

Indoor still life shadow drawing by Caitlin Howells

In my last Create activity, I suggested making outdoor shadow drawings but not everybody wants to be outdoors at this time of year, so here's an indoor version you can do at home.

On a sharp, sunny day, inspect the shadows cast through different windows in your home.

The shadows will vary during the day, depending on the direction your window faces; select a window that gives you a strong, clear shadow.

You will need:

Paper - normal or greaseproof – or card

Pens, pencil, charcoal, chalk, pastels – whatever you like to draw with and will give interesting effects

On a sharp sunny day, inspect the shadows cast through different windows in your home. They will vary during the day, depending what direction your window faces.

If you have a table by a window, put some paper on it and look at the shadows cast onto the paper from the window frames and items on your windowsill.

If you don't have a pleasing shadow already, you can design your own shadow still life, by arranging a mixture of interestingly-shaped items on the windowsill.

For example, glass objects through which light can pass make really interesting translucent shadows, whilst plants and flowers make great shadows with lots of variety to them. Random household objects also work really well; enjoy experimenting with different items until you have an arrangement that pleases you.

When you're happy with your still life shadow, position your paper under it, choose a pen, pencil or other item and trace all the edges of the shadow until you have all the shadow details traced onto the paper.

The possibilities are endless, and you can extend this activity even further, by using water colours, coloured pencils and pastels, or any other medium including collage, to fill in the negative spaces, i.e. all the space around your shadow drawing.

Of course, if you prefer, you can fill in the positive space, i.e. the actual shapes made by the shadows.

As you can see, there's no right or wrong with this activity, it's great for loosening yourself up creatively and silencing your inner perfectionist art critic!

Talking of endless possibilities – if you would like to develop your work, have a look at the shadow cartoons by artist Vincent Bal <https://www.feeldesain.com/vincent-bal-shadowlogy.html> and give some of your own a try, it's great fun, and you could bring them to life by filming and photographing them.

