

**Important information:**

Time: 1 hour per type of object

Equipment: \* Paper  
\* Ruler  
\* Drawing pencils: 2H are best as HB will smudge and give thicker lines  
\* Rim chart (for pottery)  
\* Scale bars YAC factsheet  
\* Drawing pottery YAC factsheet  
\* Set square  
\* Lamp (optional)  
\* Camera

Outcomes: \* Knowledge of how to draw a range of objects  
\* Knowledge of scale

**Why draw artefacts?**

In the age of digital photography and computer wizardry it might seem a bit old fashioned to draw objects! However, there is still a place for drawing objects as it encourages people to look very carefully at the object in question. It also provides a clearer idea of the object's shape, decoration and texture. Different materials are drawn in different, standardised ways within archaeology so that the maximum amount of information can be captured. Outlined below are some of the key features of drawing objects archaeologically.

**What should be included in all drawings and photographs?**

All archaeological drawings and photographs should include a scale; a pot photographed against a blank background for example will give no sense of how big it is. The scale chosen should be appropriate to the object and enable the drawer/viewer to include all surface decoration clearly; archaeological drawings are more related to technical drawings than artistic ones. Most objects are drawn life-size at a scale of 1:1 (i.e. 1cm on the page is 1cm in real life) but larger objects may require a scale of 1:2 or even 1:5. (See *the YAC Factsheet on Scale Bars.*) Archaeological drawings are always in black and white.

Drawings and photographs must show all surfaces of the object, so a series of drawings and photographs will be needed; these should always be flat plan drawings rather than 3D ones. When taking a photograph you should use a background colour that the object stands out against and should use lamps to highlight particularly important features; avoid over exposure though. It is also important that close-up shots are in focus. Using a digital camera will help as you can check your images quickly, easily and cheaply without waiting for films to be developed.

Archaeological drawings showing textures, patterns and other decoration are always drawn as if light was hitting the object from the top left. Remember, when drawing, the key is to produce a clear, accurate drawing that could be used to analyse the object and its condition if the actual object is not available.

**Drawing pottery**

See the YAC Factsheet on Drawing Pottery for a step-by-step pictorial guide.

The key thing with pottery drawings is that they have two sides to them:

- the right-hand side of the drawing always shows the surface detail of the pot
- the left-hand side shows the inside and thickness of the pot

The two sides are separated by a 'T' shape which shows the exact height of the pot as well as its diameter at the top and bottom.

*Continues...*

**Drawing pottery (continued)**

Shading using lines, broken lines and stippling is used to show a pot's texture and patterns, as well as the marks left by the potter such as fingerprints or incisions. Stippling is a technique using small dots made with the tip of your pencil. Colour, such as glazing, is never shown: illustrations are always black and white. If you have a pottery object with decoration on the 'inside', for example a willow pattern plate or shallow bowl, you will need to draw a plan view of the pattern on a separate sheet of paper – make sure you draw it at the same scale!

The above description is for drawing whole pots, or for creating reconstruction drawings from a piece of rim. If you have a piece of pottery from the bottom or side of a pot you will not be able to reconstruct it easily. In this case, you should draw each surface of the piece complete with any decoration and remember to include a scale!

**Drawing flint and stone**

Flint is an interesting material to look at and draw. It is possible to work out how a flint tool was made. When a piece of flint is struck with enough force to knock a flake off, shock waves radiate outwards from the point where it was hit and survive like ripples frozen in ice. There will also be a 'bulb of percussion' left behind; a knobby bit at the point of impact!

Archaeological drawings of flint should show the front and back surfaces as well as a side view showing the thickness of the flake or tool. The edges of the drawing should reflect any nicks or bumps taken out of the flint. The different depressions left on the surfaces (caused by the flint being hit and shaped) should be outlined showing the 'ripples' mentioned above.

When drawing other types of stone you should again show the outline of the stone and any details on the surface that appear to have been made by a human.

Remember that all drawings should be in black and white.

**Drawing other materials**

Drawings of other materials must:

- have a scale included
- show all surfaces and any decoration
- be in black and white.

With metal objects it is not necessary to show rust by adding shading unless the rust hides a piece of decoration. Drawings of wooden items should include details of the grain of the wood and textiles should show the pattern of the weave of the material; textiles with a repeating pattern do not need to be drawn in their entirety, just a small section showing one complete section of the pattern!

**Examples of drawings (not to scale!)**