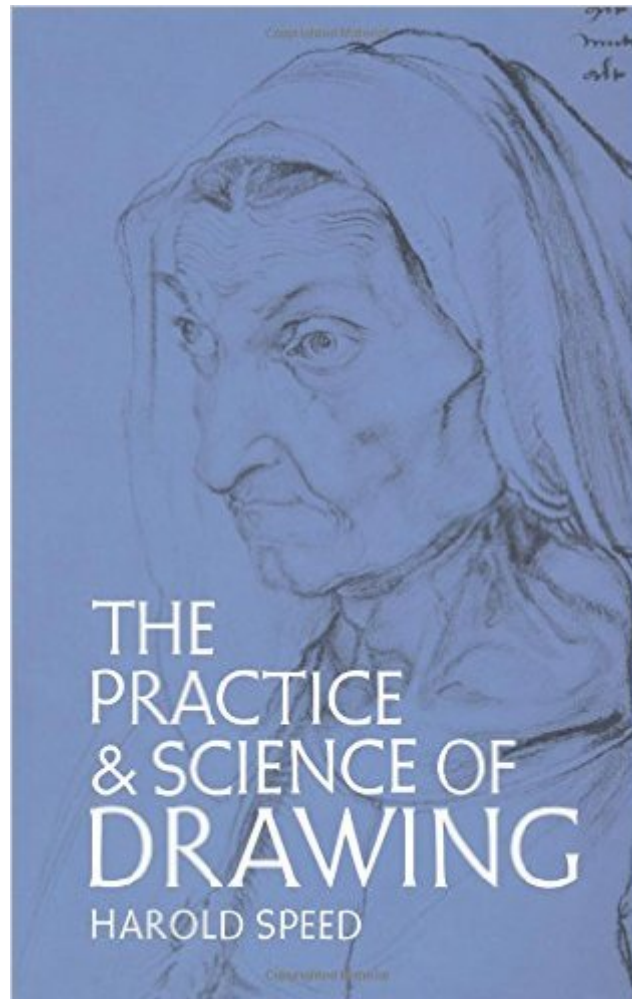


The book was found

# 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

If you're looking for a quick drawing book you can thumb through on the plane, this isn't it. However if you want a classical approach to drawing and painting theory, complete with very opinionated prose that teaches you the fundamentals of how drawing and painting should be - get this book. On a bookshelf filled with quick fixes and 30-second lessons on the go, Speed's drawing text is a welcome change. You'll read this again and again, gaining more knowledge out of it each time.

I'm now a professional illustrator and exhibiting fine-artist. But for 17 years... from adolescence on, I was a hobbyist... someone who just loved to draw. It was this book, INGENIOUSLY simple and straightforward in both it's presentation and elucidation of "how to see," which brought me from hobbyist, to professional. It's amazing because the book is about 100 years old (and is STILL in print, which should tell you something); but when you take into account he's passing on information that is 500 years old, gleaned from renaissance artists (it's no coincidence D'Árer's sketch is on the cover) I guess 100 years isn't much. You never know, as an artist, when you'll have an "Aha!" moment and finally understand something which previously eluded you... that said, I learned more from reading this book than from thumbing through any of the other 50+ art-technique books in my collection (this is a book to be read... primarily text, not primarily illustrations). The information is timeless. The instruction is solid. Get this book. If like me, you're self-taught... and you already know how to draw... and are looking to hit the next level, it's invaluable. Or at least it was for me.

It's easy to pontificate and very, very hard to draw. Suspiciously absent from most books on drawing are drawings by the author. But Speed, a journeyman painter whose career bridged the 19th and 20th centuries, drew wonderfully well, and his drawings vindicate his ideas. Additionally, Speed's career embodies the best of the academic tradition and the then-contemporary discoveries of the Impressionists. His assessment of Monet has stood the test of time, as have his splendid instruction on the nuts and bolts of drawing. If you can only have one book on drawing -- and I have a vested interest in this area -- Speed's is the one to get.

This is one of the very best books on drawing I have ever read, and I've read several dozen. Speed argues that people normally see what they would feel if they could touch what they are looking at.

Hence the tendency to draw outlines around things even though we don't actually find outlines around things in nature. Learning to draw is unlearning these ingrained habits and replacing them with a way of seeing how things appear on the retina and then finding ways to represent this retinal image with lines or masses. He makes a big deal about these two ways of drawing -- line drawing and mass drawing. He covers all the important basic topics -- unity, variety, balance, proportion, rhythm. His explanations are clear and straightforward. The writing is a bit old fashioned but highly readable. He illustrates his main points clearly with line drawings and b&w reproductions. I took ten pages of notes that I will study often. I can think of no better book for a serious student of drawing.

Though written nearly a hundred years ago, Harold Speed's book is a gem. We live in a time when traditional drawing techniques are hard to come by, but Speed takes us back to the essential skills of the late nineteenth century. If you dream, as I do, of drawing like Ingres and painting like Sargent, this book will point the way. An absolute classic.

This book is an in depth study on the elements that make a piece of art. It covers the style and movement of line, (both the drawn and implied), mass, tone, rythm, balance and proportion. It also discusses variation and unity within the individual elements, how all the elements work with the subject to create a piece of art and the differences between a piece of art and a great piece of art. I could ramble on, but will not, though there is so much more in this book. It is bursting at the binding with insight on drawing. It is clearly written by someone who obviously knows what he is writing about. It is a fantastic art course by a man who knows how to teach. It is as relevant today as it was when written, probably even more so given my experience of modern art tuition over the years. If you want to be an artist, no, if you want to be a great artist, read this book.

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 appoaches 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.

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