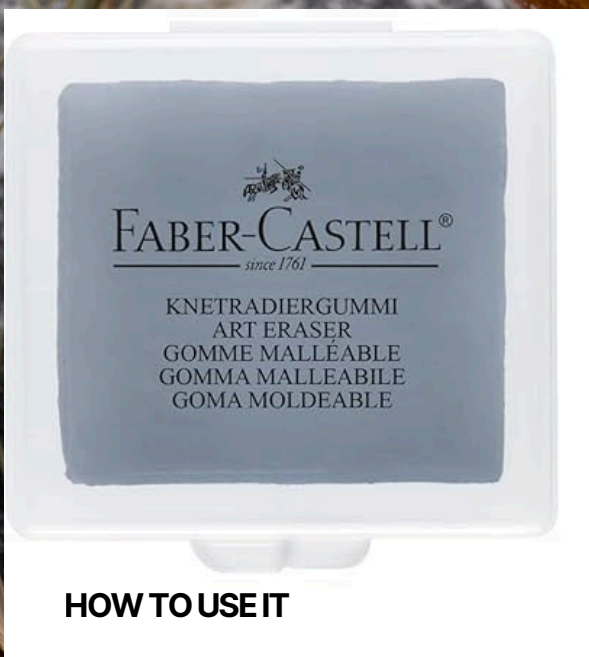


**WHAT IS A KNEADED
ERASER?**



**WHAT IT
IS USED
FOR?**



HOW TO USE IT

Bread Eraser

What is a kneaded eraser?

It is a soft, pliable eraser with a dough-like consistency. You can knead it, stretch it, divide it into pieces, and shape it into any form. It is also referred to as a putty eraser, bread eraser, or kneadable eraser. Unlike traditional erasers, it does not rub away graphite through friction – instead, it "lifts" the graphite off the paper and absorbs it into its structure, much like a sponge.

Fun fact: Its name isn't just marketing. Before the synthetic version was invented, 19th-century draftsmen actually used the crumb of fresh bread (without the crust), kneaded into a ball, to remove excess graphite and charcoal. Today's eraser is a convenient, synthetic successor to that classic baker's trick.

What it is used for

- Extracting precise highlights and reflections (e.g., in the eye, strands of hair).
- Lightening and softening lines without completely erasing them.
- "Weakening" a sketch before further work
- shading or using markers.
- Creating smooth tonal transitions, textures, and misty effects.
- Working on delicate papers
- it won't damage the surface.



What it is NOT used for

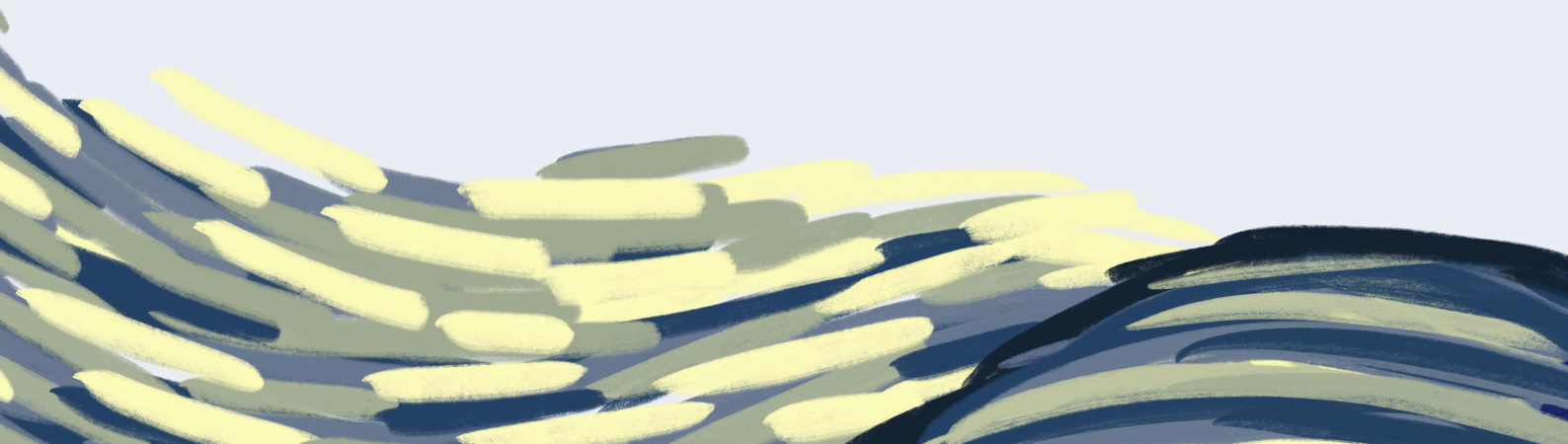
- Technical drawing and precise, sharp corrections, a regular, firm eraser works better here.
- Ink, fineliners, or markers, it won't remove them, only smudge them.
- Erasing very dark, heavily pressed-in tones (e.g., 9B) it will lighten them, but it won't bring them back to a light tone perfectly.

Note on paper type:

On rough, textured paper (such as vellum), a kneaded eraser pulls graphite only from the raised peaks of the surface, leaving the graphite trapped in the valleys. You can use this purposefully as a textural trick, but if you need smooth, even lightening, choose a smoother surface paper.

Note on eraser quality:

Cheaper kneaded erasers may leave microscopic, greasy residues on the paper. These will show up on scans or prints as unpleasant, lighter "smudges". If you are drawing for reproduction, invest in reputable brands (e.g., Faber-Castell, Prismacolor, Cretacolor).



How to use it

Before you start – always warm up the eraser in your hands, kneading it until it becomes soft and pliable. Then, shape it according to your needs:

- **Ball or cylinder (stamping):** Press it onto the paper – the longer you hold it, the lighter the result. Perfect for round reflections, like the ones in an eye's pupil.
- **Sharp point / tip (precision erasing):** Shape a thin, blunt point to lift light from fine details – individual hairs, eyelashes, or thin lines.
- **Cushion / flat pad (large areas):** Flatten the eraser and glide it over large surfaces. To achieve a grainy texture (e.g., for skin or clouds), press it onto the paper and tear it off abruptly.

The artist's golden rule:

Divide your eraser into two separate "zones". Use one side (e.g., the tip) exclusively for pulling the brightest highlights, and the other side for lightening the background. This way, you won't transfer dirt into the areas that need to remain pure white.

Optimal workflow

(step by step)

1. Draw your sketch using a hard pencil (H/B).
2. Before shading – weaken the outlines with the kneaded eraser (using the stamping method) so they aren't too harsh.
3. Apply shading using a soft pencil (e.g., 4B, 6B).
4. At the very end – pull out the highlights using the kneaded eraser (making sure to use a clean, well-warmed part).

How to care for it:

- Store it in a box or wrapped in foil – it gathers dust if left out in the open.
- When it turns grey – simply knead it; the dirt gets "hidden" inside.

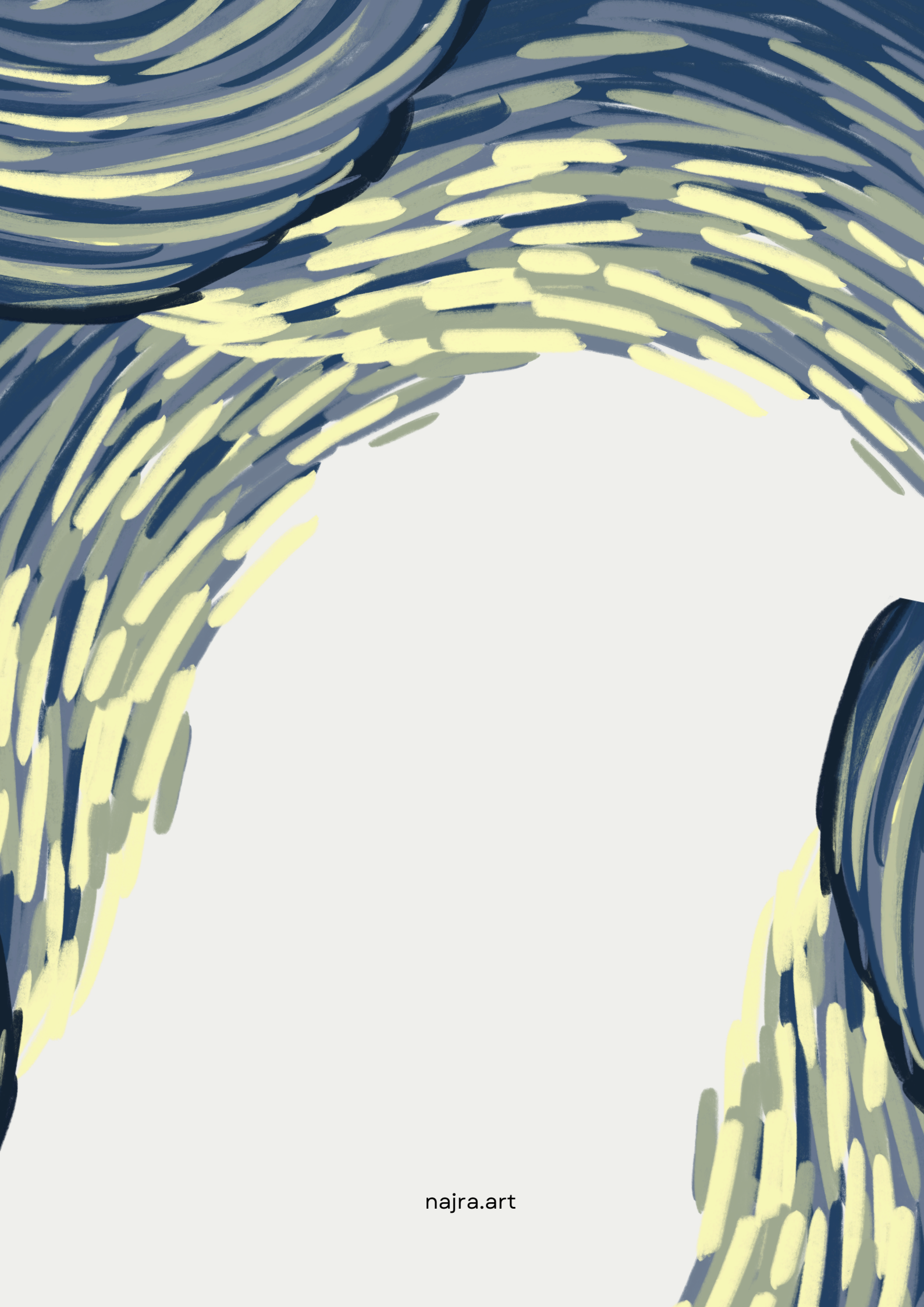
Refreshment trick:

Before you decide it's too dirty for lifting fine highlights, gently stretch it out sideways like pizza dough, then fold it back together. This motion "brings" the dirty graphite to new surfaces, revealing a bit of cleaner material inside.

- Do not wash it. When it becomes completely black, hard, and loses its elasticity – it's time for a new one.
- It softens in heat and hardens in cold – this is completely normal.

Who is it for

Beginners and advanced artists alike. It is particularly useful with soft pencils (B–6B), charcoal, sanguine, pastels, and on delicate papers.



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