



PASTEL ACADEMY ONLINE

Tonal Values -Training Your Eye

Session Worksheet/Overview



Introduction to Tonal Values -Video



Lesson Plan

An overview of the training

You are not expected to complete work from ALL of the photos provided – although I have no doubt you might. Enjoy!

There is some logical sequence in the way these exercises are laid out. But once having gone through the exercises you can return to any one of them to do more practice. There is a mixture of exercises – from shading to sketching. There is also training on Charcoal and Graphite stick work. Try them both – choose one to develop alongside your pastel work.

It would be a good idea to start a Tonal Values file for your work.

On completion on the exercises – as you complete them – you can post them into the tonal values forum (there is direct link on the video page of each exercise – or go through the community link)

All relevant downloads are also available on the video page.

- 1) Exercise 1 - Introduction to Tonal Values- **The Grayscale Exercise.**
- 2) Exercise 2 - **Shading Exercises**
- 3) Exercise 3 - Landscape in Graphite Stick – **(6 photos between exercises 3&4)**
- 4) Exercise 4 - Landscape – Charcoal Relief -
- 5) Exercise 5- Aerial Perspective and Tonal Values – **4 photos**
- 6) Exercise 6- Tonal Values and Buildings/Townscapes. **4 photos**
- 7) Exercise 7 - Improving your tonal values with **Sketching Exercises**
- 8) Exercise 8– Tonal Values and Pastel – **The Pastel Swatch**

***Any questions you have on the exercises please post them in the Tonal Values Forum – set up precisely for this training and this way we can keep all the Tonal Values issues together.**

Exercise One

The Grayscale Exercise

This training accompanies the Introduction video (Image shown on the front page).

This video explains how and why tonal values are important.

- 1) Download the PDF Tonal Scale – and if possible laminate it or attach it to a piece of card and cover with transparent film. The tonal scale will be an important part of your kit.
- 2) Turn your photographs of your images into grayscale (black and white) as I have done in the video, so that you can see if your work in colour actually works in black and white. You can do this by taking the colour out of your paintings either in Photoshop or a similar programme – Word does it too. It is easy to do and it is one of your greatest guides for good tonal values.

Doing this also helps to train your eye to tone. Getting into the habit of taking a grayscale image is good practice for your future work. Keep these images in a file so that we can compare images periodically as you improve.

If you do work in both landscape and portrait – do both.

- 3) Using your tonal scale next to your work in greyscale, try to assess where your painting is on the tonal scale – for example: from numbers 1 – 8 or 0 – 9. This is based on how much pure black and pure white you can see in your greyscale image? It is not an exact science, but it is a good way also to train your eye.

Exercise Two

Shading Exercises



Image of Shading Video

The Tonal shading video shows you exactly that – all the different ways to shade using a pencil, in particular how you can manipulate the pencil to achieve various marks which give your work variety. **Shading brings you work to life.** The important aspect of this training is repetition and filling sheets of your drawing pad with as much shading as possible.

1) Download the shading PDF to accompany this exercise.

Using two different pencils – eg a 2b and a 4b pencil (recommended) complete the same block of shading so that you can see exactly how different the ‘leads’ are. Generally the B and 2b pencils are easier to erase than the heavier greasier ones eg 5b 6,7b etc. But they all have their uses depending on the work you like to do.

2) Complete a mini version of the tonal scale at the top of one of your sketch pad pages. It helps to give you shading practice and trains the eye.

3) Practice – use all the pencils you might have – see the difference – try to avoid using the ones starting with ‘H’ (hard).

Exercise Three

Tonal Values in the Landscape Graphite

Image of graphite video



This is a module which looks at the benefits of graphite sticks as a fabulous medium for capturing the beauty of the landscape. They are a great way to get into working tonally and working 'fast'. If you are stuck for time, a graphite stick route is the way to go.

First a word about the sticks; they are in fact hardly any different to look at than a pencil – but they have no wooden case. The entire stick is graphite wrapped in a plastic type transparent sheath which keeps your fingers cleaner. Other than that they have the properties of pencils – they come in different grades like pencils and they rub out the same way.

- 1) Download the PDF's that accompany this video and training.
- 2) Download the photographs provided for these exercises.
- 3) Complete as many pieces in graphite as you can.

Exercise Four

Tonal Values in the Landscape

Charcoal Relief



Image of Video – Charcoal relief technique

Charcoal is one of the art worlds heros. It is an amazing, delicate and tender medium which has enthralled artists for centuries. The materials for this technique are few and inexpensive. And what many do not realise is that it is totally compatible with Pastel. I use it with pastel all the time, and have even written magazine articles to that effect.

- 1) Download the Charcoal materials.
- 2) Download the PDFs which contain exercises on charcoal.
- 3) Download the photo library for use with the tonal values module.
- 4) Complete as many of the photos as you can – copies of the photographs provided.

You can use fixative easily with charcoal and it will not affect you work.

Be prepared for this medium and technique to cause a real addiction!

Exercise Five

Aerial Perspective and Tonal Values



Image of Aerial Perspective Video

This video shows how shading defines our work in landscape, when working with aerial perspective. Aerial perspective is how we explain why features in the back of our landscape paintings – like a distant mountain – appear to me so much lighter and duller in colour (and indeed in tone) than a similar mountain in the foreground. As the video explains it is partly due to the effect of the earth's atmosphere between you and your eyes and the background mountain.

- 1) Download the PDF of photographs (Photo Library) provided to practice getting the feeling of distance. These have been chosen to give you the best exercise in aerial perspective.

There is one basic exercise for this module: Produce black and white versions of the colour photos provided. All photos have been given you in colour.

- 2) Recommended graphite stick or charcoal for these exercises.

Exercise Six

Tonal Values and Buildings



Image of Video of tonal values and townscapes

I have included a video on painting townscapes and buildings to show the role of tonal values in major shapes – much of this module applies to working in still life that work in shapes. The buildings exercise is twofold – to get you drawing large shapes and to get you working in textures.

- 1) Download the PDF images of townscapes and buildings.
There is a variety of images from buildings in the landscape to complete townscapes.
- 2) Complete the images in black and white: all images are provided for you in colour. Recommended medium: charcoal or graphite stick. You might also try monochrome (B& W) pastel.

Exercise Seven

Sketching and Tonal Values



Video – Tonal Values and Sketching

This video training shows work in pen and pencil that give two different effects in sketching. Sketching is important and I know that those of you who only work in portraiture perhaps don't see a role for sketching. Not so. Learning to interpret the natural world is vital tool for any artist.

What you have to understand about sketching is that as you progress it saves you time and money and makes you a far better artist. If all the mistakes you make are in a sketchbook – that saves time and money – and frustration.

- 1) Download the PDF – Sketching Worksheet. This PDF contains sketches of mine that I have made available to you to copy.
- 2) Copy the images – try it in pencil (but try not to use an eraser) make lines over lines if you have to. For some it is the only and best way to learn, and in sketching there are no 'mistakes'!
- 3) In pen – or pen and ink, just be guided by the kind of marks I make. You will notice that most are diagonal lines – following the natural movement of my wrist.

Exercise Eight

Tonal Values and Pastel

The Pastel Swatch Exercise



Image of Video – the Tonal Swatch

This simple exercise has been the one completed by over 2500 artists who were new to pastel. I devised it as a way to make it easy to understand how to blend and mix pastel and also how to recognise the role of tonal values in the pastel medium.

In this training I show you how to complete your own swatch using a simple and inexpensive box of very useful pastels and in doing so you will learn the correct way to lighten pastels and darken pastels in any given painting. I also demonstrate exactly how to approach your pastel work tonally, and never ever trust that the darkest green in your new mixed box is, in fact, dark.

This training comprises two elements of training:

- 1) Complete the tonal swatch after watching the video. Even if you work mainly in pastel pencil at the moment you will still need this knowledge. You can also complete a pastel pencil version.
- 2) Complete the tree exercise (one using black and one not using black) as shown in the video.

