

cross-hatching lines, etc. and some Family Artists do all their illustrations with these pens---Laban, Jacques Elan, Nathanael A. and others---with a very good effect! If you plan on inking-in your final drawings with Rapidographs, you'd probably want as wide a variety of point-sizes as possible.

As outlined in the Handlettering Class, a Rapidograph is the best pen to use to do your lettering with. If you are working on a 100%-sized format, lettering with a .03 would be best; if you work larger, use a .04 or a .05 point size.

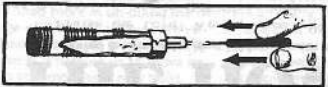
CLEANING RAPIDOGRAPHS:

The best way to clean your pen's drawing head is in a sink of warm water. (Be sure the plug is in though!--or you may lose some of the small parts down the drain!) Carefully dismantle it and swish the parts around 'til they're as clean as you can get them, then let them soak overnight in a container of Rapidograph cleaning fluid. (You can ask your Art Store dealer about these details too, when purchasing.)



Remember to remove the delicate "needle" (see diagram) from the plastic head encasing it, so that it and the inside of the head get clean as well, as this is where most of the dirty, clogging ink will be. If you cannot obtain a jar of Rapidograph Cleaning Fluid where you are, or it's just too expensive, here's another tried-and-proven cleaning method:

After soaking the needle and plastic head in warm water (running water is even quicker!) until they're fairly clean, carefully insert the needle itself into the hollow drawing point from the outside. This should push most of the clogging ink out the other side.



If you do this very carefully, it will not harm your needles, especially the larger

ones like the .04 and .05---but if you are not very gentle with your finer needles (no .02 and smaller), this is one of the best ways to totally ruin them! If you've let your pens get really clogged-up and dirty, the dried ink will be so hard as to irreparably bend the thinner needles out of shape. And don't try putting a fine needle back into an un-cleaned head either, or all that your pushing will serve to do is bend it.



Unless you can be careful, stick to using the Cleaning Fluid. But if you know how to do it carefully, you can save yourself a lot of time and money! The better care you take of your pen in the first place, though, the less frequently it will need a thorough cleaning.

A clean Rapidograph in good working-order should make a small "clicking" noise when you lightly shake it. PTL! Perhaps some of you real Rapidograph experts can send in some pointers I might have missed.

CROWQUILL PENS:

Instead of inking your pencilled illustrations with a Rapidograph however, which is limited in that it can only make unvarying even lines, you can use either a brush or a Crowquill pen. A Crowquill pen looks like a pen somewhat, but is different in that it has a clip at its drawing end to hold different-sized metal inking "nibs" with. You dip the nib into an ink jar like you would an old-fashioned quill pen.

The particular advantage of a Crowquill pen is that it gives your artwork sharp-edged effects like the Rapidograph, but unlike the Rapidograph, by applying a little bit more pressure or less pressure when inking, you can create lines that go from thick to thin. This adds more realism and variety to your lines.

About the nibs: sometimes the two sides of the drawing point will spread without letting any ink down onto the art paper. A suggested tip is to burn the metal nib for 10 to 15 seconds over a match flame. It often behaves itself after this treatment. -ha!

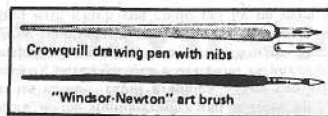
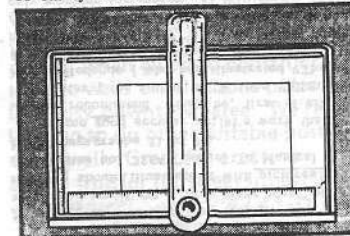
on a movable "arm" which can be adjusted to give you the best possible lighting for whatever you are doing. A 40-watt bulb is best, and if it's a special Blue-coloured bulb, that's even better. You should also have good overhead lighting in the room, or the light from your lamp alone will be too much of a glare.

It can also be helpful to have a small Hand-Mirror which you can use to help you draw facial expressions, emotions, etc. on your characters.

Instead of using pencils, you can buy what is known as a Clutch-Pencil, which is quite handy. Along with it, you'll need to buy a sufficient supply of leads: 2H, HB and 2B for different work; you'll also need to buy a small sharpener for it. Personally, I've found working with normal pencils just as good and satisfactory, and much less expensive!--but you can find out for yourself which you prefer.



Layout Board: As mentioned briefly in point 2 of the "Handlettering Class", a Layout Board can be a tremendous help to you when illustrating the Komix. Besides being a good drawing surface, it is very, very handy for drawing the dimensions of your working area, pencilling guidelines for your TK text, doing layout, etc. "Rotring" and other companies produce good Boards. Although you will have to make a small but sizable initial investment to buy one, it is far more accurate than merely using a triangle or T-square---and much faster!! A good Board size to buy is approx. 35 cm by 29 cm. (Cost: @ \$25 U.S.)



ART BRUSHES:

Most of the Artists prefer to do their inking with a brush, because unlike the sharp, crisp lines of the Crowquill, it can create very beautiful smoothly-flowing lines far thinner or far broader than a Crowquill---all in the same stroke! You can easily ink in large areas of black with a normal brush. The most-used brush---because of its quality---is the "Windsor Newton" Sable-hair, and the most-used point size is the "O". Some Artists prefer to use brushes as fine as a triple-"O" for very delicate line work, but normally a "O" will give you just about any line you want.

Like Rapidographs, Crowquill nibs and Brush hairs will last you far longer if you take good care of them! Always clean them immediately after use, especially your brushes!--because if you make a habit out of letting the ink dry in your brush hairs, after a while the ink will cake up inside the metal band holding the hairs, and cause the hairs to spread--and your brush will be ruined!

One of the best ways to clean out your brush is to have a glass of water on your desk (careful about hasty, bumping moves though!) and swish it in the water after use. Then rub it gently in the palm of your hand to work out remaining ink. Your palm is rough enough to rub ink out, yet soft enough not to damage the hairs. At the end of a day of inking, give your brush a thorough cleaning, preferably under running water. With proper care your brush will last you a year, but with improper care, you'll be buying a new one every month! One last point is: After cleaning your brush, always form the hairs into their natural point, and store it standing point up!

USEFUL ARTIST TOOLS:

Here is a list of common items you'll need for illustrating:

A pair of scissors.

Pencils (HB, 2B, 2H and 5H).

Pencil sharpener.

Erasers (A soft white Staedtler or similar brand is very good, plus a "kneaded" eraser will be necessary to erase softly in delicate areas. A "pencil-eraser"--a hard eraser encased like a pencil--is good too for carefully erasing minute details without wiping away all the surrounding pencil work.)

Scotch tape or Masking tape (the latter is more expensive, but not so sticky so you can use the same piece over and over again.)

Glue-Sticks (a good brand-name is "Pritt-Stik", but get whatever brand is available where you are.)



White-out or Correction Fluid (a good brand-name is "Liquid Paper" Correction Fluid, and you will need to buy a couple small bottles of Thinner to add to it when it starts getting "thick". Constant exposure to the air will dry out your correction fluid, so always immediately recap your bottles when you're finished.)

Instead of bottles of correction fluid you can use a brush and a tube of white "Gouache" or Acrylic paint instead. Some people prefer it! For this you won't need such a high-quality brush as a "Windsor-Newton", but a fairly good one nonetheless. Don't forget to clean your white-out brush after each using too!

Other handy items:

A small stapler.

Plastic or card storage Folders.

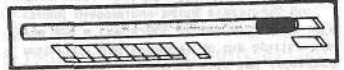
Toilet paper handy to mop up water or ink spills, and wiping rapidographs.

A large plastic bottle of Rotring ink.

When inking with a brush, I drop a few drops of ink onto a jar lid and work from that--but of course, you can use just about anything!

Some of these points may seem like very minute details, but they can nevertheless be very helpful to you!

X-acto Knife: For everyday cutting needs, you'll find a simple pen-shaped knife works the best and is easy to handle. You will also need to buy a package of snap-off blades. Do not continue to use a blade when it is dull: either put a sharp new blade in, or else get a Sharpening Stone and re-sharpen it.



Templates: For drawing Speech Bubbles, thin plastic templates with elliptical or circular holes (that go from small to big) are the best. They are normally very expensive though, so take good care of them. You might also want to buy a "French Curve" for drawing curving Titles or artwork (ask your Art Supply Dealer for details.).

Burnishing tools: When you are putting a piece of Tone on your artwork, or gluing a picture on tracing paper down, be sure to burnish (rub) it down well, as in the case of putting tracing paper down, unless you have a thin, even layer of glue on the back and burnish it down securely. It will form bubbles and wrinkles, and the edges will keep coming up. Consequently, it will photograph poorly and print with shadows and dark areas in places.

You can purchase a special burnishing tool, or simply use your X-acto knife, rubbing the handle flat across the surface. Please always cover your final illustration with a thin piece of paper and burnish on top of that, or your rubbing will smudge or mark your work.

Working Area: You should have a good Art desk, or use a normal table of a convenient height, as well as a chair that is good for your back when seated for prolonged periods of time. Make sure you have sufficient lighting so as not to strain your eyes--for they are your most valuable artist's tool of all!

If possible, your drawing surface itself should be at a slight inclination: a specially-designed Art desk is nice, but a couple hooks under your Layout Board works just about as well.

Art Lamps: You can buy the kind that clamp on to your desk: the lamp is

As much as you will be tempted to do so, never do any cutting on the plastic surface of the Board itself, nor use the plastic ruler to make straight-line cuts with. It's a hard habit to break once you start, and will eventually ruin your board's surface and chip the straight-edge of your ruler.

Do all your cutting with a metal ruler, and not on your Board. Use a piece of thick Card or separate Art Paper.

Keep another small paper handy to test or blot your Rapidograph on, and to stick excess Tone cuttings on, so as not to get it all over the place.

Drawing Paper: For your final artwork, the best material to work on is a light-weight, smooth-surfaced Art Paper. Please use high-quality art paper like Schoeller-Hammer (or Schoeller-Turm), or whatever other good card stock is available where you are. Normal typing-paper is too porous and causes your ink-lines to "bleed" as the rough fibres draw the ink. Please do not use very heavy art-boards like Bainbridge Board though, as they are far too thick and will double your postage bill when mailing originals to us.

Besides smooth-surfaced art paper giving you nice, clean, crisp inking lines, it also takes sheets of art Tone or glued-down pieces of tracing paper well: there's an overall even contact with the surface, and therefore no bubbles or bumps underneath, such as a rough-surfaced board can cause.

For your rough sketches you can use normal, inexpensive typing paper. When doing the original pencils, some artists prefer to work directly on the art paper itself. However, if you find that you have to re-work and erase your original pencils quite a bit until you're satisfied, it can make your final drawing surface quite smudged and even rough and porous--so use cheaper paper for working out your original ideas if you find it easier.

Also, when drawing or inking, keep a protective piece of clean paper over your pencil originals for your hand to rest on, so you don't smudge it that way, or cause it to become greasy--in which case your ink will not go down well on it later.

Tracing paper and its use: Tracing Paper can be a very helpful tool for many

reasons! For example, if you come across a photograph that has something or someone in the exact position that you want to draw one of your characters in, you can tape the tracing paper over the photo, and with a HB pencil copy the lines. Then, taping the pencilled side of the tracing-paper "face down" onto your final art paper, you can transfer the image to your art paper by carefully rubbing the back side of the tracing paper. The final image, however, will be "reversed" on the art paper.

If you want the image to go down in the same position as it is in the photo, then trace the image in ink, and after you have removed it, rub a HB lead over the backside of your tracing. (This will transform your sheet of tracing paper into an improvised Carbon Paper.) Tape it onto your art paper and, with a very hard (and continually-sharpened) 4H or 5H lead, go over the lines you want transferred to your art paper.

You can use the second technique with your rough sketches as well--if it comes out exactly the way you want it to appear on your final art paper. Instead of merely copying your sketch or idea, you can rub an even HB lead layer over the back of it, and by going over your lines with it on the final art paper, transfer it down!

Some artists ink directly onto the tracing paper itself, never even using initial pencils--and then glue the inking down onto the final art paper. This technique saves a lot of time, but gives you little opportunity to re-work your pencils should you want to change some details in the tracing.

Other Artists never use tracing paper, preferring to do all their drawings "free-hand" without the added crutch of tracing or even copying good photographs. If your art-style is of good enough quality to stand on its own without the use of tracing paper, photographs or any reference material whatsoever, then more power to you! The final end product may not be as realistic, accurate or graphically "gorgeous" but you could also be freed from over-dependence on reference material and enabled to work strictly by the inspiration of the Spirit alone. But--don't cheat yourself or your audience by refusing to