



Notes On Penciling

This tutorial is on how to start penciling your [final comic page worksheet](#).

New practitioners in the comic arts often spend a lot of time on pencils. Why not? With pencils you can draw something and then correct it with the simple use of an eraser! Interestingly, professional comic artists use pencils a little differently than someone might expect. Imagine that the pencils you are laying down in your drawings are the foundation and framing in a house you are building. They need to be sturdy, and measured, but ultimately they are not what people are going to see when they look at the final house you are building. No, people are going to see the outside of the house. The roofing, the windows, and the siding. The outside of the house is the inks.

When you look at the model comic example notice how the lines are black and there aren't any grey lines. Ultimately pencils are a series of grey lines. And they are working for you to be able to put down your inks on top of them. At some point, like the frame of the house, these grey lines from the pencils will no longer be able to be seen.

For this reason, use these simple rules to guide your pencil lines:

- ★ **Draw lighter than you think you should¹**
- ★ **Draw lighter than you think you should**
- ★ **Draw loose**
- ★ **Start with basic shapes**
- ★ **Use the eraser seldomly**

If you remember these penciling rules you will have a successful experience penciling! Good luck!

¹ Draw so lightly that you are barely able to see the line!

1.

The image below is a quick picture of what the pencils looked like in the middle of the process of inking. Notice how light and thin the lines are on my penciling worksheet. Make sure that your lines are that thin.



2.

When you go to look at the model example constructed for this project you will notice that the image in each panel repeats throughout the four pages. This was accomplished by using a process of transferring the art by the use of a light box (basically it's tracing). Using a light box is totally ok. Your end goal is to create a series of images that tell a story successfully and originally. If tracing an image can help with that process, then that is ok.

A quick and cheap way to get your hands on a lightbox is to go to the nearest window you have access to during the day. Hold up a piece of paper with your illustration and a piece of blank paper directly on top of it and you should be able to see the illustration through onto the blank piece of paper to trace it.

In the example, each panel in the series of pages featured the same illustration that was slightly altered. In order to do this we use a lightbox to transfer the art from the first panel to all of the subsequent panels.

Using a lightbox to work with comic art is optional. If you do not have access to a lightbox, a cheap alternative is to hold your two pieces of paper up to a window that has light showing through it.

3.

Here are some close-ups of what your pencils will look like on the page once transferred if you choose to use the lightbox method to implement a repeating illustration as demonstrated in the model comic.



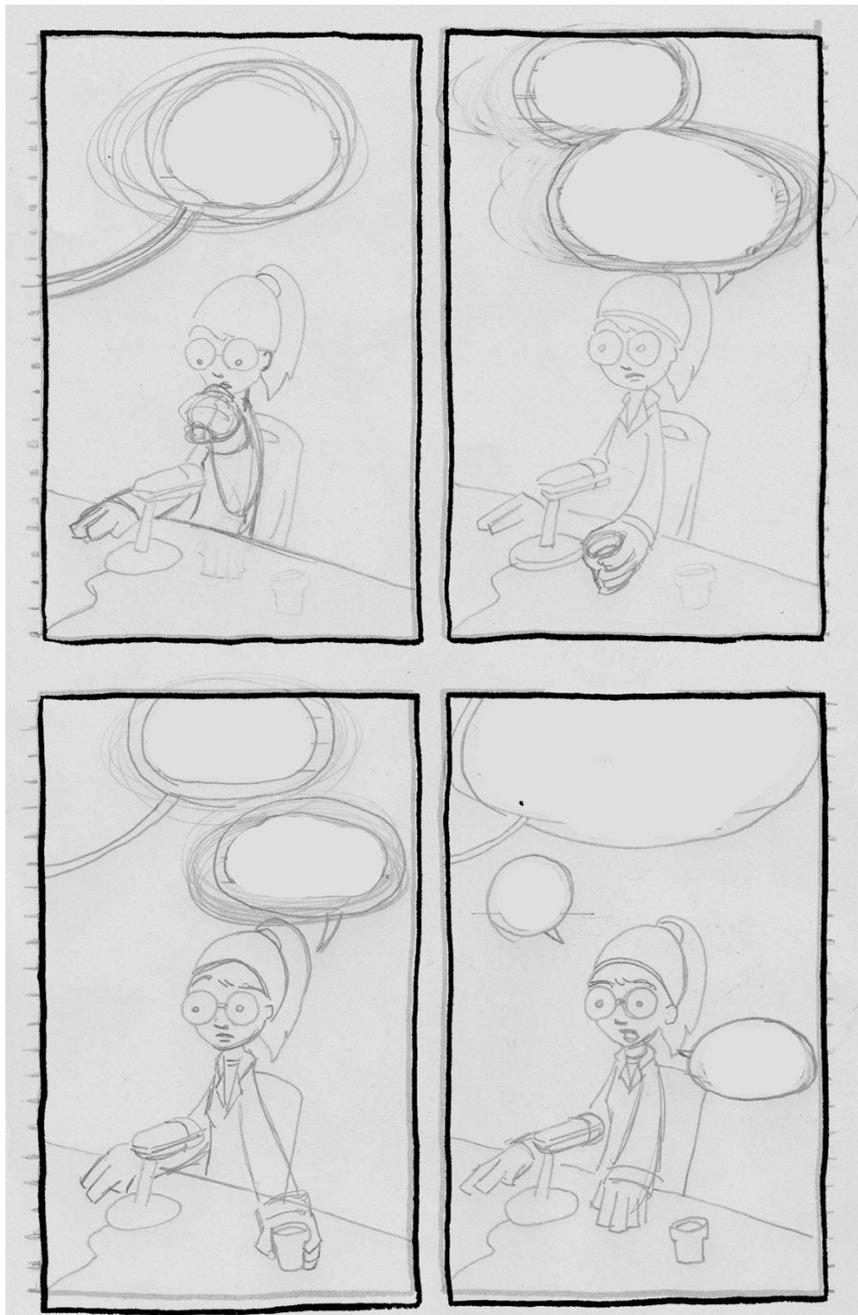
4.

During the next steps we are going to roughly add our word bubbles into the page. Make them a little bit bigger than you think that they should be.

Notice how loose and swirly the lines are. Detail is not important at this stage. It is more important to record your lines down in the right place.



5. Completing Your Sheet



This is the final pencils that I am using before I ink. Notice how loose everything is. I am not spending a lot of time erasing here, and neither should you. Erasing too early can actually degrade your paper and make it less able to absorb the inks when you get to that stage.

So don't use an eraser.

The way you can get around needing to use an eraser is to press down so lightly with your pencil that you can barely see it.