

LIFE DRAWING

A **life drawing** is a drawing of the human figure, from observation of a [live model](#). Creating life drawings, or **life studies**, in a **life class**, has been a large element in the traditional training of artists in the Western world since the Renaissance.



MEDIUM

A popular modern technique is the use of a [charcoal](#) stick, prepared from special vines, and a rougher form of paper. The charcoal adheres loosely to the paper, allowing very easy erasure, but the final drawing can be preserved using a spray-on "fixative" to keep the charcoal from rubbing off. Harder compressed charcoal can produce a more deliberate and precise effect, and graduated tones can be produced by smudging with the fingers or with a cylindrical paper tool called a [stump](#).

Graphite pencil is also commonly used for figure drawing. For this purpose artists' pencils are sold in various formulations, ranging from 9B (very soft) to 1B (medium soft), and from 1H (medium hard) to 9H (very hard). Like charcoal, it can be erased and manipulated using a stump.

Ink is another popular medium. The artist will often start with graphite pencil to sketch or outline the drawing, then the final line work is done with a pen or brush, with permanent ink. The ink may be diluted with water to produce

gradations, a technique called ink wash. The pencil marks may be erased after the ink is applied, or left in place with the dark inks overpowering them.