

# Visual Tools and Techniques

## Teaching Pack

2023

### Overview

This teaching pack includes 7 individually curated guides to develop and apply creative methodologies to learning and professional experiences.

This teaching pack is intended to be "educator-facing" and has been assembled by the Global Health Education and Learning Incubator at Harvard University, with a specific goal to provide educators with accessible, open-access tools for the design and development of curricula, teaching materials, student assignments and learning experiences. The teaching pack, and individual collections, will be updated as new resources become available.

The [Global Health Education and Learning Incubator at Harvard University](#) supports interdisciplinary education about world health through the production, curation, and dissemination of educational public goods.

This teaching pack includes:

- [Guide: Data Visualization](#)
- [Primer: Benefits of Drawing to Learn](#)
- [Guide: Design Elements, Images, and Icons](#)
- [Guide: Infographic and Word Cloud](#)
- [Guide: Mind Mapping](#)
- [Guide: Sketchnoting](#)
- [Guide: Sketch Supplies](#)

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# Data Visualization Guide

2023

## Overview

A well-designed data visualization can transform understanding of complex global challenges. Translating data into a visual format that supports easy interpretation, however, is an art that requires careful selection of the right chart type. A variety of digital tools exist to aid in the design of effective data visualizations. Here are a few curated by the [Global Health Education and Learning Incubator at Harvard University \(GHELI\)](#) to get you started!

### RESOURCES

#### THE DATA VISUALIZATION CATALOGUE

**Link:** <https://www.datavizcatalogue.com>

**Description:** This resource catalogs a diverse range of information visualization types. To inspire their own work, users can search visualizations by function (e.g., comparisons, relationships, distributions). Each visualization type is accompanied by a short description, including strengths and weaknesses.

#### DEPICT DATA STUDIO: INTERACTIVE CHART CHOOSER

**Link:** <https://depictdatastudio.com/charts>

**Description:** This tool allows the user to identify the best type of graph is suited for their data, based on number of data points and desired function. Each visualization is accompanied with a description, tutorial, additional resources, and examples.

#### TABLEAU PUBLIC

**Link:** <https://public.tableau.com/en-us/s/download>

**Description:** Tableau Public is a free, downloadable for creating and sharing data visualizations online. Visualizations that are published to Tableau Public can be embedded into web pages and blogs, as well as shared in multiple formats. No programming skills are required to use. The tool is accompanied by a series of [how-to videos](#) to get started.

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## Guide: Data Visualization

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### GOOGLE CHARTS

**Link:** <https://developers.google.com/chart>

**Description:** Google Charts allows users to design free, interactive charts for browsers and mobile devices. It includes a variety of chart types, with customizable design and ability to integrate with a variety of other data tools. This tool is accompanied by a series of guides, organized by chart type.

### DATAWRAPPER

**Link:** <https://www.datawrapper.de>

**Description:** This tool is especially for storytellers. Datawrapper includes 19 interactive chart types, 3 responsive maps, and a variety of customizable data tables. It includes options for live updating graphics, templates that follow best data visualization practices, and no coding required. Graphics are viewable across devices and platforms. The tool is accompanied by a [series of guides](#), organized by chart type.

### RAWGRAPHS

**Link:** <https://rawgraphs.io>

**Description:** RAWGraphs is an open-source data visualization framework built with the goal of making the visual representation of complex data easy for everyone. RAWGraphs includes data privacy tools, a variety of unique templates and customizable features, and options to export final visualizations in multiple formats. The tool connects spreadsheet applications (e.g., Microsoft Excel, Apple Numbers, OpenRefine) and vector graphics editors (e.g., Adobe Illustrator, Inkscape, Sketch). RAWGraphs also provides a library of [quick reference guides](#) to get started.

# Benefits of Drawing to Learn

## Primer

2023

### Overview

What are the benefits of drawing, sketchnoting, and visual notetaking? For many students, taking pen to paper makes learning tangible and personal. Visualization, in particular, helps synthesize complex information or illuminate unexpected connections impossible by text alone. Here are a few, short open access articles and blog posts curated by the [Global Health Education and Learning Incubator at Harvard University \(GHELI\)](#) that delve into “how” and “why” drawing and visual notetaking can be such powerful tools for learners.

#### GETTING STARTED

##### THE SCIENCE OF DRAWING AND MEMORY

Terada Y. The Science of Drawing and Memory. Edutopia 2019; Mar 14.  
<https://www.edutopia.org/article/science-drawing-and-memory>.

This *Edutopia* article shares how drawing encourages people to process information visually, kinesthetically, and semantically. In particular, it focuses on practical strategies for incorporating drawing into courses, from interactive notebooks and formative assessments to data visualization and bookmarking.

##### WHY TEACHERS ARE SO EXCITED ABOUT THE POWER OF SKETCHNOTING

Schwartz K. Why Teachers Are So Excited About the Power of Sketchnoting. KQED Mind/Shift 2019; Nov 3.  
<https://www.kqed.org/mindshift/54655/why-teachers-are-so-excited-about-the-power-of-sketchnoting>.

This article talks about how sketchnotes help students organize their thinking, build a visual vocabulary, support writing assignments, help identify misconceptions. This article also dives into the specific benefits of visual notetaking for students with different learning abilities and motor skills.

##### TO REMEMBER A LECTURE, TAKE NOTES BY HAND

Meyer R. To Remember a Lecture, Take Notes by Hand. The Atlantic 2014; May 1.  
<https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2014/05/to-remember-a-lecture-better-take-notes-by-hand/361478>.

This *Atlantic* piece explores findings of research indicating that people remember lectures better when they have taken handwritten notes rather than typed ones. Even with guidance otherwise, taking notes on

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## Primer: Benefits of Drawing to Learn

laptops more often leads to verbatim notes—while, due to speed, longhand notetakers have to be judicious about what is written down. The researchers believe that this active process leads to longer term comprehension.

### VIZUALIZATION AS PROCESS, NOT OUTPUT

Thorp J. Visualization as Process, Not Output. *Harvard Business Review* 2013; Apr 3.

<https://hbr.org/2013/04/visualization-as-process>.

This *Harvard Business Review* article emphasizes how the visualization process is iterative and generative, meaning the possibilities that emerge while sketching out an idea or concept are just as powerful as the end product. Creating intuitive pauses along the way to drafting a final product can help capture visual turning points in one's thinking. As an example, the article highlights the evolution of a visualization that would place the 3,000 names of victims on the 9/11 memorial in Manhattan specific places per wishes of their next-of-kin.

### FOR LEARNING, DRAWING A PICTURE MAY REALLY BE WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

For Learning, Drawing a Picture May Really Be Worth a Thousand Words. *Association for Psychological Science* 2018; Oct 22. <https://www.psychologicalscience.org/publications/observer/obsonline/for-learning-drawing-a-picture-may-really-be-worth-a-thousand-words.html>.

This post from the *Association for Psychological Science* summarizes a research study on how drawing a picture while learning can increase memory recall. Findings suggest that recall does not seem to depend on artistic ability, and the approach works for simple as well as more complex concepts.

### DUAL CODING THEORY & VISUAL NOTE TAKING

Dual Coding Theory & Visual Note Taking. *Math Giraffe* 2017; Jan 15. <https://www.mathgiraffe.com/blog/dual-coding-theory-visual-note-taking>.

This article and sketchnote from *Math Giraffe* describes psychological research on “dual coding theory,” which explains how visual and linguistic information is processed in different parts of the brain. There is a better chance in converting these two streams of information from short-term to long-term memory by illuminating connections between these two inputs—in other words, by blending images with text.

### MAKING LEARNING VISIBLE: DOODLING HELPS MEMORIES STICK

Schwartz K. Making Learning Visible: Doodling Helps Memories Stick. *KQED Mind/Shift* 2015; Jul 15.

<https://www.kqed.org/mindshift/39941/making-learning-visible-doodling-helps-memories-stick>.

The article shares two instructional coaches experience in bringing visual notetaking to their school districts, illuminating how visual notetaking is a way for educators to model constructive risk-taking to both colleagues and students. In addition to supporting deeper listening during classes, the process makes student learning visible to teachers, highlighting where concepts were missed or were unclear. The article also summarizes some neuroscience research on visualization, which frequently describes images as “zip files” to get one's working memory to carry more information.

### REDISCOVERING THE FORGOTTEN BENEFITS OF DRAWING

Landin J. Rediscovering the Forgotten Benefits of Drawing. *Scientific American* 2015; Sept 4.  
<https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/symbiartic/rediscovering-the-forgotten-benefits-of-drawing>.

In this *Scientific American* article, a biology professor reflects on how drawing use to be a critical component of scientific learning—both for communicating findings and enhancing observations. The article walks through the professor’s efforts to reincorporate drawing into her introductory biology courses and focuses on three challenges her students experienced when first diving into scientific illustration: math, writing, and psychology.

### THE POWER OF VISUAL NOTETAKING

Knezel S. The Power of Visual Notetaking. *Education Week* 2016; Dec 28.  
<https://www.edweek.org/tm/articles/2016/12/28/the-power-of-visual-notetaking.html>.

This *Education Week* article focuses on an educator’s first-person account of incorporating visual notetaking into her classroom. The article underscores how visual notetaking supports student retention of material, helps untangle difficult concepts, and increases students’ personal agency.

# Design Elements, Images, and Icons Guide

2023

## Overview

Colors, icons, and images are all design elements that support the communication of ideas and concepts. When carefully chosen, such design elements can enhance both the intention, the aesthetic, and the accessibility of visual products. A variety of digital tools exist to inspire thoughtful, engaging design. Here are a few curated by the [Global Health Education and Learning Incubator at Harvard University \(GHELI\)](#) to get you started!

### COLOR PICKERS AND PALETTES

This selection of resources includes links, descriptions and examples of tools designed to assist users in generating color palettes for web and print design.

#### ADOBE COLOR

**Link:** <https://color.adobe.com>

**Description:** In Adobe Color, users can explore color combinations through the interactive color wheel or the [Trends](#) page. Of note, users can generate inspiring color palettes from images they upload. In addition, Adobe Color includes new tools to create visually accessible color themes.

#### I WANT HUE

**Link:** <https://medialab.github.io/iwanthue>

**Description:** This is a color picking tool designed specifically for data scientists. Users can generate and refine palettes of optimally distinct colors, as well as explore [prepopulated examples](#).

#### PALETTON

**Link:** <http://paletton.com>

**Description:** In Paletton, users can create complementary color combinations inspired by classical color theory. Users can preview the color palettes on mosaics, simple websites, and other graphics, as well as export the color combinations in multiple formats.

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# Guide: Design Elements, Images, and Icons

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## COLORSNAPPER2

**Link:** <https://colorsnapper.com>

**Description:** This Mac color picker app for designers and developers makes it easy to collect, adjust, organize, and export colors of any pixel on the screen. Of note, the user interface integrates with Apple's Color Panel.

## STOCK IMAGES

This selection of resources features websites where users can download images at no cost.

## PEXELS

**Link:** <https://www.pexels.com>

**Description:** Pexels provides free stock photos and videos, all licensed under the Creative Commons Zero (CC0) license for commercial and noncommercial. Users can search their immense catalogue by keyword, category, or via the “explore” page.

## PICOGRAPHY

**Link:** <https://picography.co/>

**Description:** Picography offers free, beautiful high-resolution photos, which users can explore by category. All photos on Picography are available for use under the Creative Commons Zero (CC0) license, meaning they can be used, copied, edited, and shared for both commercial and non-commercial purposes.

## UNSPLASH

**Link:** <https://unsplash.com>

**Description:** Unsplash provides more than 1 million free, high-resolution images from photographers around the world. Users can explore photos by keyword or by topic. Images can be downloaded in multiple sizes for both commercial and non-commercial uses.

## ICONS

The visual language of icons can communicate volumes through simple imagery. This selection of resources includes stock icon websites where users can download icons and graphics at no cost.

## THE NOUN PROJECT

**Link:** <https://thenounproject.com>

**Description:** Creating, Sharing and Celebrating the World's Visual Language. Nearly a million curated icons, created by a global community.



### PICTOFIGO

**Link:** <https://www.pictofigo.com>

**Description:** Pictofigo offers a wide range of freehand drawings, searchable by topic. Users can edit a drawing's colors, as well as add any logos or text of choice. Icons can be downloaded in high-resolution in multiple formats (PNG, EPS, AI, SVG).

# Infographic and Word Cloud Guide

2023

## Overview

When it comes to presenting a “snapshot” of information, infographics and word clouds are especially useful for the economical use of text, visuals, and space. Infographics can distill data into succinct stories, in a way that text alone can’t communicate. Word clouds can capture big picture trends, priorities, and feedback. A variety of digital tools exist to virtually design infographics and word clouds that can be shared in multiple formats. Here are a few curated by the [Global Health Education and Learning Incubator at Harvard University \(GHELI\)](#) to get you started!

### INFOGRAPHIC

#### CANVA

**Link:** <https://www.canva.com>

**Description:** Canva is a simple graphic design tool with a library of pre-designed infographic templates. Users can customize the size of their projects, add diverse visual elements, adapt fonts and colors, and more. Infographics can be downloaded as image files or PDFs.

#### PIKTOCHART

**Link:** <https://piktochart.com>

**Description:** Piktochart helps with the creation of customizable, interactive infographics. The program includes editable text frames, a library of free icons and images, adjustable color themes, and multiple options for publication and download. Charts made on the free account do include the Piktochart watermark.

#### INFOGRAM

**Link:** <https://infogram.com>

**Description:** Infogram features more than 35 interactive charts and over 500 maps to help users visualize data—including pie charts, bar graphs, column tables, and word clouds.

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## Guide: Infographic and Word Cloud

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### WORD CLOUD

#### TAGXEDO

**Link:** <http://www.tagxedo.com>

**Description:** Tagxedo turns words into a visually engaging word cloud, wherein words are individually sized appropriately to highlight the frequencies of occurrence within the body of text. Tagxedo can create word clouds based on news stories, Twitter accounts, and more. There are some basic options to customize the shape, font, and theme.

#### TOCLOUD

**Link:** <https://www.tocloud.com>

**Description:** ToCloud is an online free word cloud generator that uses word frequency as the weight. Clouds can be generated by pasting text or even a web page URL.

#### WORDITOUT

**Link:** <https://worditout.com>

**Description:** WordItOut is a free to use program that delivers basic word clouds. Users can copy and paste from a spreadsheet or manually enter in text. There are basic options to customize fonts and colors.

#### WORDCLOUDS

**Link:** <https://www.wordclouds.com>

**Description:** WordClouds is a free word cloud generator that can be used with any browser on PC, Mac, tablet, or smartphone. Users can customize the cloud's color, font, and shape, as well as generate clickable word clouds with links.

# Mind Mapping Guide

2023

## Overview

Mind maps are a wonderful tool to capture, develop, and share ideas visually. These graphical representations often convey relationships between ideas, support retention of concepts, encourage creative flow, and facilitate team collaboration. A variety of digital tools exist to virtually design mind maps that can be shared in multiple formats. Here are a few curated by the [Global Health Education and Learning Incubator at Harvard University \(GHELI\)](#) to get you started!

### GETTING STARTED

#### FREEMIND

**Link:** [https://freemind.sourceforge.net/wiki/index.php/Main\\_Page](https://freemind.sourceforge.net/wiki/index.php/Main_Page)

**Description:** FreeMind is a free, open-source mind mapping software app written in Java. Great for keeping a personal knowledge base and rather simple to use. A comprehensive, PDF user guide accompanies this tool.

**Example Link:** <https://www.imindq.com/mind-map-templates>

#### MINDMEISTER

**Link:** <https://www.mindmeister.com>

**Description:** MindMeister is collaborative online mind mapping software solution. Provides a clean and simple look and includes a dynamic “presentation mode” share mind maps in a slideshow format. It is a primarily browser-based tool, with iOS and Android app versions available.

**Example Link:** <https://www.mindmeister.com/40950677/how-to-win-friends-influence-people>

#### XMIND

**Link:** <https://www.xmind.net>

**Description:** XMind is a free, open-source mind mapping tool with a paid pro version available. It includes a variety of free templates to get started, options to customize colors and graphics, ability to sync across devices, and capability to export in multiple file formats.

**Example Link:** <https://www.xmind.net/m/VSrADL>

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# Guide: Mind Mapping

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## MINDNODE

**Link:** <https://mindnode.com>

**Description:** MindNode is an app-based mind mapping tool for iOS and Mac. Users can sync maps across devices, add context to thoughts with “visual tags,” and customize with color and icons. Short tutorials on designing and organizing diagrams are also available to users. Free and paid options are available.

**Example Link:** <https://mindnode.com/mindnode/ios>

## MIND 42

**Link:** <https://mind42.com>

**Description:** Mind 42 is a free, collaborative browser-based mind mapping tool. Use it to create to-do lists, brainstorm ideas, and organize events. Simple and free. Maps are private by default.

**Example Link:** <https://mind42.com/public/415045b3-f558-4b6c-be95-ebf4b13a6735>

## GITMIND

**Link:** <https://gitmind.com>

**Description:** GitMind is a free, browser-based mind-mapping tool. It includes a variety of templates, searchable by type. Maps can be synced across devices and exported into multiple formats (PDF, TXT, SVG, and more).

## NOVAMIND

**Link:** <https://www.NovaMind.com>

**Description:** Professional multi-platform compatible mind mapping software. NovaMind is a cross-platform brainstorming software. Try it on Windows desktop, Windows 8, iPad, Mac OS X, or Android, and online as NovaMind Cloud.

## POPPLET

**Link:** <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/popplet-lite/id364738549>

**Description:** Popplet is a mind mapping tool for the iPad to capture and organize your ideas. Popplet is a great device for students as it is very intuitive. In the classroom and at home, students can use Popplet to think and learn visually. Popplet is supported by Apple products. Free and paid options are available.

## SPIDERSCRIBE

**Link:** <https://www.spiderscribe.net>

**Description:** SpiderScribe is an online mind mapping and brainstorming tool. It lets you organize your ideas by connecting notes, files, calendar events, etc. in free-form maps. You can collaborate and share those maps online!

# Sketchnotes Guide

2023

## Overview

One doesn't need to identify as an artist for sketchnotes and visualization to be an integral part of one's learning toolbox. Taking pen to paper makes learning tangible and personal. Visualization, in particular, helps synthesize complex information or illuminate unexpected connections impossible by text alone. Like any skill, however, sketchnotes require a little experimentation, patience, and practice. Over time, learners can develop unique visual "vocabularies" for communicating ideas across communities, across identities, and across disciplines. The [Global Health Education and Learning Incubator at Harvard University \(GHELI\)](#) has curated free articles and videos to get started with exploration, as well as some recommended books for a deeper dive.

### GETTING STARTED

#### SKETCHNOTES 101: VISUAL THINKING

Berman C. Sketchnotes 101: Visual Thinking. Core 77 2011; Jun 6.  
<https://www.core77.com/posts/19518/sketchnotes-101-visual-thinking-19518>.

Sketchnotes leverage visual thinking and the mind's natural desire to make sense of information through pictures. This article walks through the "circular" process of sketchnoting, which requires the notetaker to listen, synthesize, and visualize in real-time.

#### SKETCHNOTES 101: THE BASICS OF VISUAL NOTE-TAKING

Berman C. Sketchnotes 101: The Basics of Visual Note-taking. Core 77 2011; Jun 21.  
<https://www.core77.com/posts/19678/sketchnotes-101-the-basics-of-visual-note-taking-19678>.

This article covers the basics of transforming ideas into visual communication, specifically structuring thoughts and concepts. It covers useful tools, how to set up a page prior to notetaking, visual elements to organize notes, and some reminders to beginning notetakers.

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# Guide: Sketchnotes

## SKETCHING: THE VISUAL THINKING POWER TOOL

Rohde M. Sketching: The Visual Thinking Power Tool. A List Apart 2011; Jan 25.

<https://alistapart.com/article/sketching-the-visual-thinking-power-tool>.

This article demystifies the process of sketchnoting, emphasizing that it is a tool for all who are interested in visual thinking—not just artists. It highlights three benefits of sketching: generating ideas quickly, exploring alternatives, and fostering better discussions. The article culminates with helpful tools to start a sketchnoting practice.

## TUTORIALS: SKETCHNOTE SCHOOL

Neill D. Sketchnote School. Verbal to Visual 2020.

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLdKI62dB717xntLBme1dcjSumZWwsmTw7>.

Sketchnote School is a playlist of over 100 short videos that tackle different dimensions of sketchnoting. The videos tackle everything from warm-up exercises to ideas for developing one's visual language to best practices for sketchnoting live.

## TUTORIALS: SKETCHO FRENZY

Delfin C. Sketcho Frenzy 2012. <https://youtu.be/gY9KdRfNN9w>.

Sketcho Frenzy is a series of animated sketchnote tutorials to support individuals in their notetaking journal. Videos range from 1-3 minutes long and delve into a handful of visualization types. Videos include:

- [The Basics of Visual Note-taking](#)
- [Venn Diagram](#)
- [Pie Chart](#)
- [Mind Map](#)
- [Typography](#)

## SKETCH50 HOW-TOS

Sketch50 How-Tos. Sketch50. <https://sketch50.org/resources-2>.

This site rounds up some tutorials on how to draw common sketchnoting elements, such as banners, arrows, typography, figures, and more. The webpage is accompanied by a comprehensive [Google Drive folder](#) of additional sketchnoting tutorials.

## THE SKETCHNOTE PODCAST

Rohde M. The Sketchnote Podcast. Size43 Films 2015. <https://rohdesign.com/weblog/2015/8/26/the-sketchnote-podcast-season-1.html>.

These videos from Mike Rohde, one of the pioneers of sketchnoting, dives into bite-sized tutorials on sketching different concepts and typography. It also features special “Sketchnote Critique” episodes featuring other illustrators, and some recommended techniques for sketching during meetings and workshops.

### GO FURTHER

If you're seeking a deeper dive beyond the open access resources listed above, we recommend the following books:

#### THE DOODLE REVOLUTION: UNLOCK THE POWER TO THINK DIFFERENTLY

Brown S. The Doodle Revolution: Unlock the Power to Think Differently. Portfolio 2015.  
<https://bookshop.org/books/the-doodle-revolution-unlock-the-power-to-think-differently/9781591847038>.

#### THE SKETCHNOTE HANDBOOK: THE ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO VISUAL NOTETAKING

Rohde M. The Sketchnote Handbook: The Illustrated Guide to Visual Notetaking. Peachpit Press 2012.  
<https://bookshop.org/books/the-sketchnote-handbook-the-illustrated-guide-to-visual-note-taking/9780321857897>.

#### THE BACK OF THE NAPKIN: SOLVING PROBLEMS AND SELLING IDEAS

Roam D. The Back of the Napkin: Solving Problems and Selling Ideas. Portfolio 2013.  
<https://bookshop.org/books/the-back-of-the-napkin-solving-problems-and-selling-ideas-with-pictures-expanded/9781591842699>.

#### VISUAL NOTE-TAKING FOR EDUCATORS: A TEACHER'S GUIDE TO STUDENT CREATIVITY

Pillars W. Visual Note-Taking for Educators: A Teacher's Guide to Student Creativity. W.W. Norton & Company 2015. <https://wnnorton.com/books/9780393708455>.



# Sketchnote Supplies

## Guide

2023

### Overview

Sketchnotes are a great, refreshing approach to get creative with your teaching and learning style, and a way to expand your toolkit for how to present and share information. We recommend experimenting with finding the right tools for your personal sketchnote style. Here are a few curated by the [Global Health Education and Learning Incubator at Harvard University \(GHELI\)](#) to get you started!

#### MARKERS

##### CRAYOLA - \$

**Link:** <https://shop.crayola.com/color-and-draw/markers>

**Description:** Crayola colored markers are affordable, high-quality products with sturdy tips and vibrant ink. Often washable, they are sold everywhere and can be purchased in bulk. Purchase this [classic 10 pack set](#) from Staples.

##### STAEDTLER DOUBLE ENDED FIBER-TIP - \$\$

**Link:** <https://www.staedtler.com/intl/en>

**Description:** Staedtler sells a double ended fiber-tip marker with vibrant colors for creating precise lines and shading variations. Purchase this [36 piece set](#) from Staples.

##### PENTEL - \$\$

**Link:** <https://www.pentel.com>

**Description:** Pentel sells a full line of drawing supplies including pens, pencils, and a variety of high-quality marker collections (felt tip, permanent, paint markers and more). Purchase this fine point [36 piece set](#) from Staples.

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## Guide: Sketchnote Supplies

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### NEULAND - \$\$\$

**Link:** <https://us.neuland.com>

**Description:** Neuland markers come in a rainbow of colors and a variety of sizes and chisel shapes. They are marketed to professionals so can be more expensive than others but are very high quality and refillable. Purchase the [Neuland BigOne](#), an extra wide wedge marker that is great for eye-catching titles and visual graphics.

### MECHANICAL PENCILS & COLORED PENCILS

#### PAPER MATE SHARPWRITER MECHANICAL - \$

**Link:** [https://www.staples.com/Paper-Mate-Sharpwriter-Mechanical-Pencils-0-7mm-Yellow-Barrel-5-pk-30376/product\\_710152](https://www.staples.com/Paper-Mate-Sharpwriter-Mechanical-Pencils-0-7mm-Yellow-Barrel-5-pk-30376/product_710152)

**Description:** These come in packs of five and use a spring-loaded mechanism to reduce lead breakage.

#### ALVIN DRAFT-MATIC MECHANICAL, 9MM - \$\$

**Link:** <https://www.amazon.com/Alvin-DM09-Draft-Matic-Mechanical-Pencil/dp/Boo1DKGYRO>

**Description:** A fine-line mechanical pencil that provides up to 12 leads (continuously fed via a push button cap) and includes a concealed eraser. Highly reviewed for its weight, precision, and quality.

#### BLICK STUDIO ARTISTS' COLORED PENCILS - \$\$

**Link:** <https://www.dickblick.com>

**Description:** Blick developed its own in-house colored pencils that are highly pigmented and face resistant with a mix of professional quality yet affordable options. Purchase a [set of 48](#).

#### FANTASIA (A BLICK BRAND) - \$\$

**Link:** <https://www.dickblick.com>

**Description:** A great colored pencil option for blending. They are made of extra-thick blend-able cores that make them ideal for layering. Purchase a [set of 48](#).

#### PRISMACOLOR PENCILS - \$\$\$

**Link:** <https://www.prismacolor.com>

**Description:** Made with soft wax and bright colors these are considered ideal for beginners. Purchase a [set of 72](#).

### DRAWING PADS

#### SKETCH PAD BY ARTIST'S LOFT - \$

**Link:** Purchase [9" x 12"](#) at Micheals

**Description:** Lightweight option and contains 100 sheets of paper.

#### MELISSA & DOUG DRAWING PAPER PAD - \$

**Link:** Purchase [9" x 12"](#) on Amazon

**Description:** Large, easy to remove blank pages that work with multiple art supplies.

#### STRATHMORE DRAWING PADS - \$

**Link:** <https://www.strathmoreartist.com/home.html>

**Description:** Multiple types and purchase options. Popular among artists. Choose one with a medium surface (Examples: [8"x10" 24 sheets](#), [9"x12" 40 sheets](#)) that works with crayons, pencils, markers and other drawing mediums.

#### ROCKETBOOK - \$\$

**Link:** <https://getrocketbook.com>

**Description:** A reusable digital notebook that uses free cloud software to digitally upload your sketch notes. Notebooks can be wiped clean with water and a cloth. Great for the environment!

#### RHODIA - \$\$

**Link:** <https://rhodiapads.com>

**Description:** Comes in several high-quality collections in various sizes that include dot grid options. For an affordable [Rhodia 16.5" x 12.5" dot grid pad](#) try classic office products.