Economizing on Materials

Below is an in-depth list of ideas on ways you can save money on materials. You can also join the online community group called 'Economizing on Materials for Touch Drawing' to share your ideas with others!



• **One roller can be shared** by 2 to max 4 people if they share a table. This is easiest when you don't have a lot of different colors.

• **Instead of having drawing boards**, participants can roll paint directly onto formica or other smooth tabletops. Then wash off the tables when done. It is best to use water mixable oils so you can wash the tables easily.

• **Carpenters or cabinet makers often have scrap materials** like formica (the generic name is plastic laminate) or other smooth surfaced boards that they might give you for free. It can save them dump fees and it's ecological.



• **Wrapping tissue in bulk packages is the least expensive paper** you can buy and works wonderfully. It is available in packages of 1,000 sheets at paper/packaging supply stores or by mail order through us. (not at art supply stores) But any paper will work for Touch Drawing. You might find a printer that is willing to give you paper that is leftover from printing jobs. Or check your local recycling center. They might have

usable paper that has been brought for recycling. You never know where else you might find a stack of paper that no one wants. It could even be interesting to do Touch Drawing on already printed paper like newspaper or wrapping paper and incorporate the printed images and words into your drawing.



• **Use smaller drawing boards and paper.** For instance, a 9" x 12" board can be used with standard 8 ½" x 11" paper. Or try 11 x 14" paper. This smaller space will not allow for large body movement, but can still work if your resources are limited, or if you are traveling and need to pack as lightly as possible. You will use less paint and less paper. These were the sizes I worked on during my first couple of years of Touch Drawing!



• **Take turns using the Touch Drawing materials.** Set up an area in your meeting space with enough materials for a small group to do Touch Drawing. Set up other areas for additional creative processes like writing, movement or another visual art exercise. Divide participants into small groups. Introduce everyone to Touch Drawing and the other creative practices. Each group begins in one of the areas. After an appropriate amount of time, ring a bell or otherwise let them know it is time for their group to shift to the next activity. Keep the small groups rotating until everyone has experienced each art form. This can be a very rich 'multi-modal expressive arts' experience, where one art form enhances and deepens the other. As the facilitator, you hold the sacred space for all the groups simultaneously. It might be helpful to have more facilitators for this type of experience; one for each art form would be wonderful.

• **If you have only one set of Touch Drawing materials and a small group** who would like to experience it, give each person a few minutes to draw, while the rest of the group holds space for them. The group might meditate silently or drum or tone in support of each person while they draw. The support of the group for each individual could be a very powerful experience.



• **Explore what it is like for two people to work on one drawing.** This can be an interesting exploration of relationship.

Paint is by far the most expensive part of Touch Drawing. There are a few things you can do to use less paint as well as to make the tubes you have go further. Here are the essential points:

• **Squeeze less paint from the tube when you roll out the board.** If you are facilitating, always remind your participants that they do not need to make their drawing board 'goopy' with paint – they just need enough on the board to make a smooth, thin layer of paint.

• **You do not have to add paint to the board very often.** Just roll out the board and do another drawing. Do not add paint until you feel the drawing is getting too light for your liking. This will also protect against deep indentations forming in the paint from previous drawings. These happen when you keep adding paint so often that you have a deep wet surface of paint that ends up getting incised with drawings. They are very difficult to roll out. If you use water mixable paints, you can try sprinkling a small amount of water onto the board to soften the paint. Then roll out the indentations. If they don't come out, just wash off the board and start again.



• **Use larger tubes of paint.** Though larger tubes cost more initially, you pay much less per ounce of paint. Windsor Newton Water Mixable paints, now the only student-grade, moderately prices water mixable oils that are available in large tubes, have up-sized to giant 200 ml tubes. They will last through many drawing sessions, if you take care of them.



• **Keep the color simple.** You can have one tube per table. If you want to have a selection of colors, put several tubes on a central table. Participants can dab their choice on their board and return it to the central table.

• **Look on the internet for water mixable oil paints.** The Center for Touch Drawing prices are way below retail and quite competitive. You might find slightly a lower price than ours on the discount art supply sites. When you purchase through us, you support our work and we are very grateful for that. But it is more important to us that you DO TOUCH DRAWING, so look for bargains if you can find them. There are fewer and fewer sites that even carry the large tubes of water mixable oil paint. The Center for Touch Drawing is one of the few places you can find them nowadays.

• **Use regular student grade oil paint instead of the water mixable oils.** They are less expensive and easier to find. I used them for years. They don't wash out as easily as the water mixable. But you can wash up without using toxic solvents, and that is the most important thing. In many settings though, I have found that saying we use water mixable paints defuses fears around cleanliness and toxicity.

• **Use a paint tube squeezer or 'crimper' to get much more paint out of each tube.** I recommend you get a metal one rather than plastic, especially if you use large tubes of paint. I like to go through all my tubes before a workshop, squeezing the paint toward the front of each tube and rolling the crimped part of the tube up. I even wipe the tubes off with a soapy sponge so they stay looking fresh. This is especially important with the new super-large tubes that will last for multiple workshops. If you don't have a crimper, you can use a large spoon to press from the bottom of the tube. If a tube develops a leak, wrap that area with duct tape to prevent messy leaks.

