



What to Include in a Still Life Drawing

KS3

ART & DESIGN

Ages 11-14



3 min read

What is a Still Life Drawing?

A **still life** is a drawing or painting of objects that don't move. These might be fruit, flowers, bottles, plates, books, or anything else you can find around your home. The key word is "still" — everything stays in the same place while you draw it.

Still life drawings teach you important art skills like **shading**, **proportion**, and how to show **depth** on a flat piece of paper. Artists have been drawing still life for hundreds of years because it helps them improve their technique.

Choose Your Objects Carefully

The first thing you need is a good selection of **objects**. Pick **3 to 5 items** that have interesting shapes and textures. A smooth apple looks different from a bumpy orange. A shiny glass sits next to a rough wooden block. This variety makes your drawing more interesting to look at.

Think of it like creating a cast of characters for a story — each object should have its own personality and look different from the others.

Arrangement and Composition

How you arrange your objects is called **composition**. Don't just line them up in a row like soldiers. Overlap some objects so they sit in front of or behind each other. This makes your drawing feel more real and less flat. Place your objects at different heights too — some higher, some lower.

Think about the **background** as well. It doesn't have to be complicated, but it should frame your objects nicely. You might use a simple cloth, a wall, or even just empty space.

Light and Shadow

Light and shadow bring your drawing to life. Notice where the light comes from — usually one main light source. The side facing the light is bright. The side away from

the light is dark. These **shadows** make objects look three-dimensional and solid.

Think of it like the difference between a flat picture on a computer screen and a real toy sitting on your desk — shading makes your drawing look like it could reach out and touch you.

Fine Details Matter

Add **details** that make each object special. A dent in an apple. The wrinkles in fabric. Reflections in glass. These small touches show that you've really looked carefully at your objects. Don't rush this part — good observation is what separates great drawings from average ones.

Remember: a successful still life drawing includes variety in your objects, thoughtful arrangement, realistic light and shadow, and close attention to detail. Take your time, look carefully, and enjoy the process!