



This guide outlines what Alberta College of Body Art looks for in tattoo applicant portfolio submissions

Required Portfolio Pieces:

- Minimum of 5 hand-drawn images (pencil or similar medium)
- Must demonstrate lines, shapes, shading, and script
- Drawings must be original (not traced)
- Digital work, paintings, or photos of previous tattoos may be included as optional supporting pieces, but they do NOT replace hand-drawn submissions

Hand-Drawn Artwork Expectations:

- Clean, confident linework
- Ability to draw basic geometric shapes and forms
- Evidence of shading technique (smooth gradients, solid blacks, etc.)
- Script or lettering examples
- Creativity and composition skills

Suggested Themes/Ideas:

- Floral or botanical designs
- Animals or creatures
- Skulls, anatomy, or objects
- Traditional, neo-traditional, illustrative, or realism-inspired concepts
- Pattern work or ornamental pieces

Presentation Tips:

- Scan or photograph artwork in good lighting
- Ensure images are clear and not blurry
- Present pieces in a single PDF or zipped folder
- Label your work if needed (optional)

Common Mistakes to Avoid:

- Traced images
- Messy photos or dark, shadowed images
- Submitting only digital art without required hand-drawn pieces
- Incomplete drawings or low-effort sketches

Goal of the Portfolio:

Your portfolio helps us understand your current artistic ability and your potential for growth. We are not expecting perfection, we simply want to see your foundational skills and creativity