



User manual

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TECHNOLOGY SERVES THE PAINTER.

See the painting before you paint it.





SEE · STRUCTURE

Getting started

Sinopia helps you move from reference to canvas: seeing structure, simplifying values, transferring accurately, and painting with your own hand. It never makes the artwork for you.

Add a source. The photo or artwork you'll paint from. Everything is processed on your device — no image is uploaded unless you deliberately choose a cloud AI option, which states exactly what it sends and where.

The six stages follow the way a painting is built: Reference · Drawing · Values · Colour · Grid · Project.

View modes are picture cards showing a live miniature of your own image. Tap a card to use it; tap its **flip rotation** — the set of views you cycle through while painting.

On a phone or tablet, use **Share Add to Home Screen** for a full-screen app. Sinopia is a one-time purchase after a free trial. No subscription.

Reference — prepare the source

Canvas ratio crops the image to your support's proportions. Choose a preset, or **Custom** and type your canvas size (e.g. 76 × 61) — those numbers are then used as centimetres throughout. **Adjust image** holds brightness, contrast, fine rotate, invert, flips and rotation, with a single reset. Loading a new source resets adjustments automatically. **Download view (PNG)** exports exactly what you see.



SIMPLIFY · VALUES

The view modes

Fifteen ways to look at one image. Each remembers its own settings.

Drawing

View	What it shows
Line	Contour edges for tracing.
Edge map	Brightness = edge hardness. Brilliant lines are hard edges; faint ones soft or lost.
Negative space	Softened silhouette — draw the white shapes, not the object.
Focus map	Contrast, saturation and detail combined: where the eye goes.

Values

View	What it shows
Grayscale	Values only.
Blocks	Flat value steps for underpainting. Isolate one step, or build up from the darks.
Two-tone	Black and white split at a cut-off.
Notan	Fixed three-value composition study.
Halftone	Print-screen dots — dot size follows darkness.
Shapes	The image collapsed into 10–500 painterly colour shapes.

Colour

View	What it shows
Original	The source as it is.
Temperature map	Warm, cool and neutral, with luminance preserved.
Saturation map	Brightness = chroma.
Palette map	The image repainted using only a Zorn or Earth palette.
Comic	Flat colour with black linework.

Paint by values. In Blocks, set your steps, then **Isolate step** — step 1 is the darkest — to see one value band at a time. **Build up to step** shows everything up to that step, so you can block in the darks first and climb the values one notch at a time.



SIMPLIFY · COLOUR

Colour and mixing

Palette. Six dominant colours are extracted automatically, each named as a mix you could actually make — “Cerulean Blue + Titanium White”, “Grey: Titanium White + Ivory Black”. Harmony chips give the complement, analogous pair and triad of the dominant colour. Treat the names as starting points, not gospel.

Colour inspector. Switch on Inspect on hover, then hover (or tap) anywhere on the image to read the local colour as a mix, with its hex. Dragging still pans, and the inspector stands down entirely in projection mode. It pairs beautifully with the Shapes view, where each block gives one steady answer.

AI line drawing

Redraw as line drawing opens a panel with four engines. **On-device** is free, needs no account, and your image never leaves the browser — a small model downloads once. The cloud options are stronger but need your own API key or a beta code; each says exactly what it sends and where. **Restore original painting** brings the source back at any time. The result loads as your source, so every other tool works on it.



TRANSFER · SCALE

Getting it onto the canvas

Four ways — only one of them needs equipment.

1 · Camera lucida — just your phone

Mount the device above or facing your paper. The live camera shows through your image and you draw on the real page while watching the screen. If your hand moves the wrong way, tap **mirror** — then align. The **magnifier** zooms camera and image together, alignment preserved, so you can work an eye or a hand at up to 6×. **Freeze** pauses the feed to compare. A **two-finger drag** re-aligns if you knock it, even when locked. Focus lock and torch appear on devices whose browser allows them.

2 · The grid method — just a pencil

Squares with A1 cell labels, plus centimetre rulers calibrated to your actual canvas. The panel tells you the exact cell size in cm and mm, so you can dial the grid to a round number before drawing it on the canvas.

3 · Cell light table

Pencil the same grid onto a large sheet, then work through it one cell at a time. The screen shows a single cell at **true physical size** — lay thin paper over the tablet and trace through, or copy by eye into the matching square. Calibrate the screen once against a real ruler. Navigate with , tick cells done, jump anywhere with the mini-map, invert for backlighting, and show slivers of neighbouring cells so lines connect across boundaries.

4 · Projector — if you have one

Aim the projector at the canvas and enter projection mode. Tap **Fit**. Drag the four handles onto your canvas corners — watch the projection, not the screen. Tap **Fit** again to hide them. The warp corrects size, position and projector angle in one step, and is remembered per screen. Whenever a warp is applied, a badge shows at the top of the stage — one tap clears it.

Then lock. Lock freezes position, zoom and the calibration corners. Once locked nothing can shift your setup. There are no AR anchors to drift — there is nothing to drift.



PAINT · AT THE EASEL

Painting

Projection mode hides everything. Tap the image for the toolbar: cycle the grid, cycle the view, dim the image with the slider, and hold **Blink** to fade the image out and check your marks. Double-tap or Esc exits.

Critique. Photograph the painting in progress, square-on, and overlay it on the source.

Difference mode lights up wherever you've drifted — dark means match, bright means drift. Catch it before it costs you an afternoon.

Painting timer. Every five minutes it nudges you to stand back, squint, blink-check or stretch, with a break call at 25 minutes.

Keyboard shortcuts

Key	Action	Key	Action
F	Projection mode	C	Corner calibration
V	Cycle views	B	Blink
G	Cycle grid	O	Re-fit to screen
L	Lock / unlock	Esc	Exit projection
H	Show / hide controls	Arrows	Nudge overlay / move cell

Troubleshooting

Symptom	Fix
Image looks squashed or warped	A corner-pin warp is applied — tap the badge at the top of the stage to clear it.
Photo won't load	Probably HEIC. Screenshot it and load the screenshot, or convert to JPEG.
Features missing after an update	Cached build. Hard-refresh, or delete and re-add the home-screen icon.
Camera won't start	If no permission prompt appeared, the browser is blocking it.
Only one camera listed	That's all the browser can see. iPhone Continuity Camera appears only while the phone is nearby and awake.
Torch / focus lock missing	These need browser camera controls that iPhone Safari doesn't allow.



Symptom	Fix
Hand moves the wrong way in lucida	Tap mirror, then re-align.
Image drifts while tracing	Lock before starting.

Studio notes

- Work in passes: contours in Line, then flip to Blocks with Isolate step for the darks, climbing value by value. Check colour in Original. Verify drift with Critique.
- Hold Blink often. Comparing your marks against the source every few minutes catches drift early.
- Use the rulers and a real tape measure to confirm the projection is at true size before committing to a grid.
- Darken the room. White lines on black throw the least stray light onto the canvas. Stand off-axis so your shadow misses the work.