How To Be
CREATIVE
With Nail Art

A COMPLETE GUIDE
*WITH TOOLS, ACTION PLANS &
PRINTABLE TEMPLATES.*

WRITTEN BY:
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Neiru

Raising your
CREATIVITY

Creativity is everywhere and creativity is for everyone - and that includes you!

It may be new to you, and at times, it may even make you feel lost or scared. It's natural. Sometimes you feel like your winging it, sometimes you feel that adrenaline rush, or sometimes it just feels like you're in an unstoppable flow. All those feelings - get used to it; it just confirms that you are applying your creativity. But these feelings may not come often and you may feel you just are hitting a creative wall block.

You waste time sitting there with your brushes and gels, acrylics, or polishes, floating in nothingness or worse yet - in frustration. But what I'm here to tell you is that creativity can be trained through some very simple steps (given that you follow and work on them), and with them, you can minimize these dry spells.

Now this book is not some shortcut formula to being creative. 'Creativity' is very much like raising a child at first - it needs nurture, love, constant attention, and and with some of the right tools - raising your creativity can be extremely fun and gratifying throughout the journey!

Creativity can be
TRAINED

I get emails very often asking me about creativity:

"How do I become more creative with my nail art?"
"How do I simply not just copy nail art designs and create my own original designs?"
"How do I come up with colours that just work in my designs?"

And to be honest... I don't know the answers to these questions, but what I do know are some **very simple steps** you can apply to your everyday routine to help you find the answers for yourself - and eventually help you become more creative than you are now! But I'm also going to tell you some of the traps that could put your **creativity in danger**, risking your ability to be creative and making it so difficult for you to reverse it.

I'm going to give you a very foundational process of training creativity and give you the exact tools (some of which I have created) which have helped me along the way to becoming the nail artist that I am today.

Now remember, I too wasn't formally taught how to be creative, but found my own approach. And today, I want to share with you my experiences and what worked for me as a nail artist!

Creativity is all about the prep work - a lot of of your creative training takes place of when you're outside of actually 'creating' nail art.

And ofcourse, you don't need to be technically sound as a nail tech or nail artist to be creative, **but having a solid grasp of nail art technique can help you express your creativity clearly** and expressing yourself is exactly what 'art' is all about.

You may already know, but my team at Neiru has put together a nail art learning platform giving you the secret techniques behind creating some of the latest styles and trends in nail art! To become a member and start learning, simply head to www.Neiru.me

Let's just jump right into it.

Here are five simple steps to becoming a more creative nail artist!

1. Become a
COLLECTOR (NOT A HOARDER)

Nothing is original.

I hope these three words let you sleep easier at night.

Creative work builds on what came before, and that means that **nothing is ever completely original**. Now I don't mean you should go out there and steal and plagiarize and claim things as your own, but study, give credit, **get influenced by, take ideas from and transform** those ideas into a new creation.

But let's take a step back. Before you start creating, you need to become a collector, and note that this is very different from being a hoarder. A hoarder collects indiscriminately, but artists like ourselves should collect selectively.

Collect and be influenced by things that you really love. And I mean really love. The stronger you love something, the more this piece can and will influence you, your style, and ultimately your work.

"COLLECT AND BE INFLUENCED BY THINGS THAT YOU REALLY LOVE."

"COLLECTOR" ACTION PLAN:

Pinterest

Pinterest allows you to start collecting images (and, now, videos), and **sort, organize and categorize through what they call "Boards".**

For example, you could have a board for just "3D Nails" or "Textile Pattern Nails", and the great thing is you can share your inspirations and collections with everyone around the world.

Another great bonus about using Pinterest is that since your content is uploaded onto Pinterest, you can view your collection from any device as long as you have an Internet connection.

Having Pinterest on your mobile smartphone is like carrying a portable and organized photo album (or they call 'Pinboard') with you, allowing you to share inspirations, while saving others'

inspirations inside your own pinterest boards.

Not only is pinterest great for you to build your own mass collection of inspirations, but this is a great tool to also build a following.

TIP: Want to make collecting images while surfing the internet even easier?

Pinterest allows you to manually add images from across the internet by entering the images' URL.

But to save time and make collecting even MORE efficient, simply install a 'Pin it' button on your browser.

Instructions on how to install the pinterest button on your browser - click here:

https://help.pinterest.com/en/ articles/add-pin-it-button-your- browser#Web
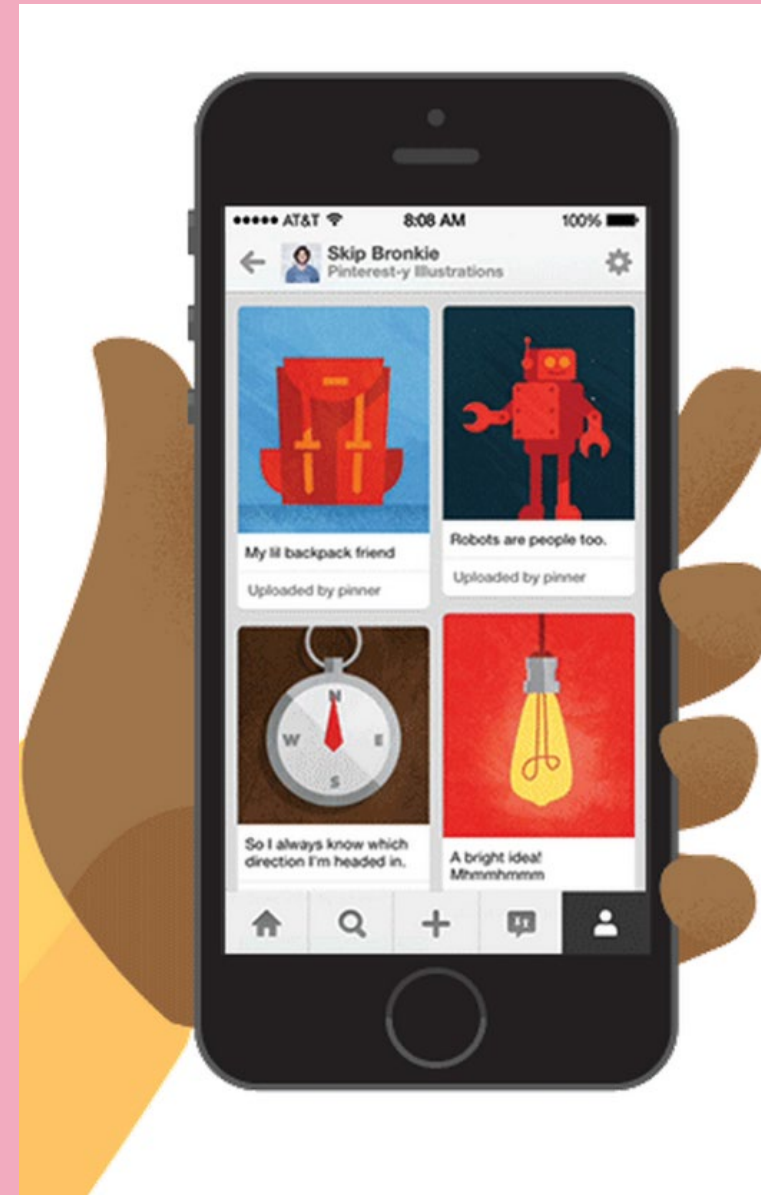
The Dangers of Collecting

It's **easy to collect** nail art designs on the Internet, especially with sites like Pinterest or apps like Instagram, but don't fall in a trap that can threaten your creativity.

While collecting completed nail artworks can be beautiful to look at, it can **completely hinder** your sense of creativity - and what you've been working to build.

Completed works make it ever so **tempting to copy**. Now, that's not to say that it is wrong to copy when you're practicing a specific technique or when you have a specific goal in mind that requires you to copy a design, but you'll have to **take it a step further so you don't fall down this slippery path**. Take what you've learned or needed to learn and then **add, remove, mix ideas, apply your own creative spin and view** - and you have now created a piece you can call your own.

Look further

So as a nail artist, I urge you to really look further beyond the nail "tip" or another #nailart or #nailswag design. I love it when I'm out shopping, looking at fashion blogs, or simply staring at my bonsai filled back yard - we're completely surrounded by amazing textures, patterns, and colours.

Rapid prototyping, commonly heard in the engineering or technical world, involves multiple iterations of a three-step process:
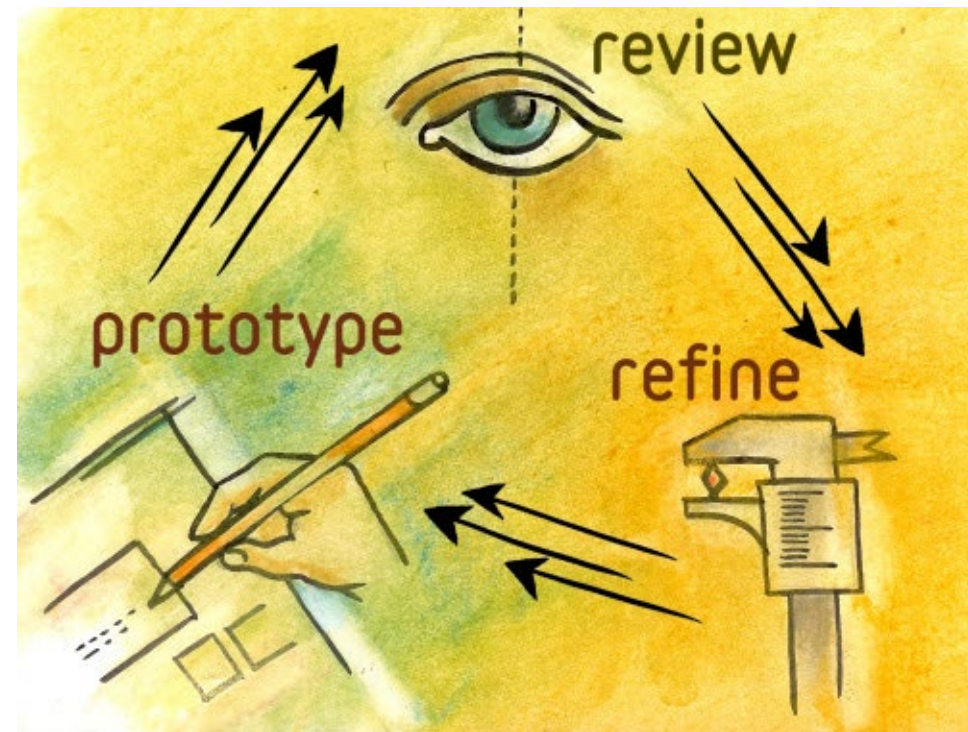
1. PROTOTYPE

   This simply means to just create.

2. REVIEW

   Share your design with others; review your own work with a critical eye.

3. REFINE

   Based on feedback and self-review, find where you can improve upon and refine your work.

For nail artists like ourselves, rapid prototyping simply means to continually and quickly come and explore an idea, then review it, and ultimately improve it.

Remember, we're working on our creativity, our imagination, and training ourselves to **explore as much as possible** within a given amount of time. During this part of your creativity training, you don't need to sit on your nail workbench and start creating nail art on a false tip. No need to worry about techniques, products, cure time, brushes, chemicals, etc - it's just you and a few basic tools and your imagination to run wild.

You can start creating anywhere; in fact, **get out of your normal workspace**, take yourself out of your regular routine and simply bring a pencil and some paper. I do this almost weekly - I grab a few of my printed nail art sketch templates (see pages 11-13), a pack of pencil crayons and a pencil and head to my nearest Starbucks (can I suggest one-pump, single shot, grande Caramel Macchiato - love this whether I'm in Canada or in Japan). I literally get lost with sketches, doodles, and colours, and eventually find myself brewing up a creative mess. Start with an idea and **with each iteration, evolve it**. Even if you know it may not turn out like what you imagine, you may end up with something totally different and you might just fall in love with it.

WWW.NEIRU.ME

´SKETCH` ACTION PLAN

EACH WEEK:

Set aside a 'sketch' block at least once a week, and push yourself to sketch at least 10-20 different designs within each 30-60 minute session.

NOTE:

You're not looking to create the 'one' amazing design, but your goal here is to **give that creative muscle a true workout**. Like at the gym, the more repetitions, the more you refine that muscle tone and the more endurance you build, and that's exactly what you want to do here. You want to build creative muscle strength and endurance to help you dig further and further without getting creatively drained.


WHAT:

So what kind of things do I sketch in my notebook or scrap nail sheets? I'll work on roughing out ideas, patterns, and even work on my sketching in general - all this will benefit your nail art.

HOW:

Attached are nail tip sketching templates for your designs. To print only the templates, go to 'File'>'Print'> and select only pages 11-13 to print (I've got three nail shapes for you and print as many as you need!)
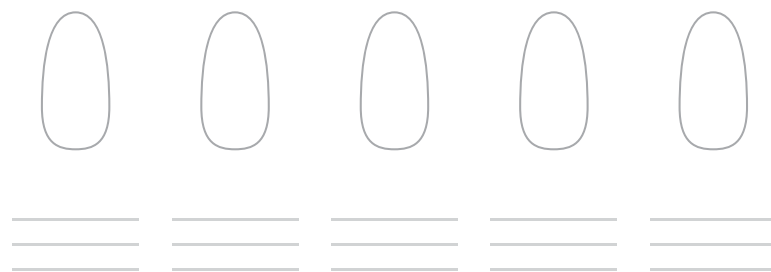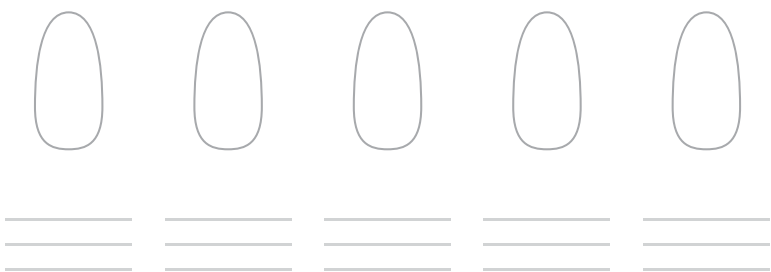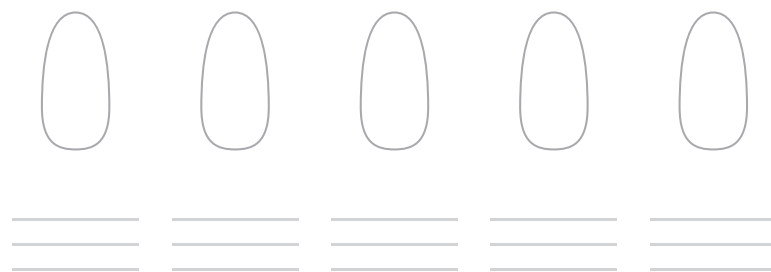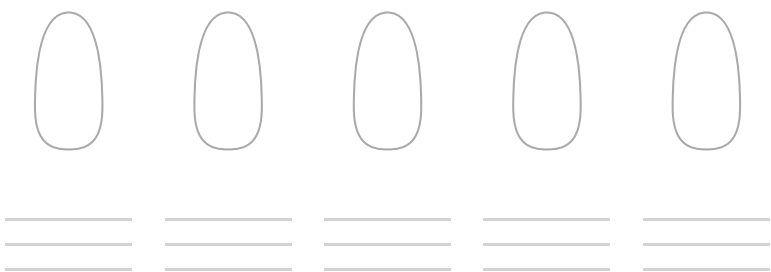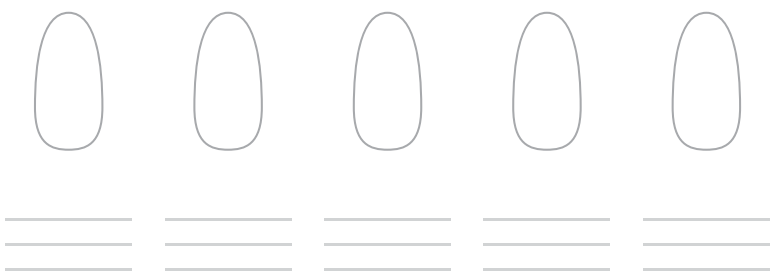
Perhaps one of the most common things I get asked is about colors.

Let's face it, we all need inspiration once in a while and finding colours that marry well together can be a bit of a hair-pulling experience. If you aren't formally trained in colour theory, or don't have an eye for colours and combinations, not to worry - **there is so much inspiration and so many tools out there to help you find the perfect colour themes**. You just have to know where to look!

Colour theory is one of those fundamentals designers and artists need to nail. It can be easy to grasp for some, but for most of us **it's like reading another language**. There are so many colours out there, it can be hard to pair up the 'right' palette of colors to make sure they look great together. Fair enough, you can learn the basics from the colour wheel of which colours contrast with which, which colors are warm and which are cold colors - but beyond that, it's a bit of a head-scratcher.
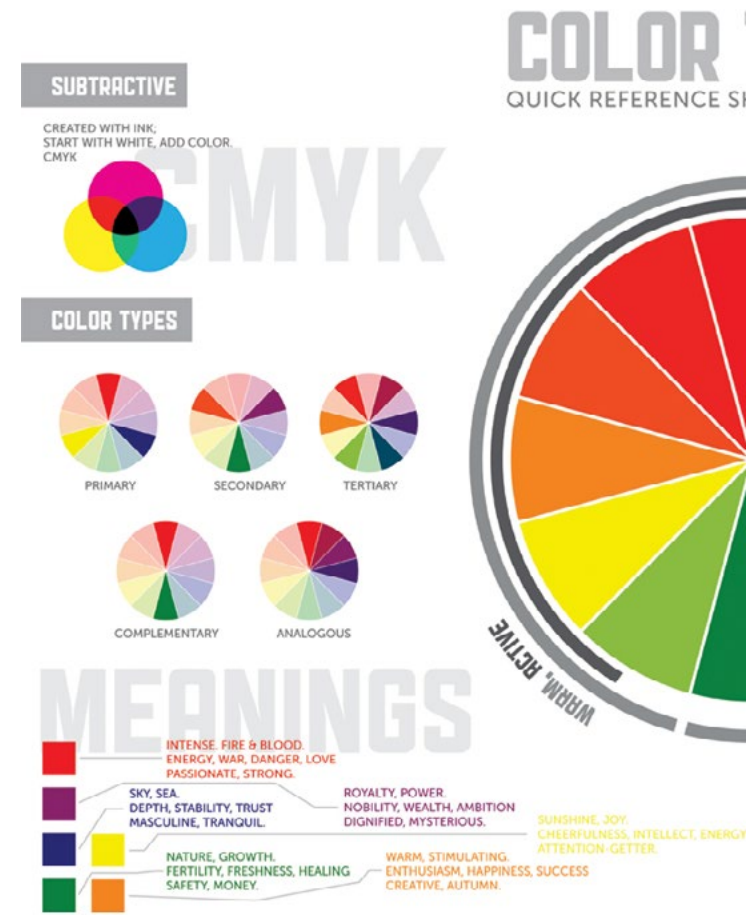
I'm not going to bore you with the foundation of colour theory; instead, let's not waste any time and find out where I always look for colour inspiration. You need that color inspiration and you need it now.

Adobe Kuler

Let me introduce to you to **Adobe Kuler**: an app for your mobile Apple device (I've listed the Android equivalent in the resources section) and it's also a site that will forever change your life!

This was originally designed for a web-based and desktop application which allows you to **collect themes (of colors)**, share them with the community, and download for use on software like Adobe Illustrator or Photoshop.

But then came along an app "Kuler" for Apple device and who doesn't love a free app? This app stays on your phone and uses your phone's camera.

´COLOR` ACTION PLAN

1. Download and install the app

Do a simple search on the Apple App Store for "Kuler" (iPad or iPhone) and download it - remember it's free!

2. Scan, snap, color!

Head over to your homescreen, swipe to the Adobe Kuler icon, and tada! You're quickly welcomed, with your camera active and scanning the view for different hues on your screen. You now have a world of colours (literally the world) to inspire you. Once you lift your iPhone to a view you'd like to sample from, the color picking points will move around your camera automatically at short intervals, **sampling the colors** you could combine to create a theme.

3. Create a new color 'Theme' in Kuler

You've had a run through Kuler and been hypnotized by all the moving color pickers - now it's time to **create and save** some of those palettes so when you're back near your nail work area, you can get started with these colors right away.

Let the color pickers wander around and settle on the predominant colors of
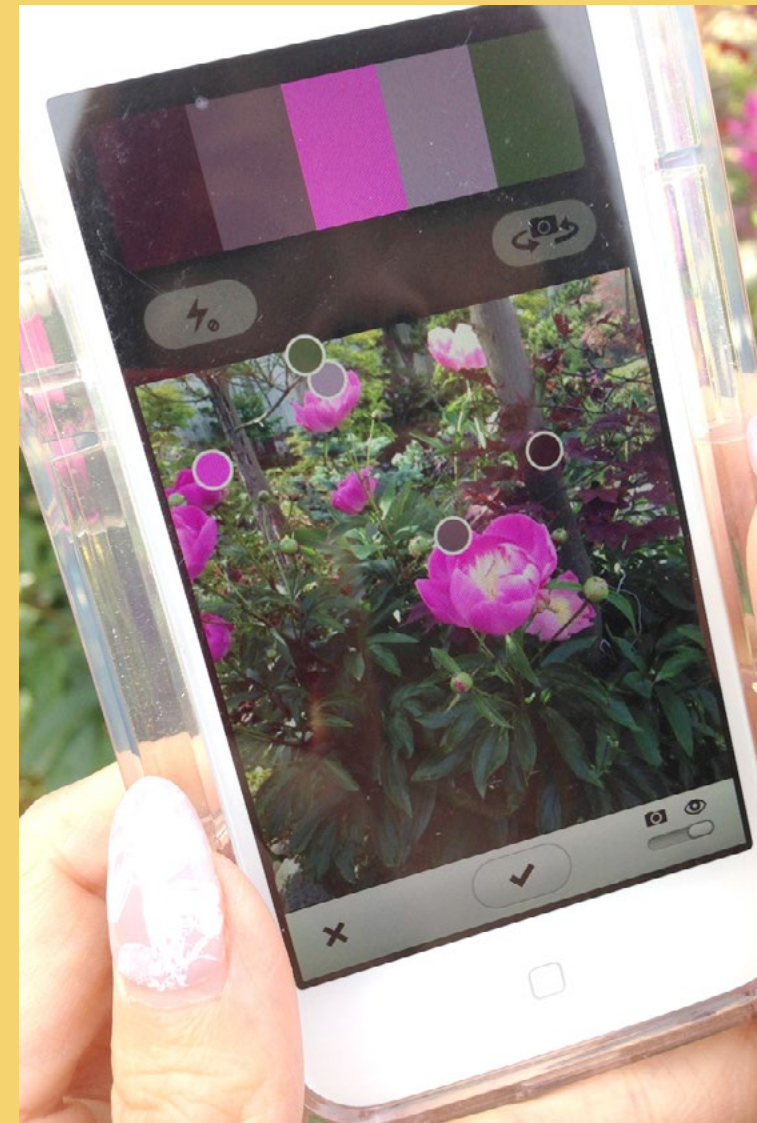
`COLOR` ACTION PLAN

this fabric. Once you're happy, tap the tick button; it will bring you to your listed themes (if you have any) and will be automatically saved on the top.

Here you can **modify the name of the theme**, whether others can view and use the theme when you enable 'Public Theme' and any tags you may have to help make the theme easier to search on. Once you've completed these fields, click on "Save Changes".

4. Bring these to your sketches or nail designs

Now you're ready to **bring these colors to your nails**. Since these color themes are saved on your phone, simply head back to your lovely nail workstation pull out your Kuler app and start browsing all the colours you have saved.

> **Don't own an iPhone?**
>
> Try using an alternative app called 'SwatchMatic' for Android. I haven't tried this, but if you have, let me know how it works.

"INSPIRATION COMES IN MANY COLORS. CAPTURE COLORS, CUSTOMIZE THEMES, AND DRAW FROM THEM FOR INSPIRATION WHENEVER YOU NEED."

Adobe Kuler

`COLOR` ACTION PLAN

5. Exercise colors

Use your phone and **capture at least three different colour themes with this app every day**. It takes 66 days to ingrain a habit, so make this a part of your creative routine. If you're able to do this daily for at least the next 66 days, that means by the end of it all you'll have about 200 different colour themes to draw from for your designs.

Looking for more colour inspirations?

Check out the **community of colour themes** that others have created. There is an endless amount of colour combinations that have been created by the Kuler community. Explore these colours and study what the user titled their theme; it may even give you a sense of how you can apply these colours, or on what type of a design. For example, the user may say 'Fall leaves of the autumn', and then you now have a hint that this may fit perfectly for your upcoming fall design!
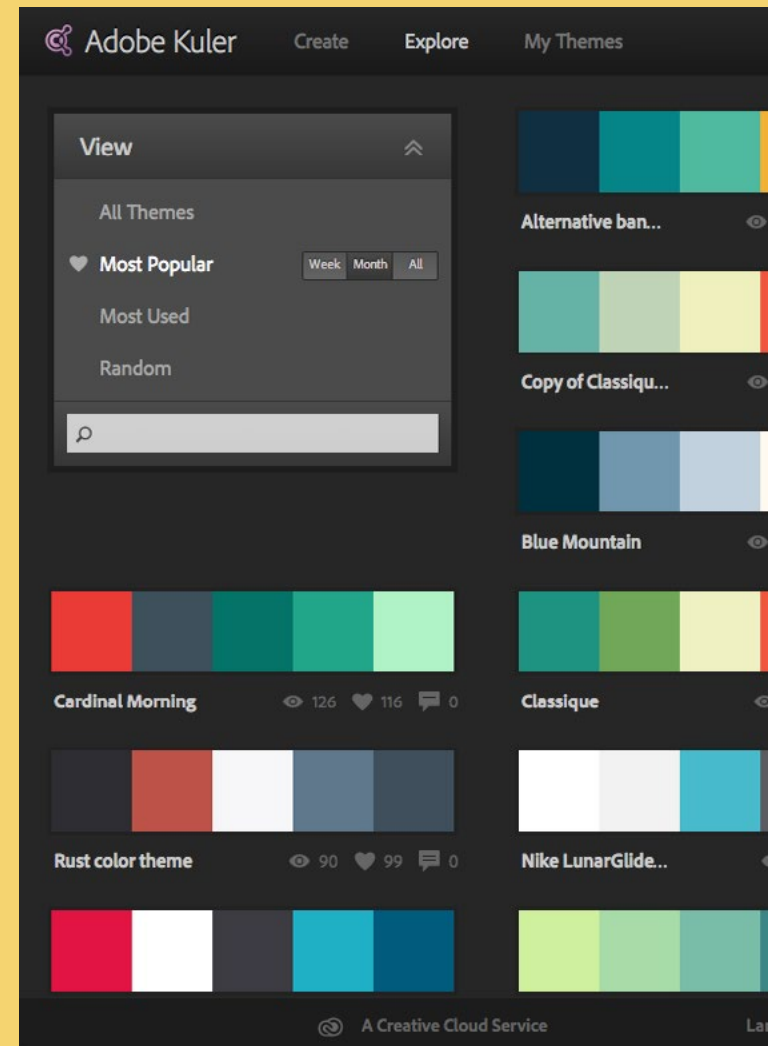
Above: Desktop version of Kuler - exploring the community's color themes.

´COLOR SWATCH` ACTION PLAN

6. CREATE ACTUAL SWATCHES:

So you have your digital swatches ready, create an actual swatch with colors you actually have for quick future reference.

Start creating your own color swatches with color combinations that you think will work. Simply use the template in the folloiwng page, and start painting color colors in the boxes below. Keep these swatches with you to plan for your furture designs.

The following page (20) is a template for you to create your own color swatches.

To print only the color swatch template, go to 'File'>'Print'> and select only page 20 to print (and print as many as you need!)

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You've got sketches, plans, and colors – let's marry them!

Too many skip the previous steps before, and jump straight into just creating on nail tips. Though, it's very tempting, I always strongly suggest to come prepared before you start creating on a nail tip. Unless you know exactly what you want to create, experimenting on a nail tip is extremely inefficient and even financially consuming – gels, acrylics, and using other supplies can all add up. Ofcourse having a nail specific design given to you can speed up your prepping time and leave you more time to experiment with a single design direction.

Limit yourself

Limiting yourself to creating on nail tips gives you focus and direction – and saves you from frustration. I give myself usually 1 or 2 nights a week of experimenting and this forces me to only be working on my best ideas – not only that, but when I start an idea it gives me focus and direction to continue refining those 1 or 2 different ideas (it's very rare that I go beyond 2 ideas a week when working on nail tips).

Develop, develop, develop

So when you when you've found a direction you want to go in, develop, develop, and develop – it's exactly how some of the greatest designs are created. Stay away from jumping from idea to idea – again another tempting step, but you'll never get anywhere.

Above: After 5 tries of working on detail styling of the feathers, I decided to let this go. Don't be afraid to let go of your ideas. Remember it's alla bout trinning your creativity.

'DEVELOPING' ACTION PLAN

1. Have a concept

You've done your sketches, you've come up with colors, it's now time you bring an idea to life. This is the hardest part, but select only 1 concept or sketch that you have created, this will be your start point.

2. Bring brush to tip

On a practice nail tip, start bringing your design to life. Pay attention to your detail, technique, and even timing.

3. Review and develop

This is key - don't give yourself a chance to be satisfied on your first try. There's always room for improvement. Review your work and develop by re-creating your first attempt, but make a point to improve creatively or technically. I am challenging you to develop your idea at least in 3 rounds.
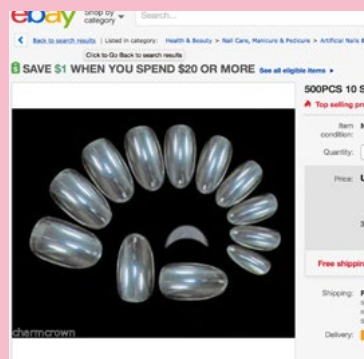
Where to purchase Nail Tips?

Since I'm outisde of Japan most of the time, I turn to places like eBay to purchase nail tips and usually refine the shape of the tip myself! If you've got a local 'Daiso' store in your city, they also have well-priced nail tips for you to develop your ideas on!

DRUZY QUARTZ

NAIL ART LESSON BY: JASMINE OSHIMA

Straight to developing your creativity. The most difficult step to nail art creativity is coming up with a concept - it's usually limited by your skill, knowledge and technique.

As a member and student within Neiru, our instructors help you save time, by showing you a concept and the hidden techniques behind the design so that you can spend your time on developing your creativity, allowing you time to focus on building your creativity and development and coming up with your own flare and style. **(To go straight to training your creativity, go to www.Neiru.me)**

4. Don't be afraid to
SHARE YOUR WORK

Sharing your work and even your thoughts about what you like helps you get great feedback and helps you to generate even more ideas.

The Internet can be a great incubator and accelerator for your ideas in this regard. Also, social sharing keeps you on your toes.

The Dangers of Sharing

Having a new set of eyes on your work can always give you new perspective of your design. But there are a couple of dangers you need to be aware of. Perhaps you aren't comfortable sharing with the world or the public on your Instagram your 'work in progress', so a great way to get feedback is to share it with those you trust or those who are really in the same boat as you.

More importantly, having the "right" kind of feedback is so important. You could potentially put your work in danger if you got the wrong kind of feedback. Perhaps the feedback from one person completely rips your design apart, leaving you with nothing but negative comments, and does not contribute to your growth at all, eventually taking a huge bite out of your creative confidence.

So how do we get around both these dangers?

A **closed and private online community** is a great place to share your work. Know what the community is about, where they all stand, and really get a general feel of how people are posting, and what they are saying.
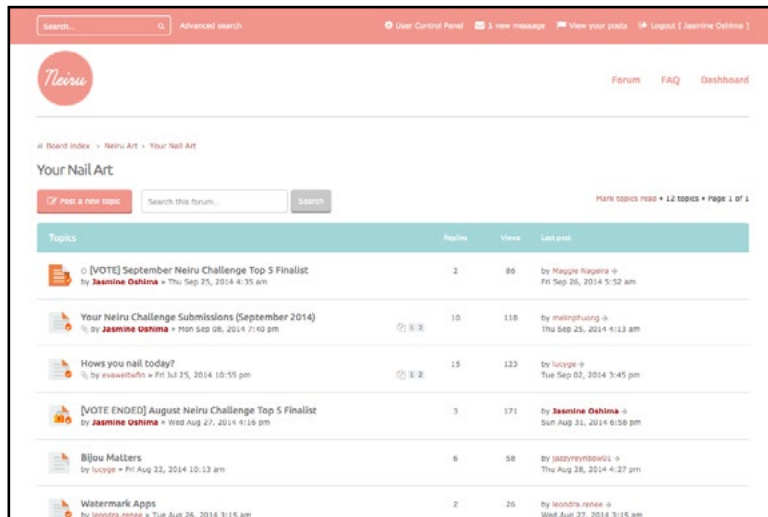
Above: Neiru's private nail art forum.

Neiru's members-only Facebook group or our Neiru forum are examples of a great breeding ground for sharing your work. It's a safe area in which you can display your work to other like-minded nail artists who truly understand where you're coming from, as everyone is in the same learning mindset.

A note on receiving feedback:

Taking comments and **feedback sometimes feels like a roller coaster,** with all the ups and downs. It happens to me here all the time at Neiru. Putting your work out there for feedback is useless if you aren't accepting any of the feedback, or if your ego is in the way. Listen with open ears and challenge all feedback in your own head. This sort of openness, more times than not, can help you and show you ideas or things you could not have realized on your own.

# 4. *"Always a student, never a master."*
CONTINUE LEARNING

Putting yourself always in the student mindframe is something that you must achieve as an artist.

I continue to do this through attending seminars, workshops, and conventions out here in Tokyo.

Reading magazines, chatting with colleagues, and meeting other nail artists are all amazing ways to continue to push your craft and your creativity. As well, the nail artists that I have met within the Neiru community have also been a great source of inspiration for me, showing me ideas that I even didn't even think of.

Where to look to continue your learning?
Schools, nail workshops, nail art demonstrations, or even learning online etc. the list goes on. Just understand **who and where** you are getting your information from, and pay attention so that you don't reinforce any bad habits.
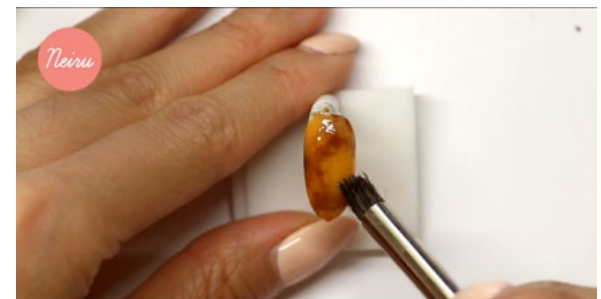
JASMINE OSHIMA — *TORTOISE SHELL MARBLE LESSON*

Learning inside of Neiru
Neiru is an amazing online platform for teaching innovative techniques and the latest nail art styles coming straight out of Japan - the home and heart of nail art!

Take advantage of all our learning tools, from our community to our lessons and our regular challenges, which all really push your creative limits.

Go to **WWW.NEIRU.ME** to join and start learning today!

There you have it simple steps, tools, and actions which are guaranteed to make you an even more creative nail artist.

Though 'creativity' seems to be a word which presents no tangible body or thought, it takes some very simple and clear steps to achieve - and anyone can achieve a more creative state of mind if they follow these easy steps.

Make it easy for yourself and train your creativity regularly, and do it in bite-sizes. Don't expect to be a Picasso overnight, but do set high expectations for yourself in the long run.

On the next page you'll find a summary some of the best resources and tools which were mentioned in this guide that I've used to help build my creativity and my nail art career!

DROPBOX

www.dropbox.com
For all devices (Computer and mobile)
Download in App Store

A space for you to save your inspirations through your smartphone, tablet, or computer and synch's across all your device.

To join click this link and install the app on your mobile device and the desktop app on your computer. Use this link because when you sign up through our specific Neiru link you'll get 500mb of extra space!

Note: Your need to install the Dropbox desktop app on a computer and sign in to the app in order for you to get the extra space. Installing only the Dropbox mobile app on a phone or tablet will not qualify.

INSTAGRAM

www.Instagram.com
For mobile devices only
Download in App Store

Search for **inspirations** on here. The hashtag function works great. Simply type images or topics you like (with no spaces) and add the "#" sign to the front.

For example if I'm in search of Gel Nail Art I would type in "#gelnailart" and Instagram will pull up all the photos which people have posted and hashtagged #gelnailart. Think of hashtagging as a way of organizing or categorizing.

Instagram is also a great way to **share** your work for feedback as well.

KULER

kuler.adobe.com
For all devices (Computer and mobile
Download in App Store

Not sure of what colours to use for your next design? This is an amazing app for capturing colour themes and swatches and allows you to save and share them with the community. Also draw from the community's own colour themes to help you with your nail designs.

Note: this is only for Apple mobile devices. The equivalent of this app on **Android is called "SwatchMatic".**

NEIRU
www.neiru.me

Neiru helps you **build and explore the latest nail art foundation and techniques** coming out of Japan - the heart and pioneering centre of nail art. Each week you'll get the latest lessons delivered right to you, detailed step by step HD quality streaming videos. Each lesson ranging anywhere from 10-30 minutes. As well, you get access to our entire library of lessons and courses 24/7, and access to our online Neiru forum and private Facebook group - an amazing place to share your work get feedback and continue to grow as a nail artist.

To join and try Neiru for www.neiru.me

STOCK PHOTOGRAPHY/IMAGE
iStock Photo (www.istockphoto.com)
Shutter Stock (www.shutterstock.com)

These are stock photography/image sites. This is where if you need a professional or high quality image of something, you can come here to purchase and use it royalty free for your web or print design.

But I come on here to look for **patterns and art styles** all the time. If you're looking for different floral patterns or perhaps water-colour paintings for inspirations, both these sites have thousands of quality images pertaining to your search! You don't need an account or to purchase, just search for what you're looking for and save the image.

PINTEREST
www.pinterest.com
For all devices (Computer and mobile)
Download in App Store

A web application and mobile app really built to help you **categorize and share your inspirations**. Another great tool to save your inspirations and can be viewed across all your devices so you'll always have access to them.

"Some paths can't be discovered without getting lost."