When working with pastels, landscape drawing can be approached using a specific order. Because pastels can be layered on the surface, it makes sense to start with areas that are farthest away from the viewer and work forward. This means that we should complete the **background** first, the **middle ground** second, and the **foreground** last. **Atmospheric perspective** refers to the illusion of atmosphere between objects that results in the illusion of space. This illusion is created in a drawing by making objects in the distance cooler in color and lighter in value. Closer features will be warmer in color and darker in value.
We’ll start the drawing by addressing the background first. In this drawing, the background is the sky. We’ll start at the very top of the paper and start adding yellow to the surface.

After the yellow has been blended into the surface, a band of orange is added directly underneath.

The orange band of color is gently blended into the yellow and a lighter value of orange is added underneath. Our goal is to develop the sky completely before moving on to the middle ground.

Next, observed areas of blue are added directly on top of the lighter values of orange. Each block of color develops the sky further.
Moving downward, an area of light violet extends the sky beyond the location of the middle ground. When we are ready to address the middle ground, we’ll be able to layer right on top of the background.

As larger areas of color are developed in the background, smaller details can be added. Here areas of darker violet are added on top of the yellow to create the illusion of clouds.

Detail areas can be blended using a blending stump for more control. Blending these areas will create smooth transitions and lessen the intensity of colors.

By layering colors, depth is created in sky. In this case, the sky has a variety of colors and requires several applications of pastel.
With the sky completely developed, work can begin on the middle ground. We will still focus on working areas that are farther away, beginning with the mountain peak in the distance.

A line for the next mountain range is drawn on top of the mountain drawn in the previous step. A darker blue is used to make the mountain range appear closer.

Between each mountain, an area of lighter value exists. We'll address this by adding white on top of the blues used for the mountains.

We'll keep repeating the process of adding mountain ranges using progressively darker values of blue, layering each new mountain range on top of the previous one.
Each layer of blue is blended into the surface using a finger. Be sure to blend with a finger that is clean or matches the color that you are blending.

Loose details can be added to the peaks of the overlapping mountains. These marks will create the illusion of trees and distant buildings.

With each new mountain range, white is added to lighten the lower portions of the mountains.

Using a finger, the lighter areas are “pulled” upward to create the illusion of atmosphere between the mountains.
Warmer tones can be added to portions of the mountains in the middle ground. In this case, a yellow ochre pastel is layered with a blue to make greens and blue-greens.

A dark brown pastel is used to darken areas of the mountain. This contrast will create the illusion of subtle details such as distant trees.

The next mountain range is layered directly on top of the previous mountain range. A combination of blue and dark, warm gray is layered to make a darker and warmer version of the closer mountain range.

Tones can become progressively warmer on land masses closer to the viewer. Yellow ochre and blue are mixed to make natural greens that are still cool enough to appear some distance away.
Again, darker areas contrast with lighter areas to create the illusion of details on the closer mountain range.

The illusion of form is created on the mountain by using warmer greens and cooler blues. This contrast will create a natural illusion of undulating terrain.

Details become larger as we work towards the foreground. The tree line that is added in this frame is much larger than its counterparts added on distant mountains.

With the middle ground completed, we can address the foreground. The last two hills on the lower portion of the picture plane are considered the foreground in this image.
With the hills in the foreground, the dark warm gray will dominate the color temperature. Blue is still used, but the gray takes precedence.

Yellow ochre is again mixed with the blue to create greens. The greens used on the hills are decidedly warmer than those used on distant land masses.

Definition in the form of the closer hill is developed by creating areas of contrasting greens, blues, and warmer shadow areas.

The shape for the last hill in the extreme foreground is drawn using blue and dark, warm gray.
Blue, black, brown, and white pastel pencils are used to add details to the features on the hill. The details of the building and trees are developed using the pencils.

A warm yellow-green is used on the hill to add a bit of depth and form to the hill.

A cream color is used add a light to the building in the foreground as well as lights on distant hills and mountains.

The completed image is created by working the background completely, then middle ground, and foreground. The illusion of space is furthered by using cooler and lighter colors for distant features. Warmer colors and darker values are used for features that are closer to the viewer.