

Kansas City Art Institute

Continuing and Professional Studies Safety Manual

Drawing

Using Charcoal

- Charcoal is made from willow or vine sticks. Compressed charcoal sticks use various resins in a binder to create the color. Inhalation of large amounts of charcoal dust can create chronic lung problems through a mechanical irritation and clogging effect.
- A major source of charcoal inhalation is from blowing excess charcoal dust off the drawing. Rather than blowing excess dust, tap off the dust so it falls to the floor or trash can.
- Use a wet mop to clean up large amounts of charcoal dust.
- Sensitive individuals may wish to wear a dust mask or respirator

Using Pastels

- Pastel sticks and pencils consist of pigments bound into solid form by a resin. Inhalation of pastel dusts is a major hazard. Pastels can contain toxic pigments such as chrome yellow, that can cause lung cancer, and cadmium pigments, which can cause kidney and lung damage and are suspected human carcinogens.
- Blowing pastel dust off the drawing can lead to inhalation of the dust. Instead, tap off the dust so it falls to the floor or trash can.
- Use a wet mop to clean up large amounts of pastel dust.
- Sensitive individuals may wish to wear a dust mask or respirator
- Crayons and oil pastels do not present an inhalation hazard, and thus are much safer than pastels. Some oil pastels can contain toxic pigments, but this is only a hazard by accidental ingestion.

Using Fixatives

- Both permanent and workable spray fixatives used to fix drawings contain toxic solvents and other chemicals. There is high exposure by inhalation because the products are sprayed in the air.
- Only use spray fixatives outside. Position yourself to be down wind of the spray. You may also wish to wear a respirator and goggles.