

Do You Have a Drawing Style All Your Own?

By [Jessie Oleson Moore](#) on January 27, 2017

Do you have a personal drawing style? That is, do you have a signature style of creating drawings that's all your own?



Artwork via [CakeSpy](#)

WITH PRACTICE, JUST ABOUT ANYONE CAN MASTER A MYRIAD OF DIFFERENT DRAWING TECHNIQUES. BUT IF YOU TRULY WANT TO BE AN ARTIST, YOU'VE GOT TO INJECT A PIECE OF YOURSELF INTO YOUR DRAWINGS.

For some, that's easier said than done: developing a personal or signature style requires time and exploration. Here, we'll explore 11 tips for how to unlock your own personal style of drawing.

1. LOOK AT A LOT OF DIFFERENT ART.

Yep, the first step to developing a personal drawing style is to start looking at art. Look at everything, not just drawings. Check out books, museum exhibits or websites dedicated to fine art, pop art, cartoon strips —

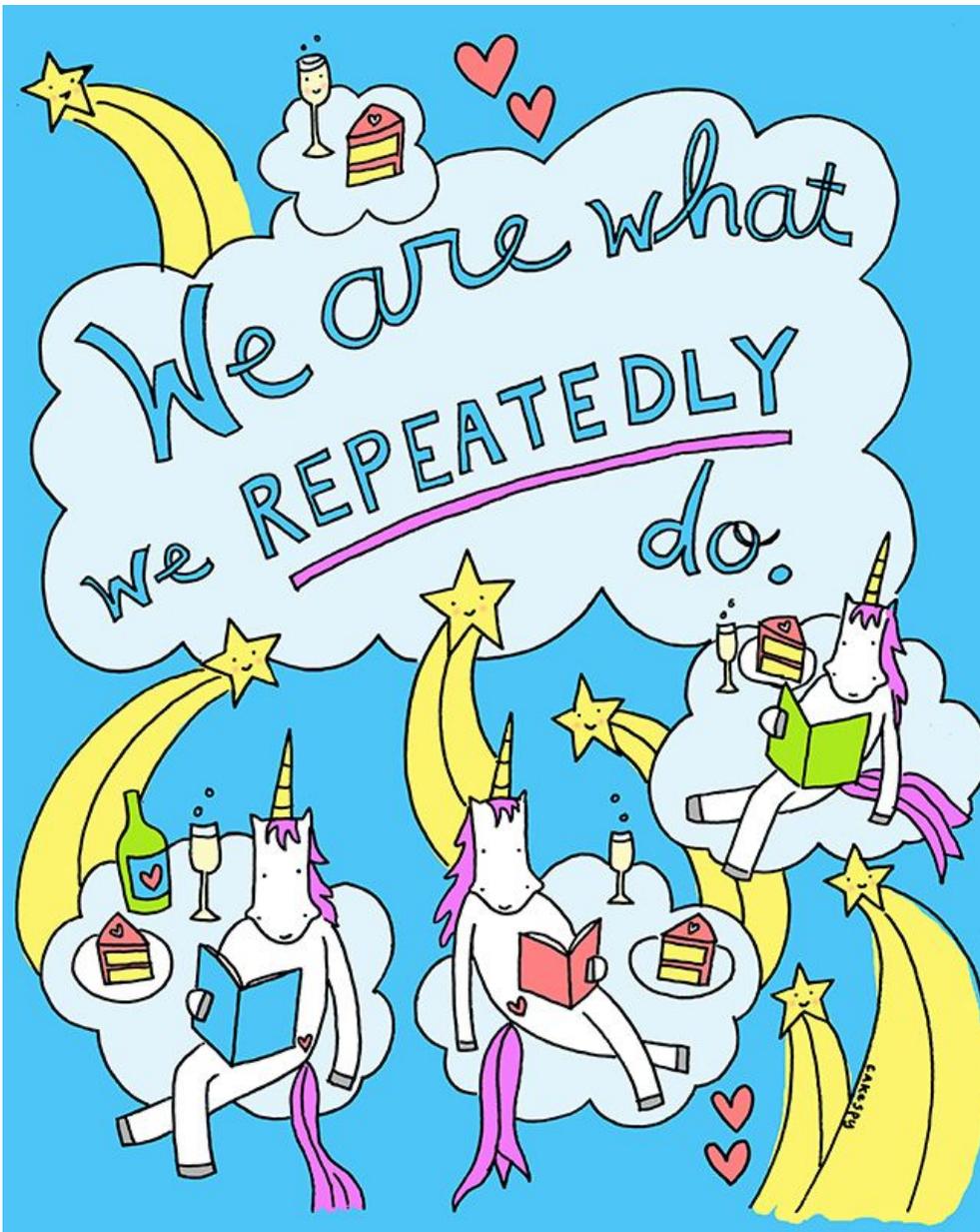
whatever kind of art you can find. Notice what appeals to you. Often, what you're drawn to can offer the first clue as to what type of style you will gravitate toward.

2. LEARN THE RULES...

Learn the rules, so that you can break them! Learning the basics of drawing, such as [pen stroke](#) techniques, shading basics and [how to draw with perspective](#), can help you learn some of the basics to creating beautiful drawings. That way, when your personal style develops, you have some skills to back it up.

3. EMULATE THE EXPERTS.

You never want to plagiarize art, but especially when you're just starting out, there's a benefit to copying the styles of others. Allow me to illustrate with a personal example. As a child, I sat in front of the TV and tried drawing my favorite cartoon characters. As time went on, I took what I learned about drawing characters and developed my own cartoon characters. I'm sure they looked derivative at first, but in time, they evolved into their own unique characters. What might start out as "copying" can quickly evolve into an offshoot that's uniquely yours.



4. DEVELOP A DAILY PRACTICE.

Learning how to draw is like strengthening a muscle: If you want to be physically fit, you need to hit the gym or exercise regularly. It's the same with the arts (be it writing or singing or drawing). Develop a [daily practice of drawing](#), and over time, you'll begin to see a style emerge — as well as improvement in your overall skill!

5. STEP OUTSIDE OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE.

Try drawing in a style that you find difficult or scary. This might sound like the opposite of what you should do to develop a personal style, but stay with me here. Exploring styles that seem difficult or unnatural can teach you about what you *do* want to draw and what *does* feel natural.

For example, if you challenge yourself to draw a realistic-looking flower and all you can think about is how you're itching to [draw mandalas](#), then you have just learned a valuable lesson about what it is you're drawn to create.

6. DOODLE.

Really! [Doodling](#) can help improve your skills and help you develop a personal style. As you doodle, you're not just improving your hand-eye coordination, but you're working in a freeform way that can involve a sort of artistic problem-solving.

The items that you doodle — be they hearts and stars, repeating patterns or freeform scribbles — can evolve into stylized elements. Those elements might find their place in more “finished” art, and might just become signature elements of your style. So keep an eye on those doodles: they can be very informative!



7. KEEP DRAWING THE SAME THING OVER AND OVER.

Drawing the same thing over and over — whether it's wildflowers or specific characters (mine is Sprinkle the unicorn, featured above) — can benefit your personal style.

To put this in context, have you ever looked back at old episodes of *The Simpsons* and thought how funny the characters looked? It's almost as if they are the beta versions of themselves. It was through constant drawing and re-drawing that the characters became refined into the "perfect" and recognizable version. Allow your personal style to become refined and reduced to its essence by exploring similar subject matter over time.

8. LET YOURSELF BE CURIOUS.

Allow yourself to be curious and to explore. Even if you start out a painting or drawing with one idea in mind, it doesn't mean that it has to come out that way. Pause and be honest about what's working and what's not. Often, that little voice that says "stop now" or "draw a row of flowers here" is really your true personal style talking. Let yourself listen to it!



9. STOP DRAWING.

Nope, I'm not joking. You know how people joke that the best ideas and greatest inspiration come to them in the shower? Channel that idea and put down the pen and ink for a moment.

Take a walk, take a bath or take some sort of joyful, mindful break. Often, even without realizing it, your brain processes things during this time "off." It can make you a better artist. Taking breaks to process like this helps you approach your art with an open mind.



Photo via [CakeSpy for Verlo](#)

10. SEE WHERE IT LEADS YOU.

Sometimes, when you find something that "works" artistically, the temptation can be to stick with it forever and ever. Well, maybe that works for some artists. But many other artists evolve over time. See where your style takes you.

For example, I have always drawn characters. I used to like to work in pen and ink and watercolor, but now I like to color the items in digitally and use photographs, as pictured above. It's still definitely my style, but it's evolved and changed based on time, my preference and what feels good.



11. DON'T QUIT.

Developing a personal style is, well, personal. For some people it will come quickly and naturally; for others, it can take a lot of time and experimentation. And you might not just have one style! People and artistic styles come in all shapes and sizes. Stick with it. Over time, you'll see your style or styles begin to emerge.