





How to Create a Monochrome Picture

What is *Tone* in Art?

In art, **tone** refers to the **lightness or darkness of a colour**. It helps artists show:

- Where the **light** hits an object (the light tones)
- Where there are **shadows** (the dark tones)
- The places in between (the mid-tones)

Tone is really important because it helps us:

-  Show **form** — how round or flat something looks
-  Create **atmosphere** — like fog, mystery, or sunshine
-  Show **contrast** — differences between light and dark
-  Create a **mood or feeling** — gentle and soft, or bold and dramatic

Artists use tone to make flat pictures look **3D** by carefully adding **shades and tints**.

Monochrome means "**one colour**."

In art, Monochrome painting uses only one colour plus black and white. This means the artist uses:

- **Tints** (the colour mixed with white to make it lighter)
- **Shades** (the colour mixed with black to make it darker)

 For example:

A **monochrome blue painting** could include **light blue, sky blue, royal blue, and navy blue**, but no red, yellow, green, or other colours.

Monochrome art in multiple tones of one colour, helps artists focus on **light, shape, and contrast** without the distraction of lots of different colours.

Creating tints, shades and tones using different media

Media Type	Tints (Lighter Versions)	Shades (Darker Versions)	Tones (Muted/Neutral Versions)
Acrylic / Oil Paint	Mix the base colour with white to lighten	Mix the base colour with black to darken	Mix with grey (black + white) to neutralise and dull the colour
Watercolour Paint	Add more water to dilute the pigment and create a lighter wash	Use a more concentrated mix or add a touch of black	Add a small amount of grey or layer with diluted neutral tones
Coloured Pencils	Press lightly or blend with a white pencil	Press harder or use a black pencil to layer	Layer with grey pencil or use medium pressure for intermediate tones
Chalk / Soft Pastels	Blend base colour with white pastel	Blend base colour with black pastel	Use grey pastel, or blend equal parts white and black into the base colour
Oil Pastels	Mix or layer with white pastel	Mix or layer with black pastel	Blend base colour with grey pastel
Graphite / Pencil	Use lighter pressure or harder pencils (e.g. H grades)	Use heavier pressure or softer pencils (e.g. B grades)	Blend H and B grades or smudge with tools like a tortillon
Ink / Pen & Wash	Dilute ink with water for lighter tints	Use full-strength ink or layer to darken	Create mid-tones by varying water content or layering diluted washes
Digital Art	Increase brightness or use a lighter value of the same colour	Decrease brightness or use a darker value of the same colour	Adjust saturation/contrast or apply a neutral grey overlay

Step 1: Choose Your Subject

Pick something simple that will look good in just one colour.

✓ Ideas:

- An apple or other fruit
- A flower
- A shell or feather
- A mountain or tree silhouette

💡 Think about how light and shadows will look on it.

Step 2: Lightly Sketch Your Subject

Use a pencil to make a **very light sketch** on white paper. Don't press too hard – you'll be painting over this later.

✏ Keep it simple: just the outlines and key details.



Step 3: Pick Your Colour

This will be the **only colour** you use – your **monochrome colour**. You can use different **shades** of this colour to show light and dark.

✏ You can use:

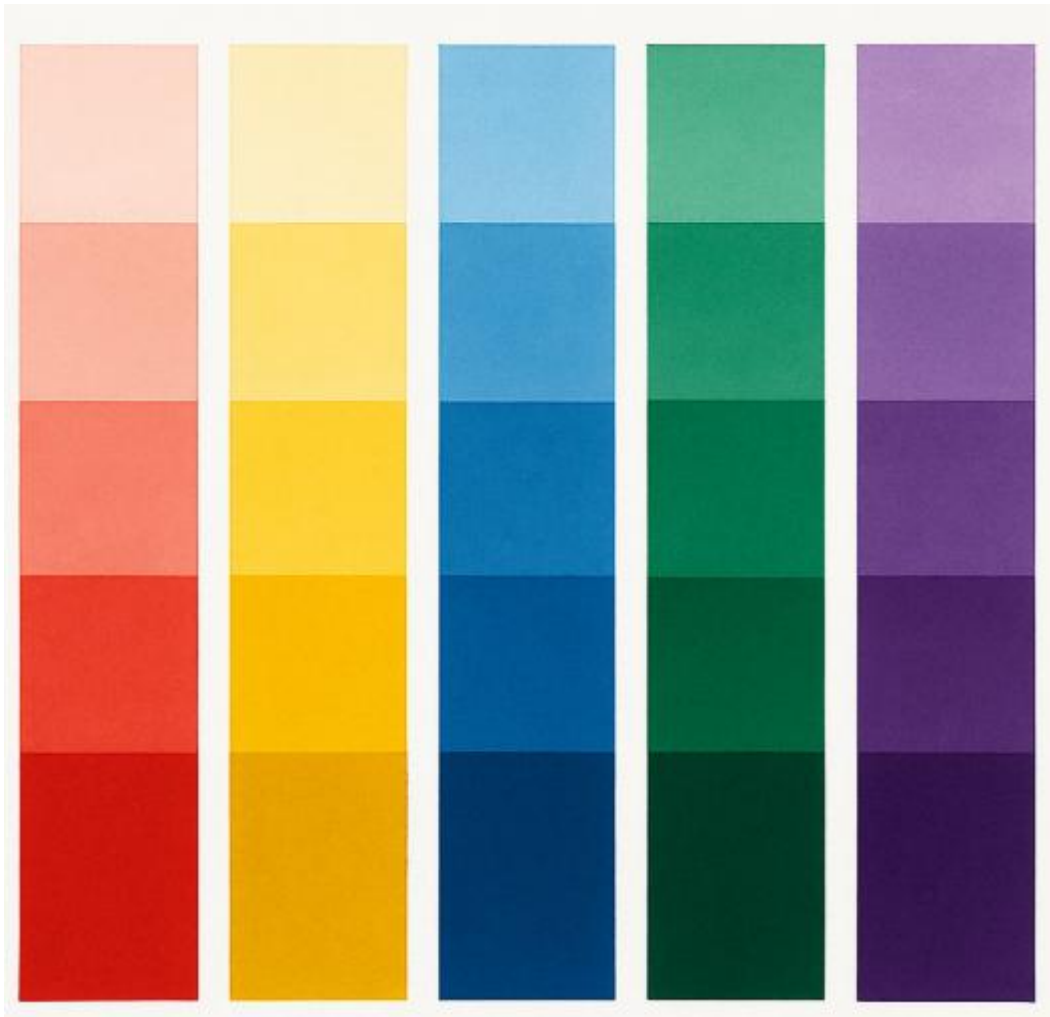
- Watercolours
 - Acrylic paint
 - Ink
 - Coloured pencil or marker (in layers)
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Step 4: Make a Tint & Shade Chart

Before painting, test how your colour looks:

- Mix it with **white or water** for light tints
- Use it **pure** for medium tone
- Add a tiny bit of **black or use less water** for dark shade

🎨 Make a quick 5-step swatch from light to dark to help you plan. Here are some examples of swatches for 5 colours: red, yellow, blue, green and purple



Step 5: Begin Painting

Start with your **lightest areas**.

Then add the **middle tones**, and finally the **darkest areas** where shadows fall.

Let layers dry in between if using paint.

✓ Tip: Leave some white paper showing for the brightest highlights!

Step 6: Add Final Details

Use the darkest shade for outlines, fine lines, or deep shadows.

You can also **softly blend edges** with a slightly wet brush to smooth things out.

