

# SOFT CHALK PASTELS

Tips on how to use soft chalk pastels

# EDGAR DEGAS





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# SAFETY FIRST

- Working with pastels is dusty work.. Don't blow the dust away as you will breath in a certain amount. Rather, take it to the garbage bin and shake it off.
- Put down a sheet on the table or make sure to wash the table after using the soft pastels.
- When spraying your work with any fixative, make sure you are in a well ventilated area or outside.
- Create the habit of cleaning the pastel each time before putting them back. Use a towel or paper towel.
- Reuse Styrofoam trays from your groceries to keep like colors together when working



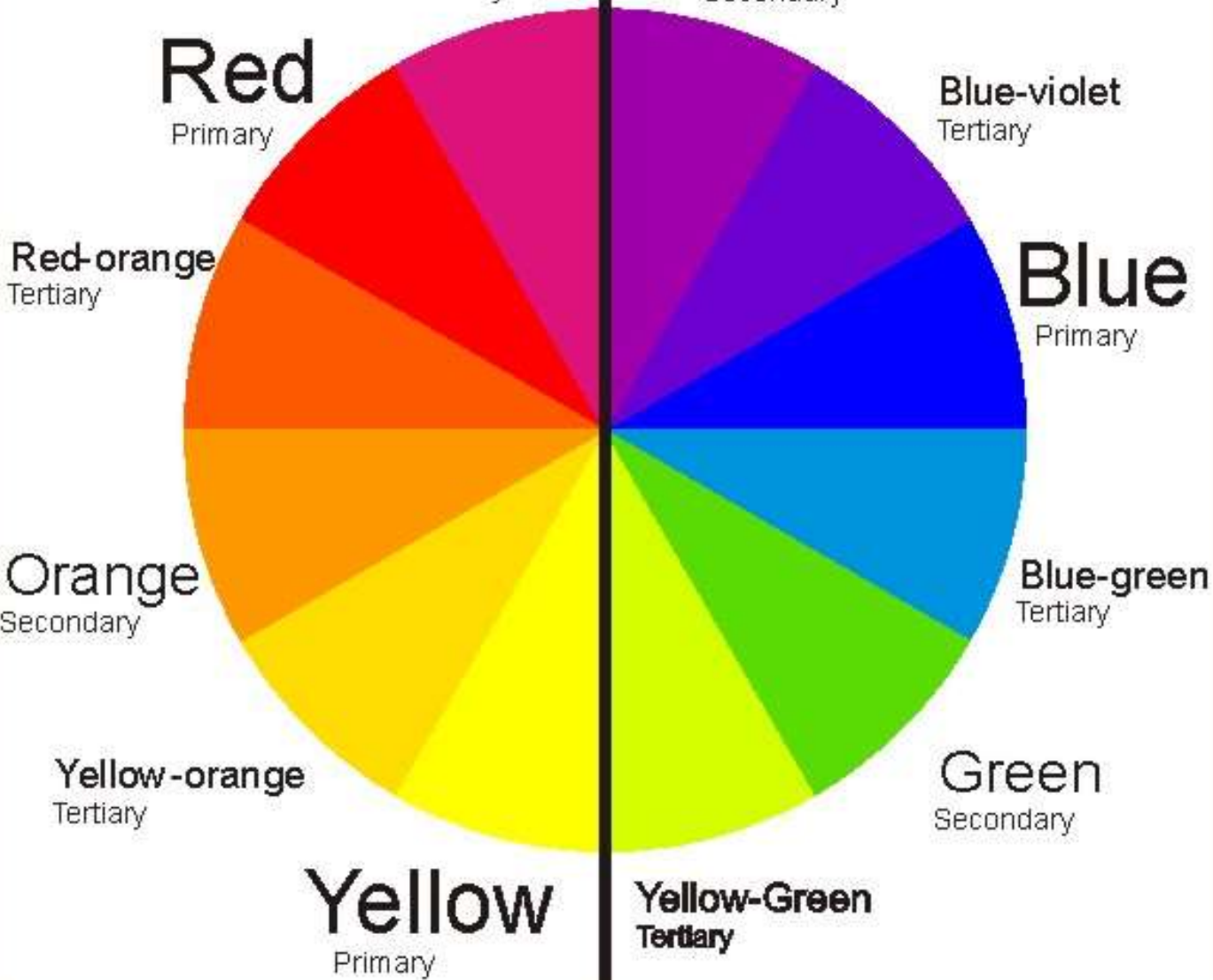
# TECHNIQUES

- Be careful of over-blending your pastels. While you can use fingers or a stump both of these have their drawbacks. The process of layering your strokes can normally do this quite well.
- Smudging is where you spread the pigment, smoothing or blending it into the paper. A stump (kind of a pencil made entirely out of paper) is used but can take off or dull the pigment. Try using a pointed stick, end of a brush or pencil with "Hold-It" or "Blue Tack" or a little kneaded eraser around it. You can shape it into a point and get into the little areas too!
- Getting a light "watercolor" like look from your pastels. On white paper, use the broad side of the pastel to make your strokes. In pastel you work from Dark to Light. Start with the darkest values first finishing with the lightest. Remember to layer your colours.

- Mix a little red, blue or yellow with your black to give your shadows depth.
- Try blocking in color just like in oil or acrylic paintings. Squint your eyes and start with the basic shapes, no details. Then move onto refining the blocks adding smaller "blocks" of color until finally you are finishing off with the details.
- Use different types of strokes in your work to give it life.
- Avoiding Mud! Avoid layering cool over warm colors and vice-versa, unless you use a fixative to isolate the layers. Try not to overwork the pastel and if you want to correct some part of the work, remove the pastel right down to surface of the paper if possible rather than going over the existing color.

**WARM**

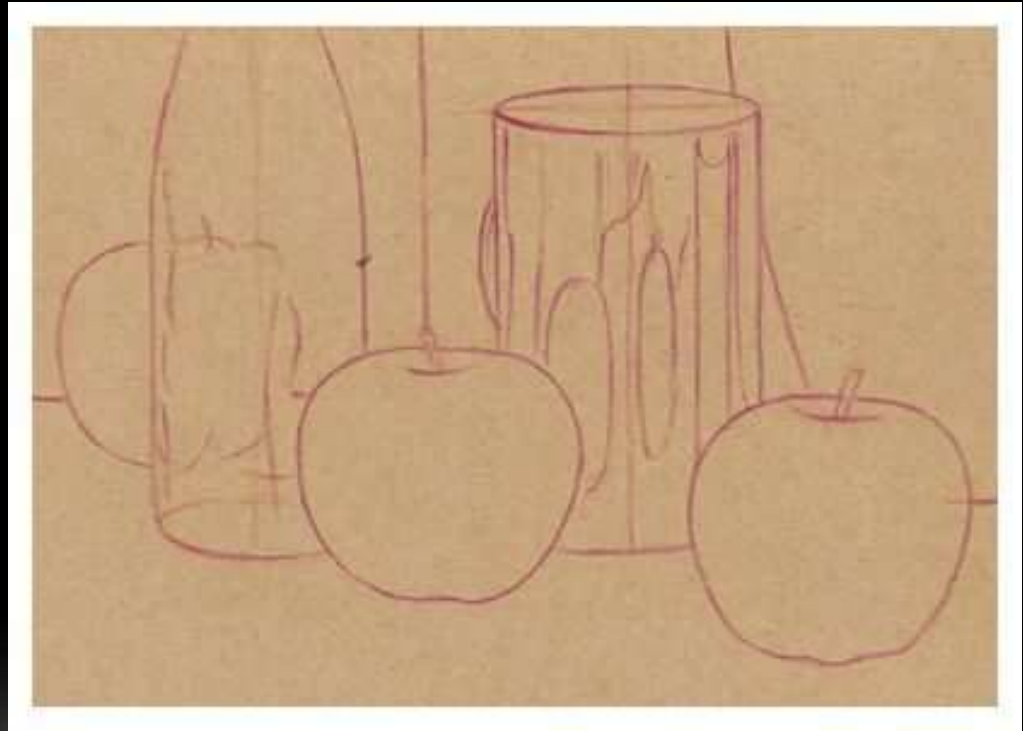
**COLD**



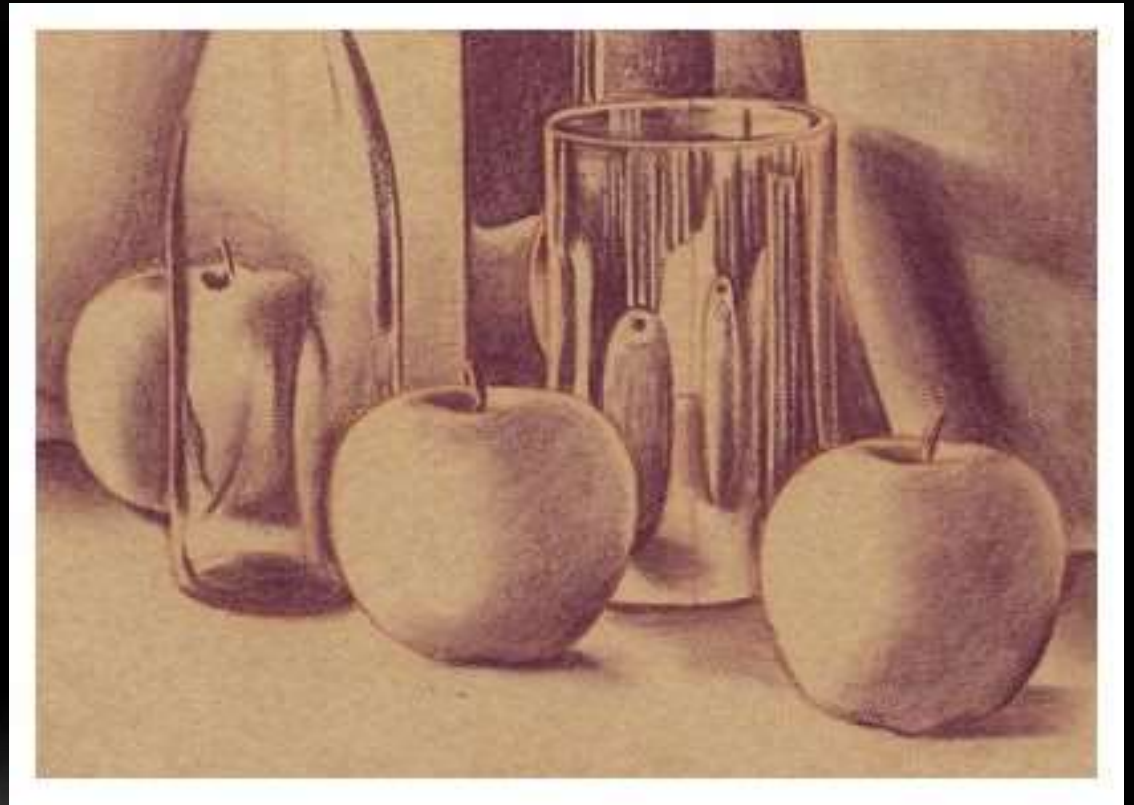


# STEP- BY- STEP INTRODUCTION

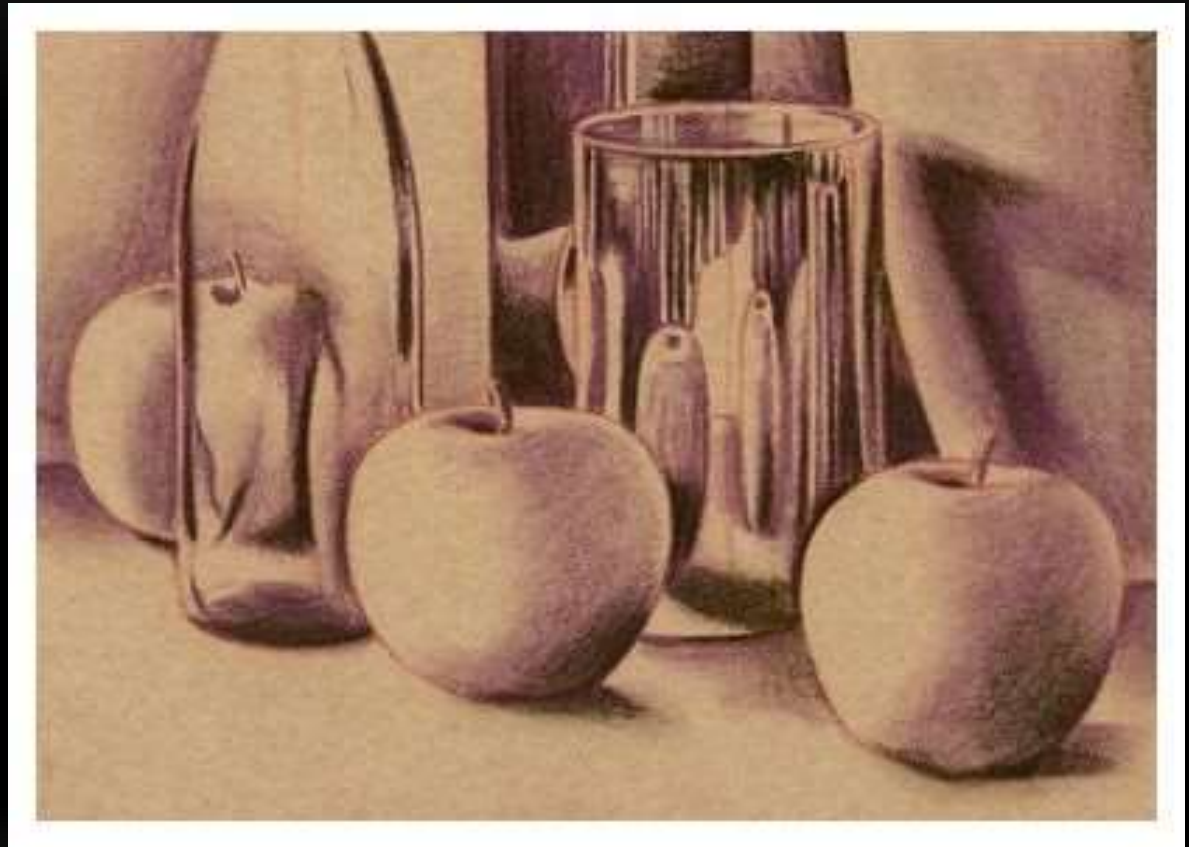
- First you need to create a preliminary drawing you may do this lightly with pencil.



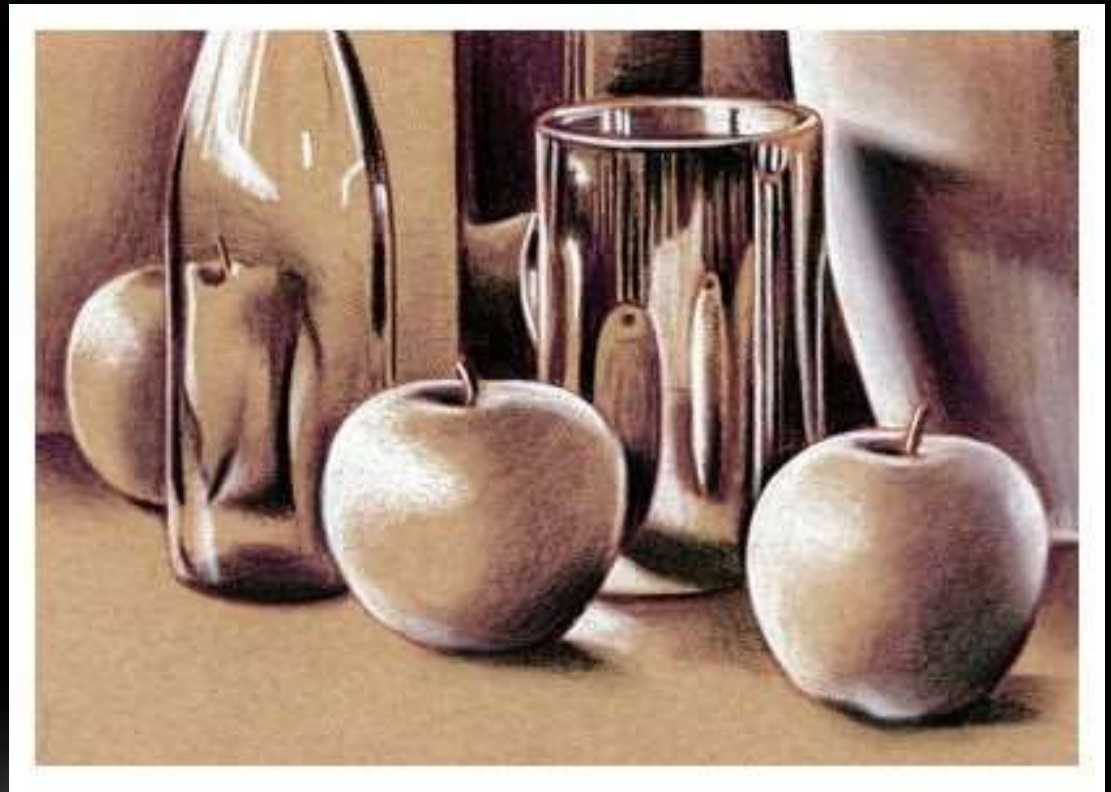
- Next we are going to focus on establishing the dark tones and rendering the form of the objects
- You can use a violet pastel for this part



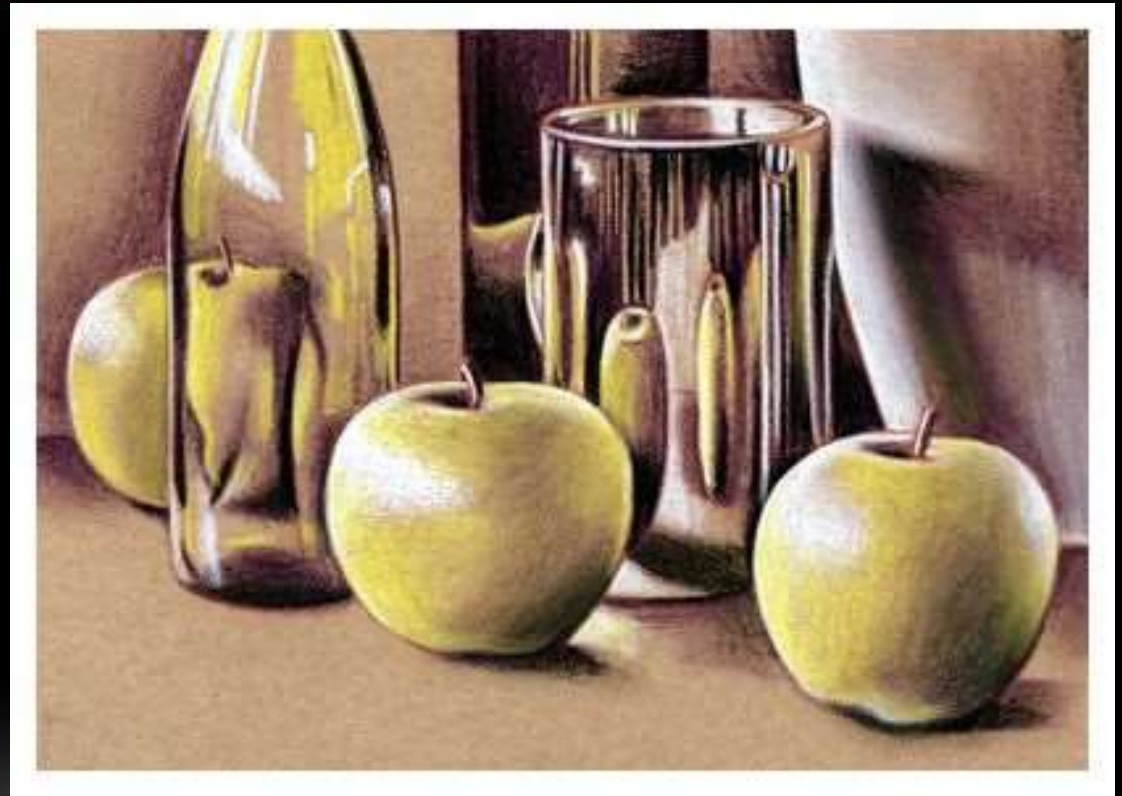
- Then you can take a brown pastel and go over the darkest spots on the object to intensify the contrast in the image.



- Next we will focus on the light areas on the image using a white pastel. Making sure that we are not over blending the darks and lights together.



- You now begin to introduce color to the image, applying the brightest layer first, the next brightest second, and so on towards the darkest. In the still life below they started with a yellow.





- A layer of green was carefully blended into those objects which had a greenish hue. Applying the green on top of the yellow gives the color a luminosity and complexity that you do not get from using a single color.





- Finally blue, gray and black were added to complete the finishing touches.

