

## Making Hues

Did you know that one does not need a colored pencil for every color or hue? For example, when working with greens one does not always have the rich dark green one would like for deep shadows. To create the illusion of three dimension on a two-dimensional surface (aka the paper) a painter should have at least four or maybe even five values of the base color. That is, one would need a light, medium, dark and “low dark”. A low dark is a very dark value of the basic color of the object. A fifth value is a high light which is a very light value. The five values of painting are labeled as: highlight, light, medium, dark, and low dark.

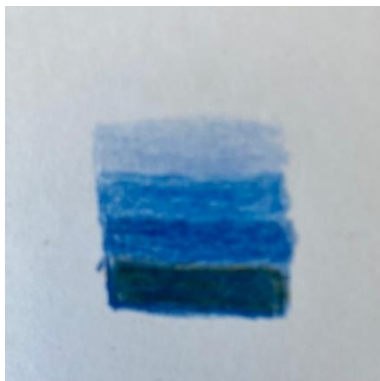
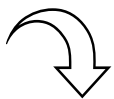
For this article I am going to concentrate on creating that low dark needed to make a painting “pop” Most CP artists “fish around” is their stash of pencils trying to find a pencil for each value. Often the low dark is not available. For example, a rich, midnight like, dark green, is not available in most colored pencils. When this happens, the artist can create the very dark value using the complement of the base color.

Oh my, what is a complement? Red, Blue, and Yellow are primary colors. Mix two together and it creates the complement of the remaining primary. For example, mixing blue and yellow creates green which is the complement of red. Mix Red and Blue, and it creates Purple which is the complement of Yellow. And finally, when mixing Red and Yellow it creates Orange which is the complement of Blue. But that’s too much to carry around in one’s brain.

Here is a good way to remember complements. Red and green are Christmas colors. Yellow and Purple are Springtime colors. And Orange and Blue are autumn colors. Think of how pretty the fall New England orange foliage looks against a bright blue sky. So just think Christmas colors, spring colors, and Fall colors to remember basic complementary colors.

But what does this have to do with creating “low darks”?

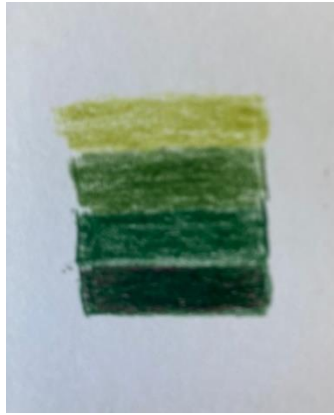
Check this out:



*Four values of blue, light, medium and dark and low dark.*

The low dark was created with layers of dark blue, orange (the complement of blue), and then dark blue again.

Tuck that low dark in the corners where objects overlap. Or when one needs a very dark color.



Four values of green, light, medium dark and low dark.

The low dark green was created by layering dark green, red (the complement of green) and dark green again.

Tuck that low dark in corners where greens overlap.



The dark blue stripes on the blue jay feather were done with a red pencil overlaid with the dark blue.

Some darks were created with medium green layered with red then green. The deep darks (under the furthest back leaf) were layered with dark green, dark red (Tuscan) and then dark green again.

