

Phase 1: Hand Control — Parent Handout

Phase 1 — Hand Control: A Parent's Guide to the Foundations of Drawing

****Lines, forms and confident movement****

1. WHAT THIS PHASE IS

Welcome to the beginning of your daughter's artistic journey. At Meenakshi Art Work, we believe that a beautiful painting is only as strong as the hand that guides the brush. During this foundational five-week period, we use graphite-on-paper to train the hand for steady, intentional movement.

You may wonder why we don't start with color or canvas immediately. In our studio, we follow a strict medium progression: ****Pencil → Acrylic → Canvas → Oil****. Every student must "earn" their way through these stages. This ensures they develop the motor skills and control required for advanced work so that when your daughter eventually reaches the canvas, she isn't fighting her tools—she is mastering them. This philosophy of the "steady line" is the starting point for every specific exercise she will perform.

2. WHAT YOUR DAUGHTER WILL ACTUALLY DO

Your daughter will progress through a ladder of 14 specific exercises. These are grouped into five stages to build her skills logically:

* **Stage A: Grip & Pressure** * **First Lines:** Using a loose wrist to create freer, more confident marks. * **Tripod Grip Drill:** Mastering the traditional grip (holding the pencil like a pen) for stability in short strokes. * **Overhand Grip for Shading:** Learning to hold the hand over the pencil to cover large areas of tone evenly. * **Underhand Grip for Detail:** Experimenting with hand positions to learn how changing your grip changes the control you get. * **Pressure Scale:** Training the hand to move from whisper-light hatching to deep, grounded shadows. * **Stage B: Tone Building** * **Hatching Bands:** Using parallel lines to build up consistent tone systematically. * **Cross-Hatching Grid:** Overlapping lines at different angles to control darkness with precision. * **Stage C: Observation** * **Contour Drawing:** Focusing on the outlines of a subject to improve accuracy. * **Blind Contour:** Drawing the subject without looking at the paper (often using a "no-peeking" paper plate over the hand) to sync the eye and hand. * **Gesture Poses:** Capturing the "life" and movement of a form before worrying about detail. * **Stage D: Forms** * **Ellipse Practice:** Mastering the circular forms that serve as the basis for most real-world objects. * **Cylinder & Cube Forms:** Learning how basic 3D forms explain the structure of almost everything else. * **Sphere Study:** A deep dive into understanding how light and shadow hit a curved surface. * **Stage E: Capstone** * **Still-Life of Three Objects:** A final project where she combines all her new skills into one finished drawing.

These exercises are more than just drills; they ensure the hand follows the eye without hesitation.

3. HOW LONG IT TAKES AND HOW WE JUDGE PROGRESS

The Hand Control phase is designed to cover 14 exercises over approximately **5 weeks**. However, our studio operates on a principle of true mastery rather than a fixed calendar.

The "No Rushing" Rule At Meenakshi Art Work, we do not advance students just because a certain number of days have passed. A phase is repeated until it is mastered. Rushing through foundations creates "gaps" that appear later in a student's portfolio.

Progress is judged by the **freedom of the line** and the **evenness of tone**. We look for a shift from "hairy," hesitant lines to single, confident strokes. We provide one-on-one feedback to every student, comparing their work against 23 student examples that serve as our benchmark for readiness. While the student's skill is the focus, having the right physical tools makes that skill possible.

4. WHAT SHE NEEDS

To succeed, your daughter will need high-quality materials that help her understand the range of the graphite medium.

Tool	Purpose
HB, 2B, 4B, 6B Pencils	A range of lead softness (H is hard/light, B is soft/dark) to build tone gradually.
Kneaded Eraser	A pliable eraser that "lifts" graphite without damaging the sturdy "tooth" (texture) of the paper.

Tool	Purpose
A3 Cartridge Paper (120–160 gsm)	Sturdy paper (grams per square meter) that can withstand repeated shading and erasing.
Pencil Sharpener & Sandpaper Block	Used to maintain a long, tapered lead for better control and various line weights.
Blending Stumps	Compressed paper tools used to soften tone without using oily fingers.

Even the best tools feel strange until a student overcomes the "beginner's awkwardness" of the first few weeks.

5. WHAT'S NORMAL IN THE FIRST WEEKS

It is common for students to feel a bit of physical awkwardness at first. Most children are used to moving only their wrists (the "writing" motion). We are retraining the body to engage the ****shoulder and elbow**** for long, expressive lines.

Expect the first strokes to look "tight," but a visible ****breakthrough point**** typically occurs around ****Exercise 10****. You will notice a shift in confidence as the "stuttering" hand of Week 1 transforms into the "gliding" hand of Week 5. You can support this physical transformation easily at home.

6. HOW YOU CAN HELP AT HOME

Support at home is about encouraging the right habits rather than teaching technique.

* **Micro-Habits over Marathons:** Encourage 5 minutes of daily "scribbles" or hatching practice. This is far superior to a single long session once a week. * **Celebrate the Process:** We aren't looking for "pretty pictures" yet—we are looking for steady lines. Praise the confidence of a stroke rather than the likeness of a drawing. * **The Originality Rule:** To build real skill, your daughter must draw everything by hand. Please avoid the temptation to "help" by drawing for her or suggesting she trace.

Pro-Tip: Keep every page she completes in a folder. Comparing a Week 1 exercise to a Week 5 drawing provides a massive boost to a student's confidence.

7. WHAT SHE CAN DO AT THE END

Upon completion of Phase 1, your daughter will be able to **draw any form from observation with a steady, intentional line; the hand no longer fights the pencil.** This milestone secures her foundation for the more complex lessons ahead.

8. ASKING ABOUT BATCHES AND FEES

Meenakshi Art Work is a women-only studio. We provide a focused, safe, and professional environment for girls (aged 6+) and women to learn without distraction.

* **Class Times:** 4:30 PM – 5:30 PM. * **Originality Rule:** We maintain a strict policy of "No Tracing" and "No Teacher Finishing." Your daughter's work will be 100% her own. * **Logistics:** For

specific information regarding current batch availability and fee structures, please contact us directly.

****Contact us on WhatsApp: [+91 70175 12686]****