

COLOURWHEEL Art Classes

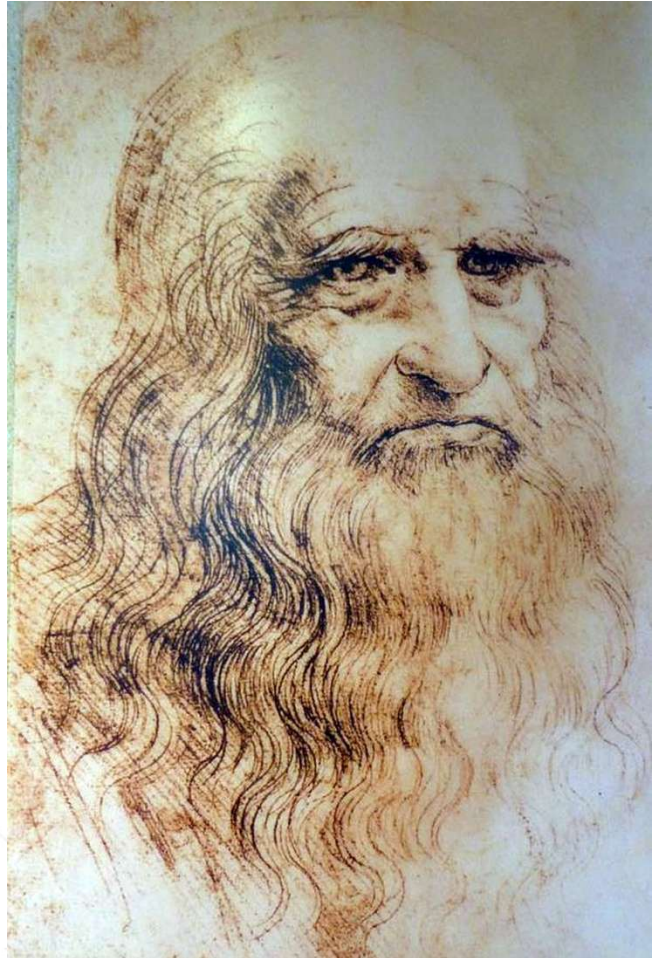
Sketching Pencils/Charcoal: Hair



Whether you want to make hair a focus of your image or just hint at it, hair is an important part of any portrait. In this session, we'll be looking at a number of ways to approach this subject to build your skills and confidence. Do give yourself plenty of practice at the activities listed below – fill those sketchbooks!



Jake Spicer Copyrighted image



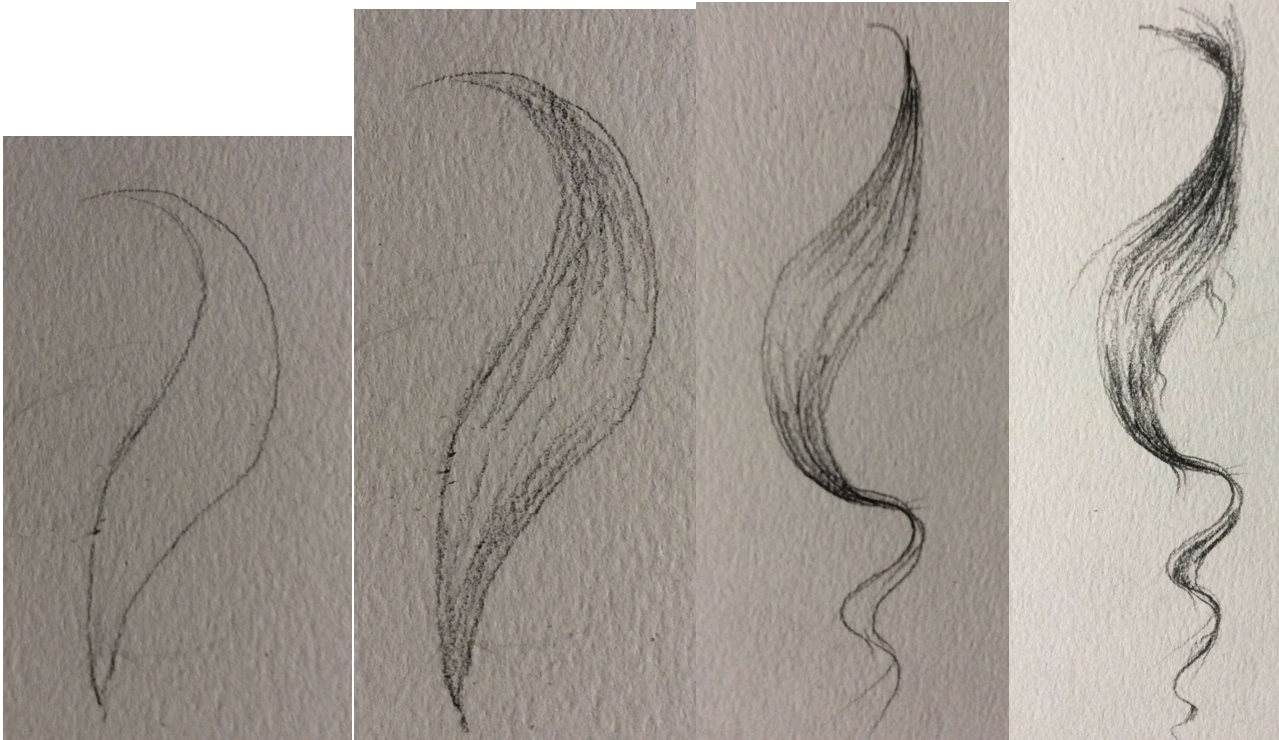
Leonardo da Vinci, Copyrighted image



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Equipment needed: white cartridge paper or toned paper
sketching pencils (I used a 2H and a 4B), angled eraser, putty eraser, willow charcoal, charcoal pencil, paper stump, hairspray to fix your work, tracing paper.

Warm Up



Even with the shortest of styles, hair moves, curls, waves and falls in various directions. This can seem daunting but can be beautiful to capture. A good place to start is small, with simply a lock of hair. Observational drawing is always best so take a photograph or use an image to focus in on an interesting strand.



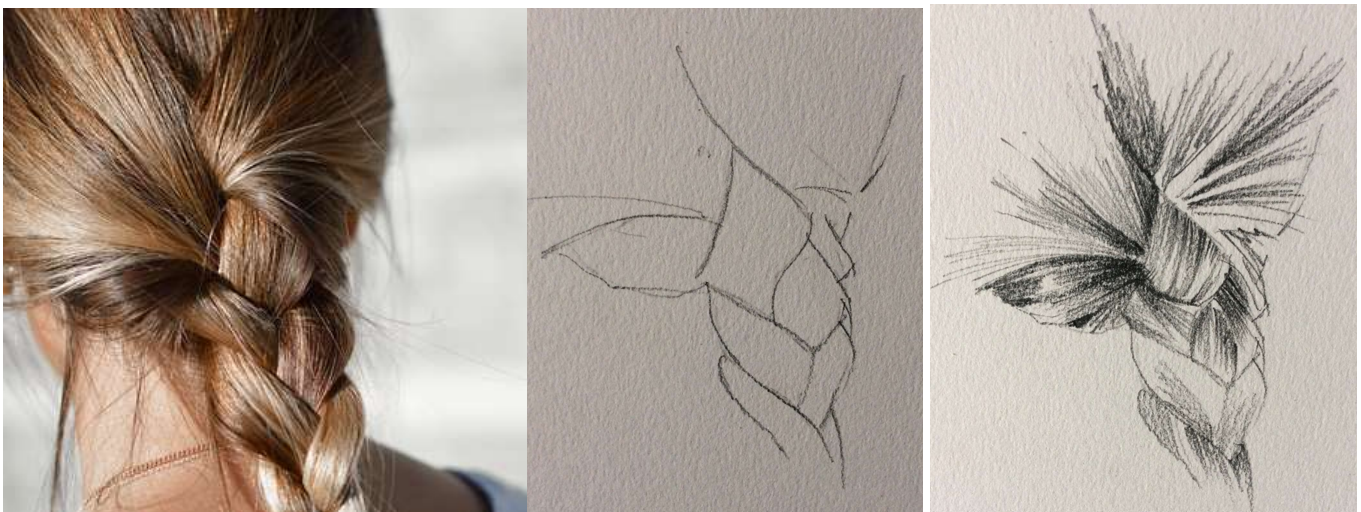
Above: I simply begin by using a 2H pencil to sketch out a lock of hair. The same pencil is used to begin to work in strokes, following the contours and the way the hair is moving. Switching to a 4B, darker hairs are placed into the drawing. Some of these lines are carried through to create the loose hairs at the bottom. Keep your pencils sharp and work between your two pencils to add detail/further tone. Leave the white of the paper for highlights or carve in with your eraser. **Left:** I've worked in the same way but using charcoal instead)

Note: Understanding light is important when drawing hair. Look for those areas where hair is darker e.g. closer to the face and neck, and beneath curls and waves. To contrast against this, look for those areas of highlights such as nearer the top of the head.

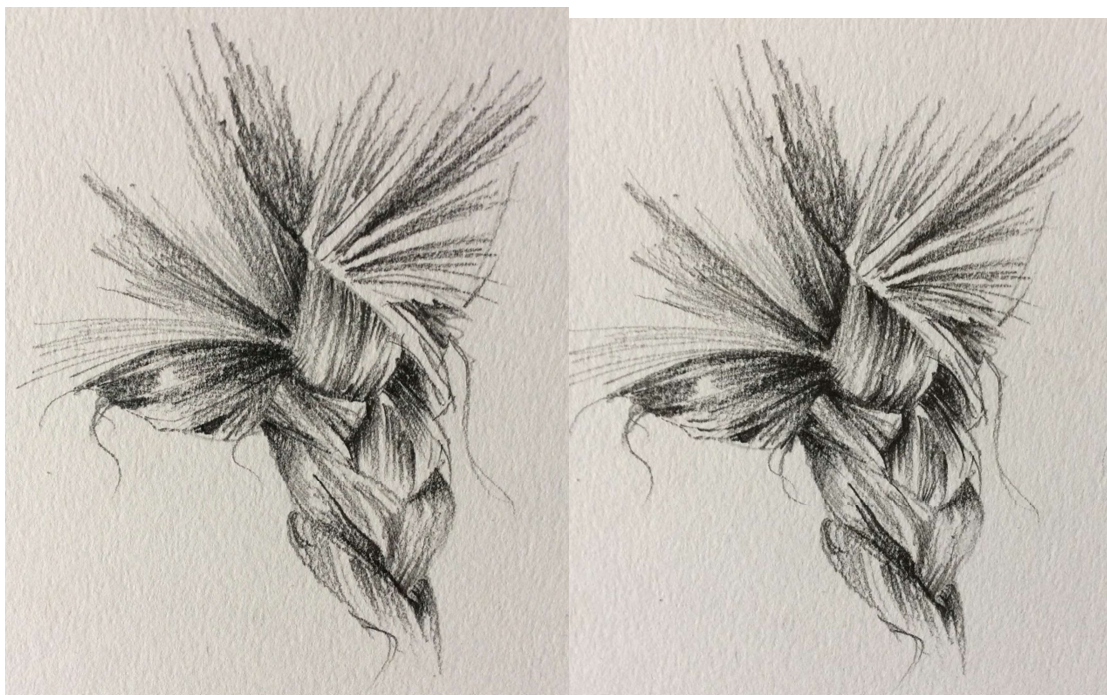
Plaits



When you've built your confidence with small studies, it's fun to have a go at something a little more complicated. Above, I've used a 2H pencil to draw the larger shapes that sections of the plait make. The construction lines in the first image help me to taper the shapes. Once these are in place, I simply divide each section into two with a curved line. Working in the same way as the warm up, I alternate between a 2H and 4B pencil, reserving the white of the paper for the highlights. Note how using curved strokes and leaving the highlights help to create the feeling of volume and body.

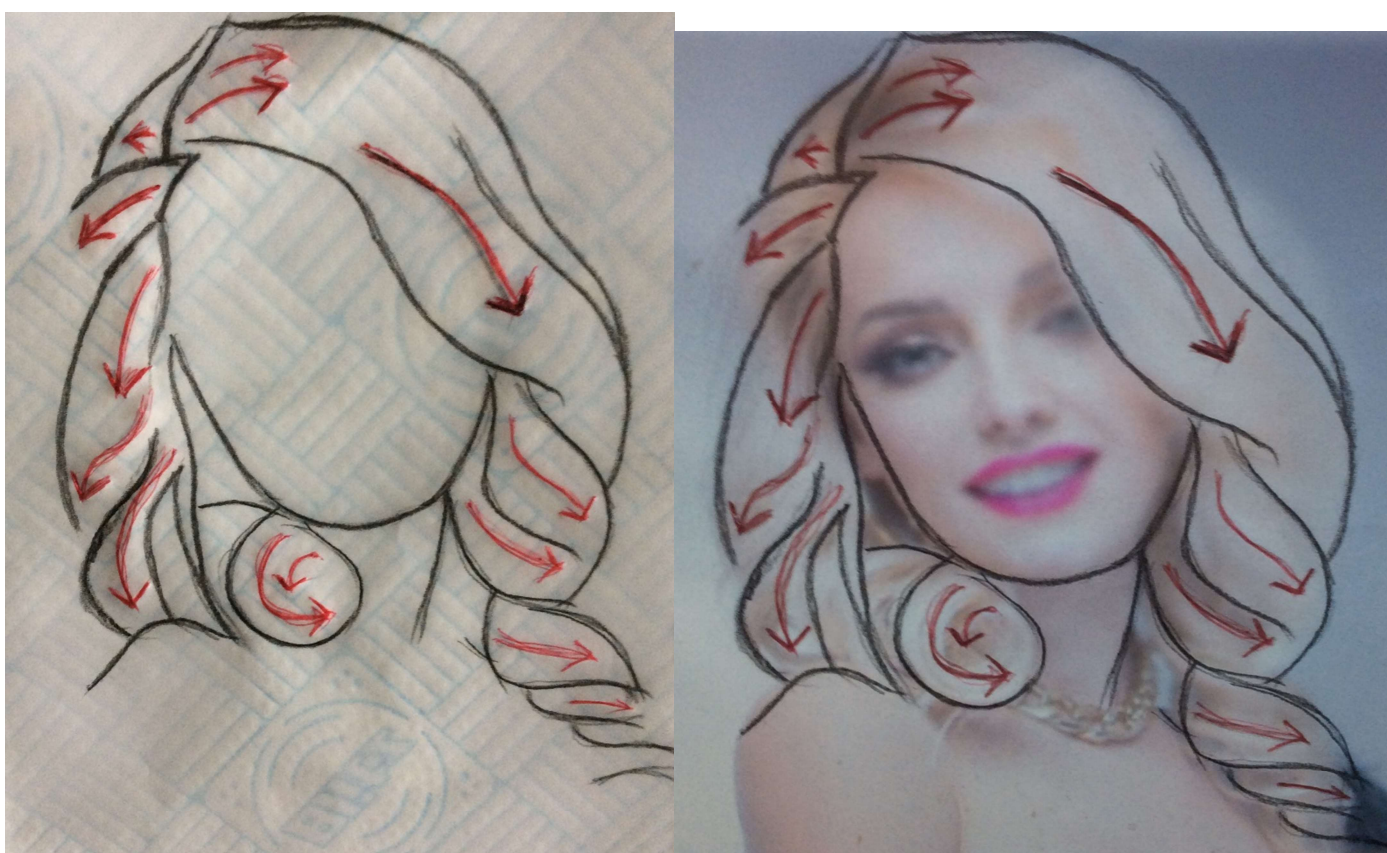


Here, I wanted to give a more complicated plait a go but notice the technique is the same (blocking in the bigger detail first, building up tone gradually, adding detail last).

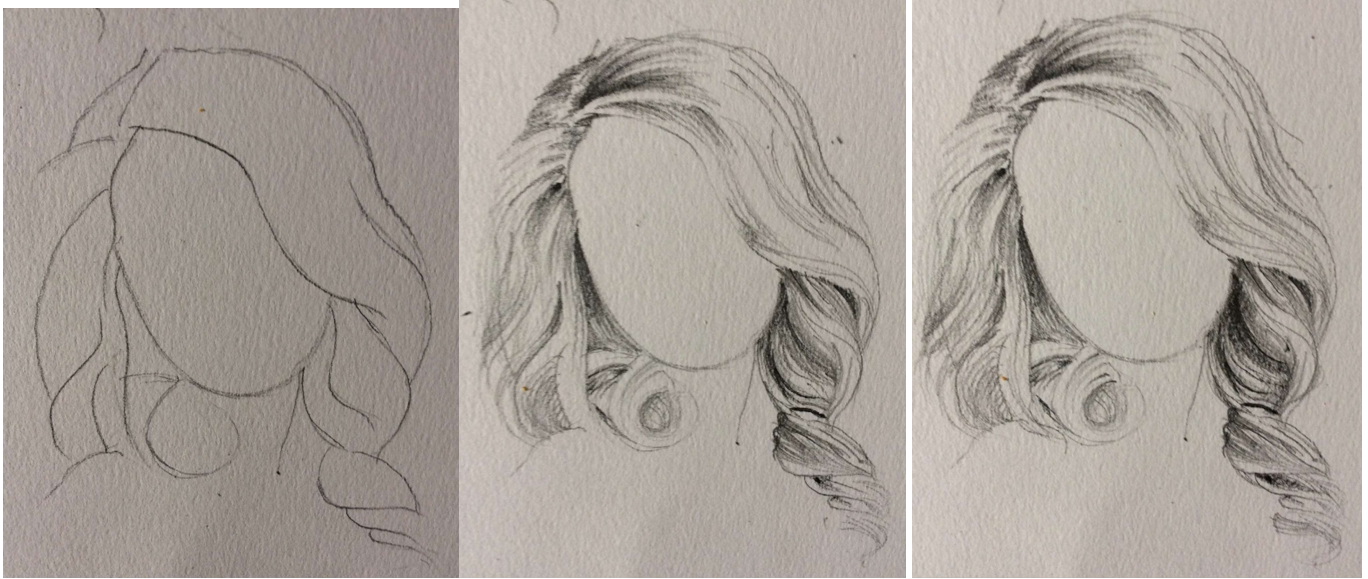


Whole Heads of Hair

When you're ready, you might want to start to think about whole heads of hair. Whole sketchbooks can be filled with various hairstyles. Even keep those less successful attempts as each go will teach you something new!



Begin simply by just looking for the shapes that the larger clumps of hair make. This can be tricky for some, so a good tip is to lay a piece of tracing paper over your image and use a pen or marker to draw this (this isn't to trace onto your paper – it's to help you to see)! I find it quite useful to use arrows to indicate the direction the different clumps of hair are growing – this will help me when I come to build up tone.



Draw this shape out onto your paper and then use a 2H pencil and a 4B pencil to begin to stroke in the hair. Keep referring back to your tracing paper and the marked arrows – this will allow you to keep thinking about the direction of your marks. As this is an exercise in hair, don't feel that you then need to add the facial features, unless of course you want to. The hairstyle in this photograph was very 'perfect' and not a hair out of place, so below I wanted to vary it and try hair which was a little wilder. I have to admit, this was much more fun. This one below, would also be a good one to try in charcoal.



Curly Hair



Do consider which medium you are using. For this sketch of curly hair, I wanted to work quite loosely and there was so much texture in the hair that I choose charcoal.

Before even starting, I experimented with my marks. Using a piece of small willow charcoal on its side, I moved it in a scumbling, almost scribbling, circular motion, changing my pressure as I went.

Once I'd used a 2H pencil to plot in the shape of the face and the outline of the hair, I went in with this mark. Note how as the hair moves away from the face, less pressure is applied to make the marks lighter.

A putty eraser is used in a wiggly motion to pull out highlights and a charcoal pencil is used to add some darker tones.

Reference Images – *do feel free to select your own images. A hair or fashion magazine is a good place to start. Why not try out a page of your own hairstyles over the years!*

