Blogs

How To Carve the Inspiration Out of Your Artist Block

*A guide to finding the motivation to make art.*

If you’re anything like the artists here at Creative Cafe, then chances are you have experienced art block at least *once* in your life. Especially with the added pressure of college courses, critiques, and work-social balance, finding the time, place, and motivation to create art can feel like an immense weight on your shoulders. However, if you are planning to pursue a career in the arts (or just want to get back into a fun hobby), it is extremely important that you recognize how to beat the art block. So, we have compiled a list of some of our best tips to gaining the drive to do art, courtesy of the Creative Cafe team.

1. Your Supplies Need to Be in Sight

One of the biggest reasons that people will fall off of a hobby is because of the idea “out of sight, out of mind.” This *especially* rings true for artists, as I have personally found that when my supplies are all tucked away in a chest under my bed or deep within a closet somewhere, I lose the motivation to go searching for them. Why spend the extra ten minutes I have before class drawing when I can much more easily doom-scroll TikTok?

So, in order to combat this, you need to have your supplies in a visible spot that you visit every single day. It doesn’t have to be your whole lineup of markers, pens, pencils, papers, watercolors, etc., but it should be some basic things: a sketchbook, a pencil, and *maybe* a special marker or pen if you’re feeling fancy. You could even keep it as simple as keeping sticky notes on your desk and in your backpack, that way if inspiration strikes, you have a place to easily develop your ideas.

2. Touch Grass (Respectfully)

Jokes aside, embracing the outdoors is such an amazing way to fight art block. Why? Well, while I may not have totally scientific answers, I do have a few theories. First, one major cause of art block can be over stimulation; you may have too many ideas and not know where to start, be in a crowded, boisterous, cluttered room, or even just be extremely stressed from your workload. Whatever it may be, taking a step outside, letting yourself breathe, and enjoying the calm around you can clear your mind and bring you back to a productive headspace.

Moreover, specifically going outside to feel the sun rays on your skin can also significantly aid in erasing art block. That sweet, sweet Vitamin D that your skin generates from light exposure? It is *scientifically* proven to be a mood regulator and decrease depression, meaning that your negative attitude affecting your inability to create will disappear when the glorious warmth of the rays melts on your skin. (p.s.: in my own experience, this works for all things, not just art block. Going outside feels like a warm hug even on the coldest of days).

Finally, going outside can be a source of inspiration in and of itself. Whether you are in the city, the suburbs, or the countryside, beauty in nature and the outside world is all around you. Maybe try a watercolor painting of the sky or attempt flower pressing for a calming art exercise!

3. Browse Pinterest or Landing Space

Sometimes, all we need is a good reference or a mood board to inspire us to create. With Pinterest or Landing Space, you can do exactly that! I often find that these sites in particular offer a plethora of not just traditionally “pretty” images, but also some super helpful poses,

1. Have it in convenient places/sticky note
2. Go outside
3. Browse pinterest/landing page
   1. Do NOT browse instagram
4. Treat yourself to a new sketchbook/pens
5. Sketchdaily .com
6. Just DO IT. Make it ugly.

* Day/week in the life as a creative director with a looming deadline
* Editorial on what being a creative in the digital age means – how it shapes us (personal story)
* How to get out of art block

Week in the life of a creative director (with a looming deadline)

By Amber Yams

If you