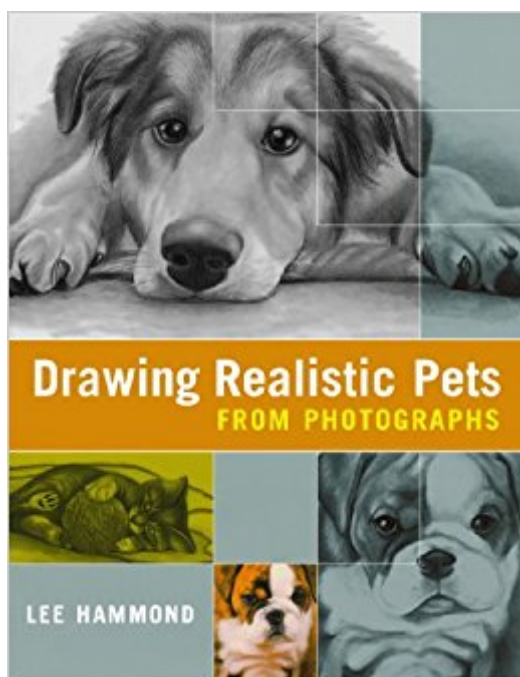


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# Drawing Realistic Pets From Photographs



## Synopsis

Draw gorgeous portraits of your favorite pets! Turn your candid snapshots into remarkable artwork that truly captures the personality of your cherished animals. In *Drawing Realistic Pets from Photographs* you'll find foolproof instruction that will have you creating impressive drawings in no time. Don't let a lack of natural artistic ability or drawing experience discourage you. Best-selling author and longtime art instructor Lee Hammond can teach everyone to draw. Her fail-proof grid method and simple penciling techniques have led thousands of beginners to undeniable drawing success. Twenty-nine step-by-step projects show you how surprisingly easy it is to render all your favorite animals, including cats, dogs, birds, rabbits, hamsters and more. You'll learn how to draw overall form and facial features accurately, plus the subtleties that make your pet unique. Capture every charming expression, every adorable pose in a work of art that you can proudly display and enjoy for years to come. With *Drawing Realistic Pets from Photographs*, it's easier than you think!

## Book Information

Paperback: 128 pages

Publisher: North Light Books; Second Edition edition (August 20, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 158180640X

ISBN-13: 978-1581806403

Product Dimensions: 8.5 x 0.4 x 11 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.9 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 75 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #188,996 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #52 in [Books > Textbooks > Humanities > Visual Arts > Drawing](#) #87 in [Books > Arts & Photography > Painting > Landscape](#) #138 in [Books > Arts & Photography > Drawing > Pencil](#)

## Customer Reviews

A professional artist and instructor for 20+ years, Lee Hammond has authored and produced 40+ North Light and ArtistsNetwork.TV products. She has owned and operated the Midwest School of Art in Lenexa, Kansas for six years and now has a studio in Overland Park, Kansas where she teaches. She conducts drawing seminars, gives school lectures and mentors nationwide. Visit her website at [LeeHammond.com](http://LeeHammond.com)

Having avoided my innate desire for the arts for close to 30 years due to perfectionism issues, I

finally decided I had to kick it in the butt and began borrowing books from the library on drawing and painting. I loved Drawing Realistic Pets so much that I bought my own copy. Basically, I had lost all the training I'd gotten from the few art classes I took way back when. But I have found not all books on drawing and painting are good at being practical and useful on teaching you simple techniques to get the ball rolling. Drawing Realistic Pets gave me the fundamental information I needed, like basic tools, how to blend pencil strokes for the right effects, effective use of an eraser for highlighting effects, equipment, supplies (it may sound foolish to a beginner but there are lots of subtleties in the differences between pencils). What especially helped me was a technique I had been taught many years ago but forgot--using a light grid to help you better draw your picture to proportion. I did 2 drawings of a face--one without the grid and one with and there is a night and day improvement between the two. Well worth the money. I love this book. Even when not drawing, the many dog drawings in this book (among other animals) have a tranquil effect on me, like listening to Bob Ross as he paints. 8-)

I expected much more from this book. Like other reviewers, I looked at the examples on the cover and thought this book would provide good information on developing animal eyes, noses and general expression - all of which are key to a good animal (or human) portrait. The best examples in this book are on the cover and the remainder are relatively poor and somewhat generic-looking portraits and the instructions given (except for using a grid system) were fairly scant. I also felt some of the commentary (such as the bit about a particular dog having been hit by a car) were not relevant to the topic at hand. The book would be an ok starting place for an absolute beginner who wants to only work in graphite drawings, but if you want to push your work past the most rudimentary basics, you'd be better served by the many YouTube videos out there or by taking a beginning drawing class through a community college. Frankly, any good book, video or class on human portraiture would serve a beginner better, since the drawing concepts are basically the same.

I'm surprised at all the gushing reviews. Perhaps the print quality was better in previous runs. But in my copy, purchased new, there are only two useful finished drawings (both on the cover: the two that haven't been obscured by blue, green, or orange dye) that indicate the actual quality of the work the author and artist creates. None of the drawings within the book are anywhere near that quality (I want to stress here this is the fault of the printing, not the artist). If I were the artist, and this book was out there representing my work, I would be enraged. The production quality, printed in

China on grainy paper, is so bad that neither the finished drawings nor the reference photographs have anything like the necessary detail for an art book. Considering how much of the book is given over to illustrations --- this is not a text-heavy book, but relies on visual examples --- failure to accurately reproduce those visuals is a fatal and unforgivable flaw. On many of the final drawings the lack of tonal variation in the printed piece is so bad it makes the work look amateurish at best; bland, flat and lifeless at worst. As a teaching tool you need to be able to see detail in order to learn anything: pencil strokes, gradation of shading, variation of line thickness, etc. The author mentions these things, but the illustrations meant to show them largely don't. Only the early stage line drawings are relatively clear, but that is precisely because they are not detailed. The photographs are even worse. To use them as exercises, the way the book suggests, is impossible. I suspect most of the reviewers who enjoyed the lessons simply substituted photos of their own, as the photos in the book are small gray blobs of uselessness. As to teaching technique, this book is basic and very narrowly focused. I find this approach too limited, although clearly keeping it very simple works for some people. The artist teaches one and only one method: create a line drawing using a grid, shade in the dark areas, smudge and blend the midtones, erase out the highlights. (it's interesting to note that the student artwork showcased early in the book looks very much like the teacher's. There's something too generic and mechanical about the whole approach, although I'd be perfectly willing to admit that whatever individual expressiveness and depth might have been real in the actual drawings gets blurred out of existence by the awful print job.) For contrast look at *How to Draw: Dogs & Puppies: Learn to draw a variety of canine companions step by step (How to Draw & Paint)* by Cynthia Knox. Much larger illustrations printed on higher quality glossy paper --- the detail is much easier to see. And it's half the price. Anyway, the grid technique works as far as it goes, it's taught to beginners the world over, but as other reviewers have pointed out you don't need an entire book to teach it, and it is only one of very many possible techniques for creating realistic pencil drawings. Practically every exercise simply repeats the same procedure and the same instructions over and over again. After you've read the first five pages, you've pretty much read the whole book. A few bits of beginner advice pop up from time to time, but mostly it's repetition, repetition, repetition, and more bad photographs. Do an internet search on drawing with a grid and you'll already get further than this book will take you. While you're at it, Google "pencil drawings of dogs" (or cats or whatever) and you'll find much clearer, more detailed (and hence more expressive and more alive) representatives of technique and finished artwork online. You can learn a lot from studying quality work well rendered. Too bad there's none in this book. To sum up: the grid and blend technique may be a revelation to an absolute beginner, although one size never fits

all and even a good technique doesn't suit every circumstance. But whether or not you find the level and style of instruction satisfying, and clearly many reviewers here do, there is absolutely no excuse for the lousy quality of images in this book. It's an art book. If being able to see the art doesn't matter, what does?

I got this book when I bought Lee Hammond's "How to Draw Lifelike Portraits from Photographs". Both proved to be incredible resources. Hammond is very good at explaining how to draw -- both through words and illustrations. This book is no exception. She gives step by step drawing lessons for many types of animals (birds, fish, other small animals, dogs, cats). Some drawings are better than others, but the lessons are excellent for all drawing. My focus was on cats and dogs (as those are the animals I own), but the other drawings and lessons she included made me want to try those as well. This is the best resource I have seen for drawing pets out there. Highly recommended.

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