



*Painter*  
**PAINT A  
REALISTIC  
NOSE**

The nose is one of the most difficult elements of portrait painting, but **Katarina Sokalova** has some advice to make life easier

**D**espite the great variety of forms, all noses have a common structure defined by the anatomy of bones and muscles. In general there are two types of human noses: thin and thick. The proportions of all noses are roughly the same and this should be taken into consideration while you're painting. Thin noses, which are usually typical of Europeans, can have many different forms depending on the bridge, tip and nostrils. The bridge is the part that is between the top and tip of the nose and can be straight, concave or convex.

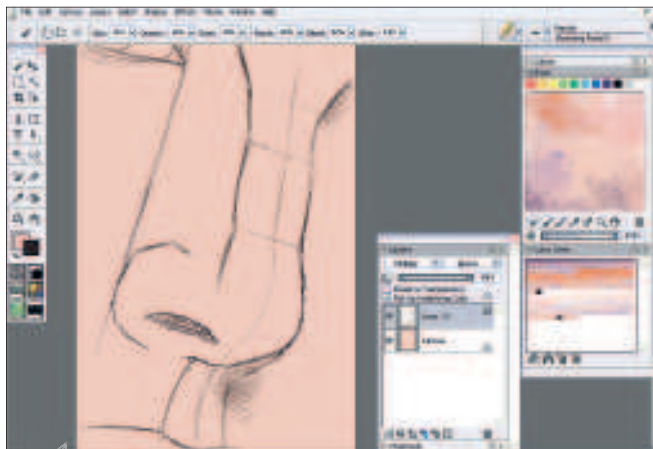
Begin any sketches with the basic proportions (height, length, width) then define the inclination and position of the nose with respect to perspective. After sketching the main outline you need to check the nose's proportions, perspective and form and make any corrections to these before moving on. That done, you can start work on the details.

The nose depends on the individual characteristics. Because the bones are usually visible in most noses, one of the most characteristic-defining properties of the nose is a small hump; this, along with the tip, defines the overall form of the nose. The bridge of the nose determines the form of the tip, which can be straight, turned up or pointing down. As for the nostrils, they can be long or short, narrow or wide.

A common mistake is to make it so the bases of the edges of the nose are set too low in relation to the tip, resulting in the corner of the nose ending up in the wrong place.

Remember that when you're drawing a nose you should pay close attention to each separate part of it, and be sure that each of the individual elements obeys the overall form.

# Quick Technique Painting a nose

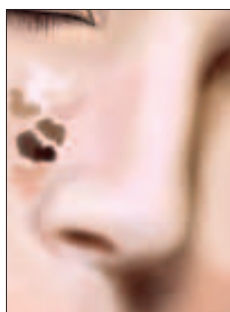


## 1 Starting sketch

I'll begin with a sketch. The girl I want to paint has a thin nose with a small hump and slightly snub tip, which makes her look coquettish. I have chosen the three-quarters perspective. The lateral plane of the nose that's turned to the painter isn't reduced in this perspective, while the opposite part of the nose and the plane of the base are reduced (in this case they're practically hidden). Notice that in a three-quarters perspective the far nostril is almost invisible, but it still exists so you must remember to paint it.

## 2 Light and shade

In Painter, start working with shadows and highlights. The front part of the nose should be lighter than the sides, and I try to create soft transitions between shadows and light. The portrait hasn't got sharp transitions on the face so



shadows on the nose shouldn't be traced strongly. Do consider the light exposure in transitions of forms from one surface to another. Sketch the nostrils, and note that the edge of the nostril is on the same line as the inner corner of the eye. I shade the parts that are in shadow. Don't paint sharp edges; convey the form with soft lines. The gradation of the light helps to show structure. The details of the near plane should be clearer than those of the far plane. I also shade the dark side of the nose, which is on the right side here. It provides the illusion of depth and size. Lastly, I add some shade to the bridge.

## Artist PROFILE

**Katarina Sokalova**

COUNTRY: Ukraine



Katarina began batik and graphics classes at the age of six.

Graduating from the Art Union of Painters of Ukraine in 2002, she has been working as a CG artist for five years and has had work printed in the *Exposé* and *Exotique* series of books. She has also held a series of exhibitions of her work, and does commissions.

[katarinasokolova.com](http://katarinasokolova.com)

## DVD Assets

The files you need are on your DVD

**FOLDERS:** Screenshots

**FILES:** Nose\_1\_KS.psd -

Nose\_5\_KS.psd

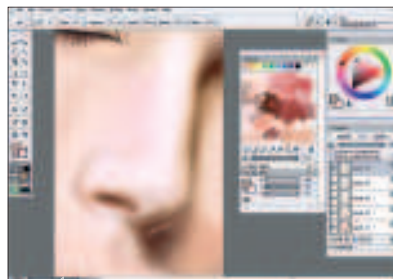
**SOFTWARE:** Painter X

(demo)

## PRO SECRETS

### Use colour

Don't use black for shadows or white for highlights and reflections. Only use tints that are close to the base skin colour that you've chosen for the portrait. I like to add colder and warmer, more and less saturated tints into shadows and highlights. Such combinations make the portrait more interesting and also make the skin tone more realistic.

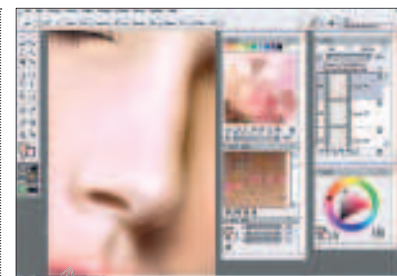


## 3 Skin tints

Don't forget that second nostril! I've sketched it with small highlight stroke at the far side of the nose. Don't mark a full contour of a nose from both sides as that makes the portrait appear unrealistic. Instead create a contour with smooth transitions between light and shadow. Usually the areas around the base of the nostrils should not be outlined. Convey their volume and form using warmer, more saturated skin tints. At this stage I gradually add detail to the nostrils and the tip of the nose with highlights that are hardly visible.

## 4 Highlights

Let's paint the highlight on the tip of the nose to add volume. The highlight should be small and softly shaded. Remember not to use white. Notice that for the nostril I've chosen a rich chocolate, not black. I've also painted the nasolabial groove, the area that connects the nose with the lips. The shape is rather like a teardrop – at the top it's as wide as the septum but it expands slightly when it meets the upper lip. I've slightly shaded this groove – note a small highlight that I put in its centre to show its concavity.



## 5 Grooves and contrast

I want to add more contrast to the nose from its far side. For that I make the shadow beyond the nose deeper using a small-diameter brush with high transparency. That way, I mark out a small hump on the nose. Then, using a soft brush with greater diameter, I make the shadow under the nose deeper and more degraded with a non-saturated brown. I also detail the form of the nose, using the tints of base skin colour. For the lighter areas of the nose I use warmer tints of colour, and for shadows, cooler tints with some lilac.

