

Colored Pencils for Zentangle - 6/06/2025 Class

Introduction

Many different coloring mediums for zentangle: water color, markers, pens and pencils. Note, there is a whole **art & science** to using colored pencils & appropriate papers that professional artists are persnickety about...we are limiting the discussion of colored pencils as an enhancer to your Zentangle Inspired Art (ZIA).

OIL BASED - harder lead; translucent; fine lines

Faber-Castell Polychromas

CarbOthello Chalk-Pastel (has more oils than waxes in binder; yields drier consistency, great for blending and shading)

WAX BASED - softer lead; opaque;

Prismacolor

Derwent Inktense (has more waxes than oils in binder; yields permanent vibrant colors when activated with water, thus can add more colors/layers on top)

Basics

1. Paper tooth affects pigment/binder ability to lay down color, paper tooth integrity matters so use a light touch plus layers for intensity
2. Sharpen tips often
3. Layer, Layer, Layer for color, then layer more for values (contrast)

4. Values - Light, medium, dark
5. Add Highlights & Shade
6. Burnish to finalize, optional
7. Grip matters both in location along pencil length and applied pressure
8. Plan tangle design with coloring in mind so have enough open spaces to color; otherwise, coloring options are limited

White Colored Pencil - Smooth, Blend, Soften, Highlights

Waxed base - softer/creamier

Oil base - harder/fine lines

1. As a base layer, “smooths” paper to make blending of hard to blend colors easier
2. As a gradient, lay down darkest color then use less pressure to lighter value; start from lightest to darkest with white pencil, using circular strokes to blend
3. As a softener/blender, layer on top of color(s)
4. As a highlighter, use last; if burnishing, use white gel pen for

Derwent Inktense - Tips

1. Have brush rinsing water and paper towel(s) to control color & water application
2. Apply water sparingly from light area to dark
3. Color can be applied to paper or use water brush pen directly on pencil tip before applying to paper
4. After layer dries and is permanent, can layer additional color (e.g., shading or shaping)
5. Burnishes well

CarbOthello Stabilo Chalk-Pastel Pencils

1. High pigment thus does well on black or dark paper
2. Dry blend and smudge using tortillons, q-tips or fingers
3. Use large soft brush to remove excess pigment dust
4. Can use water to blend
5. Work in light layers to preserve paper's tooth so can continue to add layers of color
6. Use manual, not electric sharpener or shave with craft knife
7. Use spray fixative to set colors

Prismacolor Soft Core Colored Pencils (Good on tan tiles)

1. Use light pressure, build up layers using side of pencil more than tip; minimizes lead breakage & allows for smoother blending
2. Start with a base coat of color, then add darker shades on top to build depth and dimension
3. Use circular motions to create smooth transitions and avoid harsh lines
4. Burnishes well
5. Go back over Zentangle line work as prismacolor is waxy
6. Can use eraser to remove...sometimes