



Lisilinka

TUTORIALS

Sample Tutorial

Sparkling Mouse with printable sketch

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Tutorial 1

Sparkling Mouse

Difficulty: advanced



Getting started

This time, I chose the beautiful colors of our “Serenity” set to highlight the sparkling details.

Brushes:

Lisilinka round brush - small

Lisilinka micro brush

Lisilinka rigger brush

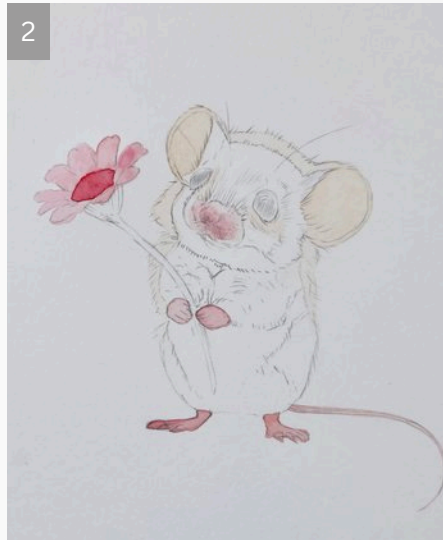
Other materials:

Watercolor paints, gouache black & white, watercolor paper, well-pigmented colored pencils and a pencil





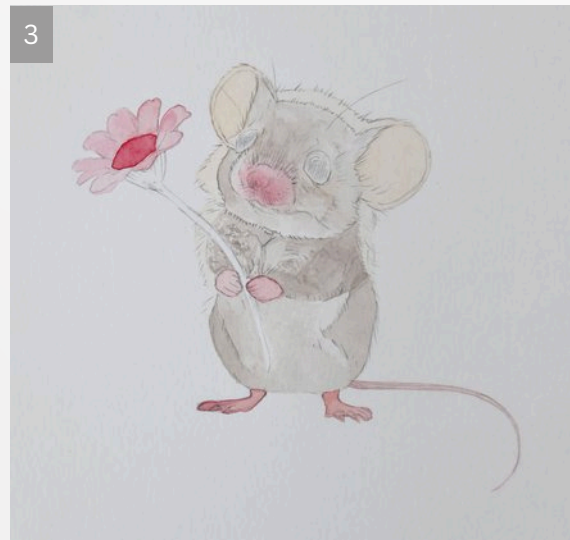
Start with a light pencil sketch to capture the basic shape of the mouse. Keep your lines loose and not too firm so that you can erase and correct at any time. The sketch is only a guide; details and finer points will come later. Tip: Print out the silhouette of the mouse provided in this tutorial on your watercolor paper or use it to trace the outline.



To color our mouse, we will use watercolor paint and the Lisilinka round brush in size small. Fill in the petals of the flower with a delicate shade of pink and the center with a slightly stronger shade of pink. Also color the mouse's nose, hands, feet, and tail in a warm pink. You can use a light beige tone for the inside of the ears.

Work with light, watery layers of paint, which you apply using the glazing technique (see chapter V). The aim is to create a soft base, which we will deepen later with further layers.

Tip: Make sure to paint the areas evenly and apply several thin layers on top of each other rather than working too heavily right away. This will preserve the lightness of the watercolor paint.



Use the glazing technique and the small round brush to paint the body of the mouse in a soft, transparent shade of gray to suggest the initial coat color. Ensure that the paint is evenly distributed and that the lighter areas, such as the belly and face, remain slightly paler. This creates the first base tone, on which we will later build up shades and fur texture. It is important that the layer is not too dark so that we retain space for further color nuances.



Now apply a darker brown to accentuate the fur areas. The head, back, and arms in particular can be made more pronounced in this step, while the belly and face remain lighter. This creates a beautiful contrast between the light and shadow areas. Make sure to blend the transitions smoothly and work in several thin layers again instead of applying the color too darkly. This will keep the mouse looking lively and three-dimensional. At this point, you can already hint at the structure of the fur with fine brushstrokes.

5



Once the previous layers of paint have dried completely, paint the mouse's eyes with a rich black (gouache), making sure to fill in the areas evenly and keep the curves of the eyes clean. Then glaze the flower stem in a muted green tone.

Tip: Be especially careful with the eyes, as they strongly determine the mouse's expression and give it a playful personality.

6



Now we come to the step where we use our colored pencils to add fine details and shading. Use light beige and cream tones and yellow and brown tones to make the ears look more three-dimensional and gently emphasize the fur structure. We can also use white to add small highlights (e.g., at the edges of the ears or in the fur), which will make your motif appear more lifelike. Be sure to use small strokes with the pencils, following the direction of the fur, to create a natural and soft surface. The combination of watercolor and colored pencils creates a harmonious mixed media effect.

7



Now use your pink colored pencils to enhance the color of the mouse's nose, snout, hands, and feet. Work with fine strokes in the direction of the shape to create texture (e.g., circular strokes for the nose). The additional layers make the small parts of the mouse's body appear more vivid and three dimensional. Be sure to layer the colors carefully so that the watercolor background continues to show through and the lightness is preserved.

Tip: Use the darker tones specifically in the shadow areas and use the lighter tones for the transitions to create a natural color gradient.





Make sure your lines remain loose and vary in length (sometimes shorter, sometimes longer) to create a natural fur pattern.

Especially at the edges of the body, you can pull individual strokes slightly outward to create the impression of soft, fluffy fur. Always leave small gaps between the strokes so that the watercolor layer underneath continues to shine through.

Tip: Concentrate the darker strokes on the shadow areas, such as under the arms and on the sides of the body. This immediately makes the mouse appear more three-dimensional.

Use a brown colored pencil to deepen the fur texture. Work with fine, short strokes in the direction of the fur (from the snout over the head to the body).



Using an even darker brown pencil, we can define our mouse's fur even more clearly.

Once again, make short, precise strokes in the deeper shadow areas (on the back, sides of the body, and under the arms), which will make the animal appear even more lifelike. Continue to pay attention to the direction of the fur so that the strokes appear harmonious. You can then prepare the eyes by reinforcing the contours with the same dark pencil. However, leave the area in the middle free for the highlights later on.



Now use a dark charcoal pencil (make sure it is well sharpened) to emphasize contours and details. Carefully trace the edges of the eyes, nose, paws, and tail to make the shapes clearer. You can also use darker strokes to make individual areas of fur stand out more clearly.

However, it is important not to draw hard lines everywhere and only consciously select the areas where we want to add more depth and sharpness. This keeps the mouse lively and soft without losing its naturalness. You can emphasize the dark strokes around the eyes in particular. This will make the eyes even more intense later on when the highlights are added.

11



For the stem, we use a lighter green for the sunnier areas and a darker green for the shady side. This creates the impression that the stem is round and not flat.

Make sure that the green tones overlap slightly so that the result is softer and more natural.



12



To make our mouse appear more lifelike, we will add subtle accents in this step using our micro brush and white gouache. Take your time and be sure to use the highlights sparingly: less is more when it comes to keeping your illustration fresh and natural!

13



Continue working with the white gouache and your micro brush and add the decisive highlights to the mouse's eyes in this step. Place small, round highlights at the upper edges of the pupils and, if you like, add tiny light reflections next to them. This will make the eyes appear shiny, moist, and lively. You can also use very thin white lines to highlight a few hairs around the eyes, nose, and muzzle. These tiny details give the motif even more depth and naturalness. Finally, you can trace over the brown areas of the fur again more strongly with your brown colored pencil.



14



Now we come to the use of our metallic colors to give the mouse a magical shine. For this motif, I chose the soft tones of our “Serenity” set and used my micro brush to apply the two shades ‘Cedar’ and “Fawn” as highlights in the animal's fur.

The glitter reflects the light beautifully and makes the little mouse look particularly lively and magical. Be careful not to distribute these sparkling accents too evenly, but rather to work them into the drawing in a targeted manner.

Tip: Hold your picture in direct light from time to time and turn it slightly to see where the reflections appear most beautiful. This will help you place the glitter in the best possible way.



15



For further glittering highlights in the mouse's fur, I used the gold shade “Vanilla” and carefully applied it to the long hairs using my rigger brush. The pink and coral shades “Cherry Blossom” and “Blush” can be found on the mouse's nose, paws, and tail (applied with the micro brush).

16



Finally, we will make the flower shine. For this, I used the colors “Cherry Blossom” for the petals, “Blush” for the center of the flower, and the green tones ‘Olive’ and “Clover” for the stem.

Be sure to apply the metallic colors in thin layers using your micro brush so that the colors underneath remain visible and the shimmer appears harmonious. It sparkles especially beautifully if you emphasize the center of the flower a little more and add only subtle accents to the leaves.



Our little mouse is now finished!

The combination of watercolors, colored pencils, white highlights, and glittering accents has created a lively, detailed motif that is both playful and elegant.

Every single step—from loose sketching to careful glazing to adding sparkling highlights—has contributed to giving the illustration depth, warmth, and character.

Always take your time when creating such motifs, because with mixed media techniques in particular, it is the interplay of the layers that creates the magic. Play with light, color, and shine and watch how you bring your drawing to life.

Thank you for participating in my tutorial. I hope it has inspired you and that you can now develop ideas for your own designs.







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