

## Self portrait

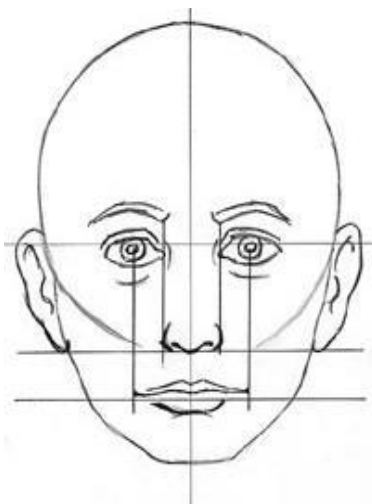
Artists have drawn their self-portraits since Antiquity, with examples found in Ancient Roman, Egyptian and Greek art. Before photography, it was a way to capture a likeness. It can be a way to understand oneself. It is a wonderful way to learn to really observe, experiment and practice. And of course, an artist always has access to one model free of charge: themselves! All you need is a mirror, a piece of paper, and something to draw with.

There isn't a right or wrong but 'softer' pencils such as a 4B (with a B mark for Blackness) tend to be better for loose sketching and shading, allowing for bold, darker mark making Hard pencils such as a 2H (with an H mark for Hardness) leave very fine, light marks great for drafting and design.

### Top Tips

Try to avoid using a photograph. Using a mirror will allow you to see your face in three-dimensions, and make it easier to understand the shapes, lights and darks. Adjust your position and the lighting so you are comfortable. The mirror should be close to your drawing surface so you are not moving your head too much, and your drawing surface should be as close to vertical as you can get it.

Drawing portraits is all about looking. Spend some time looking at your face. Notice where the light is coming from, and where it hits the face, or leaves it in shadow. Play around with the light source to see its impact on the values. Light and dark values define the planes of the face.



Proportions of the face



Planes of the face

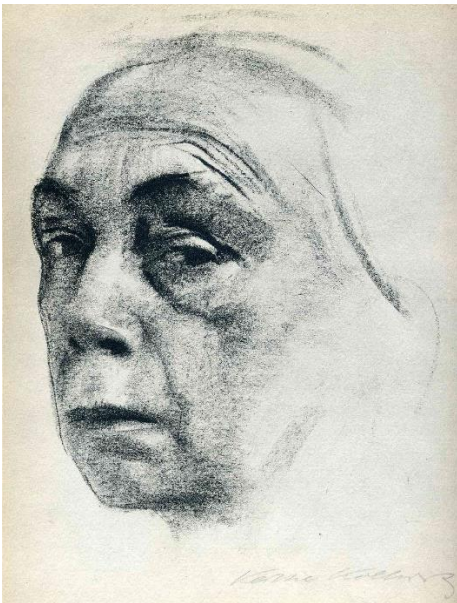


Light and dark values

Look straight into the mirror and imagine a vertical line running straight down from the inside edge of your eye. You will notice that the edge of your nostril hits this line. The edge of your mouth will be close to a vertical line from your pupil. The top of your ear will be in line with your eye, and the bottom of your ear will be in line with your nose. Use these vertical and horizontal lines to measure where your features sit in your face.

Work loosely and lightly at first, sketching in the correct proportions and light and dark values. Concentrate on sketching the entire head and avoid the temptation to spend time drawing a detailed eye, or a mouth. You are trying to capture the bigger picture, rather than focus on the small stuff.

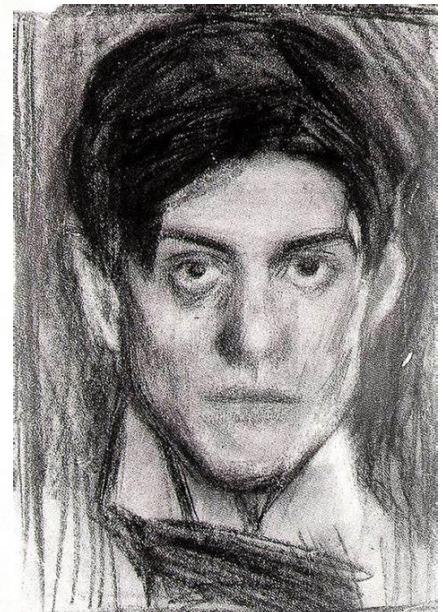
Once you are happy with the proportions and values, gradually start to work in the details, such as facial features, hair, glasses, clothes. Don't stop looking! How high does your hair rise above your head? Where is it darkest and lightest? You should be looking in the mirror at least as much as you are looking at your drawing.



Kathe Kollwitz, 1924



Henri Matisse, c.1900



Pablo Picasso, 1899

We do hope you have fun with this. Don't forget to keep your creative efforts safe for when we can collect them. If you can send them now, please do. Let us know your name, age, where you are from, and send to: CARM, Unit 12 Mountfield Road Industrial Estate, New Romney, TN28 8LH or email a photograph to: [rem@carmromneymarsh.org.uk](mailto:rem@carmromneymarsh.org.uk)

**Take care and stay safe xx**