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Before rubber was first used as an eraser in the mid-1700s, people employed everything from pumice to damp bread to expunge their errors. Luckily, we no longer have to turn to the bread box to cleanly remove graphite from paper, but sorting through erasers to find the right one can be a headache, especially when they appear so similar. We're here to help. For erasers that work beautifully on graphite, last a long time, and don't leave your workspace grubby, take a look at our top five recommendations below.

ARTNEWS RECOMMENDS

Pentel Hi-Polymer Eraser

Plastic erasers like the Pentel Hi-Polymer are soft enough to avoid traumatizing your paper but firm enough to offer a high level of control. This eraser, which comes in small (1.7-inch), large (2-inch), and "super XL" (4.5-inch) sizes as well as in pencil-cap form, don't smear or ghost. Most important, they receive the highest marks in removing graphite from paper. No need to worry about crumbling, either, because they will stay soft and intact for years.

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WE ALSO LIKE

Staedtler Mars Plastic Eraser

For a quick and thorough erase, the German-made Mars plastic eraser is a good option. The handy block shape is easy to manipulate, and it removes graphite with very light pressure. The sharp edges are good for targeting detail work, but they are not so sharp that they will tear at your paper, even delicate watercolor paper. In terms of cleanliness, these erasers will shed some rubbings, but they do not crumble, even after years.

ANOTHER OPTION

Prismacolor Magic Rub Eraser

The Magic Rub eraser is a heavy-duty option that can remove India ink as well as graphite, and it can be used on delicate surfaces like soft paper, tracing paper, or drafting film. Some people quibble with the fact that the eraser gets dirty with use, but this absorption makes for a cleaner erase. Simply rub the dirty eraser on scrap paper and a clean surface will emerge. The Magic Rub eraser comes in one standard, easy-to-hold size measuring 1 by 2.25 inches.

EDUCATORS' CHOICE

Paper Mate Pink Pearl Eraser

As any student can attest, the Pink Pearl is ubiquitous in classrooms. It has been around for years, and for good reason: It is affordable and features a unique beveled-edge shape that is perfect for erasing both small and large areas. It is soft and pliable, so it won't break even in small hands that often press too hard. Unlike other top erasers, the Pink Pearl is made from latex-free rubber rather

than plastic, which means it can have a powdery feel, and it can smudge a bit more than other choices. But for hard pencil on smooth paper, this accessible option erases wonderfully without issue.

ARTISTS' CHOICE

Faber-Castell Perfection Eraser Pencil

Block erasers are good for removing most marks with speed, but for expert-level precision, these German eraser pencils are unbeatable. They sharpen to a fine point using any regular pencil sharpener, and are as easy to maneuver as any pencil. The eraser core, encased in a wood barrel, is made from PVC-free plastic that is also free from phthalate, a chemical additive that may disrupt hormone function. The soft, red eraser of the 1056 pencil removes graphite cleanly and effortlessly.

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