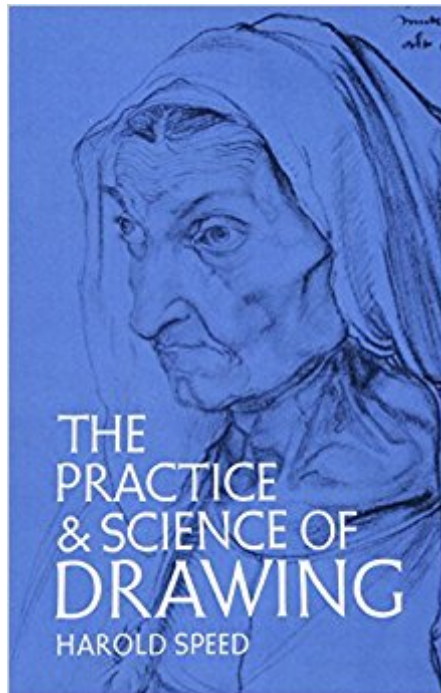


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# The Practice And Science Of Drawing (Dover Art Instruction)



## Synopsis

Much of the learning to practice as well as to appreciate art is concerned with understanding the basic principles. One of these principles is what Harold Speed calls "dither," the freedom that allows realism and the artistic vision to play against each other. Very important to any artist or work of art, this quality separates the scientifically accurate from the artistically accurate. Speed's approach to this problem is now considered a classic, one of the few books from the early years of this century that has continued to be read and recommended by those in the graphic arts. In this work, Harold Speed approaches this dynamic aspect of drawing and painting from many different points of view. He plays the historical against the scientific, theory against precise artistic definition. He begins with a study of line drawing and mass drawing, the two basic approaches the artist needs to learn. Further sections carry the artistic vision through unity and variety of line and mass, balance, proportion, portrait drawing, the visual memory, materials, and procedures. Throughout, Speed combines historical backgrounds, dynamic aspects which each technique brings to a work of art, and specific exercises through which the young draughtsman may begin his training. Although not a technique book in the strict sense of the terms, *The Practice and Science of Drawing* brings to the beginner a clear statement of the principles that he will have to develop and their importance in creating a work of art. Ninety-three plates and diagrams, masterfully selected, reinforce Speed's always clear presentation. Harold Speed, master of the art of drawing and brilliant teacher, has long been cited for this important work. For the beginner, Speed will develop a sense for the many different aspects which go into an artistic education. For the person who enjoys looking at drawings and paintings, Speed will aid developing the ability to see a work of art as the artist meant it to be seen.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Much of the learning to practice as well as to appreciate art is concerned with understanding the basic principles. One of these principles is what Harold Speed calls "dither," the freedom that allows realism and the artistic vision to play against each other. Very important to any artist or work of art, this quality separates the scientifically accurate from the artistically accurate. Speed's approach to this problem is now considered a classic, one of the few books from the early years of this century that has continued to be read and recommended by those in the graphic arts. In this work, Harold Speed approaches this dynamic aspect of drawing and painting from many different points of view. He plays the historical against the scientific, theory against precise artistic definition. He begins with a study of line drawing and mass drawing, the two basic approaches the artist needs to learn. Further sections carry the artistic vision through unity and variety of line and mass, balance, proportion, portrait drawing, the visual memory, materials, and procedures. Throughout, Speed combines historical backgrounds, dynamic aspects which each technique brings to a work of art, and specific exercises through which the young draughtsman may begin his training. Although not a technique book in the strict sense of the terms, *The Practice and Science of Drawing* brings to the beginner a clear statement of the principles that he will have to develop and their importance in creating a work of art. Ninety-three plates and diagrams, masterfully selected, reinforce Speed's always clear presentation. Harold Speed, master of the art of drawing and brilliant teacher, has long been cited for this important work. For the beginner, Speed will develop a sense for the many different aspects which go into an artistic education. For the person who enjoys looking at drawings and paintings, Speed will aid developing the ability to see a work of art as the artist meant it to be seen.

Good text, though I think that some of it is a bit overly romantic for my taste. Occasionally he'll ramble about something somewhat unrelated to the chapter, like in one part of a chapter about line drawing he goes on to describe the shifts in direction of eyebrow hairs. But I suppose his enthusiasm is shown through these passionate outbursts, even if they are sometimes out of context. The pictures are small and very bad, but the book is so cheap that it doesn't matter much. It isn't too hard to gather what Speed is trying to show through the images, and if you need to see a better image, most of them are easily available online. Entertaining enough. Overly dramatic at

points. A somewhat limited definition of what art is (my take on what Speed defines art as is a sort of conveying of the emotional content of the artist to the viewer through beauty). But it is a classic for a reason. It does have some great info in it, and some people might find the text inspiring, although I found it a bit stifling at points.

This book is an excellent resource for anyone starting out in teaching themselves to draw. Those who just want a refresher on what drawing should be like in the mind of the artist would benefit. This is a valuable gem showing how the subject should be approached from an acquisition stand point. Guided practice makes perfect. His approach and suggestions for acquiring the skills to draw are isolated as his science by building off the blocks he previously laid down for foundations. These progressive steps should be noted. The theories or plans are presented with pictures of his own design and plates from other artists referred to. He even provides a good selection of reference suggestions that coincide with the discussions and lessons. I would highly recommend this book as one of many for the study without a master, yet a must have even with a teacher. It might open your mind up to the meaning and drive of individual art, or provide a new technique or approach that might have been looked over.

The photos of the art are tiny and pixelated, and some of the pages have lines running through them. Lucky that has such a strong return policy. They refunded my money right away.

While written quite some time ago, and including some negative criticism of what was then new styles of artistic expression, this work is as valuable to the modern artist as it ever was. While the title would lead one to expect it to be mostly useful to illustrators, print makers, or other artists who predominantly "draw" rather than other media, the author spends as much time on painting technique as he does drafting, and his commentary on composition, line, and colour is universal to all two dimensional art forms. I strongly recommend this work, and expect to refer back to it often.

There are a lot of books on the fundamentals. A lot of art books say for both beginners and advanced artist. But honestly most are made for beginners to follow. And it's understandable to a point cause, lets face it, they are trying to sell books. But this book honestly delivers on the taking your skills to a higher level. It doesn't do this by teaching step by step and honestly the book has very few pictures in it. it makes you better by making you aware of elements you might have not thought of before. cause at this point you should know your craft and

know how to work a pencil. but knowing the subtleties that make one drawing look better than another takes a whole different form of understanding. A wood carver can carve out a chair with perfect seamless precision but you still might not want to buy it. I think the book really is about analyzing style. Why one style speaks to you and another one doesn't. It's about the mood or feeling the lines give you in an abstract way, aside from subject matter and composition. Which is important but when it all works together saying the same thing, That's what separates a good drawing from a better one. Cause you can learn to render photo real, like a camera would. But what are you adding? This book was very helpful in me finding that unique style.

Before art instructors of the late 20th and early 21st century Betty Edwards or Mona Brookes shared their insights with us, Harold Speed wrote this profoundly analytical handbook explaining the psychological and technical foundations of drawing and observation, i.e. line drawing and mass drawing, and much, much more. Although his English is stiff, and perhaps colloquial to the locale where his style of English English was spoken (where he was raised or lived) and the 19th and 20th century periods in which he lived, it is still readable and understandable. I found his tightly dissected views of how the (young person's) mind starts to perceive objects and to draw them, and how early artists approached drawing to be very helpful. It contains clear explanations that methodically lay out the approaches by which artists apply their talents. In doing so, he helps us to become more analytical and more understanding of art and the world around us. This work by Harold Speed helps us become better observers. It is the most penetrating book on drawing techniques I have found. This book is an excellent investment at about \$10.00 on .com.

To Peter, the Drawing Enthusiast--there is a free copy of this online, true. In fact, there is a free copy here in the Kindle store. But it has no illustrations to show the theories that Speed is describing in the text. As (I think) this book tends to be more for the beginning illustrator, and because the text seems a bit dated, spending the little bit money is worth it.

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