

## Lydia Rink - Exploring Collage Composition - FREE 5-Day Challenge - Day 1

Hello everyone and welcome to an exciting journey into the art of collage composition! I'm excited to bring you this five-day challenge designed to ignite your creativity, hone your skills and overcome common artistic challenges.

One of the reasons I wanted to put this together is because I often hear things like "I don't know where to start and I feel overwhelmed. I don't know how to keep the collage composition simple and not overdo it.

How do I bring all the elements together and add my unique style to the collage?

If any of these challenges sound familiar, this will be a great exercise to take part in.

Over the course of five days, we'll explore various aspects of collage composition, from choosing materials to mastering layering, creating shapes, playing with contrast and embracing repetition.

I'm a firm believer in the power of sketchbooks as an invaluable tool for artists. So I'm going to challenge you to build reference material in your sketchbook. Think colour palettes, shapes, compositional studies - these little helpers will fuel your creative fire and provide guidance when you need it most.

And that's the beauty: working in a sketchbook allows you to seamlessly integrate art into your daily life. Even when time is short or you're feeling overwhelmed, these quick and manageable tasks will keep your artistic momentum going.

Each day we'll focus on a specific area.

So our first day is all about materials - the building blocks of our artistic creations.

On day two we'll explore layering. We'll learn how to add depth and dimension to our compositions, creating visual interest that draws the viewer in.

Day three is all about shape - the foundation of our composition. We'll experiment with different shapes and discover how they interact to create dynamic compositions full of energy and movement.

On day four we'll dive into the world of contrast and differences. We'll play with light and dark, smooth and rough, exploring how differences can enhance our compositions and evoke powerful emotions.

Finally, day 5 is all about repetition. We'll explore pattern, shapes and colour, discovering how repetition can create rhythm and unity in our compositions.

Each day I'll be guiding you through a short lesson and providing you an assignment to put your new-found skills to the test.

So before we get started, I wanted to talk about the materials we will need for this challenge.

Let's get into it.

OK, here you can see the basic materials you will be using for this project. A substrate/base for the collage, cutting tools, glue and collage materials.

In this challenge we will be working on small exercises on paper. You can work directly in your sketchbook. This has the advantage of creating a collection of examples and references. Your sketchbook will serve as a source of inspiration as well as a reference work. You can add notes to help you understand later what materials you used and how you proceeded. This is really helpful.

I use this sketchbook for such exercises. The paper is firm enough to work with glue and paint without bending too much. If you're looking for a sketchbook with a firm but not too thick paper, have a look at the Seawhite sketchbooks. The paper is perfect for quick composition sketches.

If you don't like working in a sketchbook, you can work on loose sheets of paper.

When I'm working on small collages, I like to use mixed media paper as the base for the collage. I like the smooth surface and it cuts well. But you can also use watercolor paper. Check your paper stash to see if you can find something suitable. Cut out small cards from this paper and use them for your experiments. Later you can stick these cards in your sketchbook.

One of the most common questions I get is:

What glue do you use?

The wide range of glues available can be confusing. It's best to experiment with different glues to find your personal favourite.

When I work in a sketchbook, I like to use a glue stick. It is easy to use and comes in different sizes.

For larger collages I use Matte Medium and Matte Gel Medium.

Matte Medium has a liquid consistency and Matte Gel Medium is more creamy.

A simple rule applies: the thinner the paper, the more fluid the glue.

For tissue paper I use the Matte Medium, for cardboard or very thick paper I

use the Gel Medium.

Both mediums can be mixed, so I can adjust the consistency to suit the thickness of the paper.

These are my cutting tools.

I like to work with scissors and a scalpel.

The scalpel is great for cutting out shapes, letters and numbers. It has a replaceable blade. I find this very handy because paper quickly dulls a blade. With this scalpel, I can easily change the blade when it gets dull. And it's much easier to cut with a sharp blade.

We also need a selection of different papers.

Experiment with different types of paper and find your favourites.

I like to work with paper that I decorate myself. This has the advantage that you can use the paper that you prefer to work with. For example, I prefer drawing paper because it's not too thick. I then design the paper according to my personal taste.

Another advantage of designing your own collage paper is that you can use the colours you like. Creating your own personal colour palette really shows your own style.

Okay, so gather your favourite materials, clear some space in your creative sanctuary and get ready to embark on this creative journey with me!

Let the creativity flow!