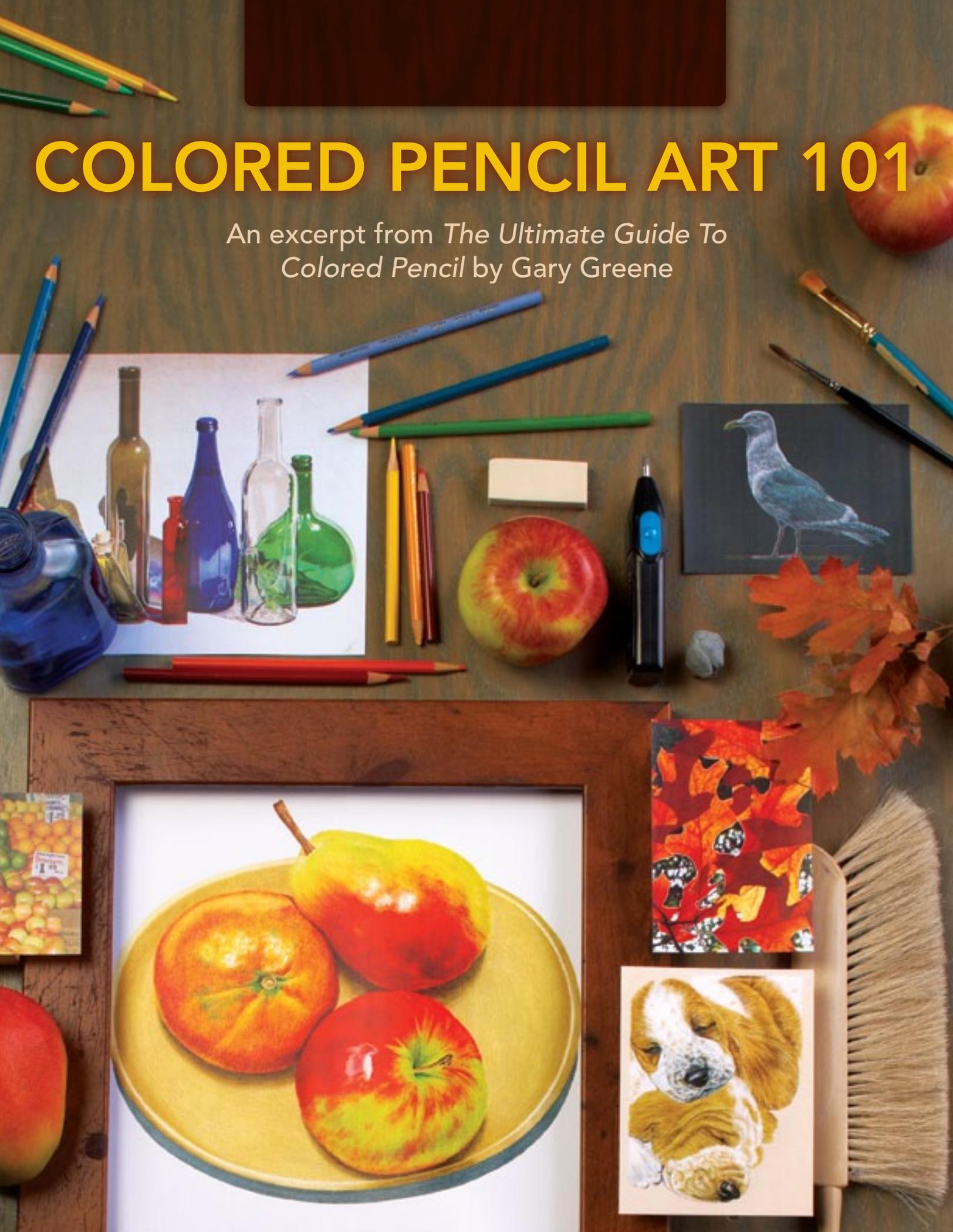


# COLORED PENCIL ART 101

An excerpt from *The Ultimate Guide To Colored Pencil* by Gary Greene



# Colored Pencil 101

Before discussing specific techniques, there are several pointers you should know that are applicable to all colored pencil art.

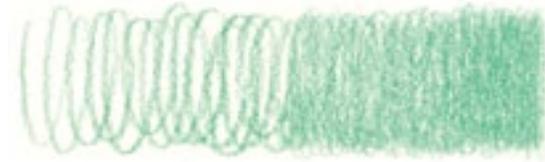
## Different Strokes

Colored pencil can be applied in a variety of ways: hatching, cross-hatching, stippling and so on, but all of the demonstrations in this book use either circular or linear strokes. These strokes are the most effective with colored pencil painting.

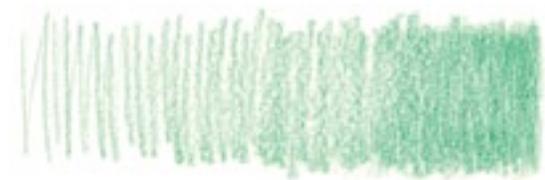
What stroke to use depends on the size and shape of the subject. Circular strokes work best with flat areas, while linear strokes are usually used in areas with obvious contours.

## How To Hold the Pencil

Both circular and linear strokes are made with the pencil held in a normal (most comfortable) writing position, approximately perpendicular to the paper surface. Except in special instances, color should never be applied with the point horizontal to the painting surface.



Circular strokes



Linear strokes



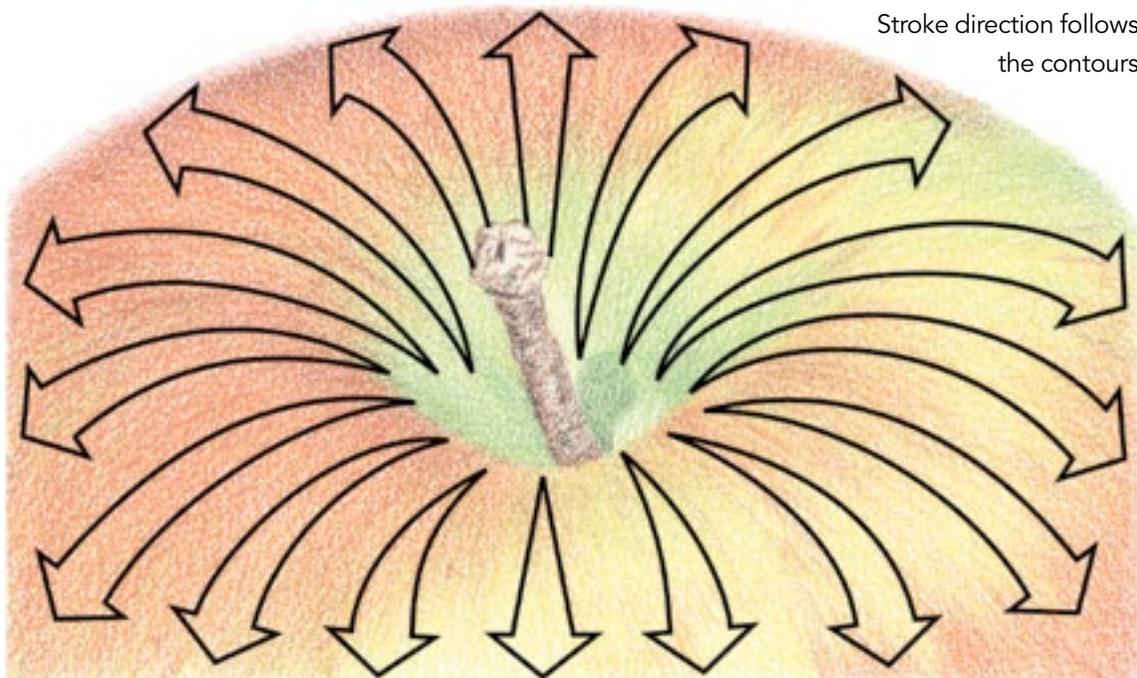
# Following Contours

In order for subjects to look natural and to give them dimensionality, colored pencil strokes, and (if needed) subsequent strokes

of water or solvent, should always be applied in the same direction and follow the contours, texture or grain of the subject.



Contours drawn with linear strokes



Stroke direction follows the contours

# Adding Color Gradually

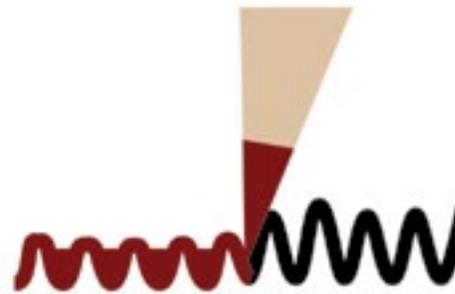
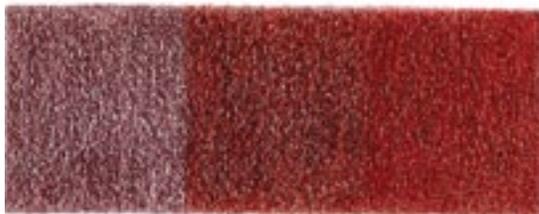
Regardless of technique, color is always added gradually, with as little pressure as possible and a needle-sharp point. Heavy application of pigment made all at once defeats your ability to utilize colored pencil's unique translucent characteristics because they are simply overpowered, somewhat like covering a prime steak with a bottle of ketchup.

Keeping the pencil sharp allows the point to deliver the pigment into the tooth's valleys. A dull point does not fit into the valleys, leaving them bare, which makes it seem like not enough color is being applied. The natural response is to apply more pressure, which leads to applying too much pigment too soon.

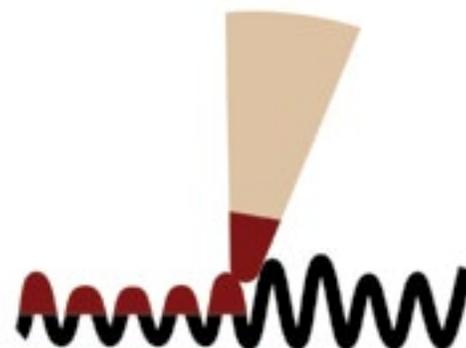
Adding color gradually



Adding color too heavily



A sharp point penetrates into the tooth of the paper



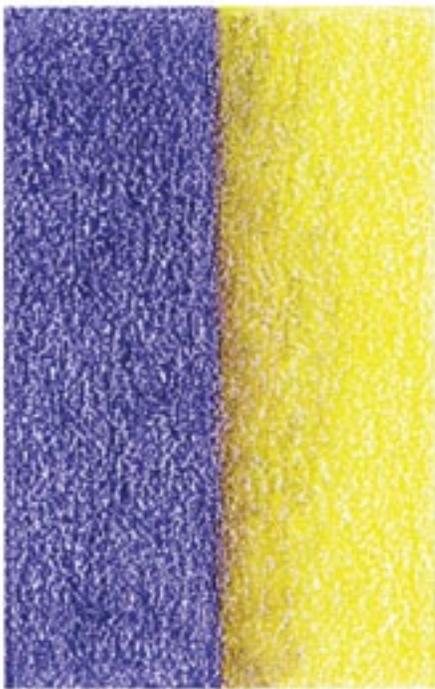
A dull point does not reach the valleys

# Color Contamination

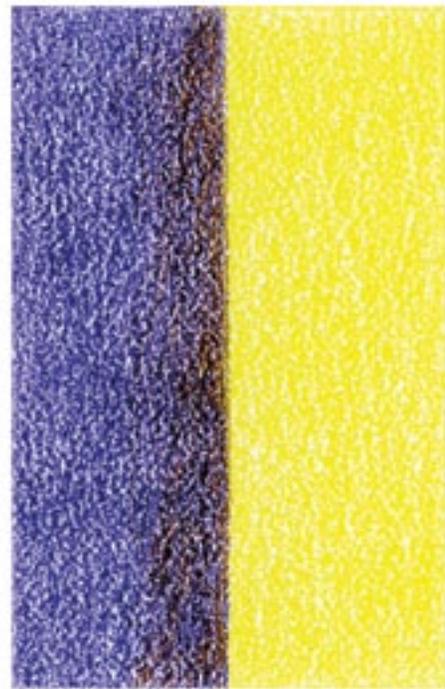
In the process of painting, regardless of technique, individual areas should be worked to completion, rather than covering large areas and going back over them with subsequent layers. This reduces smudging and provides a better estimation of the painting's progress.

Colors can become “contaminated” by inadvertently mixing one with another.

Because of colored pencil's translucency, contamination can occur with any color. However, the contamination is more noticeable when a dark color is dragged into a light color, as shown below. To avoid contaminating lighter colored areas, paint them first when they are adjacent to darker colors.



Dark color dragged into a light color



Light color dragged into a dark color

# Working Dark to Light

Paint the darkest value of a specific area first, and then add lighter colors on top. The colored pencil's unique translucency allows darker values to show through lighter colors layered over them while the lighter colors retain their visibility.



# Highlights with Bare Paper

When painting on white paper, leave it free of color for primary, or *specular*, highlights (the bright spot of light that appears on shiny objects). Only the specular highlights in the painting below are bare white paper. Secondary highlights (those that are not as intense) are mostly white pencil mixed with some of the color of the immediate area.



*INDIVIDUALITY*  
18 x 25 inches (46 x 64cm)  
Colored pencil on white museum board

Primary (specular)  
highlight

Secondary  
highlight

# Making Adjustments

## Adjusting a Wax or Oil-Based Colored Pencil

Values and hues can be adjusted by dabbing them with a kneaded eraser or using an electric eraser, then re-applying color over the erased area. For more precise adjustments, sharpen an electric eraser strip and use it with an erasing shield.

## Adjusting Water-Soluble Colored Pencil

Water-soluble colored pencil is not quite as adjustable, especially after water is added. Although water-soluble colored pencil can be lifted or erased when dry, adjustments can also be made while it is still wet, by lightly scrubbing with a brush or cotton

### WAX OR OIL-BASED COLORED PENCIL

Column 1: Lifted  
with kneaded eraser

Column 2: Erased  
with electric eraser

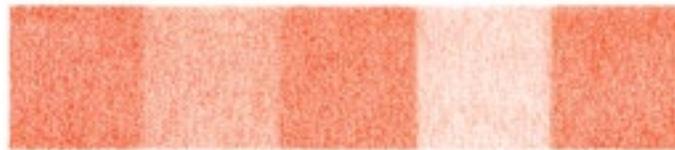
a. Color lifted  
and erased



a.

a.

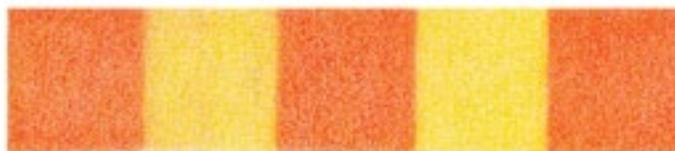
b. Same color  
re-layered



b.

b.

c. Second color  
re-layered  
over lifted and  
erased area



c.

c.

d. Second color  
re-layered  
over b.



d.

d.

swab, as with watercolors. Care must be taken not to overdo lifting wet pigment, especially on hot-press surfaces, or on surfaces other than watercolor paper. Once the color is dry, traditional erasing is not possible, nor is lifting with water.

### Adjusting Colored Pencil With Solvent

Areas with solvent applied to the pigment can be easily lightened and adjusted with a kneaded or electric eraser.

#### WATER-SOLUBLE COLORED PENCIL



a.



b.



c.



d.

- a. Before wetting
- b. Pigment lifted
- c. Wetting previously lifted pigment
- d. Pigment removed wet

#### COLORED PENCIL WITH SOLVENT



a.



b.



c.



d.



e.

- a. Before adding solvent
- b. After applying Bestine rubber cement thinner
- c. Erased with electric eraser
- d. Second color applied
- e. Solvent re-applied

# Housekeeping

## Colored Pencil Debris

Although colored pencil is probably the least messy medium, small crumbs or debris is given off the pencil as you work. Wax-based pencils, Prismacolors in particular, produce more debris than oil-based. If left unattended, these tiny bits of colored pencil can lodge in the tooth of the paper, causing potential problems. For

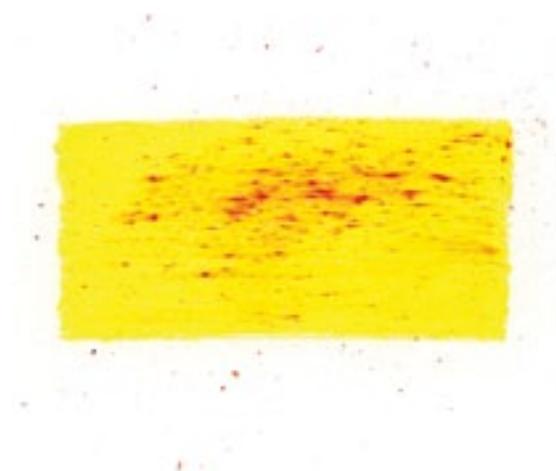
example, if you are using a red pencil and it leaves debris in an area that is intended to be painted a light color, the area can become contaminated resulting in tiny red streaks when the lighter colors are applied. Since colored pencil cannot be completely erased...you get the idea. Debris should be removed as soon as possible with a soft brush or a spray can of compressed air.



Debris lodged in tooth of paper



Red pencil debris on paper



Debris streaks when color is added.

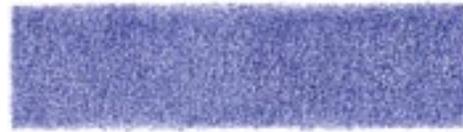
# Rough Edges and Smudging

## Cleaning Up Rough Edges

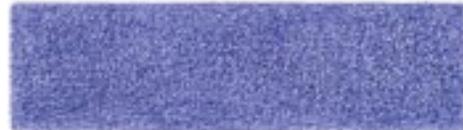
Using soft pencils on a toothy surface results in rough boundaries, or edges, between different objects in your painting. These rough edges are especially noticeable when the burnishing technique is employed. Because of their hardness and thin cores, Verithin pencils are best suited to clean up rough edges.

## Preventing Smudging

If the heel of your hand contacts your paper on the colored areas, smudging may occur, especially with strong colors such as reds, violets, dark blues and such. Smudging colored pencil is minimal when compared to pastels, but if it is left unattended, smudged



Before cleaning up rough edges



After cleaning up the edges

colored pencil can also lead to color contamination. A sheet of tracing paper under your hand, or not resting your hand on painted areas, prevents smudging. Light smudging can be easily removed with a kneaded eraser.



# Purchase *The Ultimate Guide To Colored Pencil* by Gary Greene

[www.northlightshop.com](http://www.northlightshop.com)

## Follow us on

 [facebook.com/ArtistsNetwork](https://facebook.com/ArtistsNetwork)

 [twitter.com/ArtistsNetwork](https://twitter.com/ArtistsNetwork)

 [pinterest.com/ArtistsNetwork](https://pinterest.com/ArtistsNetwork)