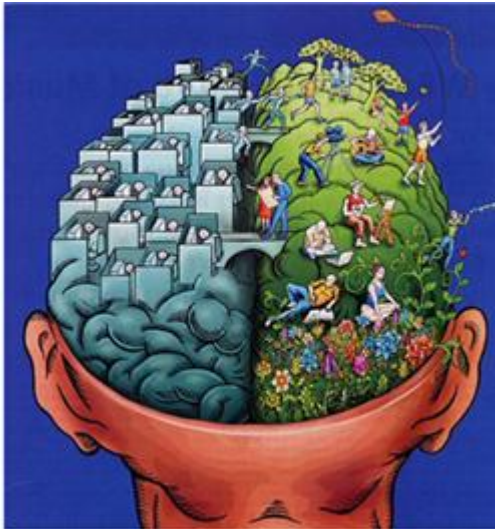


Learn How to Draw Step-by-Step MULTIMEDIA Lessons

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Introduction

Drawing is a world that will change your life...really. I know. And here you are now to begin that journey over the “right” side of your brain.



The right side is where you “feel” rather than “think”. It allows you to see the beauty of the sunrise, hear the singing birds, and enjoy smelling the fragrance of a rose. The process of understanding those feelings is called Sensing, and there is actually a lesson on that subject in this course.

But it is this sensing that is going to allow you to pick up a pencil and move those feelings onto paper, so that you can move others into those same feelings.

So here we begin our lessons together. We’ll start with the basics and progress to the point where you indeed will feel comfortable in your newfound methods of drawing. (By the way, we won’t stop there, I’ll continue with you by making some special offers on the next program).

Like Real Estate’s Number one principle of “Location, Location, Location”, Art also has its mantra: Practice, Practice, and Practice.

Please note: The 2 bonus articles that you received (within your order) called “The Creative Process of Art” and “How to Introduce Perspective Into your Drawings”, are just that—Bonuses. I would encourage you to read The Creative Process of Art, but postpone reading “How to Introduce Perspective Into you Drawings” until after Lesson 10 as it is more advanced material (unless you are already a fair-to-good artist already and can absorb that material easily).

What you will have accomplished at the end of this course.

So here's the plan, Stan. **I'm assuming you know nothing about drawing.** (If you do, you will nonetheless find many helpful hints along the way so I encourage you to stick with the program.)

First, I'd like to talk a little about owning your art. By Owning, I mean your art is YOUR art. Don't let **anyone** dismiss your art. Don't let **anyone ever** tell you to stop doing art because they don't think you qualify. Nobody can ever say your art is no good. It is YOUR art and why on earth would someone say to a child learning how to walk "you'll never be a good walker so you should just give up". Hogwash. Everyone has within them the ability to draw well. It just takes time and practice just like any new endeavor. **But is you practice you will see improvements.** I PROMISE.

What I am about to teach you will completely accelerate that process. These are techniques that all artists learned which still help them

I will start you out with the basics. Simple things, like how to hold and use your pencil. This is NOT handwriting...some artists hold their brushes and pencils as they write but I don't recommend it—it should be obvious that when you are drawing on an easel you are more vertical than horizontal—and bending your wrist that much will be quite painful after even the shortest time. AND you'll be covering up your work with your wrist which will slow down your ability to keep your proportions. Don't worry though, I'll show you a much easier way.

I will show you many "how to's" along the way and to become a good artist you should practice each one and "add" it to your repertoire of skills, repeating it for each new exercise. You can't possibly learn these all at once--you would forget some and the result would show up in your drawings. So I encourage you to constantly rewind and repeat (wash, rinse, repeat).

This course is about seeing something you like, grabbing a pencil and paper and free-hand drawing it. This skill is absolutely invaluable as an artist because it not only lets you draw wherever you are, but in so doing, you will find yourself "seeing" things that you'll want to draw that don't have to be in the studio.

Imagine going to the beach or the zoo or even a museum (yes, they do let you sit and copy in museums!). To be able to draw anything, anywhere, anytime is such a thrill—you'll see how much fun that is.

And for Pete's sake, don't skip an exercise. Practicing each lesson will enhance your skills so that the next lesson becomes easier than if you didn't have the lesson before it.

What this course is NOT.

I will **not** be teaching tone or paint (we'll save that for a later course).

You will **not** be told to draw a rectangle, an oval, add a few lines here and there and you will have a mountain goat. That technique is great for teaching children or the simplest of drawings. And those oversimplified techniques are useful in helping you *understand* the shapes you'll find and use in building of your art—but you won't *start* with these like many books teach you.

Here you are going to learn techniques that will show you how to draw what you see—and the best techniques available from the best artists for doing just that.

So Congratulations.

So congratulations, you've arrived here in this course where you are going to learn many tips, tricks and techniques to help you succeed in drawing...and you'll be learning them step-by-step to make the process simple and much easier for you than all your other books.

The Lesson Plan

Contained in this first document are Lessons 1 and 2.

So you can see what's coming, here's the **Lesson Plan** for this course.

Lesson 1: Setup and Materials (see below)

Lesson 2: The One Big Shape (see below)

Lesson 3: The Important Concept of Sensing

Lesson 4: Preconceiving, and Bias

Lesson 5: Comparing, Adjusting and Improving

Lesson 6: Working With Midpoints

Lesson 7: Triangulation

Lesson 8: Lines, Angles, and Streams—the Building Blocks of a Composition

Lesson 9: Symmetry and Ellipses

Lesson 10: How to Draw Flowers

Lesson 11: How to Draw Animals

Lesson 12: How to Draw People

Lesson 13: Hands-on Perspective

Lesson 14: Loosening up Techniques

Lesson 15: The Big Picture

Lesson 1

Setup and Materials

[\(Watch the Video\)](#)

Art really is simple and you can, in truth, draw anywhere using any number of mediums.

Sit on a couch or at table or even on the ground, grab any pencil and any paper and go.

The principles I will be teaching you apply wherever you go.

Now, that being said, you may want to follow what I'm about to share with you because you are just starting out. Once you are practiced in these more controlled techniques and you are doing them out of habit, then even when you are in uncomfortable new settings, these techniques will still be a part of you and natural and your results will still be outstandingly accurate and you can literally take these with you anywhere, anytime.

Here's what you will need:

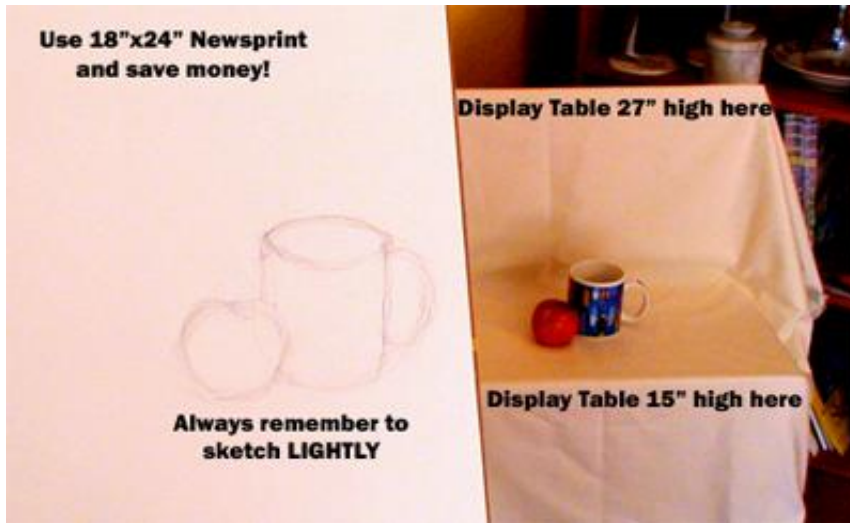
- An 18" stool (at your superstores)
- An 18" x 24" newsprint pad (50 sheets)
- A masonite hardboard of the same size as your newsprint pad
- An Easel. There are so many of these but I recommend a simple one that I talk about in the video
- A small display table to hold your objects on (about 15"H x 22"W x 12"D and with a 15"H x 22"W backing (secured 2" to the table back)
- A 3' x 3' neutral vanilla cloth to cover the table

Assemble this and put it in a location with plenty of light.

It's also a good idea to put a shelf nearby to hold household objects that you can try your hand at and mix and match: cups, fruit, vegetables, bottles, teapots, creamers, saucers, small pots, pencil holders, small jars, glasses...and anything else that looks interesting.

As we progress through the course you'll find these will make good arrangements with which to practice your form and techniques. Don't go for really small or very large or tall objects (for now) as they will be too complicated. These will be added later when you are ready.

Adjust the easel legs to be initially low for working with the newsprint. The height should be set so that **your view** of the display table which holds your objects "**drills**" right through the middle of the drawing paper. That ensures that you can minimize the distance you have to look between your subject and your paper. Thus:



Place the masonite hardboard on the easel and fix the paper closest to the right hand side (if you will be drawing with your right hand, left side otherwise).

Now, onto you. Sit upright with good posture—you'll be able to sit for longer periods of time with practice here and will definitely be more comfortable when you are at the beach, zoo, mountain stream—anywhere where there is only a rock to sit on.

Keep drawings small. Your drawings will be more accurate. It's a known fact by artists that the more your eye has to move the poorer will be the accuracy of your drawing. And I'm not even talking about your head moving side to side between the sketchpad and the objects you are drawing—I'm referring to even the little motions your eye makes looking around for relating points (more on this later).

The cloth may be either light or dark depending on whether you have an arrangement of articles that are dark or light. For example, if you wanted to draw a white candle, you may use a dark cloth because you will "see" your shapes more easily. As you learn how to control light later on, you'll see that the cloth color and brightness (or lack thereof) will help you create richer compositions.

A cloth that is too bright with objects also bright will result in drawings and paintings that will appear too washed out. A cloth too dark with objects also too dark, and the composition will appear dull and uninviting.

Do you remember being a toddler? There was a time when you were learning how to walk. You would crawl over to a table and hoist yourself up and then happily teeter away.

Well, art is very much like that. The setup and work space that I am recommending is like that table. I am showing you these tools as we proceed so that later on you won't need them at all.

Now that being said, go pick objects that you are going to draw but keep them simple, "roundish", not too big and not too small.

Lesson 2

The One Big Shape

[\(Watch the Video\)](#)

The One Big Shape is the “object” formed as a collection of all the objects you are drawing. Specifically it is the outline of those objects. As demonstrated in the video for Lesson 2, it would be the following shape:



From here you can keep your pencil on the paper and sketch other shapes and begin to relate using the points on each.

Before we actually begin drawing, let's review a few basics to keep in mind while you are drawing:

1. Plan your drawing light and small – It's easier to finish a simple drawing
2. Do not lift your pencil
3. Keep pencil as nearly parallel to the paper as possible
4. Using your eyes constantly back and forth

As we start drawing our One Big Shape, notice that we are looking for all the outside points and keeping our pencil light and nearly parallel (flat) with the newsprint pad.

Then, as we search for the overlapping smaller shapes we can see them all over by simplifying the shapes (called Secondary Shapes)

- Cup with cup handle
- Apple & Cup without handle
- Lip of the cup and apple
- Lip of the cup and handle

It's important to note that in this first drawing, don't zero in on anything yet, keep yourself loose and focused on those secondary shapes—try and imagine the objects as blurry to help keep you “unfocused” on the essence of apple and cup.

Remember that if you are focused on the trees you can't see the forest and first and foremost at this early stage you must see the forest first.

Here's some overlapping Secondary Shapes you should be “seeing” and lightly constructing with your pencil on the paper. Don't use your eraser at this point, just keep your fingers VERY loose.



I can't repeat enough that you should NOT be committing your lines—just keep your strokes loose—you're going for proportions here and these secondary shapes will help you ignore the “apple” and the “cup”.

If it makes sense, you can draw other geometric shapes: Circles, Squares, Triangles, Ovals, Trapezoids, Ellipses, and so on: **JUST MAKE SURE THEY ARE ALL ROUNDED.** That's right, as I state in the video, I want you to try to keep your pencil on the paper at all times. That's how you are going to learn to keep everything rounded and connected (it's all connected anyway!).

Finally, when you are done, walk away from the whole shebang for a couple of minutes and then come back, sit in the same spot and look it over again. You will be surprised to see the subject “new” again.

Go ahead and correct them. Then walk away one more time just to be sure. So after you are done with this, decide if you “nailed it” or need a little more practice.

Congratulations, you have completed this exercise. Now, this is not going to the J. Paul Getty Museum so go ahead and move on to the next exercise.

You should keep practicing with 2 simple objects. Choose other pairs of small items and go ahead and draw them. Go with the rules you have learned so far but by **ALL MEANS HAVE FUN!**

After you have grown comfortable with this exercise, you may proceed to Lesson 3.

Lesson 3

The Important Concept of Sensing

[\(Watch the Video\)](#)

The entire essence of art is in this Lesson. Learn what I am going to talk about here and you will move many, MANY steps closer to becoming a good artist in a shorter period. When you look at a rose, what do you see?

Likely you see exactly that...the rose. You “see” the leaves, thorns and stems, but in truth, you are enraptured by the Petals—the softness, the color, the dew, the variation in color, the hue, brightness, contrast, the flowing folds, the unity and harmony of the petal grouping, the lilting angle, the openness or close-ness of the bud—even the size ratio of the flower compared to everything else—all this is more than just “the rose”—it is the vital quintessence that breathes life and soul into an artist’s thinking.

It is called Sensing.

Sensing, which was also the basis of the Impressionist movement in France in the 1800’s, is a very subtle right-brain process that truly brings you into the art world. Being aware of “things” in a very different way, like the rose above, will truly awaken the artist within you. Any engineer can draw a rose and copy it exactly the way they see it. The mechanics and technology for doing that these days is very easy with computers.

But the artist can give life by **EVOKING THE SENSES**. HOW you Sense what it is you are about to draw and how you are *involved* with the drawing, decides **how** you will create the drawing. **Art** is not about mechanics, it IS about those feelings that **you** put into it and what feelings you intend to “pull” from your viewers—how you were inspired and how you are going to *inspire* your viewer.

Art is a means of communication. The old phrase “One picture is worth a thousand words” has its basis in the ability of the brain to absorb great amounts of information in an instant, and drawings and paintings can do that.

In fact, art can move people to act or to change their thinking, even faster than words. All of this by just connecting with your viewer and giving them the thoughts and feelings of what is going on inside YOU. What motivates you, your inspirations, fantasies, dreams, even your epiphanies can be presented in such a way to your audience that they feel the same emotions that you felt while sketching.

So how does one start Sensing and incorporate it into their drawings?

Here is an exercise. Grab a clipboard, paper and a pen. Go to rooms in your house, or places outside and stand a moment. Take a couple of deep breaths and ask yourself if anything emotional comes up. Is there a thing in the room that creates a sense of strong feelings? If so,

what feelings are they? What emotional impact does it have on you? What attributes of that (or those) things are playing in your heart right now?

Write them down. Don't wait to "think" about the thing, just free-flow write the words as fast as you can with every emotion as it comes to you. If nothing happens, change rooms until you can lock onto some emotions that pour out of your gut or heart. It's important here that I NOT stack the deck with **my** ideas or examples—you just need to go do it. Do it right now before proceeding with the next page.

Did you get results?

Years ago, I took my sketchpad and pencils and put them in the car with me and took off—I wanted to travel up through the California Hwy 49 Gold Rush Trail—places like Sutter’s Creek, Placerville, and Angel’s Camp. And of course I wanted to draw.

Here is a sketch of an object that inspired me while traveling there. The sketch is all about the old west—feelings of timelessness, freedom, power, man and machinery. The drawing represented my time away from modern man into a time of yesteryear. These old engines ran through the gold camps and giant sequoias of Sutter’s Mill, blowing their steam whistles and clanging their huge bells up and down treacherous mountains. Now they are lost to just resting as relics for passerby’s to appreciate. But this sketch always reminds me to reconnect back to the trees and the earth and feel of those cold, rough steel plates—and to appreciate the life and times then and now.



While you are working on your first drawings, remember to let go of the details. Stay loose and flowing. And live in the moment. Follow your intuition. Focus more on the One Big Shape.

Learning how to Sense **now** will vastly improve your ability to make more interesting, absorbing compositions. That is why it is important to start now to be aware of Sensing. The earlier you can accomplish this skill, the faster you will make huge strides in your artwork. A final word about Sensing. You don’t need to be drawing to be doing Sensing. You can do that anywhere, anytime. There is a caveat, albeit a small one: I remember when I was working for a manufacturing company (I was a project consultant in my capacity of technical designer) I had just learned all about tones, light, and shadows and was just fascinated by the way light worked. My “Sensing” sort of got in the way when I realized the President was talking to all the project managers in a meeting and I found myself drifting over to the right brain by “sensing” the way the shadows dynamically played over his face while he spoke. (Yes, of course, I had to ask later some key points I had missed). So choose your Sensing times thoughtfully!

And [Watch the Video](#) for more.

Lesson 4

Preconceiving and Bias

The major difference between engineering and art is the left and right brains, respectively.

With engineering, the goal is accuracy and detail. Period. (OK, maybe some engineers are good artists; I'll bend a little here.)

With art, the goal is just about everything else. Every sense is used in art, and even your 6th sense comes into play. Art is about awakening the giant within (to coin Tony Robbins). It is about reaching into the life blood of the soul and pulling out amazing stories to tell.

When you are just beginning in art, there is a tendency to remove yourself from this because you are trying so hard to “get it right”. Working on the mechanics of your art can be challenging. Which is why there is a tendency to break the picture down into it's component objects and simply draw those objects—even one at a time on the paper; for example think back about the apple and the cup.

The down side to this procedure is that, although you are trying to draw what you see, your “engineering left brain” is taking you down its dark road, a place that good artists avoid going.

Here's what I mean.

Preconceiving

Preconceptions lock half your brain out.

We already touched on this a little bit in Lesson 2 where I was asking you to see the apple and the cup as unified entities, the One Big Shape. And then seeing you're your Secondary Shapes within that. (A *secondary shape* was an artificial shape, usually an oblong circle that you circle shapes that are not true objects, like the cup and apple without the handle). As soon as you want to discern the apple and the cup as separate items, you will be missing an important skill in learning how to draw.

The reason is simple. You will have a tendency of wanting to draw each separately rather than together. And more importantly, when you begin to draw them separately you will lose the ability keep the proportions correct.

Here's how the eye works. If you draw a very small triangle on a piece of paper, say about 1 inch or 1 cm high, it is fairly simple to duplicate the exact sized triangle next to it. But if you try to enlarge the triangle using the same proportions, or make another triangle much further away, say on a separate sheet of paper, you will find the exercise becomes more and more difficult. The eye simply has to move further and the imprint is now lost. You have to move back.

The only way around that is to move the eye back and forth between the drawing and your subject. Hint: look more at the Subject than your drawing when looking back and forth.

If you draw an apple and THEN the cup, you'll find this problem grows by leaps and bounds in trying to keep those proportions and points relating the two objects together uniform and "right".

But if you START WITH ONE BIG SHAPE as we did in Lesson 2 and find other relationship lines, your accuracy will vastly (and quickly) improve. The hands-on video will demonstrate this with a more unusual approach to what may be in your head about drawing.

As you get stuck in your preconceptions and things, there is even a bigger problem that will repress your skill-building.

Bias

The goal is to remove your bias and live in the NOW.

Let me explain. There is no getting away from your bias. That's the naked truth. The fact that you have ever seen one other drawing or one other painting in your life has already set up your Bias. And likely that bias became even further entrenched into you unconscious when you were looking at it with a dear friend and they said "wow that is great". Or, they said, "wow, what a piece of junk". And you were nodding in agreement.

Bingo.

You have now set the wheels of motion into gear—any other drawing or painting that reminded you consciously or unconsciously about that painting you had made a judgment upon—would now be projected into the same classification...and therefore your Bias.

I'm being severe here, I know, to make a point: you may or may not be that highly judgmental about someone else's drawing, but my exaggeration is intended to demonstrate how bias can be (and is) formed, even in the smallest nuances.

When bias (prejudice or favor) gets into your drawings, there is a tendency to get stuck. Why?

Conceptually, you'll find your compositions will start looking like someone else's drawings.

Technically, you'll find yourself saying "but I just *know* this line is right and so is this angle, but these two lines just don't intersect that way in the subject—why?".

Your answer may be in one object that should be bigger than the other and you've just not caught the condition—your **Preconception and your Bias have stopped you from seeing the whole of the drawing**. That's where you should begin, *from the whole*, working your way down to smaller relations (notice I did NOT say smaller objects).

Preconceptions and Bias are so important in understanding that they can literally stop you from wanting to continue drawing.

So that's why this exercise will be so important for you to complete.

[\(Watch the video here\)](#)

Below are the links to the 4 drawings that you are going to do (choose either color or black & white depending on your printer). These are different from just setting up

arrangements. We're going to draw these UPSIDE DOWN. The reason for this is to **encourage Sensing** and **minimize Preconceptions and Bias**.

If you don't have a printer, you can actually work off the monitor by pressing Ctrl-0 (hold down the Control key and press the number zero) to fit the pdf file to your screen size.

[Bagels, Honey & Jam \(Color\)](#)

[Bagels, Honey & Jam \(B&W\)](#)

[Fruit Bowl \(Color\)](#)

[Fruit Bowl \(B&W\)](#)

[Pasta & Tomato \(Color\)](#)

[Pasta & Tomato \(B&W\)](#)

[Vases & Candle \(Color\)](#)

[Vases & Candle \(B&W\)](#)

We'll of course **start with The One Big Shape**. Remember to keep your sketch loosely and lightly and don't commit your lines...just erase those that you know aren't correct.

Feel the picture. Feel the lines, angles, relationship of points. Try squinting to make the picture blurry. Stay away from trying to "see" the individual objects you are drawing. That is important in this exercise.

Don't hurry, go easy and light, round and round you go (everything in life in a circular motion...)

After you do your One Big Shape, go ahead and find your Secondary Shapes—make artificial objects: Cut off the neck of that bottle, combine 2 objects to make one, cut through objects with your lines where you know they are, rather than stopping because you don't see them behind another object.

Then after you have worked your Secondary Shapes, begin working down to your Detail, always checking back with both One Big Shape and Secondary Shapes until you are certain you have them nailed down.

Then, after you think you've got a reasonable sketch, ONLY THEN turn both your paper and the picture upside down (right-side up ☺) to compare again. If you lightly squint, you'll find yourself blurring the picture—that will help you shut off the true objects and let you focus better on the One Big Shape and the Secondary Shapes. Your eye will catch things that you missed before and you'll find those simple changes you'll need to quickly fix so that the drawing will be much closer to your mark.

And if you did not watch the video yet, [in the video](#).

Ultimately I'd like you to ultimately use the Left Engineering Brain as a tool but have it owned and used by the Right Artist Brain, not the other way around.

When that happens and your happily Sensing and drawing without Preconceptions and/or Bias, you will be drawing in a new way and will find a peculiar happiness that you may have been missing before.

Lesson 5

Comparing, Adjusting, and Improving

If you are not yet comfortable drawing shapes, don't worry, just keep practicing. Set aside a firm time to draw, say 3 hours per week (Go on, calendar it!).

By drawing the apple and the cup multiple times, different ways to learn the One Big Shape, and secondary shapes, and by drawing the upside down pictures in Lesson 4 you now you likely now have a clear understanding of “ignoring” the objects in subject and a grasp of “un-object-ive” drawing—forcing your right brain to come on board instead of depending on Preconceptions and Bias. (we'll keep working on those).

In this lesson, I'm going to set up a slightly more complicated arrangement and introduce two tools to help you. Although it might seem trivial, 4 objects is actually an exercise that will introduce you to a common mistake. All artists fall prey to it until they can train their eyes to watch for it. I'm going to make that mistake in this exercise—and then show you a very simple tool for correcting it.

Below is the object that we are going to draw in the video.

In this exercise I don't want you to copy the photograph, it's already flat.

Instead, go to the kitchen or pantry or anywhere in the house and find 4 objects to draw. And even if they're not a "composition" together, that's ok for now; we're more interested in 3 small and one larger objects.



So following the One Big Shape, here is the concept of The Biggest Object (also known as the biggest adjustment)

Somewhat surprisingly, when you draw a group of objects, if there is a single large object (this exercise), it draws the eye more than any other object, and you will find that *that* object comes up in error more often than any other.

Why?

Because the farther your eye has to move from point to point, the more difficulty it has gauging the relationship distances. If you don't believe me, try this:

1. Draw a small simple squiggle
2. Copy it on the same sheet of paper. Easy, huh.
3. Now copy it larger and on another sheet of paper farther away from your original. Notice that now the same task becomes more difficult.
4. Don't get frustrated, because we'll talk about tools and techniques momentarily to help you.

Here are 6 strategies that will minimize your effort in overcoming this eye problem:

1. Always use only **one eye** to keep perspective. You'll have to view what you are drawing as a flat image, so you must turn off your other eye (and lose for the moment that wonderful stereoscopic vision of yours)
2. Keep your **drawings relatively small** on the paper (for now)

3. Keep the drawing **close to the subject** so your eye moves a minimum distance back and forth (if you followed the steps in Lesson 1, you are already on task for this). Balance this against number 1 above.
4. **Keep your head still** when looking at real objects like the apple and the cup (or a model!), move your head back into the same position in which you started (to maximize accuracy).
5. **Continually check point relationships** (which line crosses or aligns with another; what angle is that line or object; how high vs. how wide is that secondary shape; and so on.)
6. **Look at your subject MORE than your drawing.** Get into the habit of "watching" your subject as you draw, not your drawing. Go more with your gut instinct and try to keep your pencil on your paper.
7. Look for the smallest corrections last.

In this exercise I am going to make an arrangement with 4 objects arranged in a grouping, 3 small objects and 1 larger object to make my point. I will begin, of course, with The One Big Shape, followed by Secondary Shapes—always ignoring the actual objects in my mind until later.

As you draw, you may likely notice that the One Big Object, the teapot, is just not quite right. This is normal for students just starting out. The **largest** object or the **tallest** object, or the object **in the middle** seems to go askew first.

So it's time to introduce you to 4 techniques that you are now ready to incorporate into your practicing:

1. Eyeballing
2. Comparative Measurement
3. Stepping Back
4. Side-by-Side

Eyeballing

This is a general approach to seeing relationships of objects. In short, Eyeballing is just about using a back-and-forth movement of your eyes looking at everything all at once (point relationships, angles, flows, proportions, height, width, midpoints and so on). Don't fret about all of these yet, I will introduce them to you at the appropriate times during this course. Suffice it to say that, for now, just think of Eyeballing as using common sense when comparing your drawing to the arrangement you are trying to draw.

Comparative Measurement

Many good artists use this technique. You'll see them close one eye hold up their pencil to the open eye to "flatten" whatever it is they are drawing. Then they take 2 measurements of what they drawing: Height and Width, and use the same measurement to gauge the same proportions of the drawing on paper.

The only problem with this is your pencil may not be long enough! So you need a longer measuring stick. You can get them at your local office supply store but those are only 5 inches long. To get a much longer one, go down to Starbucks, order a coffee, and pick up some of their coffee stirrers (they're 7 inches long)

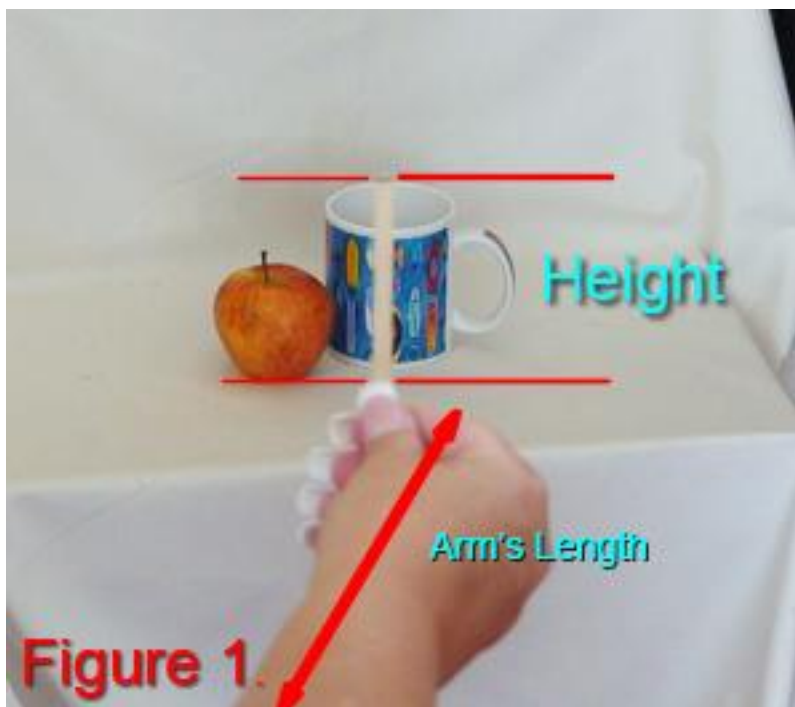
So how do you use it?

Let's start with the big picture...total width and total height

Sit down on your stool after you have drawn some small objects for practice.

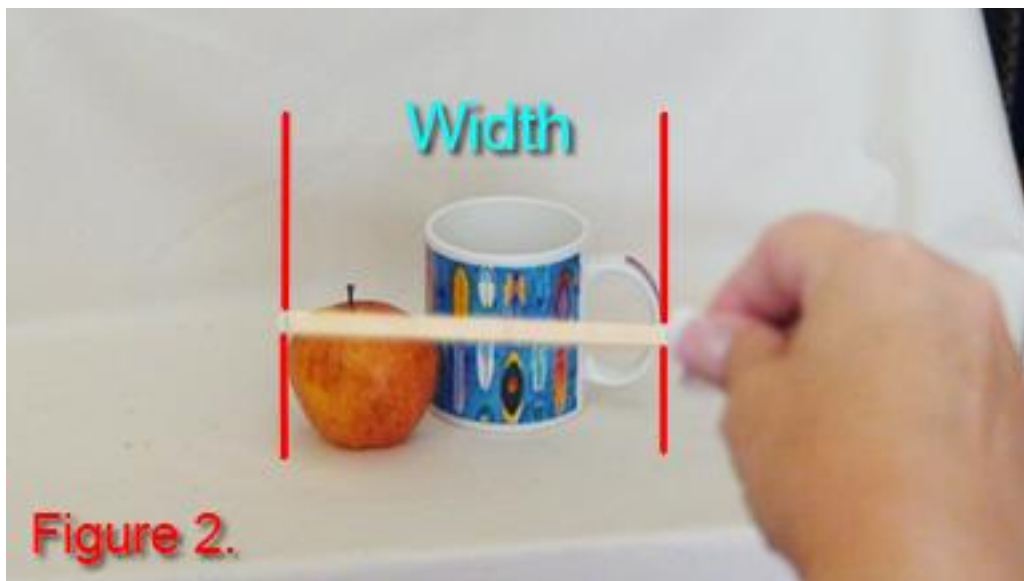
Hold one end of the stick between your thumb and forefinger vertically (see Figure 1), turn the stick toward the drawing and extend your arm (yes, you can use your other arm to hold it steady if you need to).

Close one eye.



Move your pinched fingers up or down on the stick to gauge the height of all objects combined (total height). Open your eyes, and make a mark with your pencil at your thumbnail.

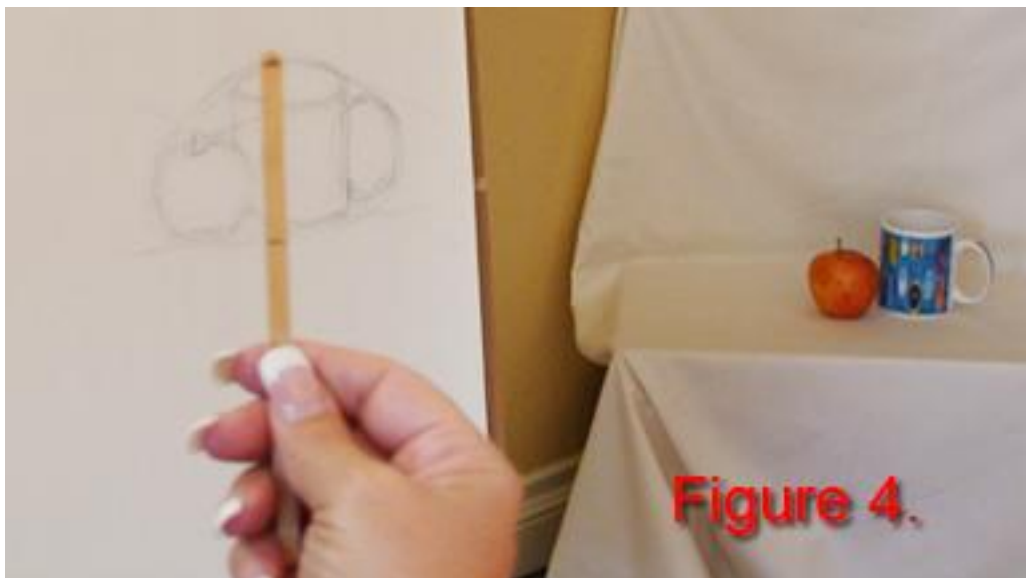
Next, (Figure 2) extend your arm again and this time we'll do the same exercise horizontally...only this time you won't need to mark the stick—your thumb is already on the width mark!



It's also important to notice that the stirrer measuring stick is not true vertical...it's perpendicular to the line of sight. (Figure 3)



Now, **get out of your seat**, walk behind it and face the easel. Close one eye again, **extend your arm**, then physically move and lean your body forward or backward to get the height (marked) to match the height of the image (Figure 4)



Still keeping the arm extended, carefully twist the stick 90 degrees moving it down to horizontal. The image width should match the thumbnail mark (Figure 5).



If they don't fit the same dimensions (we're aiming for accuracy), then you can choose which one (width or length) to fix. Be careful to look over your drawing again and see WHICH object you will need to fix.

Also, if it wasn't obvious in the exercise, let me point out that if the objects you are drawing are *higher* than they are *wide* (Portrait vs. Landscape in printer terms) you can simply reverse your steps—simply do the longest width or height first to allow you to see your physical pencil mark and your thumbnail.

You'll catch on quickly enough with a little trial and error here.

One more thought. If you're really clever, you'll probably figure out that you can take the 4 steps above and turn them into 2 steps. Just try the above part first!

Here's how (one picture worth a thousand words).



Stepping Back

After you have tried the measuring technique for Width and Height you may very well notice that because your drawing was sketched too big you simply can't use an arm's length to measure it.

In this case you'll have to get out of your seat and literally "step back" from your drawing until the longest measurement "fits" the drawing (still at arms length).

Just in case you want to know, measuring at arms length gives better reliability because your arm can't change distance when you move the stick from vertical to horizontal.

If you can't step back far enough, you can simple bend down to put your eye into the same position it was as if you sitting.

Side by Side

Here's another way to test your work. Without disturbing your display, take your paper pad off of the easel and place it next to your drawing, then sit back down in the same position, putting the eye in the exact position it was when you were drawing.

You'll almost instantly see improvements that you'll want to make.

Begin comparing again.

Start with Eyeballing your points and point relationships. Use your measuring stick and start looking for angle matches between the subject and drawing (last part of the video).

- Check the **overall** width and the height.
- Check the point relationships. That means checking the angles between points, both outside and inside the subject against the same angles on the drawing.
- Check **each object** width and height

OK, you're ready to go ahead by watching the video.

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!!!!

[Watch the video here.](#)

Lesson 6

Working with Midpoints

So far you are likely struggling with constant adjustment of your drawing—this is too big, that's too small; this is too tall, that is too short.

"What should I change first?"

"How much of that should I adjust without erasing everything?"

If you are feeling overwhelmed at this point, that's ok—most students do struggle in this period, as it all seems like such a balancing act trying to get everything on the paper to look right. But do know that this IS the most difficult phase of your learning how to draw, and your persistence and dedication WILL pay off, and rather handsomely and shortly. So just keep practicing.

It is time to introduce you to another technique that is a **more precise way of drawing** to make the balancing act easier. In this exercise, I am going to show you, using the measuring stick, how to break your picture down into more manageable units.

Look at the picture below. You'll notice several objects on the display table of varying sizes and dimensions. Although there are more points to relate (that's a good thing) there will still be a tendency to make them disproportionate—because the relating process becomes longer and more tedious.



So here's how to master the problem. We start by breaking the overall parts down into simpler pictures. And the first part to break down is literally dividing the arrangement in half. This is called finding the Midpoint.

The Midpoint is, of course, the halfway mark, **both** vertically and horizontally in the arrangement and on your drawing.

But between what and what?

Up until now we have been doing the One Big Shape, followed by Secondary Shapes, followed by the Details. It is the One Big Shape that begins the process of finding your **Frame of Reference**.

The Frame of Reference

In order to find a Midpoint, you obviously need a box of some sort around the objects you are going to draw. This is called a Frame of Reference.

Here's how to find and mark it:

- 1) Put your pencil on the paper and very loosely sketch around all the objects in a circular or oval shape (the One Big Shape). You already know that by using the One Big Shape you are defining and positioning the left- and right-most points and the top- and bottom-most points of the objects you are drawing.
- 2) Now work in your Secondary Shapes and VERY rough details
- 3) Draw a vertical line on both the leftmost and rightmost points (the red lines in the picture)
- 4) Draw a horizontal line through the top and bottom points.
- 5) You have created your Frame of Reference.



Now we can find the midpoint.

First, take a measuring stick and make a vertical line through the ends (it's easier to use the line rather than the rounded edge).

Grab a of paper and cut it to match the measuring stick end points, then fold it in half and use the half-way fold to mark the stick. Fold again to mark the 2 quarter points to either side of the midpoint on the stick.

You may even want to permanently mark the measuring stick and keep it with your drawing supplies for future use.

Using the Midpoint

Hold the measuring stick up to the arrangement and close one eye. The left end of the stick should hover over the leftmost point of your arrangement. The right end of the stick should hover over the rightmost point of your arrangement. (Move the stick up or down if you are hiding that point).

Once the 2 ends are correctly hovering, identify the horizontal midpoint in your arrangement.

Now repeat the process finding the vertical midpoint.

You may have to Step Back from your drawing to

It should be obvious now that both horizontal and vertical midpoints can be thought of as a single point, the **True Midpoint**.

Now begin checking the relationships of your arrangement against your drawing using the midpoint, the quarter points (there's 4 of them!) and of course, the Secondary shapes.

Now [go watch the video](#) and begin your practicing.

Other methods to Try

Using the **Horizontal Midpoint** and the **Vertical Midpoint** are not the only methods you have available to help you.

You can also use the **Radial Midpoints**. Take a ruler or straight-edge of some type and draw a line from opposite corners. The two lines will criss-cross at the midpoint. This can be helpful in some situations where there are more circular patterns in what you are drawing, like people. The only problem with this method is that it depends on accurate corner positions, which are a little harder to place unless your vertical and horizontal lines are just that—accurately vertical and horizontal.

There is an old trick (that you probably used when you were a child or saw used) that involved making a small picture into a big picture, say, on the wall or a giant sheet of paper. It involved making **A Grid** on the wall matching a much smaller grid drawn over the picture that you wanted enlarged. You then simply "drew" the parts of the grid, one at a time on the wall. This may work well for wall-sized pictures, but it's slower, unnecessary and just quite not practical for most work.

Unfortunately, this (in my humble opinion) is not drawing; it's copying, and does not (for me) bring a sense of satisfaction of being an artist. It's more of an engineer's tool.

Lastly, one other tool is **The Ratio**. This is a calculation of the Length of the vertical over the length of the horizontal. You'll find this useful when you want to copy another painting and want it either larger or smaller, and you need to pick out a proportionately similar canvas. So, you can calculate the ratio of the drawing you want to copy and then find a matching ratio on a different sized canvas.

One Final Note

You may decide or not decide to try to make your pictures bigger now on the paper if you think you're ready. If not, then don't; just keep practicing on relating until you can make your pictures bigger on the paper.

That being said, go ahead and compromise between being relaxed and pushing yourself harder.

Remember, the butterfly cannot be released unless the caterpillar struggles to free itself from the cocoon.

Lesson 7

Triangulation

If you have been watching and practicing the techniques I talk about on the videos, you have been (predominately) using a calm flowing circular motion throughout your drawing process. And, yes, there is the need for straight lines, especially while defining your Frame of Reference.

You have also been checking relationships between points using angles that we have become more and more dependent upon to establish the proportions that we are after.

But now I'd like to "change" your mind a little bit. And it's a small but mighty change indeed.

Draw What You See, Not What You Know.

When you look at something you wish to draw, you are "translating" what you are seeing in 3 dimensions onto the 2-dimensions of your paper. To do this as we have already seen, you need to close one eye to "make" what you are seeing 2-dimensional, and then "match" it on the paper.

That means you really have to close your mind to **what you know** about the objects you are drawing. You have to "flatten" everything, close your mind, and think away from the 3-dimensional space that you are so used to, and instead think more in 2 dimensions, length and width only.

Once you have the flat image of what you are going to be drawing, you are now ready for the next stage getting proportions much better in a shorter time.

Living in the Land of Two Dimensions.

Ok, here's a short exercise. Close your eyes. Focus your mind on everything being two-dimensional. See everything in lines. Try and turn off color and the shadows.

Look away somewhere else.

Next, take an imaginary photograph. Open ONE eye for 2 seconds only, then close it again. Ignore the colors. With your eyes still closed, imagine drawing what you just

"photographed" in your mind. See it as ONLY a picture with no depth—just 2-dimensional (you know, just plain flat).

With your eyes still closed, take your imaginary pencil and outline everything you remember in that flat state only.

Do this several times in different rooms or outside.

Now for a reality check. Do the same for real. Grab your hardboard and paper, and turn around in your chair, or take your hardboard and paper to another room. Close your eyes again, "shoot" your 2 second drawing and then open and sketch what you remember.

You'll actually do better than you think you might have.

As you practice this, you'll begin to appreciate how your mind can be changed from viewing in 3 dimensions and seeing your world more as flat images.

As soon as you can begin viewing your world from this 2-dimensional standpoint, translating that view onto your paper will become far simpler.

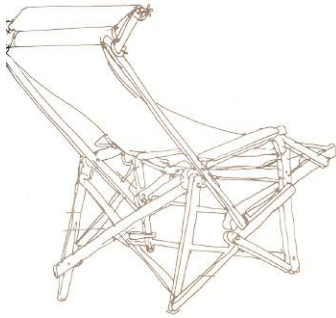
Taking your mind from 2 points to 3 points

Once you have this flat thing going on in your head, you're ready for understanding the use of triangles. Here's how it works.

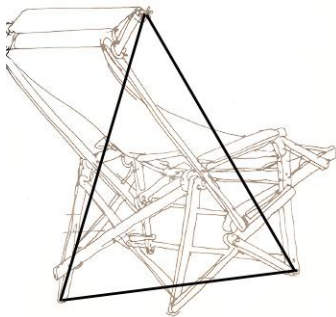
Rather than always looking at the angle of 2 points, I'd like you to focus from here on out 3 points, also known as **The Triangle**. Making use of the triangle in seeking proportion on what you are drawing will vastly accelerate your ability to get proportions right. The reason is simple—using a triangle to see relationships, you become vastly more efficient (and faster) at gauging those proportions that you were previously trying to get by just using lines at given angles (2 points).

Let me give you an example on the next page.

Here is a drawing of a beach chair.

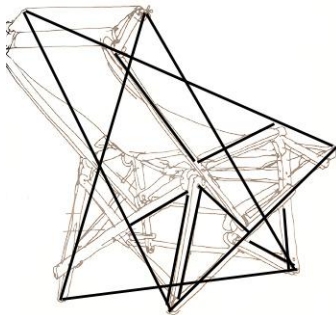


Take the longest points and "triangulate"—that is, find the most distant 3 points and imagine a triangle, thus:

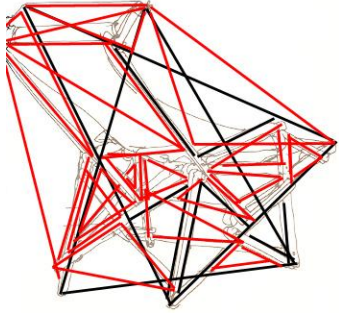


Can you see how more accurately your overall proportion becomes immediately?

Next, add more triangles



...and then, even more...



What should become apparent at this point is that you can easily understand that there are an INFINITE number of triangles that you can use and work your way down to constantly check your proportions.

This will become especially useful to you when you begin drawing people's faces. But be careful out there! Triangles can become addicting, and you'll find yourself wandering over someone's face and they'll look back at you oddly ☺.

Exercise 2.

Have a supportive friend sit down in front of you for about 5 minutes and have them ask you to point out triangles in their faces. You then tell your friend the positions of the 3 points in the triangle, pointing to them (with one eye) with the tip of your pencil.

Push yourself, finding triangles that you may have missed.

[\(Watch the video here\).](#)

Lesson 8

Lines, Angles, and Streams

The Basic Building Blocks of a Composition

Art is not cold. And is not calculated. And it is not *necessarily* precise.

But good art DOES catch your attention.

Art is any of inspiring, motivational, encouraging, warm, exciting, expression-full, dramatic, thought-provoking, and/or moving.

It is for all of these reasons why controlling the elements of your drawing is so vital. Because it is the vitality you put into your drawings that will people to weep, to laugh, to think and to feel the hundreds of ways that people feel. And you, as an artist are in a unique position of helping them feel that way with your drawing.

If you know how to draw with precision, you WILL be able to control the emotions of the viewer.

Here's why: When many people look up into the sky and see clouds, they are seeing whether it is going to rain.

You, the artist, look up and see special lines, colors, patterns, form, and such things as faces, animals, objects, sensual colors, wind direction the direction of birds and you might even feel the work of God. (Review Sensing, Lesson 3 for all of this).

It is this innate AND practiced skill that enables you to see things that others may miss, yet allows you the ability to help them appreciate these things through your drawings.

Lines

As you work with different lines, you'll come to understand that beyond just the normal drawing lines there are 3 specialty types of lines: **Directional lines**, **Non-stop lines**, and **Fluid lines**. Understanding how to apply these to your drawings will help you build a better and more balanced drawing.

Directional Lines.

Simply, a **Directional Line** is that 1-dimensional, imaginary form that denotes direction. Any direction. These lines don't actually appear **on the drawing**, but they are a powerful way of seeing, and creating movement, resolve and/or importance.

In this first simple example, the direction of a spoon on the table below has 2 imaginary lines (in red) to help you see direction of the 2 parts of the spoon, the ladle and the dipper, and the orientation of the bend between them.



To see these lines without actually drawing them significantly orients your perspective and therefore draw the spoon with better perspective. (Without directional line the spoon may appear twisted).

Here's another use of directional line. Consider the direction that this man is pointing in this drawing.



Simple right? Yet, there is **another line of direction**, or flow, which could easily be missed, and **is actually more important**. It is the man slightly leaning forward into the direction of the pointing finger and shows his determination over a more relaxed vertically-standing person. The second red line shows this "flow".



See how subtle that effect is. Yet, you know instantly the man is being more forceful than he is relaxed by the forward leaning motion alone. As soon as you "see" that forward line before beginning your drawing, you'll be able to draw his body much more easily as you'll get the desired effect. (When you are just beginning to draw it DOES make sense to draw that imaginary line).

Here's another usage of **Directional Line**.

In this painting by Homer Winslow (Fresh Air, 1878) notice the wind coming from the left. How do you know? It flutters the ribbons in her hair and blows back the tassels in her sleeves, dress, and even the foreground leaves.

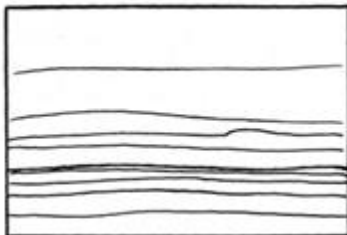


The clouds help the viewer easily see that this is no doubt, a blustery day. All by applying a single Directional Line.

And by **Directional Line**, I don't necessarily mean a straight line.

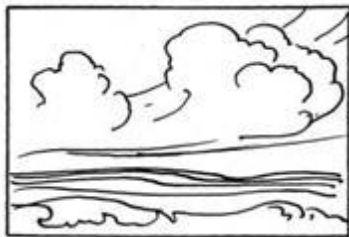
A directional line can be a dramatic sweeping curve, a small curl, or a vast view into a great expanse, whether it's straight or not.

Consider the drawing below demonstrating rather flat directional lines. The directional lines below may represent clouds, rays of light, a horizon, waves, a shoreline, and sand.



This may be used when you want a sense of calm and peace.

But now consider something bolder.



In this second view, you can definitely feel a heightened sense of energy. It may not be calm, but it certainly can move the viewer to vastness far better than the first one. Here's the point of this concept. Start thinking and feeling in terms of **Directional Lines** that express your energy, mood or desire and those lines will help build for you an **emotional navigational blueprint** for the picture that is in your mind.

For the more scientific types, note that directional lines can also accurately be interpreted as **Euclidean Vectors**. A vector is the mathematical breakdown of forces. Here's what [Wikipedia has to say](#) about them (if you are the technical type, otherwise skip it).

Non-stop Lines.

Let's go back to the apple and the cup. Recall that the cup was behind the apple. One of the techniques that will help you is that it's OK to physically draw the back line of the side of the cup right through the apple. The reason is simple—you want the edge of the cup to be aligned and not misshapen. You can always come back and erase the line where it disappears behind the apple.

The same is true anytime you are lightly sketching and you want consistency of shape—circles, ovals, ellipses, and so on.

Non-stop lines, then, are mostly a technique for making your drawing smooth, uniform, and easier to get right. They are real, not imaginary like directional lines, but they are useful and can be erased as you work.

Now, non-stop lines also play in when you are doing your fast or rapid-sketching. Here you are moving your pencil around and you would be unconcerned that "good" lines are mixed in with "bad" lines.

Taken to the extreme these almost become more like squiggles:



Bert Dodson

Fluid Lines.

When you are past the One Big Shape and Secondary shapes begin to lay down your final detail with your pencil, consider using smaller strokes. They will add interest to your drawing lines. This is demonstrated in the video.

NOTE: Fluid lines are a more advanced technique that you may want to hold off on until your sketches are big enough and your hand confident enough to use them. But it is worth mentioning.

And in a more exacting way, when you start drawing people, you will soon realize that beyond the (fairly straightforward) eyes, nose, lips, and hair, there are small fluid lines that can define young or old, wisdom or foolishness, determination or apathy, courage or cowardliness. We know these as people who know our own kind, and yes, it is possible for you to put those expressions into your drawings.

All Lines come from just having full control of your drawing line. This is why understanding the concepts are so important. And of course, practicing your concepts is equally important.

Angles

You have already seen how angles are used to check proportions and size of objects you are drawing. Here's an example where lines are used to map the angles of the body and relate points. How many triangles do you see? (Your answer should be "infinite").



But **angles also have another purpose**. They can be used to show direction, mass and even geometric balance.

Here's an example from G.F. Watts. Notice the curl of the figure on the right which helps heighten the entire "submissive" effect against the rigid dominant angles of the figure on the left.



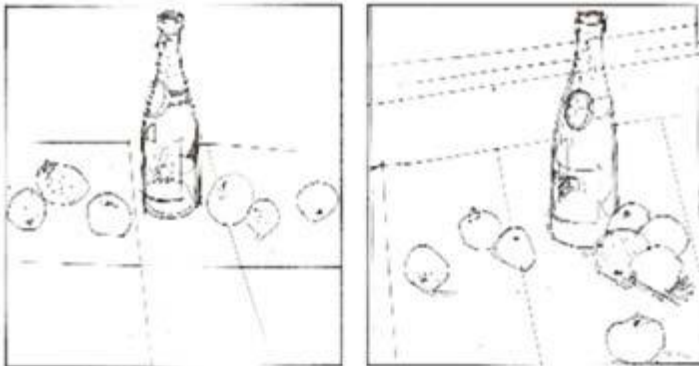
Consider, too, in many of the drawings that come down through the ages, the curvature of lines often are used as a "softening" technique. Think about the drawing of a bridge vs. the drawing of a baby and I think you'll see how that logic works.

Streams

Have you ever driven on a very straight long road? You certainly know how tiresome and boring it can be. The monotonous "Are we there yet?" is what you'll hear from your kids.

Conversely, if you've ever gone on a drive up to the mountains I'm sure you've at least travelled a road by a river. Do you remember the sense of excitement you got rounding each bend, thrilled by each new view of the rocks, the splash of the water, the dips, waves, calm eddies and raging torrents. Even the trees you were playing hide-and-seek with created a tumbling sense of variations, each second a snapshot of lines (remember the last lesson about taking the snapshot of 2-dimensional space?)

Your lines in your drawing can become that same stream for the viewer. Let's take a simple example.



Notice that the drawing on the left sort of has that "long road" effect, whereas the drawing on the right where the fruit appears more dynamically placed into the clusters has a much more interesting effect—the stream "meanders" and intrigues the viewer much more.

Now take one of your drawings from Lesson 6 on Midpoints, and look at it again. You'll likely notice that from a compositional standpoint it may not be that interesting. Don't worry, the purpose of the exercise was to see proportions and we simply were not focused on such things as compositions. That comes later.

But do notice HOW you placed your objects (just remember that I intentionally placed mine nearly evenly spaced to keep it simple).

As you continue your drawings through the remainder of this course I'd like you to add in the additional thinking about how your drawings will take on the special effects that

ultimately make them uniquely "YOU".

Now, [go watch the video](#) and let's have some more fun.

Lesson 9

Symmetry and Ellipses

[\(Watch the Video\)](#)

An interesting problem for many artists is trying to get "things" even on both sides if the thing in question is "symmetrical". Symmetrical objects are those objects that have identical (or semi-symmetrical) left and right half sides.

Examples of objects that are symmetrical are round vases, bottles, cups (minus the handle), glasses, saucers—just about anything that when you look at it you know you can split it into 2 opposite but identical shapes.

Here's some examples of objects I'm talking about:



What becomes most obvious is that you can draw a vertical line down the middle of each of these objects you see that the right and left-halves are identical as your eyes move down that vertical line.

And while it can be somewhat of a nuisance to get both "sides" correct, there are actually simple methods for getting both sides equal.

Once you have completed One Big Shape and Secondary shapes, and **you are ready for working the detail level**, here is when you use this following trick.

If the object you are working on IS symmetrical, then one of the easiest ways to accurately work the detail of it is to use The Ellipse.

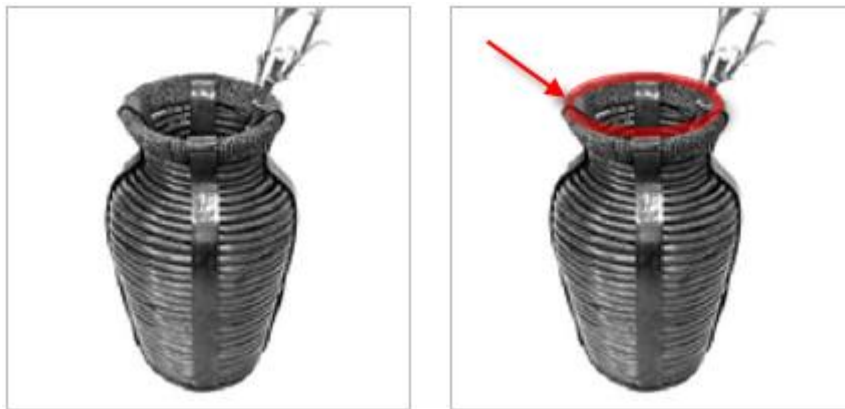


Here are examples of ellipses.

Notice that an ellipse can be long, short, at any angle in which it works, and even a full ellipse (which we all call a circle!)

An ellipse has two wonderful features.

One, an ellipse is the form you can use to draw the ends of a cylinder or vase that you are trying to show at an angle, like this:



Two, because the ellipse is so powerful, you can use it often as a Non-Stop Line (Lesson 8) to get the form you are after, like this:



Further, if you are drawing a simple vase like this one, you could always check the evenness of your side points (distances A and B below) by literally drawing a vertical midline and checking to make sure the distances are the same:



It probably goes without saying that not all vases are round and using an ellipse to manufacture one on paper may be a tad trickier, or may not even worth the effort.

Here's one that you could use an ellipse for but could be tricky if used (can you see the ellipses?) (even the roundish one for the flower—ah-ha!)



And just because part of a vase is non-symmetrical still means that part of it is and then you can use your ellipse techniques where it applies. Can you see where the ellipse does NOT apply?



Of course, right where you would expect it, near the top!

And here's some vases for which an ellipse would not serve you well at all for pretty obvious reasons:



So where do you go from here?

You guessed it. Practice, practice, practice.

Just take sheets of paper and start drawing all kinds of ellipses...start with horizontal flat ones but also try ones at an angle and vertical.

Then go on and take a vase setup on your display stand and try your newfound technique. You'll be amazed at how much easier this will make quick work for you.

Also look around for *parts* of a picture that are symmetrical.

Here's your last tip. Even though you might think that **people** are symmetrical, I would advise NOT drawing them that way—people and animals are just too dynamic in how they sit, stand, walk, run and so on...even the sleeve on one side won't match the other. Don't worry though; we'll have great tricks in that lesson.

Keep up the good work. If you are practicing, you are seeing results. If you are NOT seeing results, simply go back to a lesson you think you may have missed or didn't get it and review it again—and practice the lesson until you got it.

If you don't have or can't get your hands on a vase, or you simply want to get a clear shot of the vase I'm using, you can download it here:

[vase for ellipses](#)

And...if you've not watched the video yet, you can do so here:

[\(Watch the Video\)](#).

Lesson 10

How to Draw Flowers

If you think about it, drawing flowers is no different than drawing anything else you've been drawing. There's the One Big Shape, secondary shapes, details, angles, direction, flows, symmetry and ellipses....

All the techniques you've used up to now will be applied to flowers, and I'll explain that shortly. But now, we need a little side trip.

The Philosophy of Drawing

I can't begin to tell you how many students go to an art school and they simply want to begin by painting. They want to grab a brush and swash those rich, vivid paints, and let their wild imaginative *Sensations* just draw them into the exotic tones and colors they see the masters execute.

Flowers *especially* can hypnotize you into that luring place.

Because, as you look at those gorgeous flowers you might really be getting the itch to put down your drawing pencil and go grab a brush.

So why wait!?

Because I can't stress enough the importance of being committed to this course and the step-by-step ways it is intended to nurture you and grow you to into controlling your hand into becoming an expert.

Thus, that leads us to the question why NOT move directly into charcoal and paint?

Here's why—(and flowers are perfect for this discussion)

You are focused right now on all the elements of drawing. Your lines, angles, flows, direction, symmetry and other tools and techniques you are practicing right now are all being applied into a concert of effort. Each time you practice a drawing, you'll (nearly) automatically be going back in your head to the lessons you've learned thus far and applying what you learned in sort of a "rattle" fashion—

An inside conversation might sound like this:

"Hmmm, is that angle the same? Yeah but I need to check the midpoint again. This is definitely higher but that means this other thing will have to be stretched and widened; better check the overall size again just to be sure; ok these over here are definitely elliptical so I'm laying those in using elliptical strokes; oh yeah and leave the behind-lines alone for now; soften, soften not so hard; measure width and height of the biggest object (again); erase these lines 'cause I know they're just plain wrong and are getting in my way, step back and check; now back to comparing these angles...."

By constantly checking and comparing, adjusting, and improving, you will get faster and better at making the drawing look like the picture or arrangement or story you are trying to draw.

But flowers are really a big step forward. Why?

Because although no one will (likely) see the actual flowers you are drawing, you may be inclined to say, well, it's good enough, nobody will really know. And that's true.

But there is another, more important side, to the story.

The Dual Nature of Drawing Flowers

Flowers are both simple and complex.

You know enough now to draw some pretty good flowers—you can draw a rose, a day lily, a mandevilla and hundreds of other flowers—even a vase of flowers, just by using the tools and techniques we've discussed up till now.

But conversely, flowers, too are very much like portraits of people...they are so unique that they can be demanding on even the finest proportions and angles, just because there are so many points to manage simultaneously. Thus, they demand rigorous attention, and the time needed for drawing them is longer. What I mean is, you should invest longer periods of time in drawing flowers. The time spent here will prepare you for more complex elements like animals and people in the next 2 lessons.

And if you are really focused on the "drawing" end of the flowers now, and practice there, when you are ready to pick up your brush and immerse yourself in the rich flavors of color that flowers excite, you will have confidently locked down the details with your brush because you have already locked down the lines with your pencil.

Then my friend, you will be ready for nuances that tone and color can "blossom" in your future paintings.

Remember, Line...Tone...Color. Always in that order!

So get your lines down now by adhering to the course. Practice, practice, practice. The payback will be worth its weight in gold.

Now that you are willing to stick to your drawing lessons, let's take a closer look at drawing those flowers.

The Wonderment of Flowers

Perhaps you've already figured out that drawing flowers will require that you use all of the steps learned up to this point.

Here's a simple example that has well defined lines:



That, when drawn appears as:



But it should be obvious that the following photo will require much greater patience because there is so much more "personality"—many more lines, ellipses, symmetry and general detail.



And it's exactly this personality that requires precision. So if we were to draw this, although we can "fudge" the proportions, lines, arrangement and so on, and still create a beautiful drawing (and later painting), there's still a hitch with that reasoning.

When you move even further in your drawings and you want to draw a **person's face**, you'll quickly discover that one hair line width in difference in a cheek or chin or eyebrow can make that person look more like his cousin than like him.

That's why paying attention to detail here and now in Drawing is so very important to your skills later on.

Practice, practice, **practice**.

What to look for in flowers.

The basics of the flower that we all recognize in physical form are the petals, leaves, stem, and sometimes stamen, stigma. People have a sense about these and depending on which flower you are drawing and how close you are to what you are drawing.



For example, a close up of an orchid would suggest that you draw the stamen (male with pollen) and stigma (female) parts, but these may not even be noticeable at a distance.

Here's a tip. While trying to draw a flower (or anything else for that matter), if you **KNOW** what you are seeing, it's easier to draw. What I mean is, if you can't see something clearly, get off your seat and get closer to it (if you can). I don't know how many times I've drawn from a photograph where if I had recognized an object in the background or what someone was holding, or the detail of the thing I was trying to draw, it would have made drawing it **SO MUCH** easier. So, if you can, get close and study the detail of what you are trying to draw at any point during the drawing until you are sure of the shape.

Flowers all have **character** and **personality**. This takes us back to Lesson 3, Sensing.



The rose, for example, has very soft petals to the sight and touch, and smells delightfully sweet. That's why roses are so often associated with romance.

And the bud atop a strong straight stem gives us the sense of something new and blooming with the foundation of strength.

Of course we transfer those characteristics, quite symbolically and literally, to our loved ones.

Here's the point. Think about using roses in drawings where you want love, romance, innocence, affection, and even sexuality. Then, think of other flowers and what personalities they have (are associated with).

Here's some other examples

Wildflowers are associated with Nature where earthy, outdoor senses are desired.

Exotic flowers like orchids take the senses to distant lands (and mindsets).

Traditional flowers like carnations, daisies, mums and lilies can be used in drawings where, well, appropriate, like weddings, parties, and so on.

Introducing Value (or Tone)

Up 'till now, I've not really mentioned it but you probably have already felt an urge to draw shadows and control light in your drawings. Because this is really a separate course, I've shied away from the discussion because I want to keep you fully focused on your lines, angles, perspective and proportions for now. But...

If you look at the rose that I drew above you will quite clearly see the power of shadows while drawing. And flowers are just soooooo fun to use values because that's how you can so easily add the softness that will reach out to an audience.

Now, it IS possible to draw a sophisticated drawing using nothing more than carefully placed lines and Values. Rembrandt did it brilliantly in his self-portrait "Wide-eyed Rembrandt" below. You'll notice all the shadowing came from the **thickness and number of lines** he used to create his self-portrait.



Summing up.

OK, let's sum up how to draw flowers.

Draw flowers using the tools you have been given already. Start simply with a flower or 2-3 flowers in a vase. Remember:

- The One Big Shape,
- followed by identifying Secondary shapes,
- followed by details.
- Look for any and all angles that you can use to test your relations.
- Use your measuring stick to decide heights vs. widths of shapes.
- Find the horizontal and vertical midpoints
- Triangulate often
- Remember to look to soften lines by breaking them (Fluid lines)
- Apply rules of Symmetry and use of Ellipses wherever you can.

If you are coming along well in your proportions you could try a tall rose in a vase and some smaller objects near the vase base like petals or leaves or a water pitcher, anything that gives a "sense" about what it is you want to draw. If that becomes too difficult, then abandon ship and go for simpler more squarish arrangements and keep practicing there. Everyone learns at their own good speed, but do push yourself within reason.

Did I mention that you should practice often? ☺

[Here's the video.](#)

And if you want to download the pdf document of the Oriental Lilies that I drew for YOU to draw, you can get [Oriental Lillies here](#).

I'll be drawing Oriental Lilies from an arrangement for you. Notice how I decide to take a portion of the arrangement and pick only the lines that are most important.

You'll get a sense of this yourself every time you draw, so don't focus on that as a left-brain exercise (you're artistic right-brain will get it right for you if you just keep Sensing).

Lesson 11

How to Draw Animals

So here we begin a slightly more complicated road, but also more rewarding.

Animals, like flowers, have personality...MUCH more personality (well, obviously). And this is why controlling your line is going to be more important to capture that personality. But not to worry, if you can't capture the personality, just keep practicing.

All of the techniques, tools, tips, and tricks you've learned up to now all are to be used together. And I will use these during the video.

It's simple to find animals to draw. If you have a cat or a dog, try drawing them while they're asleep. (Yes, this time you can leave your post, at least for a little bit, of your stool and easel and grab a drawing notebook and position yourself comfortably near your pet).

Or you can go to the zoo and take pictures.

Or, if you don't have a zoo nearby, go to your computer and Google and type in "funny animals" then click on Images. There's a hilarious number of animals to draw and practice. In fact, here's just 2 that you can download and try.



[Super Squirrel](#)



[Jeremy](#) from AA

If you are still uncomfortable with your proportions, choose an animal shot that is not disproportionate—like a horse with long legs. Try more compact animals like a cat curled up or a dog looking up (I'll be doing that one in the video).

Also try and find animals whose lines are well-defined or easily discernable. Avoid pictures that show animals too contorted or simply too alien—people should be able to relate to your drawing, and don't stretch your abilities too far just yet. Thus, these examples, although funny, require excellent line work to portray the humor correctly.



Just Strange Proportions hard Foreshortening Critical lines

Also, use animals whose background can help you see proportions better.

Looking at the basics.

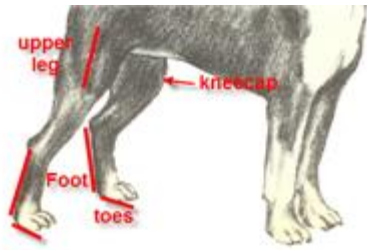
Head

One of the most obvious and simple elements to notice about animals is that most of them have a snout instead of a nose. So when you are doing their head (like a closeup), notice that there's likely some obvious shapes to use for Secondary Shapes or Detail Shapes, for example—circle for the head, rounded cone for the snout, and triangles for the ears, or whatever else fits.

Legs

Most 4-legged animals have evolved into standing on their toes, and the foot looks like part of the leg, but it's still a foot. So don't be fooled by this anatomy—the kneecap is higher and closer to the body, and the foot almost looks like the lower leg. If you keep that in mind while you draw a dog or a cat you won't get caught up in trying to draw the legs like ours and your results will be more accurate. See example below.

The Dog's hindquarters—Note the shape is different from people.



[Boxer Drawing](#)

Fur

Use the side of your pencil in repeating strokes to get the effect of fur. Make the lines darker in the more shadowed areas.

Also, the darker the fur, the more lines you'll need to use.

Overall proportion

Try to draw “compact” animals as I said before, like the curled up cat. I’m sure your remember when we did the bigger object compared to the smaller objects in Lesson 5 (the teapot, creamer, sugar and tea holder). What that means is avoid drawing things like flamingos, ostriches or giraffes!

Secondary shapes become VERY important (but easier) here because there are just so many points you can relate (more during the video).

If you can't get “cute”, then just slow down and work for “proportionate”. With practice you'll get it. If you DO get to “cute” right away, then congratulations, keep up the good work.

In the video, we're going to draw a picture of this little Jack Russell pooch. So go ahead, and download and print.



[Download & Print](#)

We will begin of course with the One Big Shape, moving to the important secondary shapes and then the detail. We'll find the midpoint and use detailed shapes. This is a good exercise for relating so we'll REALLY focus on that now. The most difficult part is going to be keeping his head raised to the correct angle upward, but I'll be showing you a new trick for that.

Finally:

I'll admit: I prefer drawing dogs over cats. Probably because I relate the old saying:

Dogs have owners, cats have staff.

And this bumper sticker I saw once wraps up the canine philosophy we can all use:

Bark less. Wag more.

Now, let's get going.

[Watch the video here.](#)

Lesson 12

How to Draw People

Ever go to the park or mall or anywhere where people congregate and “people watch”? It’s quite fun if you can get away from your business or worries for just a while. You will discover a whole bunch about humans and how they behave...and you will find all kinds of stories moment by moment to inspire you if you are looking for them.

A mother tending a child, a person quietly reading a book in the corner, even a well-dressed gentleman sitting on a bench eavesdropping on a couple cuddling behind him. Stories pour from people all the time and many can be caught by your imagination.

The great thing about drawing is that you don’t really have to be limited by what you see. You can create stories even if they don’t exist. And that means you can create drawings out of nothing, out of pure imagination!

Many of the great artists in history would do just that—they would use models of people standing or sitting in just a certain way that they could use in their work—putting them in a different place, dressing them differently, all to express a story that was in their mind.

Why people are different (to draw 😊)

If you have been practicing the earlier lessons faithfully you are now ready to try your hand at drawing people. In fact, **this is where you are going to see how much you have learned**...and will likely surprise yourself if you apply it here.

We will not be drawing figures here as that is different and more complex. But drawing people from books or graphics or photos is like drawing anything else you have been drawing and you still will use the same tools and techniques.

Drawing people is a tad different from other things you have been drawing mostly because of 2 reasons:

1. Proportionately they are higher than they are wide, forcing you to pay close attention to proportions.
2. Since everyone intimately knows what people look like, you can’t cheat on your lines (remember the lesson on flowers?)

But do remember that you *are* armed with all the right tools and you will do well if you employ them. You will still begin with the One Big Shape, then Secondary Shapes, then details. You will use your now-developed knowledge of measuring height vs. width,

angles, triangles, midpoints, ellipses, and symmetry. And you can feel empowered because your eye is now learning how to relate points **faster and more accurately**, in the same way you learned how to read. See, it's no different! You are developing a skill, whether you have talent or not.

How long does a drawing take?

Since this is the longest exercise of all of them, I thought we should talk about your concern about how long should you spend on a drawing.

Earlier on I wanted you to focus on the basics, and not necessarily spend too much time on any one drawing. Now I want you to begin “settling down” into your drawings.

On this drawing however, be prepared to spend some time. It's going to take as long as it's going to take. If you are getting frustrated because you feel it should be going faster than relax, this is quite normal. Step away, use upside down and sideways, step back, and mostly **BE PERSISTENT** yet kind to yourself. If something feels wrong, study your drawing methodically and talk to yourself—**WHAT** is it exactly that can be improved? Keep observing, measuring and asking? You **WILL** spot what you need to correct.

Finally, don't fret about all the lines you cannot erase because they are too dark and you laid them down too hard too early. Just keep going. Over time and practice even these will be needed less and less.

And above all, **RELAX** and stay loose. Don't **be too hard on yourself** but **DO** be patient and persistent.

If you have been doing the exercises before this, this exercise will be truly rewarding!

Here's what you've been waiting for. It's the longest video in the series at 39 minutes, so play it when you have enough time to fit it in.

[Watch it here.](#)

And here's the picture you're going to draw as your exercise. It's called [Eavesdropping](#) by Norman Rockwell, one of my all-time favorite artists. Do other people drawings though, don't be content with just this one!

Last note: Notice how Norman Rockwell did the fur on the dog in the picture with his brush. You can mimic that same effect with your pencil.

OK, it's time to listen in!

[\(Watch the video\)](#)

Lesson 13

Drawing with Perspective

Every artist struggles with Perspective...until they learn the right concepts and tools for handling it. So here I am going to assist you in understanding and using those tools.

Let me state, right out of the gate, that Perspective is NOT a right-brain exercise, that is, Perspective is very much about geometry, math, angles and lines. All great art masters understood and applied perspective. Perspective is not difficult, but is the foundation of a great drawing.

And, having a firm grasp of Perspective will not only allow you to create correctly proportioned drawings, but it will give you tremendous mastery of each and every one of your drawings, regardless of what it is you are drawing.

So many times, beginning artists will draw a house, barn, building or even book, only to see “something” wrong with the picture, but not know what it is and be frustrated by not having the right skills to correct it.

So here we enter the technical part of your art world. Here is your guiding light:

There is Beauty in Precision.

If you can accept that, you will “get” Lesson 13.

We will be talking about Perspective which includes Vanishing Points, Relative Distances and Foreshortening.

What is Perspective?

Perspective is how you see something and how you want others to see something. But it's also the reality of how something is accurately expressed in 2 dimensions. This is the ultimate goal of the artist—to take 3 dimensions and portray it in only 2.

Picasso well understood perspective, but twisted lines, angles and space in order to change the viewer's perspective of something—in order to get the viewer to think differently by playing on perspective distortions. But, as the old saying goes, you can't break the rules until you understand them.

So where do we begin?

We start with a clear understanding of the exact rules for how to translate those 3 dimensions back down into 2. And THAT means “seeing” or imagining lines and planes that you CAN’T see but are quite naturally there behind the lines and planes you can see. In short, you have to start seeing your subjects in terms of imaginary and/or hidden lines and planes.

Let’s start with 2 lines, parallel to each other:



No matter how far up or down these 2 lines travel, they will never meet.



If we were to take these 2 parallel lines and lay them down in front of us like railroad track, you would see something entirely different. The track appears to come together in the distance. We know they are parallel but they appear to converge in the distance.

We call that point in the distance the **Vanishing Point**. Every drawing you will ever make has at least ONE vanishing point.

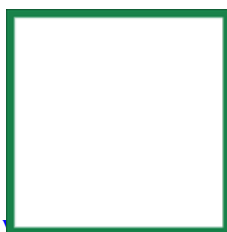
In fact, you’ll also notice the tree tops and the shoulder also converge at the same point.



Here’s another excellent example of the Vanishing point of converging parallel lines of the People Mover tunnel at the Frankfurt International Airport.

Again you will always have at least ONE VANISHING POINT. The vanishing point may be hidden if it is obstructed by another object, but it is always there, sometimes in subtle ways:

Let’s take a square.



Both the top/bottom and the two sides are parallel to each other.

But if this square were, say, **the front** of a rectangular cube and we took a picture of it from the side like this...



...then you could see that the square is no longer square: the right side of the “square” (in the middle), is actually taller than the far left side. Why?

Because as our view moved towards the right (to expose the right side), the far left edge of the square is now further away from our eyes, and just like any object that gets farther away, it appears smaller. This is what happened to the train track; the distant railroad ties got smaller and smaller.

Whenever you can see any second side **of an object** you’ll automatically have 2 new vanishing points:



So what’s the difference between objects that have a single
In this case you will notice that the 3 corners of the building all have vertical lines. That’s because we are still looking at it from near the vertical middle. Whenever you see only 2 sides to a box or a building and you are in the vertical middle...your sides will be vertical.



Further, your drawing may contain **all 3 vanishing points**.

The box in the picture on the left is now sitting “on” the railroad tracks. The vanishing point is really still there, just hidden from view.

And as you’ve already seen, the box has 2 vanishing points.

Note: don’t let a hidden vanishing point throw you off—just see through the lines to see where the hidden lines converge to find the single vanishing point.

Here’s the sequence to find your vanishing points:

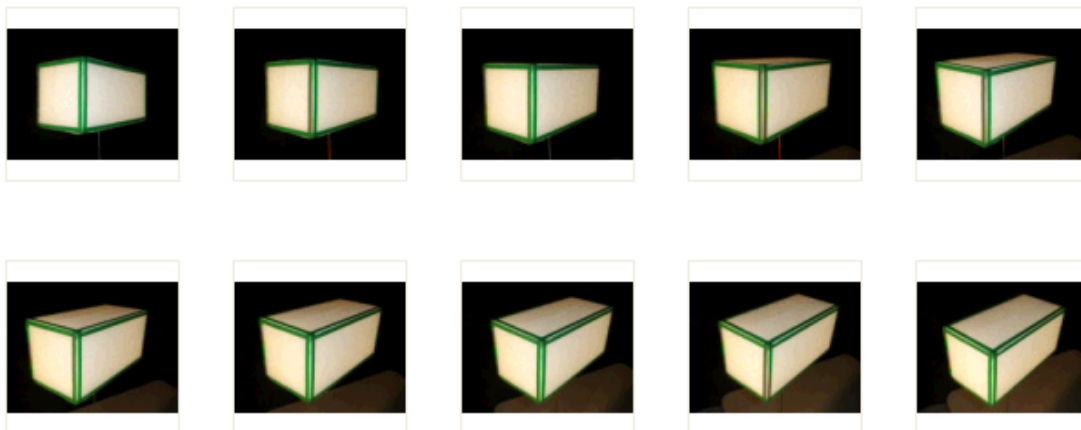
- 1) First look at your subject and ask yourself if you are looking “into” something—down a hallway, or into the distance—that’s your clue that you can find a single vanishing point.
- 2) Then, look for objects that protrude “towards” you, like the corners of buildings or boxes; anything that is not flat in which you are looking at least 2 sides. These objects always have 2 vanishing points.

Finding your vanishing points in this order will help you orient your whole picture.

OK, now we have to expand our concept just one more step.

In both the building and the box you have seen 2 vanishing points where the top and bottom lines converge at some distant point (the sides that are farther away from you are smaller).

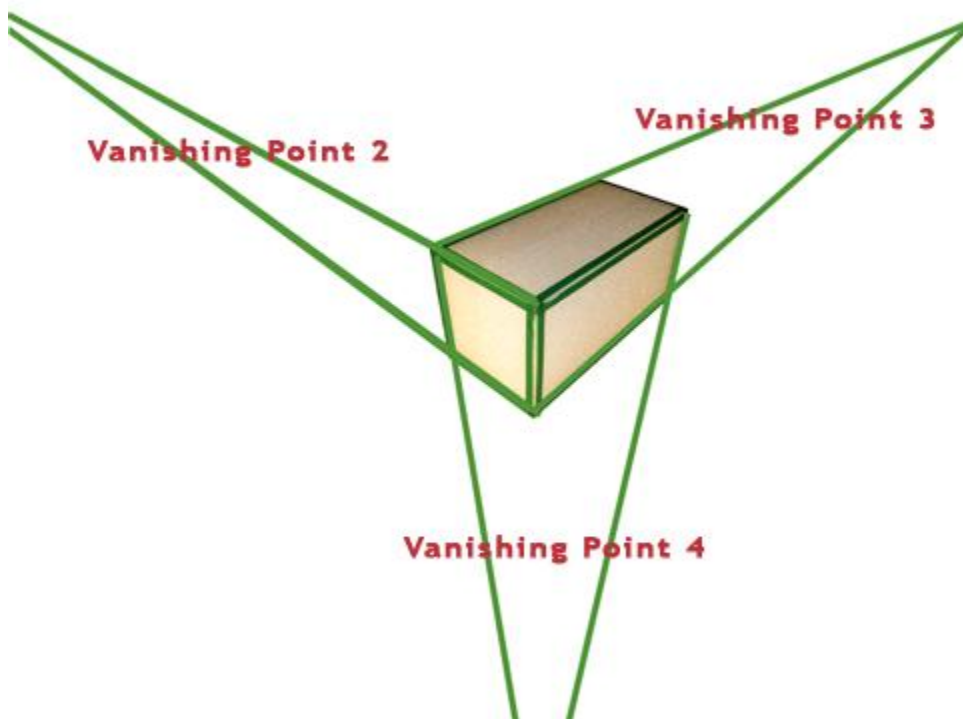
But what if we move *higher* or *lower* to the point so that **3 sides** of an object are now exposed. Watch what happens to the vanishing points:



If you noticed that the 2 vanishing points raised up (like wings) as the camera moved up, you were correct. But...

Did you also notice that you have a NEW 4th vanishing point? (BTW, the camera exaggerated these angles—in reality the angles are more subtle).

Here, this will help:



You will typically see this effect occur when drawing boxes, books, or aerial views of buildings.

Many times you will not see a vanishing point because it is so vague or difficult, like drawings of a mountain scene or portraiture like these:



Practice “seeing” the vanishing points in what you are drawing you will find your drawings will improve.

Now for your exercise. Set up either a box or a block (as in the video), a book standing up (don’t copy and print this picture, I want you practice in the 3-D mode as that will force you to “see” in 2 dimensions.

Remember and apply everything you have learned up to this point.

In the video Julinya is going to introduce you to a new tool, the plumb bob and plumb line. That is just a string and a small weight that you can hold over your subject to make sure you the vertical points align the same way as over your drawing—Make GENEROUS use of it, especially when doing buildings.

Ok, here’s the video, which will demonstrate drawing using vanishing points—and the important tools that you have already learned which will be most useful to you.

[\(Watch the video\)](#)

Keep up that practicing!

Lesson 14

Loosening Up Techniques (Relaxation)

It MAY go without saying, but I'm here to tell you if there is any doubt...

You cannot draw well unless you are relaxed.

You might be thinking “I **am** drawing for the *sole purpose of relaxing*”. In that case, it's still a win—the techniques I'm about to show you will help you relax even more.

We'll break our techniques into 3 groups which you can practice before and during your drawing sessions:

- 1) Physical Loosening UP Techniques (used anytime)
 - a. Warming Up Exercises
 - b. Elbow vs. Wrist
 - c. Stand Up
 - d. Loosen Your Hold
 - e. Changing Workplaces
 - f. Dancing
- 2) Focusing Techniques
 - a. Stepping Back
 - b. Breaking From Your Session
- 3) Confidence Building Techniques
 - a. Clearing Your Mind
 - b. What Others May Say or Think
 - c. Start Paying Attention to Visual Detail in Life
 - d. Not a Masterpiece (Yet!)

Warming Up

To warm up we're going to do circles and figure-eights (also called infinity symbols). Take your pencil and holding it at an angle (like you always do), begin to ever-so-slightly draw circles and figure-eights. Keep your pinkie finger resting on the paper at all times as you move across on the page—that will act as a rudder on your sea of paper. Keep moving until you are comfortable and into the “flow of it”.

Elbow vs. Wrist

When drawing, use more of your elbow and less of your wrist. This forces you to use wider (and faster) strokes and keeps you from falling into the habit of holding your pencil like you are handwriting. Really, *really*, try to avoid that pitfall.

Additionally, using your elbow more than your wrist forces you to keep more distance between you and your overall drawing, giving you a better birds-eye view.

Stand Up

OK, this is real change, but you're ready for it now. Take that easel of yours; lengthen the legs and try drawing standing up. The real advantage to this is that you can step back more easily and frequently. You've come a long way and already understand that you have to keep your eye in one place so “returning” to that place is likely comfortable for you now. That is the key though to keeping perspective in check.

Loosen Your Hold

At any time while you're drawing, I should be able to walk over to where you are sitting and pluck that pencil right out of your hand—it should be THAT relaxed.

If it is NOT that loosely held, begin reading this document over again! ☺

If you are still holding your pencil it as if you are writing, break that habit now. (refer back to Lesson 1).

OK, as with most “rules” there are always exceptions and here's one to remember. It is ok to use that technique for final refinements (when you are almost done with your drawing).

Changing Workplaces

Go ahead and experiment! Take your sketching pad, pencil and eraser to another room. In fact, don't stop there! Take your pad with you wherever you go...to the beach, to the park, to the doctor's waiting room, to the coffee shop or library and draw everything.

Getting a different perspective by changing location allows you to relax in ways where nothing else comes close.

Dancing

This might seem odd at first but it certainly does work. Put on some of your favorite upbeat music and start to dance. Now, don't get me wrong—this is NOT about dancing while you draw. This is about helping you loosen up your body, much like shaking out your tensions. After you put the music on, go back to your drawing but do NOT put all of your attention to the music—focus only on the beat, not the words.

Also don't let the music take over your emotions (we'll save that for the painting course). You'll find dancing establishes a rhythm and helps you loosen up.

NOTE: Always remember to come back to the same sitting position where you began so your eyes can see the lines of what you are drawing in the same perspective before you got up.



Stepping Back

This is absolutely necessary. Frequently during your drawing session, get out of your seat, take a few steps back and lean down, putting your eye at the same angle as it was while you were seated (it will obviously be higher up to account for the steps back you take).

Breaking From Your Session

Learn to know when you need breaks. The best time to break is when you find you have been working on one section of your drawing (like getting the perspective correct for a corner of the cube done in the last Perspective Lesson 14). You'll know it when you "got it", and you can move on. Congratulate yourself and walk away for a moment feeling the pleasure of your win. This self-encouragement becomes extremely valuable (and offsets the negative voices telling you can't do it).

Remember that great artists are not rewarded for how long it took them or how fast they did it. We only see their results.

I'm just talking about short breaks here. This could be a full session break, a cup of coffee, even walking out of the room for a moment and doing a stretch will help before returning.

Clearing Your Mind

Learning to keep a clear and open mind is an important step towards loosening up. If your mind is filled with the clutter and pressure of business and living, or if it is working hard on your mental calendar, or personal issues, or whatever...then you'll need to let go. This is YOUR time. YOUR personal space.

The art of drawing is a process very akin to Yoga. When you enter your studio or when you start a project or when you start a lesson think of entering your temple—where nobody else will come in to disturb you. This is your present to yourself and you deserve it. Shut the world off outside. All else dissolves. You become one in your focus of the object or arrangement or subject that is before you or that you have put in front of you to draw.

What Others May Say or Think

It could be recommended that you not show others your work until you are done—at least in your early development. That really depends on how sensitive you are about criticism.

Although there is a general life principle that states "only ask a question when you're ok with the answer", creating art *is*, by its very nature, designed to help you share your thoughts and feelings with others—your drawings are destined to invite the viewer to have an opinion, regardless of what it is.

Many people don't like Picasso's work. But what mattered was that he pursued what he loved to do, regardless of what others thought. He went on to become a great contributor known to practically every person on earth.

Here's the point. Consider that as you continue to define *who you are* as an artist—you will find your own style that is not a function of what others think. Period.

Simply be kind and supportive to yourself.

Start Paying Attention to Visual Detail in Life

Artists look carefully at the detail of *everything*. Start practicing!

For example, below are 3 Christmas trees that, to an artist, are all *quite* different.

The Douglas Fir grows thicker and more uniform with very little negative space.

The Balsam Fir, on the other hand, has very long spreading branches with more negative space (there's more black shadows).

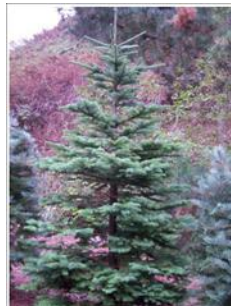
And the Noble Fir has branches that hang downward near the bottom and upward near the top with the greatest amount of overall negative space.



Douglas Fir



Balsam Fir



Noble Fir

Not a Masterpiece (Yet!)

Don't get caught up in perfection. You are a student and it takes time and practice to become a master (even Michelangelo did much practice).

You will need to practice, practice, practice. It won't happen overnight. BUT, see improvements. Just look at your earlier drawings and you'll see just how much you have improved.

And you will have the grandest sense of jubilation and fulfillment. Trust me!

Keep up the good work!

One more lesson to go and then you graduate!

Oh, I almost forgot your homework assignment.

Grab your pad, go out somewhere other than your regular drawing spot. Make a new drawing while all of this is in the back of your mind. Warning: don't do this on a date!

(There is no video with this lesson...it's pretty self contained above).

Lesson 15

The Big Picture

As you practice more and more you will discover that after you get reasonably proficient at controlling your lines during your drawing, you are going to start thinking about bigger things.

Things like, what *can* I draw? (Don't ever tackle something that you don't think you can do or it won't feel like a win).

What do I *include* in my drawing and what do I *exclude*? (there are reasons for both)

And finally, what is it that makes a better or even *best*, drawing?

What Is The Big Picture?

The Big Picture means simply learning to draw by *designing* the overall composition before you even begin.

And that, too, takes rules.

But before I share these rules, let me be the first to say that you, as the artist, you certainly have the *right* and *encouragement* from me to draw whatever you *darn* well want. Likewise, you've already learned throughout this course that Rules have already helped you create better drawings, right?

So, understanding the "rules" of what it is that constitutes a better or worse drawing (or painting), will help you "see" your art from a centered, social, and "acceptable" art position, at least with us humans who pretty much have the same view of what makes for good art. Or does it?

Now, obviously there have been many artists throughout history who each broke the rules. Picasso certainly broke the rules majorly. But beware that he began so **KNOWING** what the rules were and it was his knowledge of exactly those rules that led him to experiment with techniques for breaking them.

And once *you* understand the rules, then *you* can go ahead and break them.

So, in addition to the rules you've already learned here's some and some others.

The Principles of Organization

Let's start with the basic principles of organizing objects on your drawing pad.

You have to keep basic principles in your head all at once to create a "view" better than others, and there are definite ways of thinking to help you. Here's what I mean by that.

1. Field of View and Using Intuition

If, while you are looking at something that attracts and moves you, frame it with your fingers. Close one eye and look through to find the right frame. This is probably the fastest and easiest way to instantly pin down *intuitively* what it is you want to include/exclude in your drawing. In fact, you should try this out frequently and begin to develop the habit of "seeing" the completed work well before you begin.

With practice (use this technique frequently!) you'll get a better eye at composing and you'll build your skill substantially. This has another name: cropping. Photographers do this all the time. They'll just use their camera instead of their fingers. They'll zoom in and out. They'll pan left and right. Just SO they can get the best composition. True, they're also using the same rules that we'll be talking about here, and granted, they have other advantages: of having an instant frame available and of being able to freeze and snap right there.

But, you have one simple HUGE advantage over those seeming advantages.

You are the artist. You can move, remove, add, re-add objects. In short you can create EXACTLY what's in your mind, not simply what you're looking at, and what the photographer has in his/her viewfinder is *all* the photographer has! Whoa. That's powerful.

2. Shape and Proportion

This is a place where we've already been (Lesson 14). Your practice should now include applying the principles of perspective to get the right shapes and proportions of the objects included in your drawing. For example, imagine a drawing with 2 people one behind the other, but the size of the second person is just way too small based on everything else you know about the picture. That is a proportion issue and people can pick up the error instantly literally in the blink of an eye.

So you are responsible for making sure that you keep proportions, correct. In short, well, proportional.

3. Balance Among the Elements

Have you ever looked at a drawing and felt uncomfortable, yet it was a scene that was NOT intended to be uncomfortable? For example, some object that overpowers the picture but "feels" wrong. That is likely due to the balance of the objects that were drawn. Balance has to do with actual weight but has a more subtle psychology when drawing. If you put a large object on the right you should put small objects on the left, enough to counter-balance the single object on the right—unless you intended on making the desired feeling heavier on the right.

Say for example you were drawing a "cliff hanger", someone hanging on the side of the cliff. Don't you think your drawing would be far more effective if the cliff were moved to one side or the other such that the drop was nearly off the page—giving the viewer the sense of intended imbalance, of pending doom, and making them uncomfortable without they're knowing why.

Intended imbalance can also be a more subtle perceived weight than a physical one. Imagine drawing something dark on the left. To balance it you would add an equally bright object on the right, or an equally dark object on the right.

Likewise take this example to the extreme. Imagine, say, a dark creature on the left. Balancing this can be handled with an equally bright creature on the right, say a devil and an angel figures.

Examples of what will NOT work however are obvious use of falsity:

- Gravity is off (e.g. water doesn't flow uphill)
- Physics are off (e.g. a person cannot hold an elephant from falling off a cliff)
- Distances are off (mostly perspective, e.g. a volcanic island too small to appear so close relative to another)
- Biology is off (a large bee on a small flower too small to be real)

Subtle examples of *imbalance*

- A beach scene where people in the background are irrelevant or do not add anything to "your story"

Examples of good *balance*

- A central character surrounded by supporters
- Trees balancing a rock or a stream or a mountain

4. Harmony

In music harmony means all the parts of a quartet (like Barbershop or Sweet Adelines) sing in 4 parts—effectively like a chord with variations.

In art, harmony means having all the objects work with each other, much like the artist's palette of colors.

For example, if I was arranging to draw a tea party setting, I would have a teapot, teacups, tea caddy, even crumpets or cookies, spoons and napkins. But why would there be a bottle of

wine or straws or forks? These would certainly NOT add to the harmony of the picture would they?

5. Rhythm

Rhythm plays into your drawings sometimes in outright, sometimes subtle, ways. Waves on the ocean or a pond that ripples after a stone is dropped have an even distance between them. Physics IS important in art, so whenever you come across a physics lesson from anyone, do pay attention to it from your left brain. Your pictures will improve if you know your stuff there.

[Here's the last video](#)

Goodbye for Now.

We are now at the end of our 15 sessions together.

If you enjoyed the course (or even if you did NOT enjoy the course) please send me an email (paulw@how-to-draw-online.com) explaining why or why not. Feedback loops help all of us grow as people, and, if the suggestion is good enough we'll surprise you with a special present.