

# 25 Artist Insights to Help You Unleash Your Creativity



Inspiring Ideas and Techniques to #DrawYourMemories, #PaintYourLife, and #FillYourBook, from the original Shiny Happy Artist.



By Anna Battle



## Firstly, understand YOUR 'why',

Why are you painting or drawing?  
There's no wrong answer.

And your 'why' can change. But know that you certainly don't have to sell your art. There are so many other good reasons to make it.  
What are yours?

## Now, sketchbooks.

### 2. Make sketching a daily habit.

It's good for your mental health and it's good for improving your seeing and drawing skills. Even if you only have 5 minutes a day, try making it a habit as important as cleaning your teeth. For a few weeks at least. It really is worth a try.



### 3. Always name your sketchbook.

And put your phone number and email in there too. It's too precious to lose.

### 4. Just open the book.

And start there. You really don't need to start a sketchbook on page 1. Date your pages so you can see the improvement, but bypass the paralysis a blank first page can bring. Or sketch your current art supplies on your first page. That's a classic idea.



# Supplies & Techniques

## 5. Talk through colours.

Describe the colours you're seeing and talk to yourself while you're mixing the paint colours you want. Dark, light, warm, cool... get descriptive! You may look crazy but it really helps you learn.

## 6. Date your favourite art supplies for a while.

When it comes to art supplies, like dating, there are plenty of fish in the sea. But there's no need to 'speed date' your art supplies. Get to know each other. Have a relationship. Really get to know each other. And then go and date another supply if and when you feel like it! No tears!

## 7. Tone is more important than colour.

Practice in shades of grey (or blue) never goes astray. And use the monotone filter on your phone. It's a great help!

## 8. You don't have to colour inside the lines.

Try going outside the lines as well! You're not being marked. Experiment. Impress yourself. Disappoint yourself. Surprise yourself. And keep going.

## 9. Be resourceful.

Using photo references, gridding, tracing, projecting is all fine. We have these tools available to us and you'd be crazy not to try them. The time may come that you outgrow these techniques though, and that's an exciting day too.

## 10. Try drawing fast.

Try a 5 minute sketch, then a 2 minute sketch of the same thing. Then 30 seconds. THEN try 10 minutes! It'll feel like complete luxury. And you'll see so much more in your subject as well. This is a marvellous routine.

## 11. Paint and draw in the wild.

You can see so much more when you're there. A photo is a good reference but really can't capture a landscape or scene like your eyes can when you're there. Practice with photos but try en plein air. Just try.

## 12. Decide on a focal point.

Then spend 80% of your time there. It's the ol' 80/20 rule again. This gives you permission to leave some of the painting unfinished. Blurry. Incidental. Worth a try.

## 13. Add two more things.

I truly believe that many people who think they're no good at drawing and/or painting just stop too soon. They don't finish. So when you think you're done, try adding two more things. I'm a fan of dots and/or stripes.

## 14. It's a jigsaw. Break it down.

Every drawing and painting is simply a collection of lines, shapes, colours and tones. Start with a small section and learn that, and do more as your confidence grows. It's all so possible.

## 15. Try unreal colours.

Want to make that tree pink? Go for it. Blue skin? Worked in "Avatar". Step outside the confines of reality sometimes. You can just visit or you can stay a while.

## 16. Go beyond the edge.

A picture is so interesting if it goes to the edge and beyond. It shows there's more to the story than what's presented within the boundaries of the page. And that makes a picture worth looking at.



## 17. Draw and paint subjects you connect with.

You'll always be more interested in subjects you love and you'll see more too - which will make your art more intriguing to a viewer.

## 18. Potluck your influences.

You never know what might go really well together! Imitation is definitely a great way to learn. But it's when you combine styles, supplies and/or influences that you can create things that are truly your own.

## 19. Go towards the light.

When you're painting or drawing, notice the light. What direction is it coming from? Is it hard or soft? Harsh or indirect? Warm or cool? It'll affect your subject. The light is what reveals the texture.

Even if you're working from your imagination, make the light part of your story.

## 20. Match your art to your time.

Got a little amount of time? Make little art! Lots of time can mean big art. It's a rule made to be broken but it's a great place to start.

# Encouragement

## 21. The 'Law of Averages' applies.

Expect to like half of what you draw and paint more than the other half. Which also means that if you want to make a lot of good art, you have to make A LOT of art! So do that.

## 22. Never stop learning.

Quite simply, art is life. It's a subject that constantly has more to reveal. How lucky are we? Stay open to learning the charms of art.

## 23. Don't pressure yourself.

While you're learning, you don't also need to be 'showing' and 'selling'. Give yourself a break. Allow yourself space to learn and grow and improve.

## 24. Stay positive.

The words in your head can be the loudest you hear. Make sure you're speaking to yourself like you'd speak to your favourite child. Encourage. Cajole. Love.

## 25. Forget the labels.

"Good", "Bad", who cares? Instead start noticing your feelings as you draw. Is it smooth, strange, pleasurable, surprising, exciting? Put those miles on your pencil and/or brush and move towards the feelings you enjoy as you go.



## What's next?

### Free Resources

FB Group - Drink and Draw with Anna  
FB, Insta & TikTok - @shinyhappyart

## Paint with me right now in the Shiny Happy Art Club

Instant access to 24 colourful, high quality Paint Alongs with a new class every month - only \$25pm/\$250pa

## Check out my website for classes, art supplies and inspiration

[www.shinyhappyart.com](http://www.shinyhappyart.com)