

Drawing Tablets

Why you need one and how to choose it.

Architects often express ideas by sketching. In the modern computer-driven and predominantly online world, you will probably find it more convenient to sketch right in the computer rather than on paper. As drawing with a mouse can be tedious, drawing tablets come in handy...



An LCD screen drawing tablet

What is a drawing tablet?

Drawing tablets, also known as pen tablets or graphic tablets, are input devices for computer hand-drawing.



A regular drawing tablet

How to choose your first drawing tablet?

Drawing preferences are very individual. If you have never used a drawing tablet before, we would suggest buying an inexpensive one to develop your own experience. You can start with [Huion Inspiroy H640P](#) – a capable inexpensive drawing tablet.

If you would like to make a more informed choice, read the next section “What factors to look at when choosing a drawing tablet?”

If you have used a drawing tablet before, probably you know what parameters/features are important for you. Then you can go to Amazon and shop for a model which suits you and fits your budget. Our advice is to choose a tablet from a recognized brand: Wacom (the absolute leader in graphics tablets) or one of the lower cost competitors known for good quality: Huion or XP-PEN.

What factors to look at when choosing a drawing tablet?

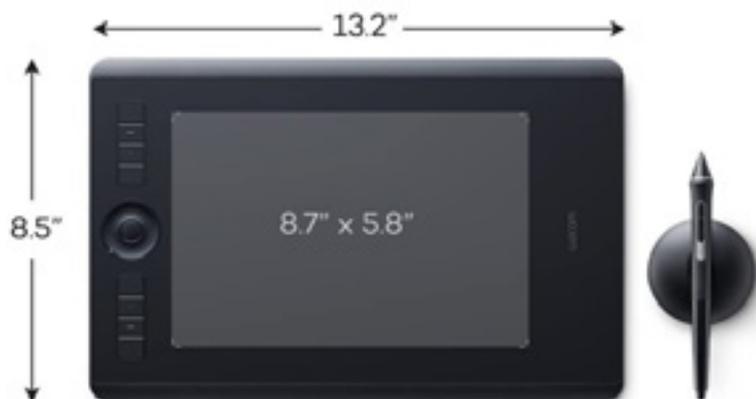
Tablets without a screen vs. tablets with a screen

Non-Display tablets

Whatever you draw on the tablet is not visible on the tablet itself. Instead your drawing appears on the computer screen that your drawing tablet is connected to. These types of drawing tablets are much cheaper than their display counterparts. Some people find it hard to get used to drawing on one device and looking at the other device to see the drawing, but most digital painters use non-display drawing tablets.

Display tablets

These drawing tablets are usually more intuitive to draw on, as whatever you draw appears directly on the screen of the tablet which makes the drawing process similar to drawing on paper. The downside is that these types of tablets are significantly more expensive. They can start in hundreds of dollars and go into thousands. Computer tablets, like Apple iPad Pro, compete with display drawing tablets as drawing devices when used with a stylus.



Pressure Sensitivity

Drawing tablets come with anywhere from 100 to 8192 pressure sensitivity levels.

What this means is the harder you press on the stylus, the greater the pressure level is identified and therefore the line you are drawing gets thicker. The greater the sensitivity number, the finer distinctions in thickness of lines. Sensitivity of 1000 is good for most applications.

[Here is a great video explaining differences between different levels of pressure.](#)

Size

There are two factors to consider when choosing tablet size:

Size of the active area

The active area is the portion that you draw on. On the one hand, larger active area will enable you to draw more easily without the need for zooming or panning. On the other hand, too large active area require wider hand movements which can be inconvenient or even less precise.

Size of the overall device.

This includes the active area and the surrounding borders of the device. If you draw a lot on the go, a more compact tablet will be easier to carry around.

Tablet sizes should be relative to your screen size and resolution. The smaller the tablet surface, the less hand movement will be necessary to move the cursor on the screen. Having a tablet too small for your screen leads to a jumpy cursor and makes fine selections difficult. A tablet too big for your screen feels slow, requiring more hand movement, and may tire your arm muscles quicker.

Stylus Type

Drawing tablets come with three types of styluses:

1. Battery Powered

Usually thicker and heavier. Once the batteries run out, the pen will cease to function until batteries in the stylus are replaced

2. Rechargeable

Usually slimmer than battery powered. Need to be recharged with a supplied charger or USB cable.

3. Electromagnetic resonance (EMR)

Newest type of stylus. Uses Electromagnetic frequency that translates power to the pen wirelessly from the tablet. There are no batteries to charge or change. This is the most recommended stylus type.



Controls

Many graphics tablets come with functional keys which can be programmed according to your needs. Some models include keys around the drawing area, while some models include keys on the stylus pen. Functional keys can save time, allowing you to use shortcuts and your favorite settings directly on the tablet, instead of opening program menus.



What brand to choose

At the moment there are three highly recommended companies that manufacture different types of drawing tablets in different price ranges. All of them can be found on Amazon.ca.

Wacom

[Wacom tablets on Amazon.ca](#)

Huion

[Huion on Amazon.ca](#)

XP-PEN

[XP-PEN on Amazon.ca](#)