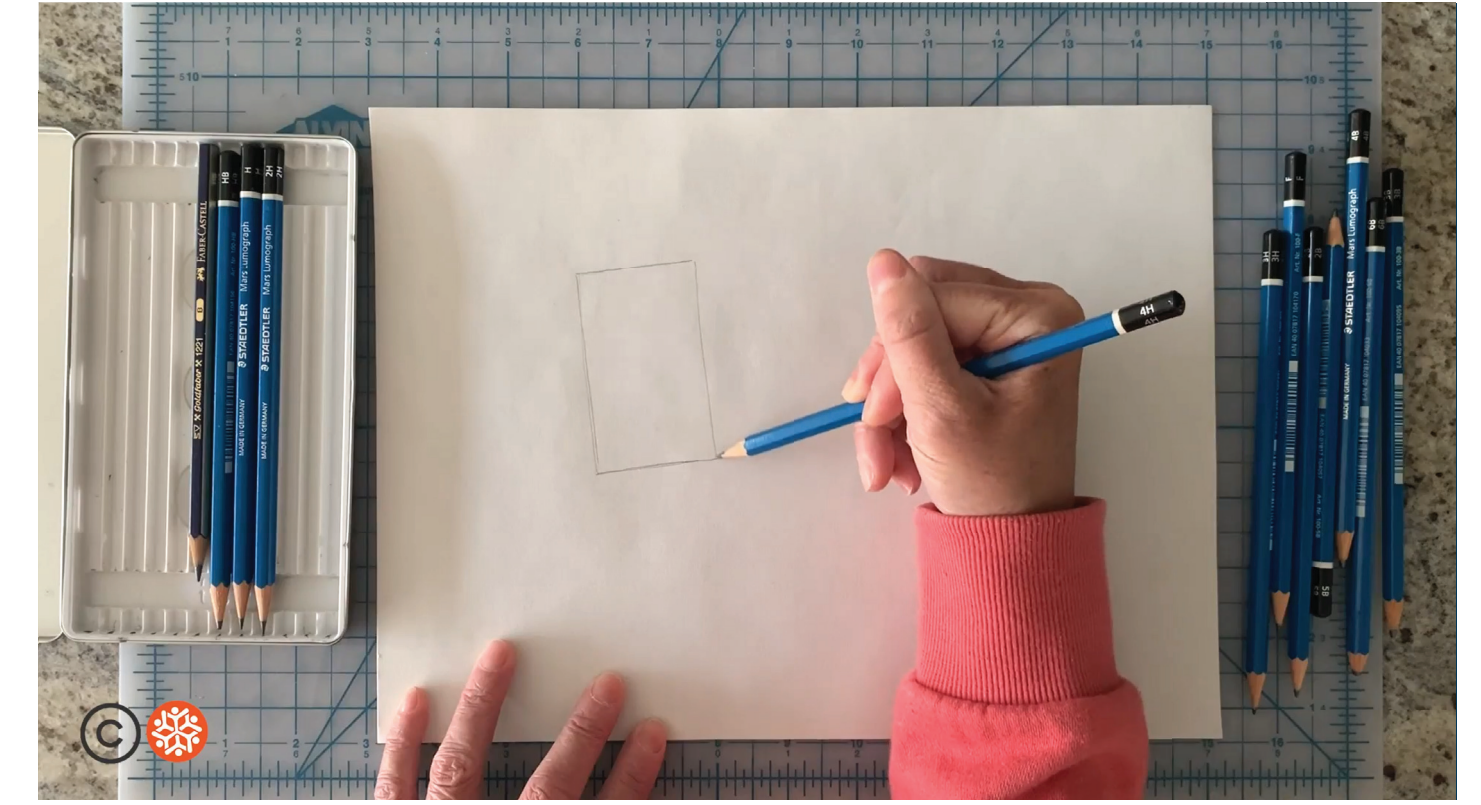
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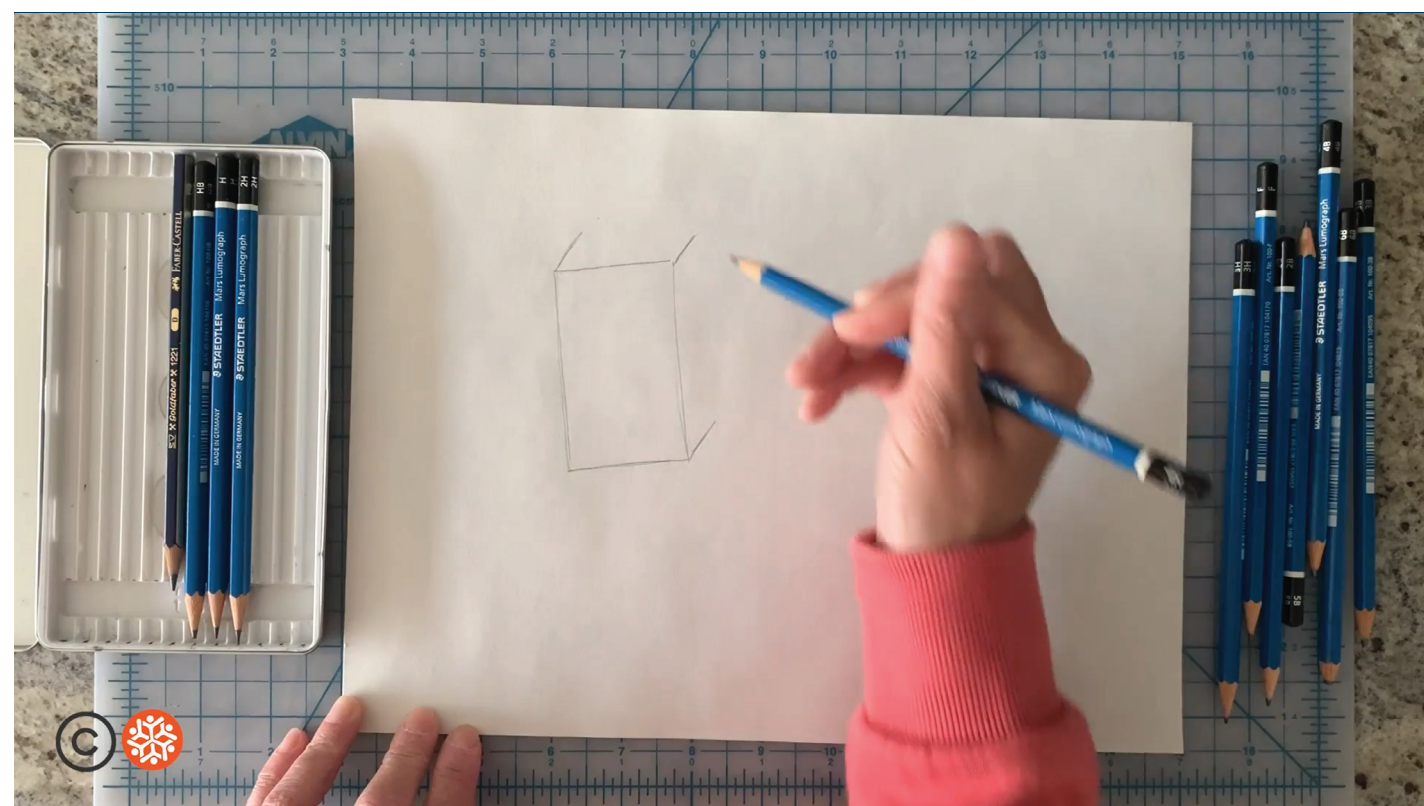
Now, how do you determine which pencil to use when? Think about the surface type of the object you are drawing.



For example, if you're drawing a building with a hard surface, you will want to use an H pencil.



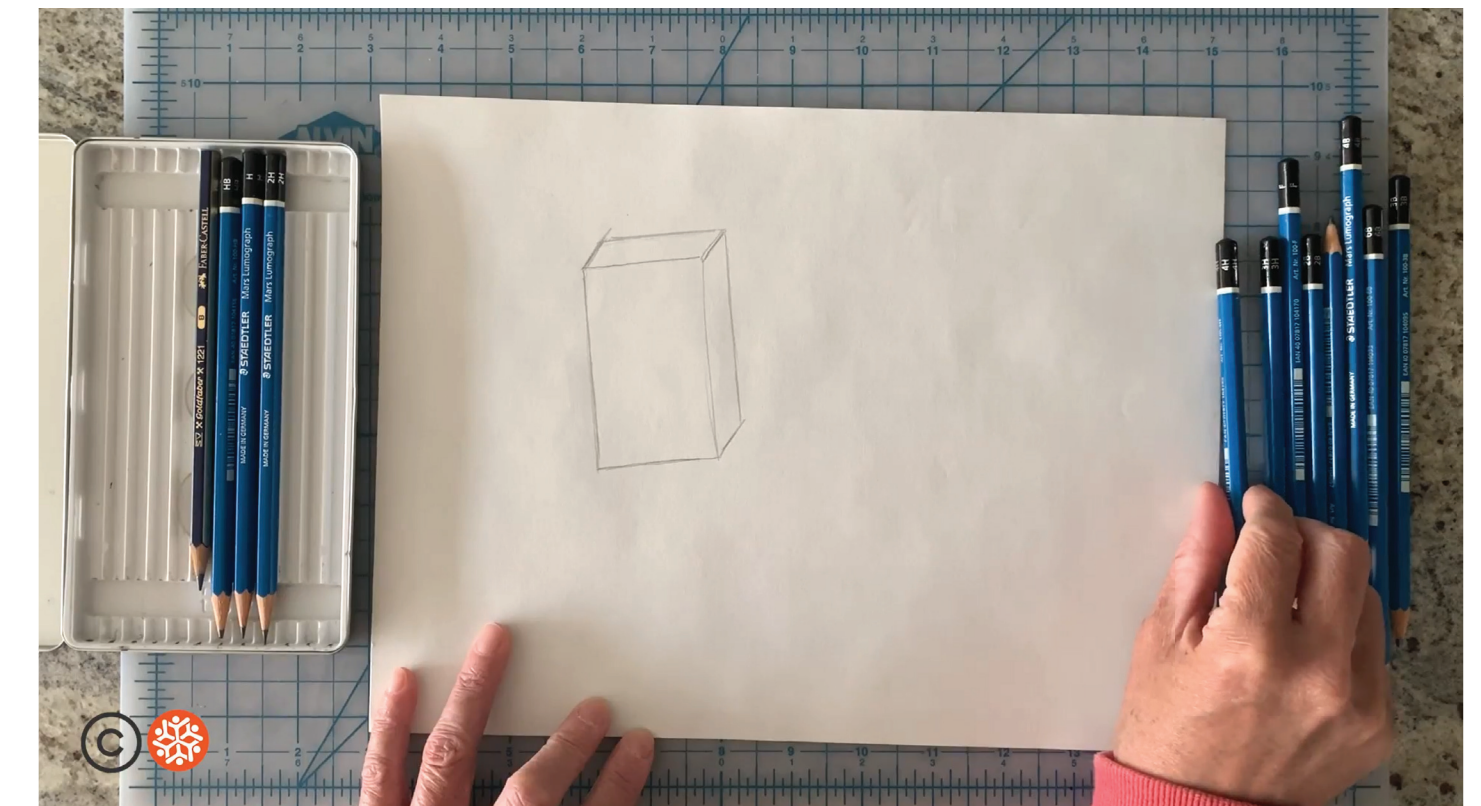
Let's try this out. First, use an H pencil to draw a tall rectangle.



Next, add a profile view by drawing two parallel angled lines (of the same length) from the top corners and the bottom right corner.



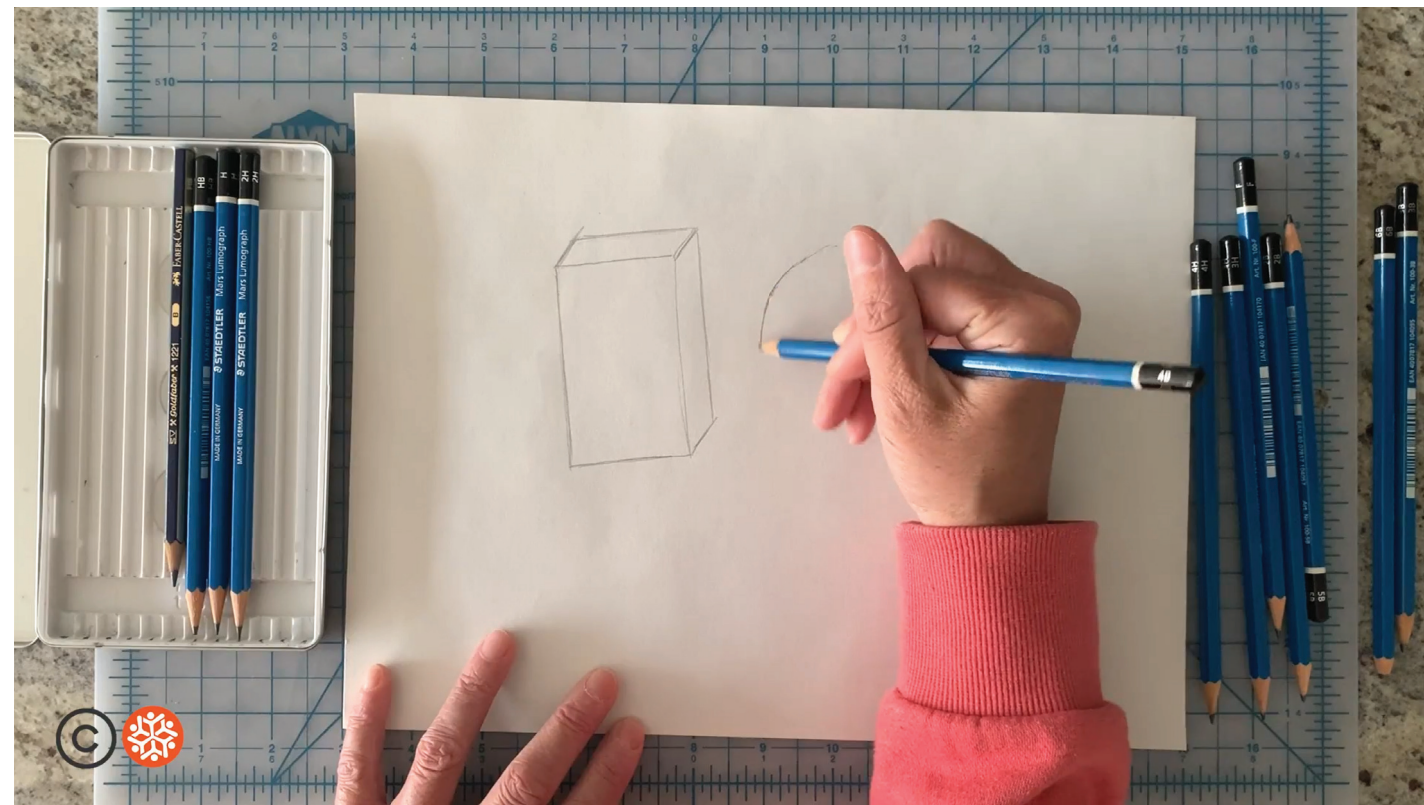
Connect the bottom right corner angled line to the top right end of the angled line, creating a parallel line to the right side of the rectangle.



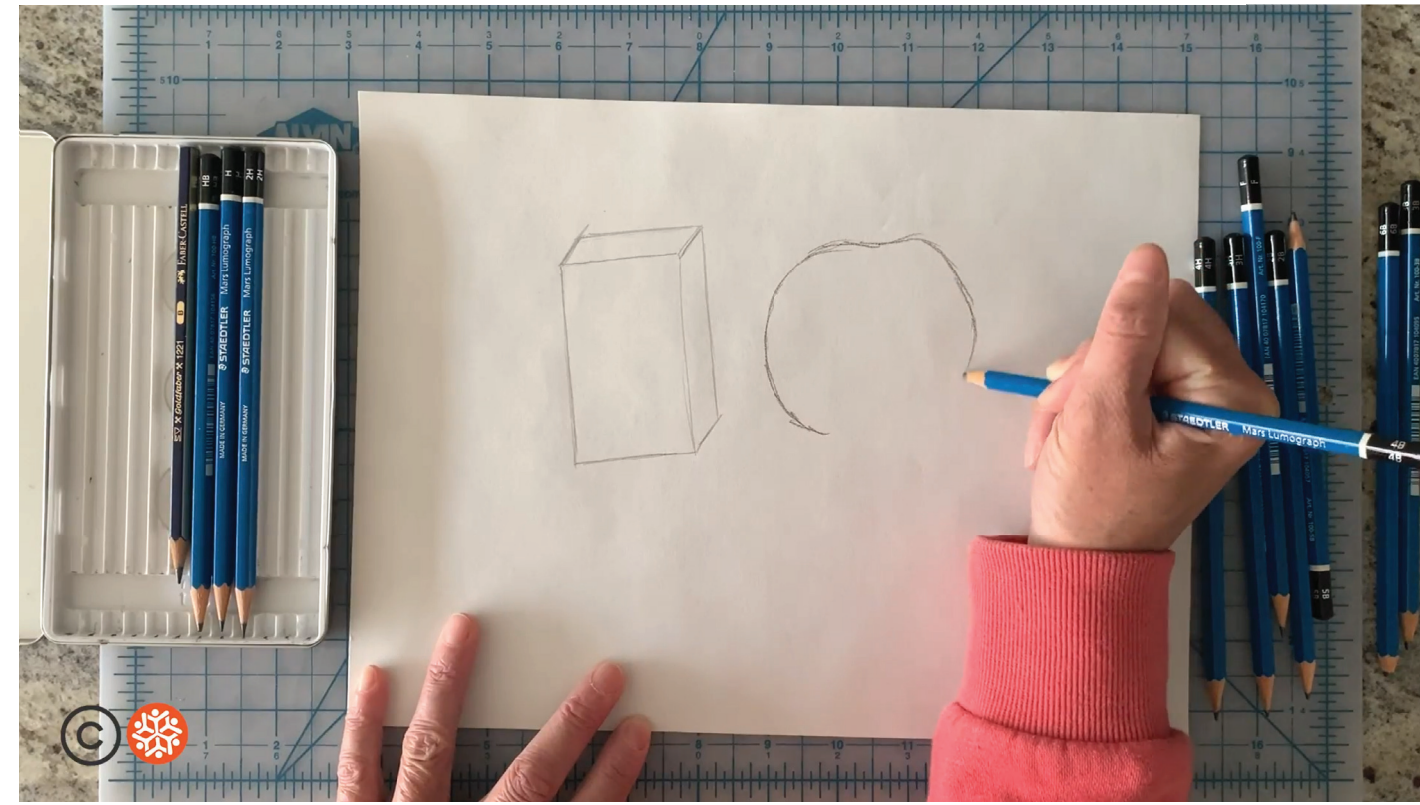
Many architects and engineers use H pencils to create their schematics, or plans.



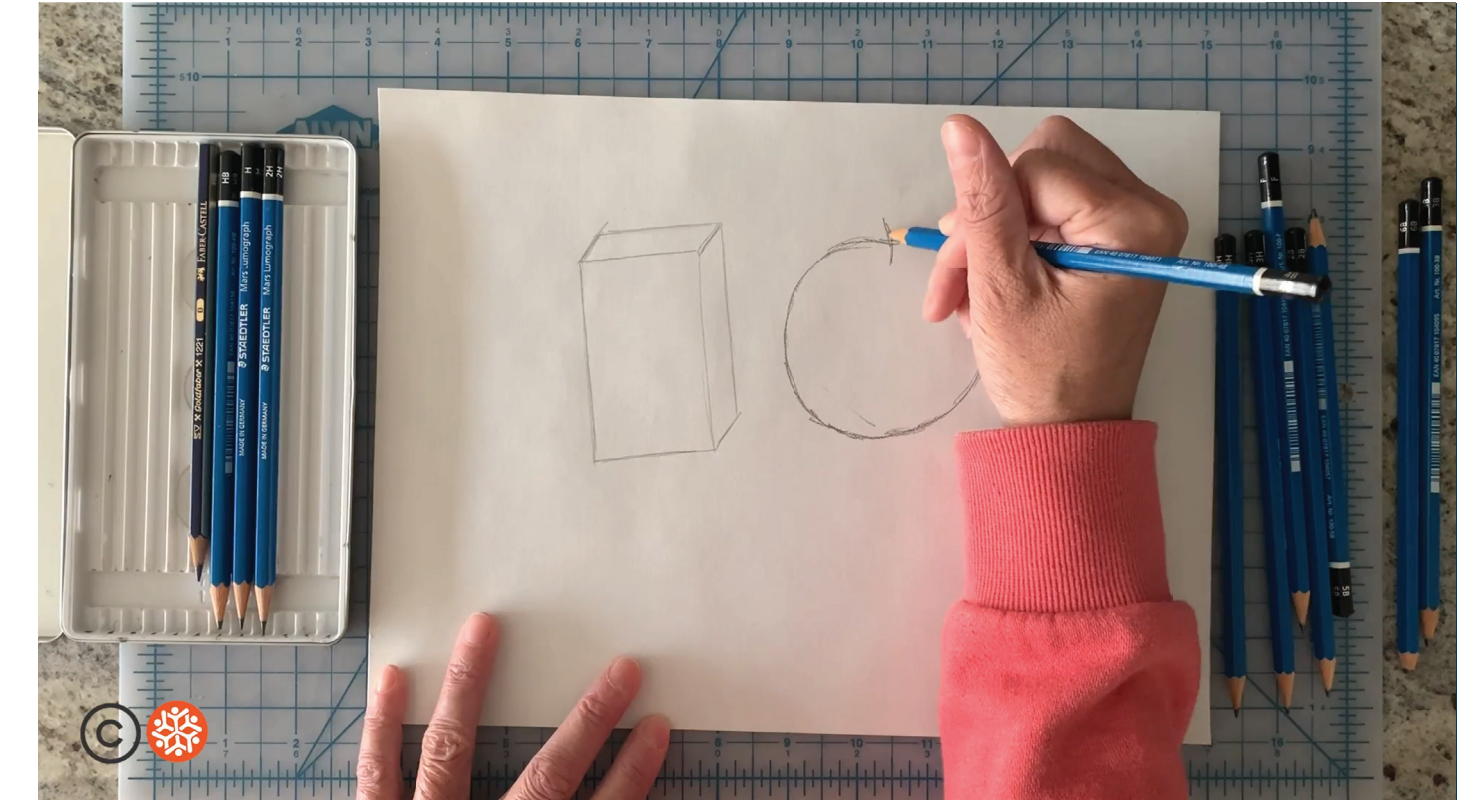
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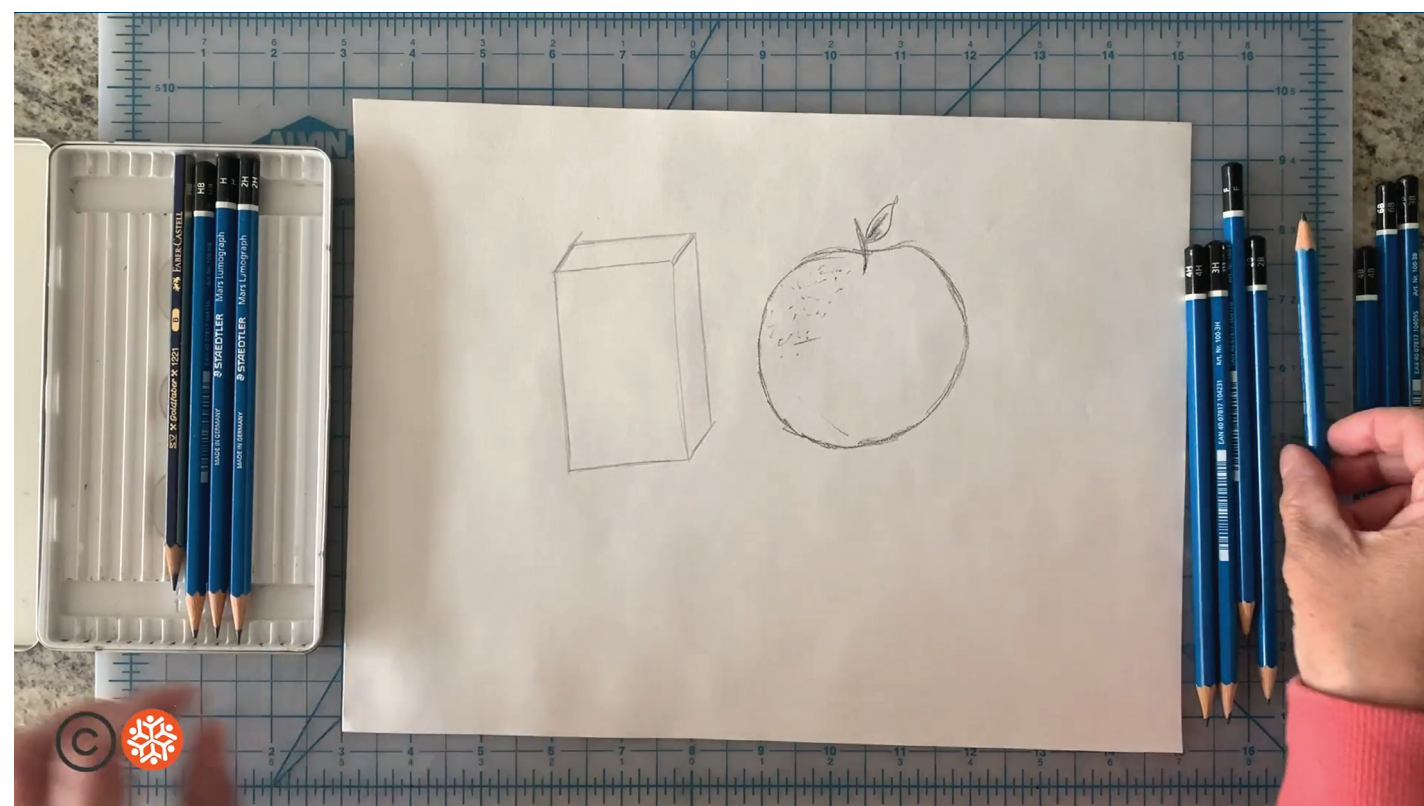
HB and B pencils are more commonly used in sketching drafts because they are easier to erase.



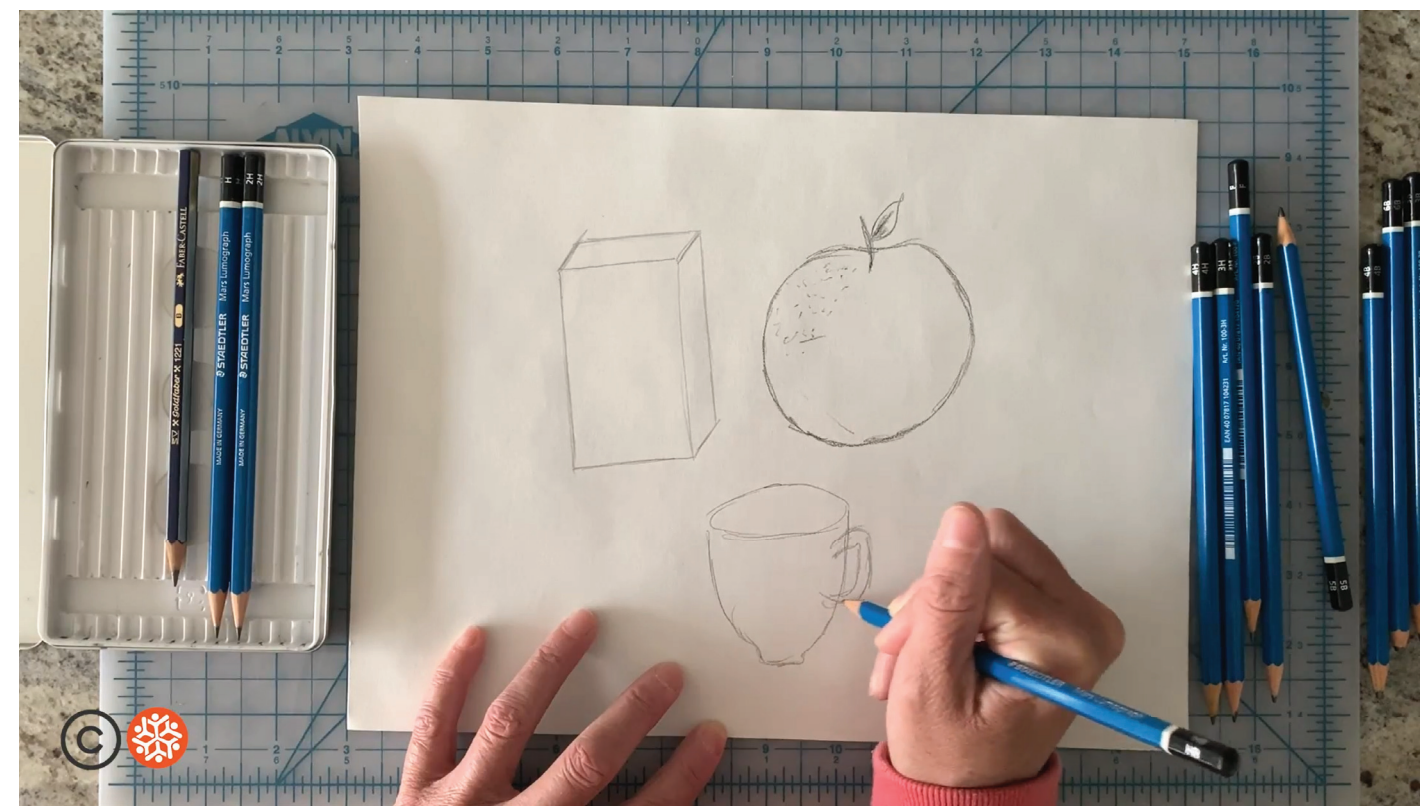
Let's draw an example of this. If you are drawing a soft surface, like the rind of an orange, you'll want to use a B pencil.



Use sketch lines to create a circle shape.



Then add a line at the top, crossing over the circle line. Add some dot-like marks to create the divots of an orange peel, and maybe a leaf at the top.

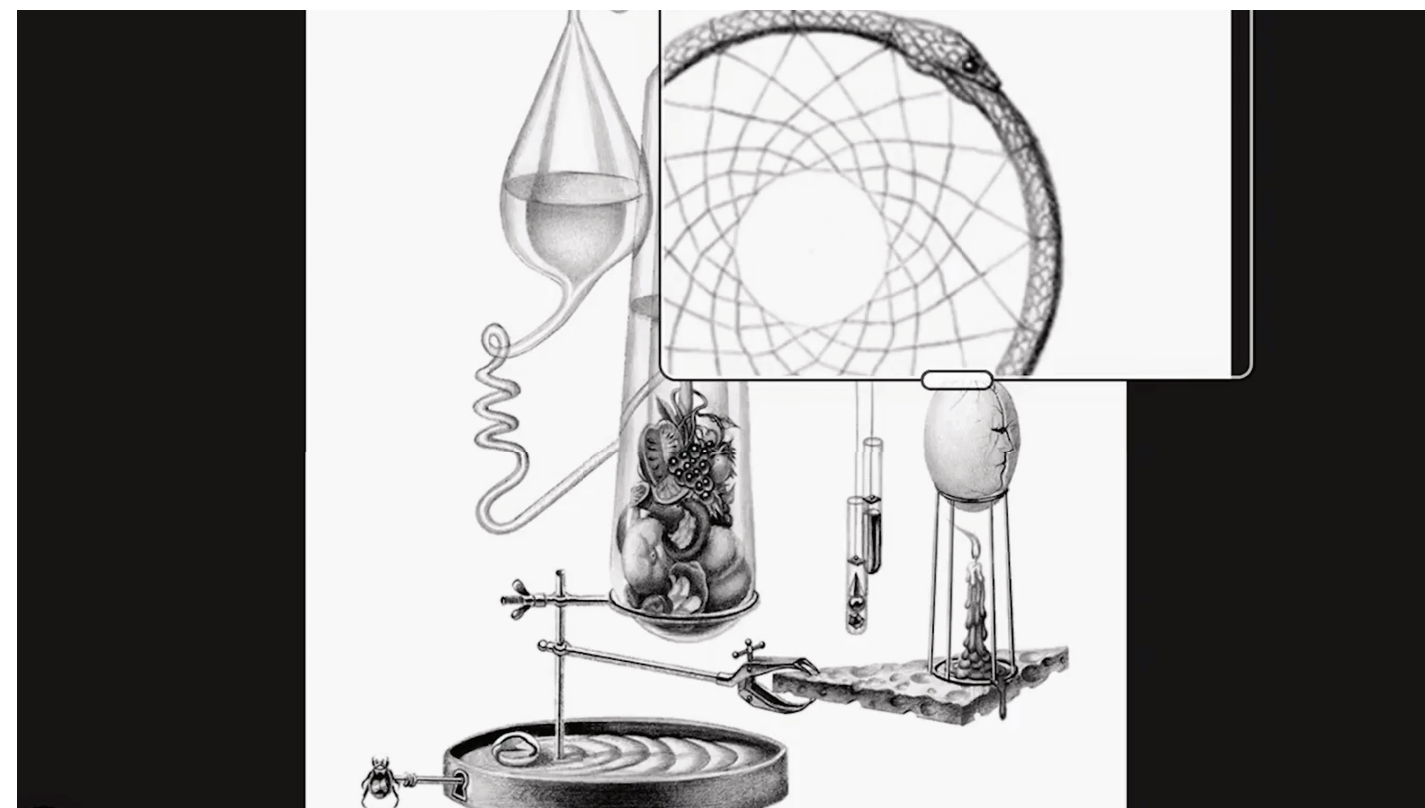


Now that we know a little more about drawing pencils, let's play a guessing game with Armando Veve's work.

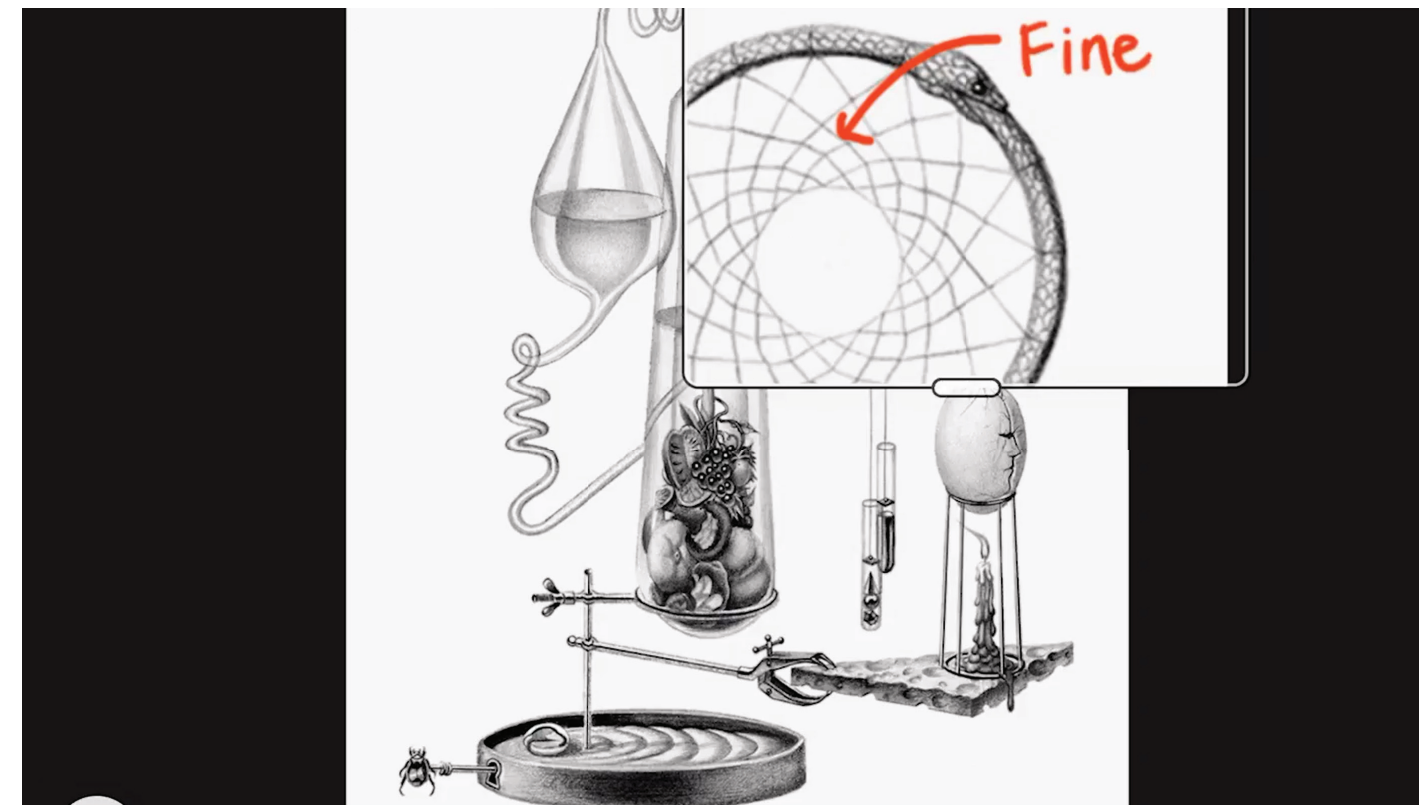


I am going to point to a line, and let you guess which pencil he might have used. Are you ready?

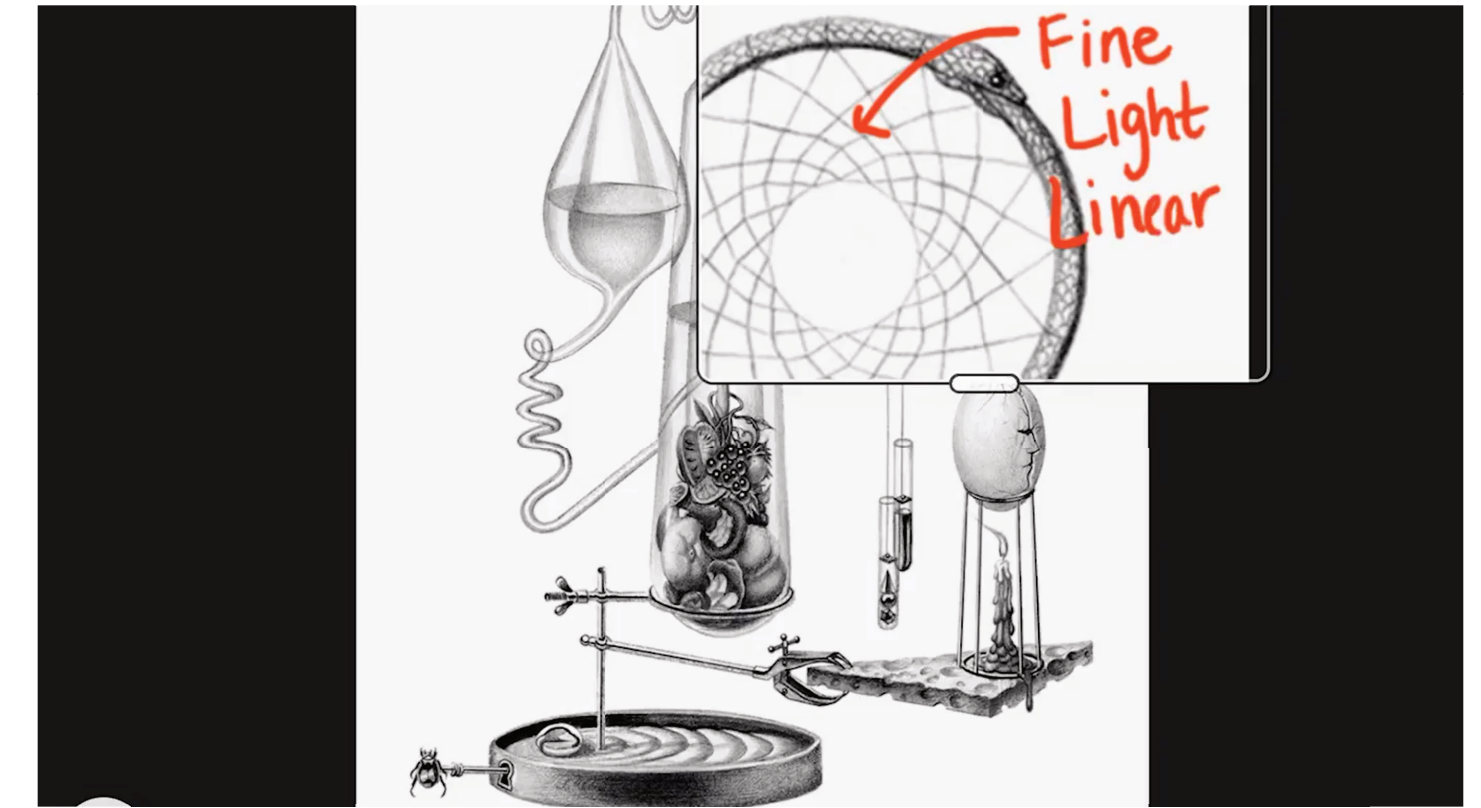
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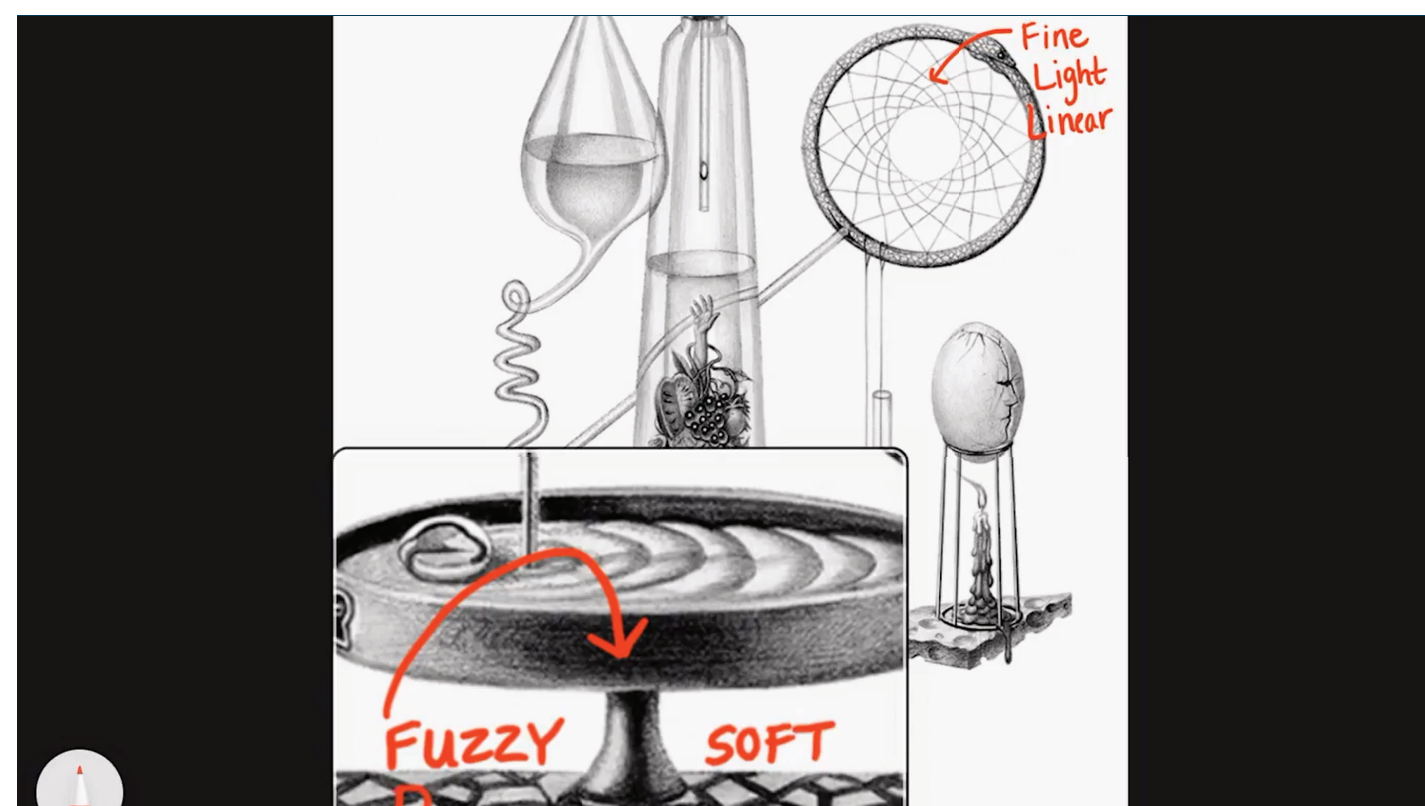
This is a piece by Armando Veve called *Alchemy*. What pencil do you think he used here? The line is very fine, very light, and has a strong contour, meaning a well-defined line.



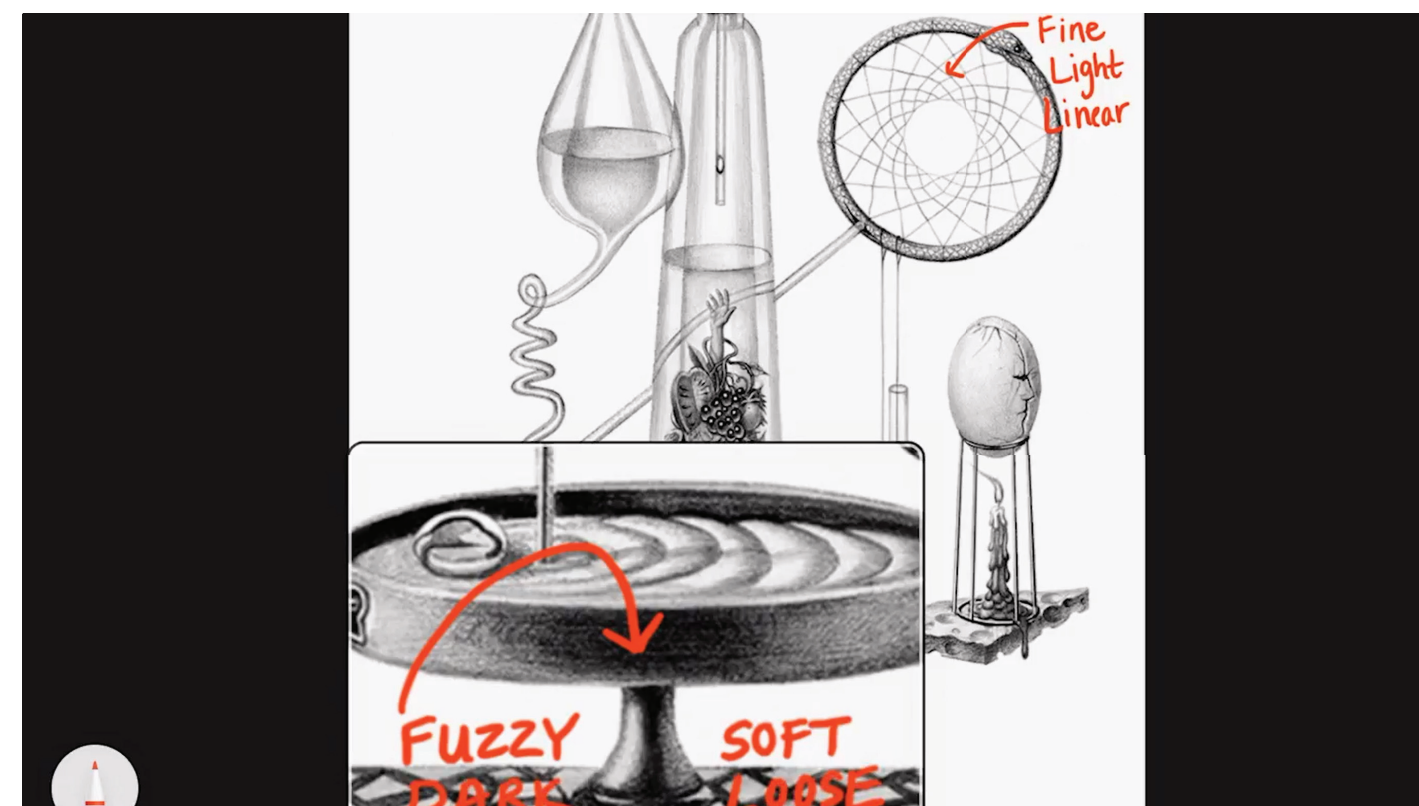
It's okay to look back at the spectrum guide we just created. That's your reference sheet.



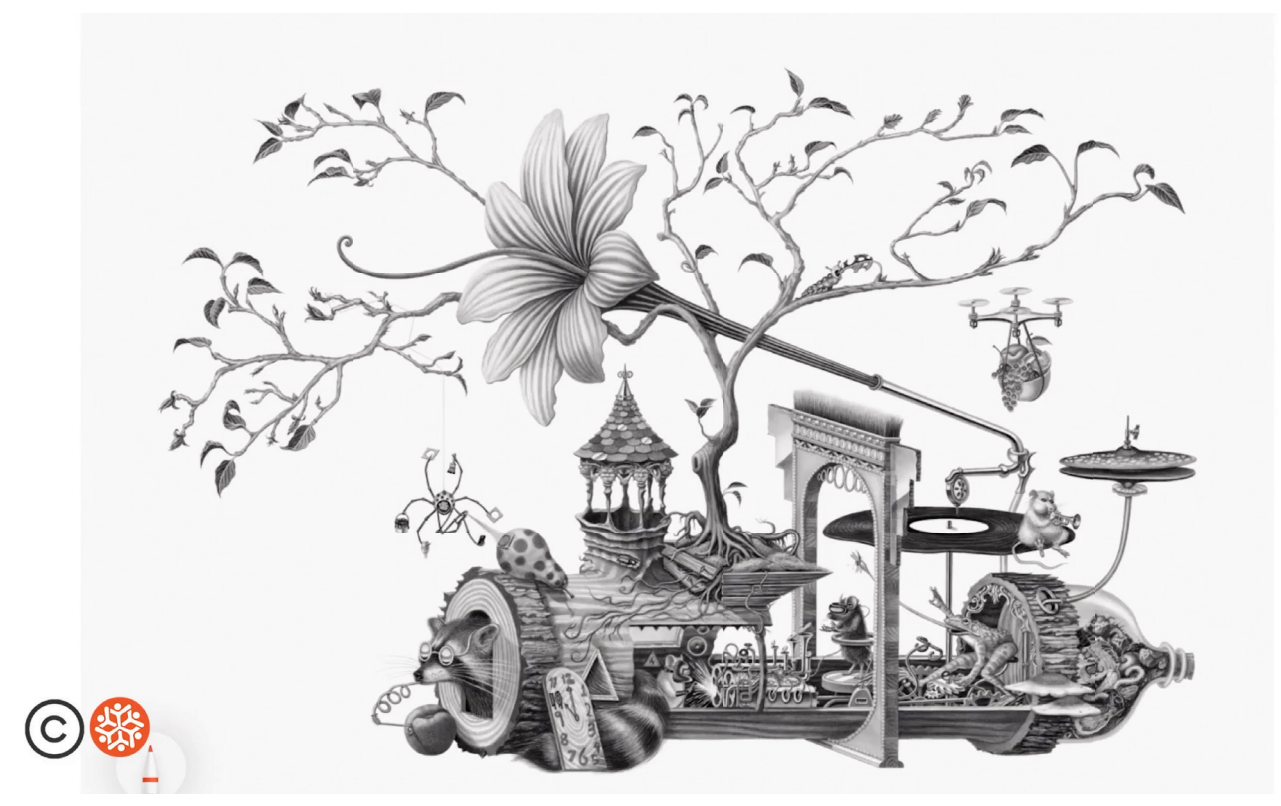
Did you guess an H pencil? If so, you're right!



Now, let's look at these marks here. These marks are fuzzier, softer-looking, darker, and more loose. Take your time to make an educated guess. Remember, you can use your reference sheet. It isn't cheating.



Did you guess a B pencil? If so, you are correct!



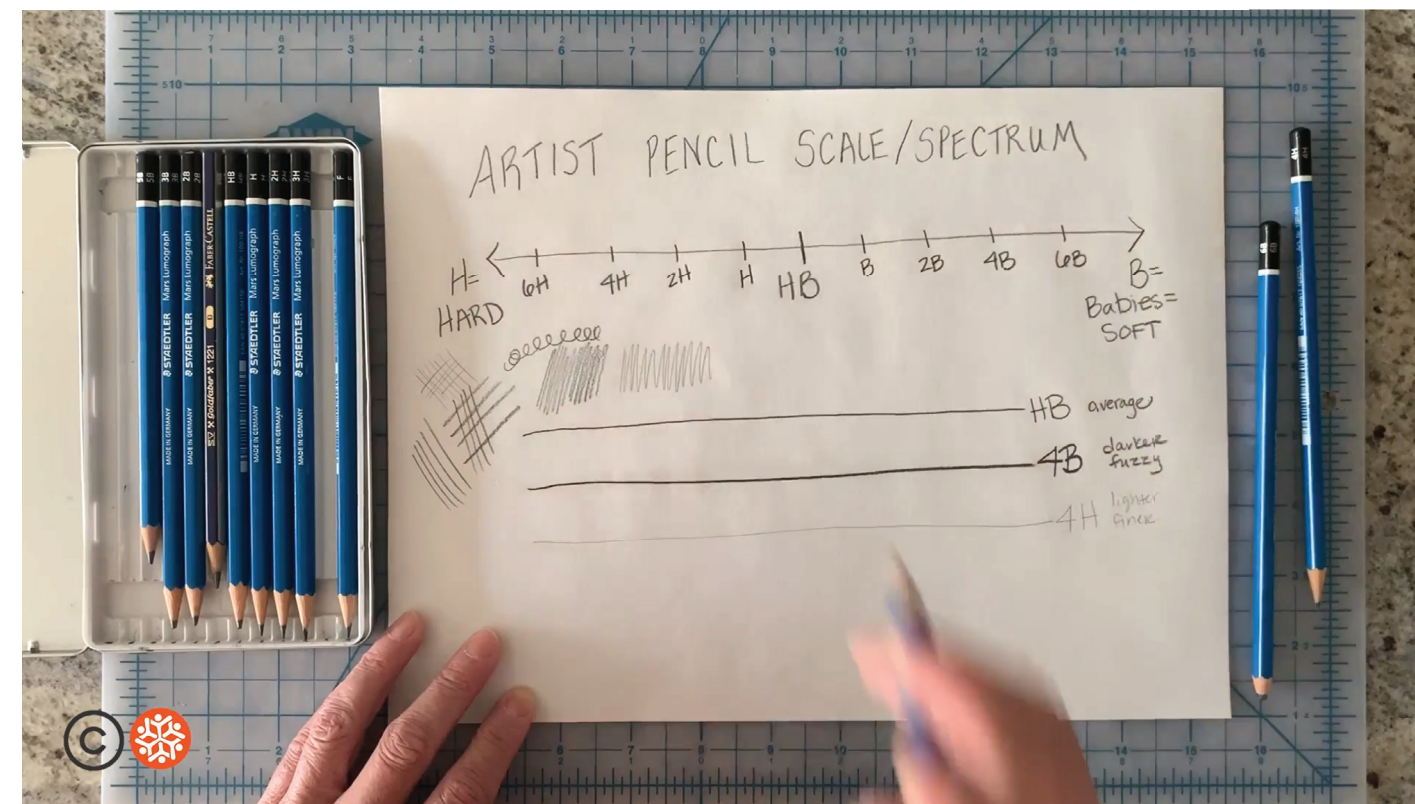
You can continue playing this game with yourself at any time. It is a good way to test your knowledge of how to guess artist pencils.



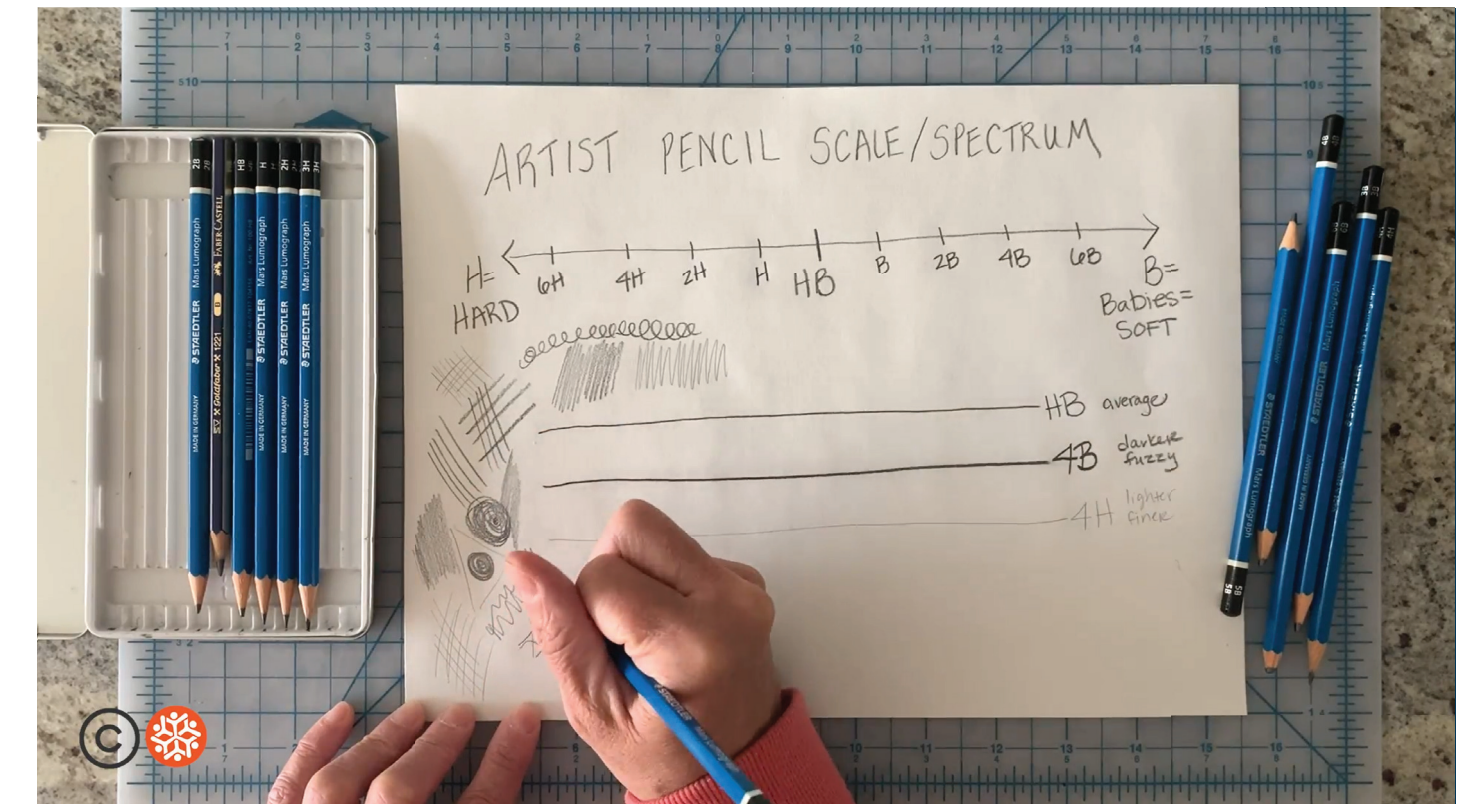
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Finally, let's go over why it's important to know how to read and use artist pencils.

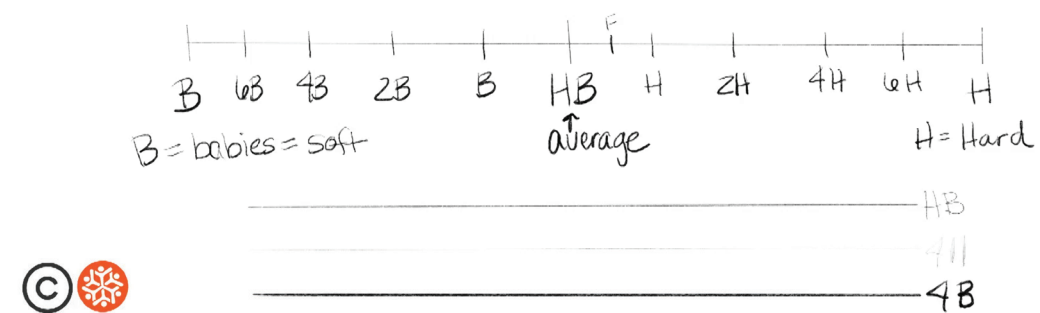


Each pencil makes a different mark. Using artist pencils will help you achieve greater depth and details in your illustrations.



By the end of this workshop, you have now created your own reference guide to help you if you get stuck when practicing your own drawing skills.

## Artist Pencils SPECTRUM



Thank you for spending the time to learn about artist pencils today. Keep creating!



# LEARNING STANDARDS

This workshop is aligned to the following state and national anchor standards. It can be differentiated for learners at every grade level. (For arts performance standard alignments at specific grade levels, feel free to email [programs@snowcityarts.org](mailto:programs@snowcityarts.org).)

## ILLINOIS ARTS LEARNING STANDARDS

### Anchor Standards: Creating

- **CR1.** Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
- **CR2.** Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

### Anchor Standards: Responding

- **RE7.** Perceive and analyze artistic work.

## COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

### English Language Arts: College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards

#### Language

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.6.** Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

### Standards for Mathematical Practice

- **SMP.4.** Model with mathematics.
- **SMP.5.** Use appropriate tools strategically.
- **SMP.7.** Look for and make use of structure.





If you are interested in **receiving school credit** for the work you have completed in this workshop or if you would like to **have your artwork displayed** in a Snow City Arts exhibition space or virtual gallery, please visit <https://snowcityarts.org/consent-releases/>

**Contact us at [programs@snowcityarts.org](mailto:programs@snowcityarts.org)** if you have questions, would like to offer feedback, or would like to continue working with us virtually.







Workshop Duration: 25-45 Minutes | ALL LEVELS



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