

## UNDERSTANDING ROSES

### LESSON 6

Old botanical illustrations and chintz fabrics of cabbage roses can be quite enchanting due to the use of dramatic light and shadow. Consider Googling them as reference for this lesson. Before beginning to draw a rose, understand a bit about the structure and botany of this romantic plant. Look at drawing the rose as a life long pursuit toward capturing the elegance. Remember to ‘smell the roses’ as you draw and study. This lesson is an exploration of the rose structure.

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ROSE FAMILY

**Genus:** *Rosa*    **Family:** *Rosaceae*

A rose is a woody perennial flowering plant. There are over a hundred species and thousands of cultivars. They grow as erect shrubs, climbing or trailing plants.

**Identifying Features– Multiples of Five:** Sepals: 5; Petals: 5;  
Stamen: Numerous; Leaves: typically oval with serrated edges.

**FLOWERS** Flowers vary in size and shape, typically large and showy in a wide range of colors. In the Rose family, the petals are separate and the numerous stamens are distinctive. Rose species hybridize easily, resulting in a wide range of garden roses bred to have the desirable high number of petals.

*Petals grow in a spiral arrangement often visible when looking at the top of a blossom.*



**LEAVES** The leaf stems emerge from the main stem alternately. In most species the individual leaves are 2”–6” long, pinnate (feather shaped), with 5–9 leaflets that usually have a serrated margin and often a few small prickles on the underside of the stem. The term for rose thorns is prickles – outgrowths of the epidermis. Rose prickles are typically sickle-shaped hooks, which aid the rose in climbing on other vegetation.



*Many of the newer domestic cultivars do not produce hips because flowers are so tightly petalled access for pollination is impossible.*

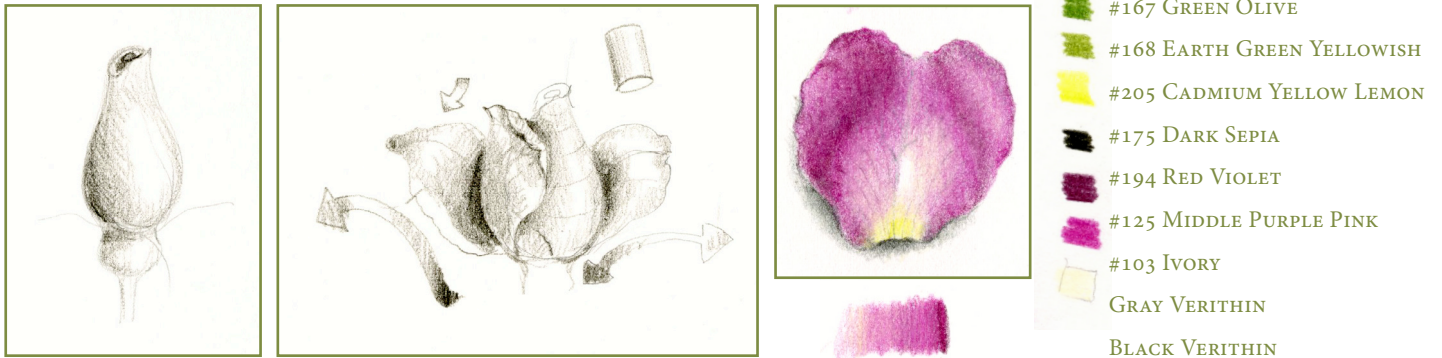


**FRUIT** The family includes many edible fruits, such as: apple, strawberry, cherry, blackberry and rose hips (shown here).

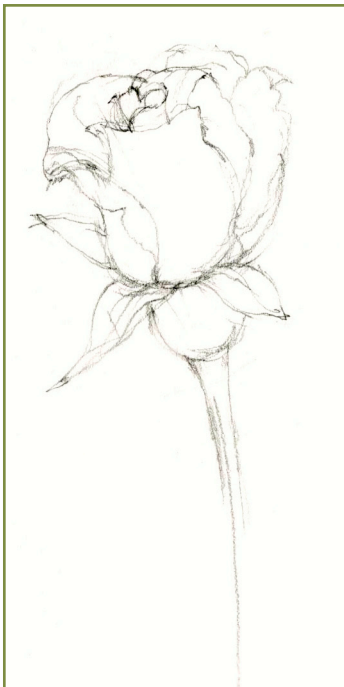
## DRAWING A ROSE IN COLOR

### LESSON 6 PART 1

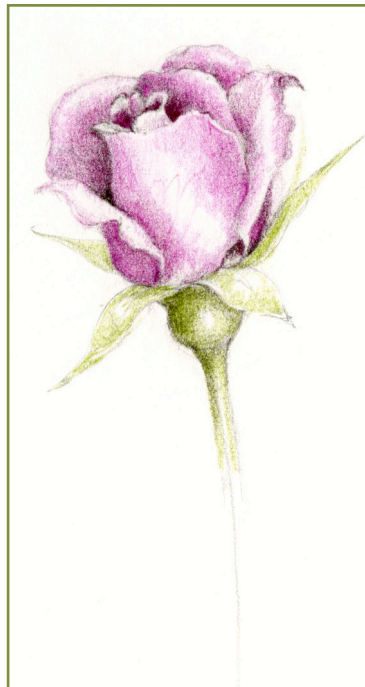
Practice using dramatic lighting on a rosebud to emphasize and capture the overall urn-shape and rolling petals. Start by considering the overall form and the way petals hug to the form and then how they peel away in shapes that can be rendered as cylinders. Give close attention to the details of overlapping petals. One of the most delightful benefits of drawing a rose is smelling the sweet aroma.



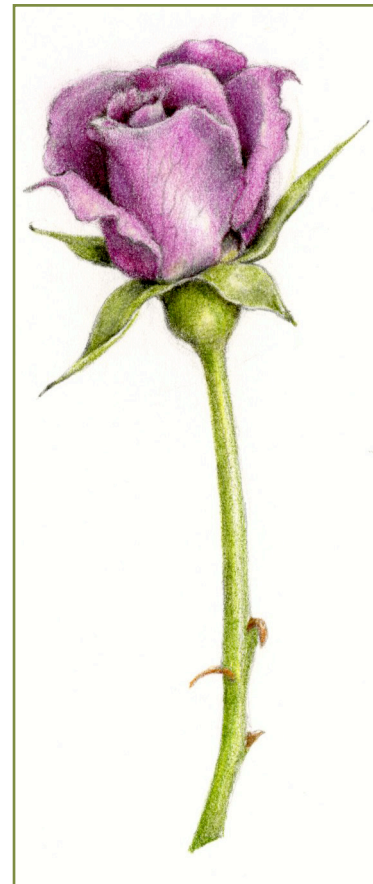
**STEP 1:** Set up light source, draw thumbnail sketches to understand form, test color swatches. Think about the light on a cylinder for the petals that roll and curve. Draw one individual petal to practice color and shape. Note: This rendering was done with a light source from the upper right. This is used by left-handed artists. If you are right-handed, set up your light from the left side. Refer back to Page 6 “Upper Left Light Source.”



**STEP 2:** Draw the life-size outline in graphite pencil. Tone the shapes.



**STEP 3:** Begin toning overlapping areas with color and maintain highlights.



**STEP 4:** Add saturated color and detail.

**STEP 5:** Evaluate your drawing.

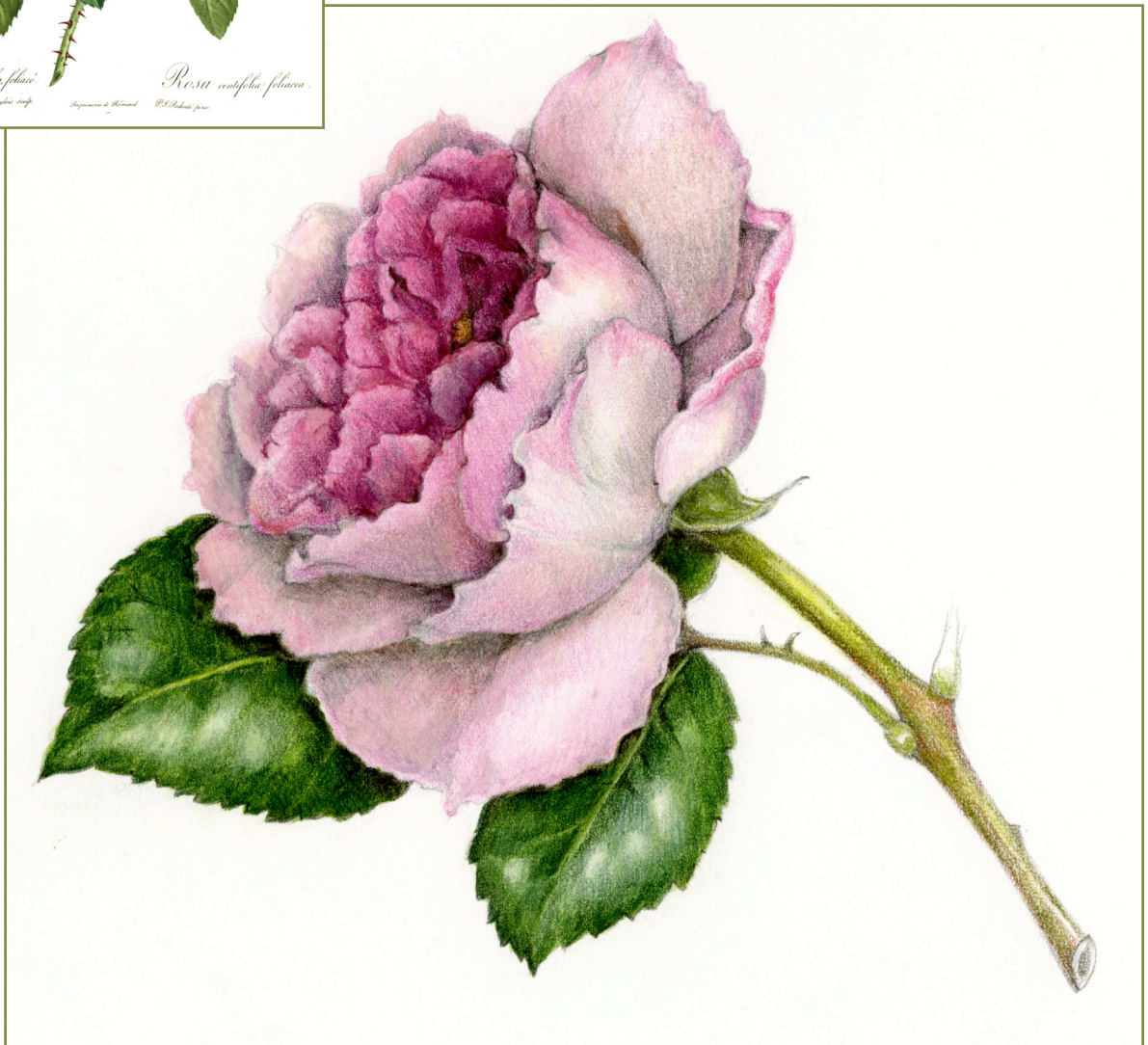
## DRAWING A ROSE IN COLOR

### LESSON 6 PART 2

#### DRAWING A LARGE OPEN ROSE IN COLOR

Roses with many tightly-packed petals can be challenging to draw. Often there are so many petals that drawing this subject can be dizzying. To start, focus on the overall shape of the whole flower. Set up your subject to give a good view of a rose blossom with lots of contrasting dark areas of shadow versus areas highlighted by light source. The shiny leaves have a curvy surface also creating contrasting lights and shadows.

ENGLISH ROSE  
BY REDOUTÉ FOR  
INSPIRATION



## DRAWING A ROSE IN COLOR

### LESSON 6 PART 2

Collect several roses so that some of them can be deconstructed for close examination of the various parts.



**STEP 1:** Start with a petal or a few petals of varying sizes from the inside and outside of the flower. Develop correct color and overall shape and note the irregular edges.

*If you decide to go further and tackle a whole rose, get ready to take days for this drawing. Sometimes this becomes a difficult task as the rose keeps changing. Putting your rose in the refrigerator can help slow the opening. To get an overall sense of the rose, do some loose concept sketches to check light source, and do a few detailed petals. Take breaks as needed.*



**STEP 2:** Create concept drawings for tonal variation with correct light source to get the overall feel.



**STEP 3:** Measure an entire rose flower and outline it using graphite pencil.



**STEP 4:** Do a layer of toning emphasizing the overlapping petals. If your flower is a pale color, start with light toning to keep your colors fresh.



**STEP 5:** Apply a layer of watercolor to color the flower leaving the highlights as the white of the paper.



**STEP 6:** Continue to layer color remembering to maintain strong contrast on the light and dark areas. Add details and sharpen.



*To create pleasing contrast around a pale flower, emphasize the dark, shiny, serrated leaves.*



*Notice how the petals appear to be rolling and that there is an overall cup shape to the flower.*