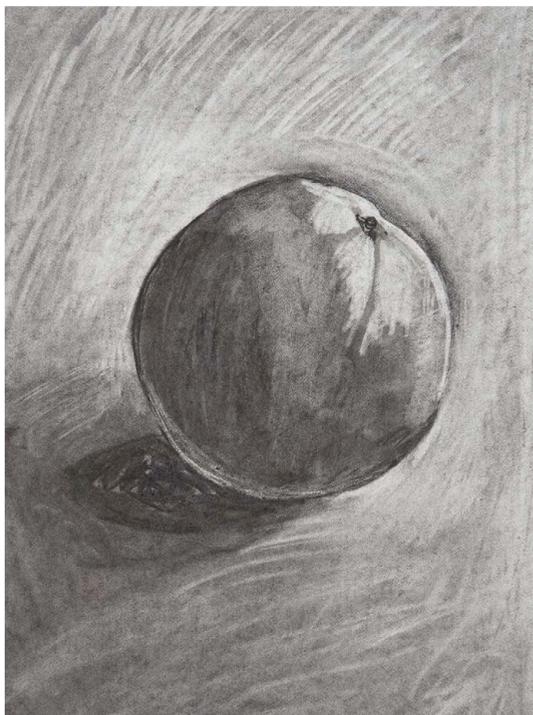


The Big Painting Challenge

Orange on table



Estimated time: 1 hour

Medium: charcoal

Surface: paper

Difficulty rating: 2

You will need:

an orange, A3 paper, a stiff board, masking tape, charcoal, a cloth or duster and a retractable rubber or the rubber on the end of a good-quality pencil

Are you ready to release your inner artist? The Big Picture is a revolutionary guide to painting and drawing, to accompany the new BBC series presented by Una Stubbs and Richard Bacon. Packed with practical information, useful exercises and accessible projects in almost every medium, it will give you the confidence you need to express your artistic side. Whether you want to work with charcoal or ink, acrylics or watercolours, you'll gain skills quickly and easily, moving from warm-up exercises and first sketches through to full paintings. You'll be amazed at what you can create with just a few simple principles, some basic materials, and a bit of inspiration!

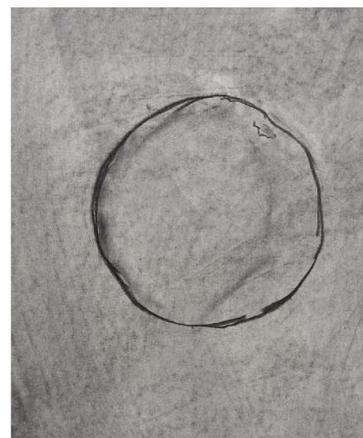
1. POSITION YOUR OBJECT

Put an orange on the table in front of you in a space with a good amount of natural light, if possible. Prepare a mid-grey charcoal background. Set up your materials and easel, if you have one (just work flat on a board if you don't), so that you can comfortably see both the subject and your drawing at the same time.



2. DRAW AN OUTLINE

Start by drawing the outline of the round shape of the orange as best you can, paying attention to any lumps, bumps and irregularities in the shape. Get the stump of the stalk roughly in place, paying close attention to how far it is from the outline. By working like this in charcoal on a mid-grey background, you should be able to rub away lines with your hand if you make a mistake so there is no need for a rubber until you start shading.



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Taken from...

The Big Painting Challenge

by Rosa Roberts



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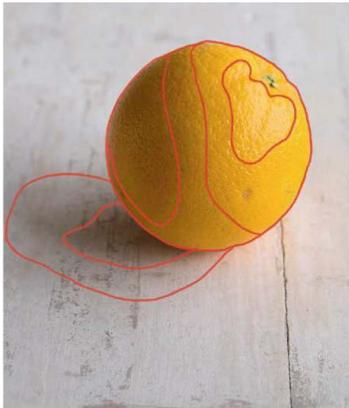
Author photograph
by Sarah Cuttle.
Orange photograph
by Simon Tupper

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3. FIND THE MAIN AREAS OF LIGHT AND DARK

Look at your orange and think about where the main lights and darks are, and where the light is coming from. The orange in the photo is on a table next to a window so the strong light is coming from the right. This means that the orange looks lighter on the right than on the left. The pink lines roughly divide the areas of different tones, including the shadow the orange leaves on the table. These lines are the basis for the shading plan.



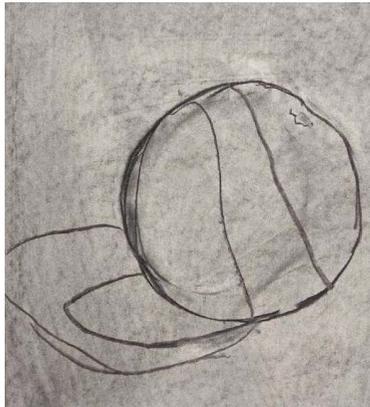
6. SHADE THE BACKGROUND

Now it's time to fill in the shadow and work on the secondary shading. Notice that the shadow is darkest closest to the orange and it fades out further away from the orange. Fill in the dark and medium sections of the shadow with charcoal according to your plan. Then it is time to work on the rest of the background. When thinking about secondary shading, always consider whether the background looks darker or lighter than the object. There is usually some variance: the background will look darker in some areas and lighter in others. Remember that the shadow on the table looks darker than the bottom of the orange. In order to lighten the background, erase away the mid-grey using a rubber. Pay attention to any areas that look particularly light, and establish those light areas first. For example, the lightest area of the background of the photo is close to the orange on the upper left-hand side, so get this in first.

Look for areas of high contrast to help you identify the lightest areas of the background, i.e. the upper left-hand side of the orange looks very dark compared with a very light background. This is an edge of high contrast and so provides a clue that the background in that area will need to be particularly light. The key to secondary shading is paying attention to the contrast between the object and the background, and understanding that this will vary all around the object. I have added a little bit of charcoal to darken the background slightly just next to the lightest part of the orange: this accentuates the edge in that area. I have also adjusted the primary shading in this area by adding a little more light along the edge of the orange itself.

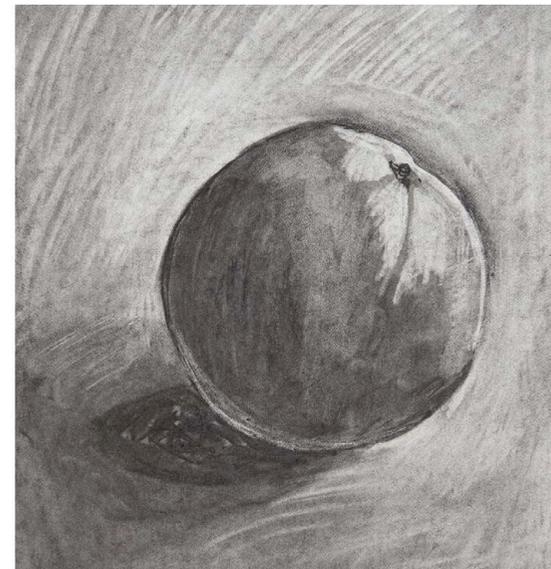
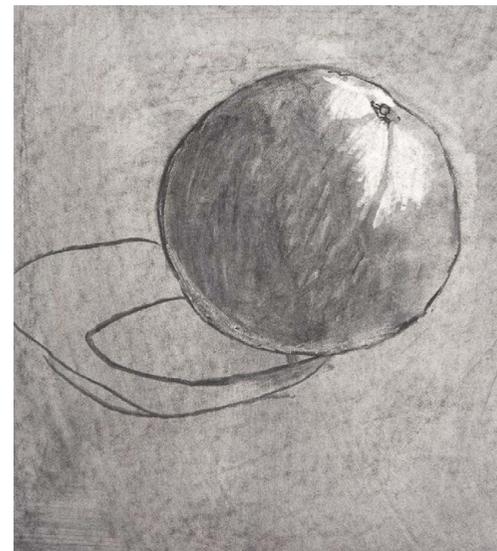
4. DRAW YOUR SHADING PLAN

Draw around the areas of light, medium and dark in the orange outline you have drawn. Also draw around the outline of the areas of shadow on the table, ready for filling in.



5. SHADE THE OBJECT

Shading of the object itself is called primary shading and the shading of the background is called secondary shading. Now use your charcoal to fill in the dark and medium areas of the orange, blending the charcoal with your fingers so that it looks fairly smooth. For the light areas, such as near the top of the orange where light is reflecting off the shiny surface, use a rubber to remove the mid-grey surface charcoal. In the original photo, notice that the bottom left-hand edge of the orange is slightly lighter than the table.



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