

GCA Orientation Seminar Materials List

This class, as a survey course, is limited to drawing. A majority of the most fundamental concepts specific to the GCA are accessible through graphite, thus, below please find my strong suggestions for drawing materials.

While I can't stand over your shoulder as you collect your materials I want to make the following **"absolutely not"** rules.

No bristol, vellum or other cardstock weight paper. No newsprint. No toned paper. We are aiming for a high quality, high cotton content drawing paper.

No charcoal. Charcoal, while darker than graphite, is more difficult to deposit deliberately on the paper. Graphite has the further advantage of forcing us into a limited value range due to its natural limitations of darkness.

The blue underlined words are linked to the exact product at Blick but feel free to purchase anywhere.

Paper:

Strathmore [300](#) or [400](#) in size 11"x14"

Pencils:

A high quality drawing pencil in 2B, HB and 2H

No jumbo width pencils, avoid things labeled "sketching pencils".

The following brands are ideal:

[Staedler](#)

[Tombow](#)

[Faber-Castell](#)

[Derwent](#)

Sharpener:

An [exacto](#) or [retractable blade](#) (for removing the wood of the pencil)

[A sandpaper block](#)

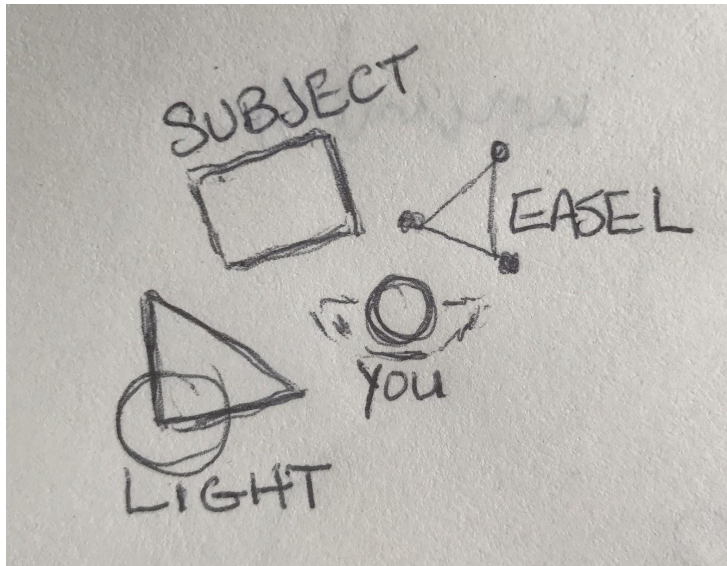
Eraser:

[A kneaded eraser](#)

You will need something hard to support your drawing pad, drawing boards are nice supports for our paper. [I have linked to a nice version](#). You can draw in the pad or tear out a piece and tape it to your board with [painters tape](#).

I do not require an easel but please consider constructing a space in your studio or home with a consistent light source that can light both you and your paper for working from life.

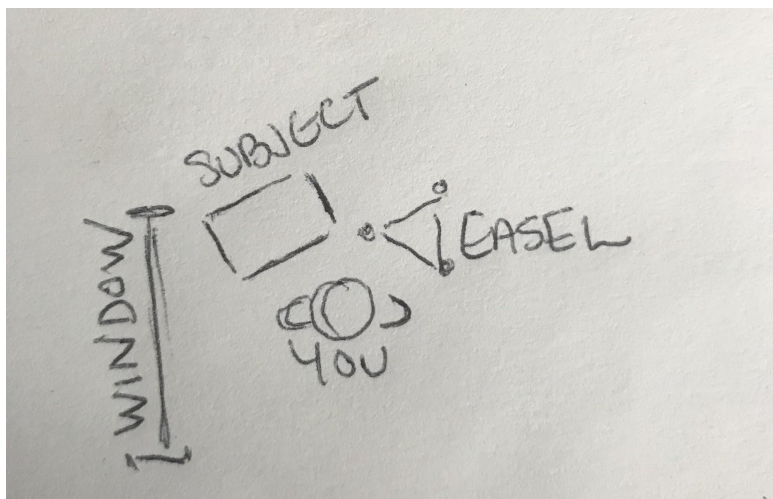
Here is a little sketch of a simple set up, I include an easel but in the event that you don't have one you can work seated and lean a drawing board on a chair in front of you, or get creative and clamp it to something upright.



The light can be a photography light, a clamp light (like from the hardware store) basically any light that is directional (meaning can be pointed at something, rather than lighting the whole room like an overhead light). Ideally artificial light should be a "daylight" LED bulb that is 5000K.

A window is also perfectly acceptable.

Here is an example window set up...north light changes the least throughout the day, followed by south light and if working in east or west light just wait until the light is not directly in the window.



These are all right handed set-ups. If you are left handed everything is reversed. You want nothing between your lightsource and your paper. So, if a left handed person set up in these diagrams they would be casting a shadow with their hand when they tried to draw.

You can work sitting down or standing up. Just pick a height for your subject and do what you have to do to position yourself at or just above eye level with the set-up. Ideally your drawing will be at the same height as your set-up so that you are moving your head side to side to view both and not as much up and down.

Before the first class you will receive a little video of me explaining my set-up and best practices for your first assignment (how to sharpen the pencil, how to make the proper mark etc...)