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ASK THE EXPERTS

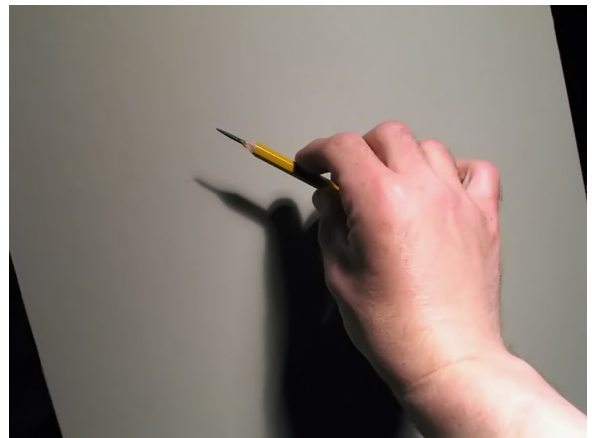
Studio Craft: Sharpening a Drawing Point



Mechanical and manual pencil sharpeners are quick and convenient, but sharpening by hand is the best way to achieve a versatile point. Mechanical sharpeners produce a short point better for writing than drawing.



A proper drawing point should be conical and long enough to produce good line variation.



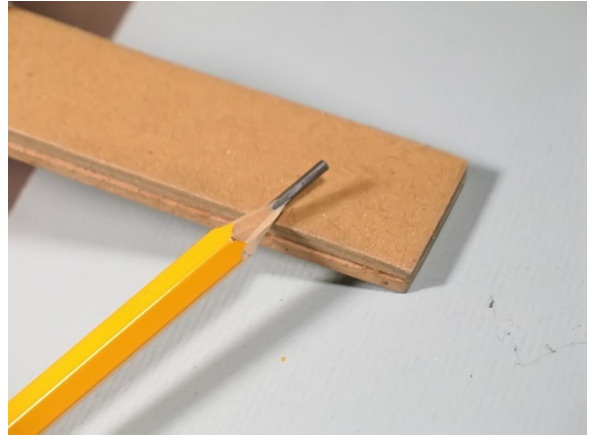
A drawing instrument should be held loosely between the fingers and thumb- not tightly like a writing pencil. This grip facilitates fluid ellipses, long, straight strokes and careful detail without excessive pressure on the paper.



Flat sketching/composition pencils can be sharpened to a chisel edge for lettering and similar tasks.



Begin with a sharp knife, removing wood to expose $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 inch of lead, depending on softness and thickness.



Use a sanding paddle or small piece of sandpaper over a stiff card to shape lead.



Any sharp knife will do; a #11 blade in a craft knife is ideal.



Push lead forward across sanding surface, rolling the pencil to ensure a uniform shape.