

DRAWING USING A REFERENCE PHOTO

Ages:

All ages!

Description:

Using and studying a reference photo can be a great way to learn how to draw. Training your eye to recognize different shapes and patterns will support your art skills. During this activity we will learn a few of the basic reference photo techniques. You will train your eye to notice geometric shapes, and that will help you develop as an artist.

Time:

20-30 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Pencil
- Paper
- Eraser
- Reference Photo

Let's get started:

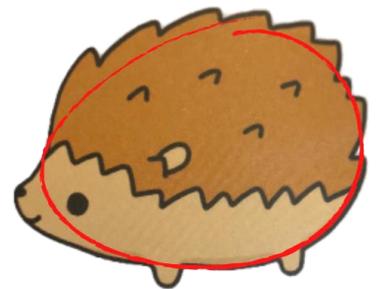
Find a comfortable spot that you can relax and concentrate. Have all of your supplies nearby. Having a dedicated art space where you feel creative and energized is ideal, but as long as you have a pencil you can create anywhere.

Step 1

Notice Shape

For this character the basic shape is an oval or egg shape

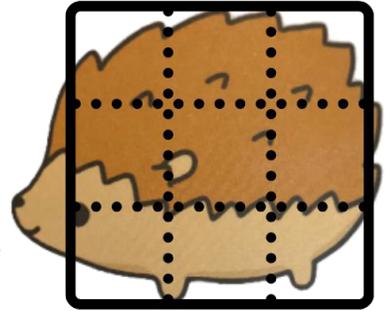
Beginning with a light line start to sketch out the size and basic shape. You will erase most of these lines so keep your lines light.



Step 2:

Decide Where Everything Goes

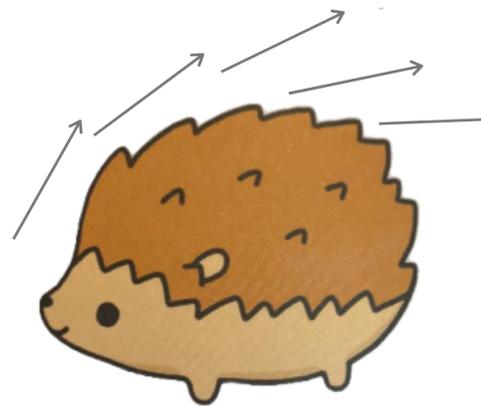
Whether you actually apply a grid over your image or just imagine one the main thing is to carefully study where you will place things. For example, notice that the top is $\frac{2}{3}$ of the hedgehog's size. During this step you should lightly begin marking where you will place the spikes, feet, ear, and eyes.



Step 3:

Look Carefully at Line Direction

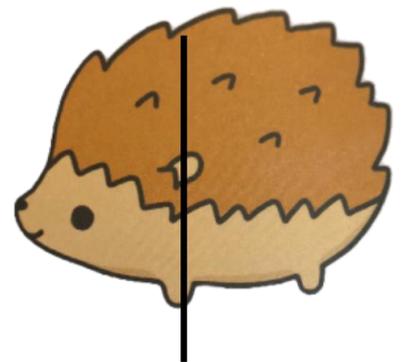
To make his spikes look realistic, they gradually point backwards. As you begin to add detail, be careful to pay extra close attention to direction. Some artists hold their pencil up to a line to compare direction or angle. [Did you know that hedgehogs have 5,000-7,000 spikes?]



Step 4:

Checking Your Work

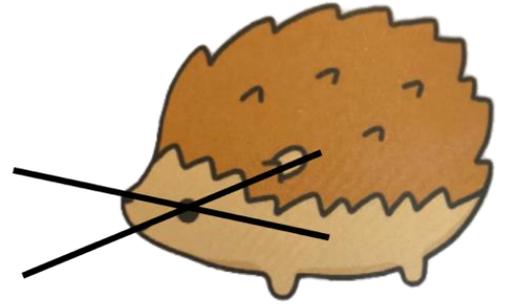
As you are drawing in the features pay close attention to easily identifiable checkpoints. For example, I can see that the hedgehog's ear and front foot line up so, if mine do not, I may adjust and correct before adding final lines.



Step 5:

Focusing on the Details

It is important to notice that the nose is on the top of the little nub that extends off of the body. The ear and eye line up diagonally and so does the nose and the eye. If you look carefully at an image, all the information is there for you to recreate. Training yourself to see it is the journey of an artist.



Step 6:

Darken the Lines

Once you have a final rough sketch darken the lines and watch your hedgehog come to life.

Step 7:

Try another drawing!

Now that you know the steps to take, try these techniques to draw another picture.

ACTIVITY RECAP

Discovery Questions:

- How did your hedgehog turn out? Did the guides help you to notice things you weren't noticing before?
- Do you think studying the details of a photo will help you notice more things in real life? Do you feel inspired to draw more of what you see?
- Do you think that skilled artists use these techniques? How do you think your art could improve by learning them?
- With a parent/guardian's permission, share your art with us on our Instagram page with the tag @girlsincindy.

Inspiring all girls to be strong, smart, and bold