THE CHARACTER DESIGNER



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THE CHARACTER DESIGNER



21 DRAW

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Designed in the USA by BookWiseDesign.com

Printed in China

ISBN Hardcover: 978-91-982277-3-4
ISBN eBook: 978-91-982277-4-1

This book was successfully funded through Kickstarter in May 2019.



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For beginners, students, and masters

THANK YOU

TO OUR SUPPORTERS:

A HUGE thank you to all the incredible Kickstarter backers who have backed our books over the past five years! This book would not exist if it wasn't for you. Thank you so much for your support, input, and patience.

TO ALL THE ARTISTS:

Kenneth Anderson
Tom Bancroft
Michael Bills
Randy Bishop
Chamba
Rene Cordova
Loish
LoopyDave
Rodgon
Wouter Tulp
Gerardo Sandoval

Thank you all so much for contributing to this book! It would not have happened without your support and your help in spreading the word. It was a pleasure to work with you all.

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for purchasing *The Character Designer*! This book was created to give you a unique insight into the minds of some of the most popular illustrators and character designers in the world today. You will learn the unique methods they use to create awesome art. The designers have condensed their long years of training into their submissions for this volume.

We created *The Character Designer* to compare the techniques of very different artists. We trust that this book will help you explore different methods and find your own unique voice on your artistic journey!

We hope that you love this book as much as we've enjoyed making it! It has been a fun process that started in May 2019 when more than two thousand backers on Kickstarter helped us raise the funds to make it happen. We're so thankful for the incredible support over the years, and we promise that we'll keep making awesome books as long there are people who keep asking for them!

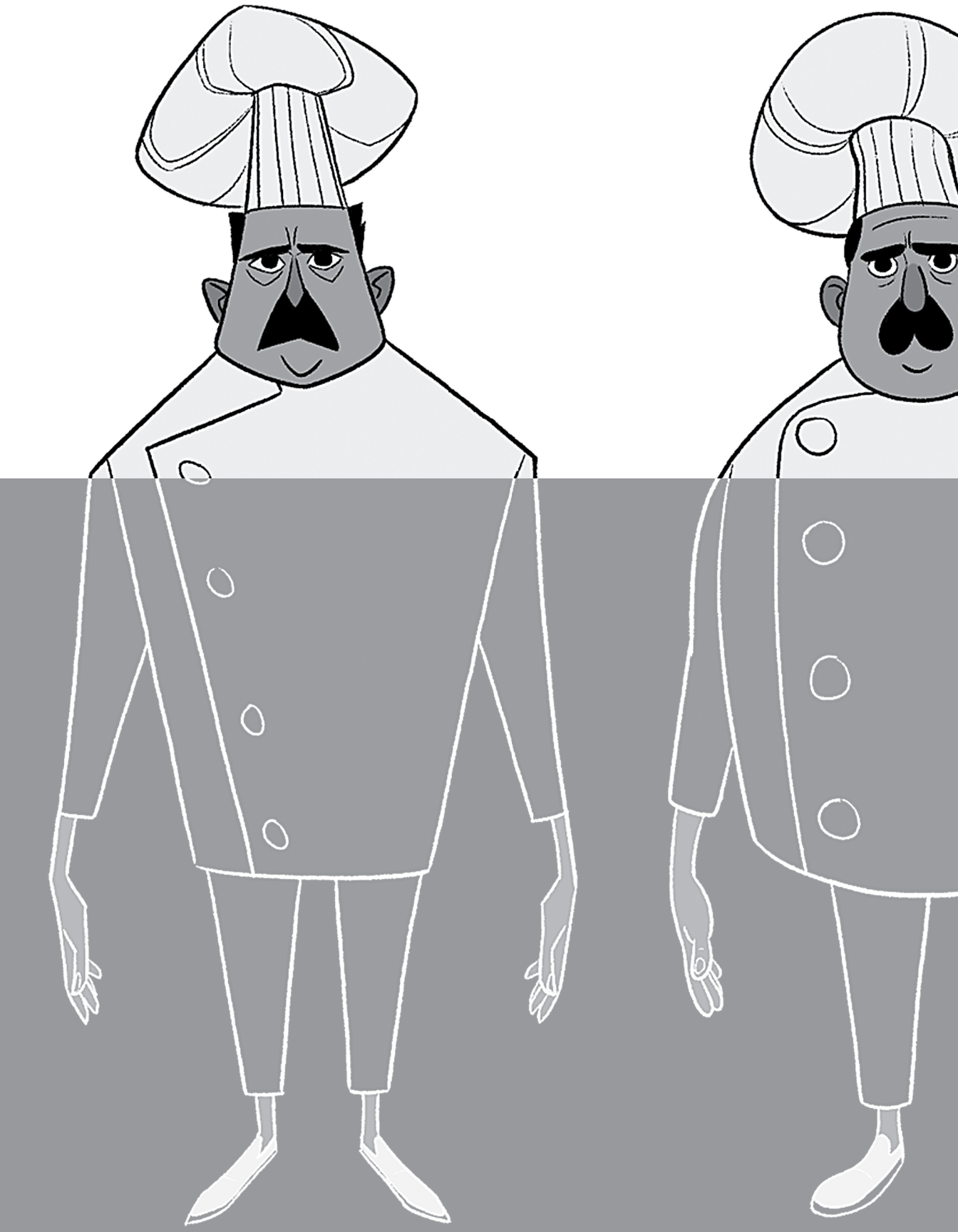
HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

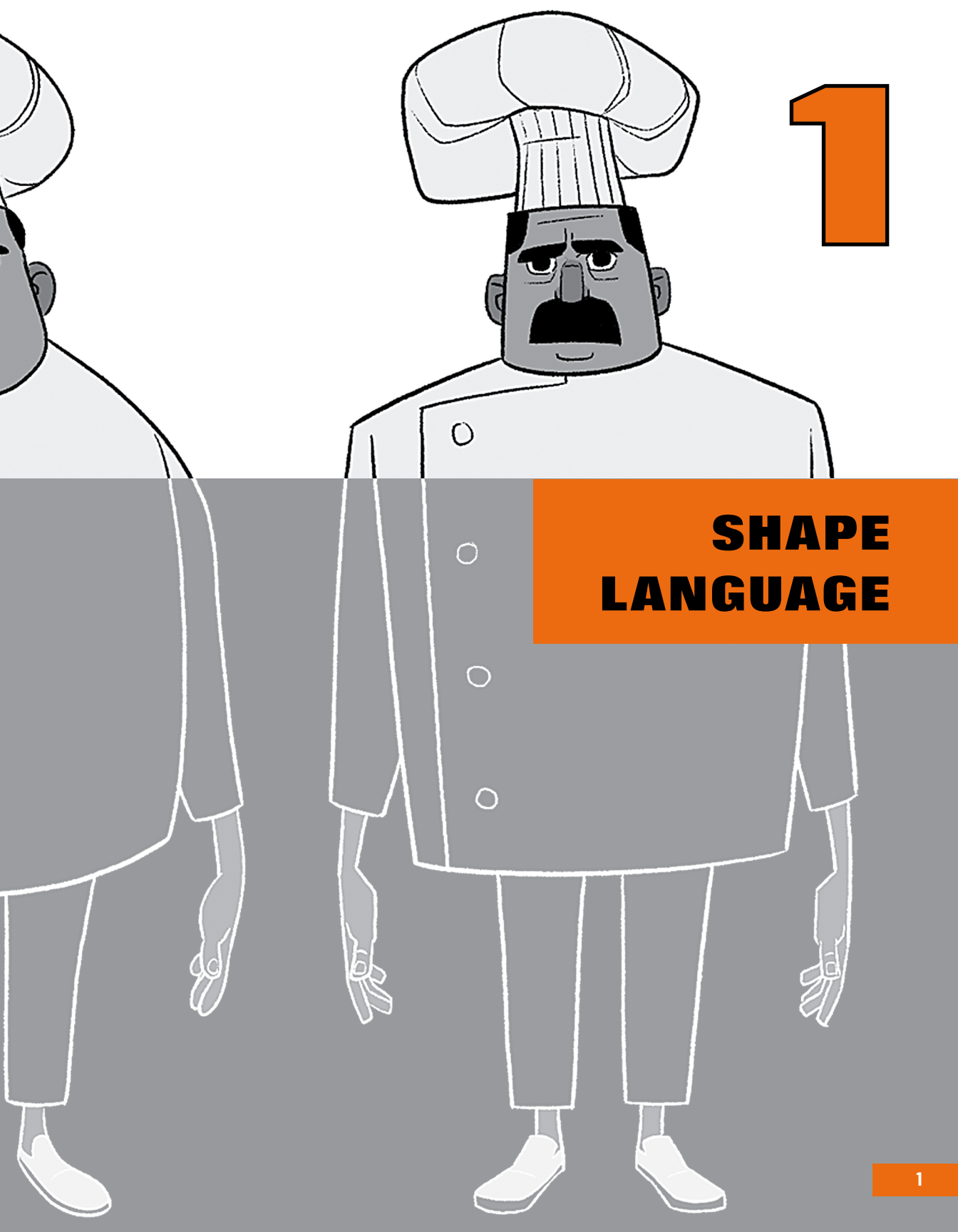
It's recommended that you read the book from start to finish as opposed to skipping around the chapters. We made a real effort to design the book in a way that gives the character design process a logical feel, where we start off with fundamental concepts before moving on to more specific skills. We've also included lessons in each chapter, and we recommend you complete them before moving on to the next chapters.

If you're interested in learning about a specific artist, then of course feel free to skip to that chapter or bio page where we've included information about them that will hopefully inspire you to continue to improve as an artist. You will find that each artist's submission is unique, and we are confident that this will allow you to understand the exact process the artist uses when completing an image from start to finish.

For the most part, the artists followed the briefs we gave them, but in some cases we gave them the freedom to change it, allowing the artist greater scope to respond. By doing so, the work from these artists turned out to be even better than what we had envisioned. We trusted the artists' versions and chose these over our own briefs. We are sure that you will enjoy the creativity that each artist offers.

Although we revised some text for spelling, grammar, and editorial styles, the artists were shown their completed chapter in full layout for their approval before sending to press. We hope that you take what you learn from the artists, add it to your own repertoire, and become a master someday too. Of course, you could already be a master. In either case, make sure to have fun on your creative journey, because that's what it's all about!





1

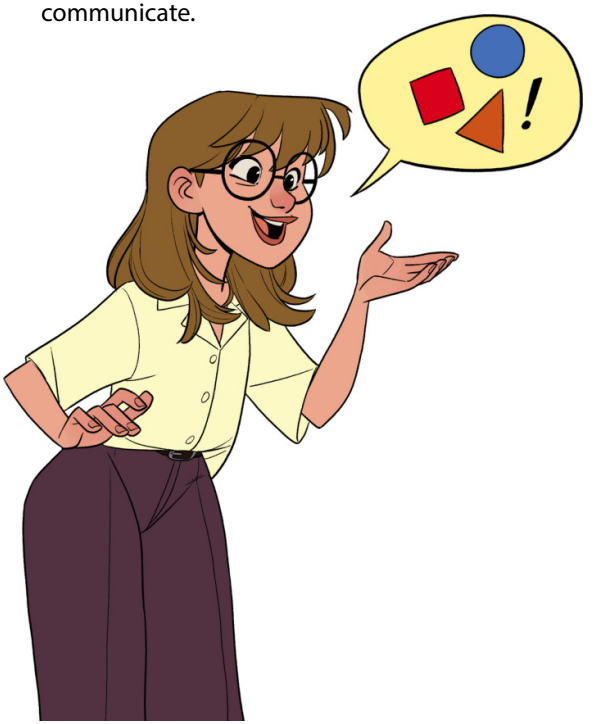
SHAPE LANGUAGE

SHAPE LANGUAGE

WITH RANDY BISHOP

As a character designer, our first job is to communicate a character's purpose to the audience. In order to do that effectively, it's important to be deliberate in the decisions we make as artists. Being able to communicate a particular idea can be tricky and requires more effort than most people might expect.

With any form of communication, familiarity and mastery over the language affects how well we're able to get our point across. The greater our mastery of the language, the better we're able to communicate.



Color has its own language, as does line, texture, value, etc. For this section of the book, we'll be discussing shape language.

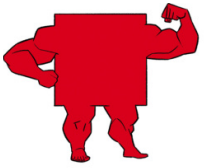
What is shape language?

Simply put, shape language is using shape to communicate meaning. Different shapes provoke different reactions within us, causing us to associate the things we see with certain feelings or meanings.

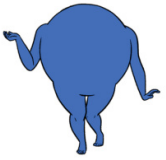
THE PRIMARY SHAPES

There are three primary shapes, just as there are three primary colors. The primary shapes are the square, circle, and triangle. Each of these shapes has strong associations psychologically with certain meanings. The most important ones are these:

- **The square represents physicality and masculinity.**



- **The circle represents positivity and femininity.**



- **The triangle represents movement and sharpness.**



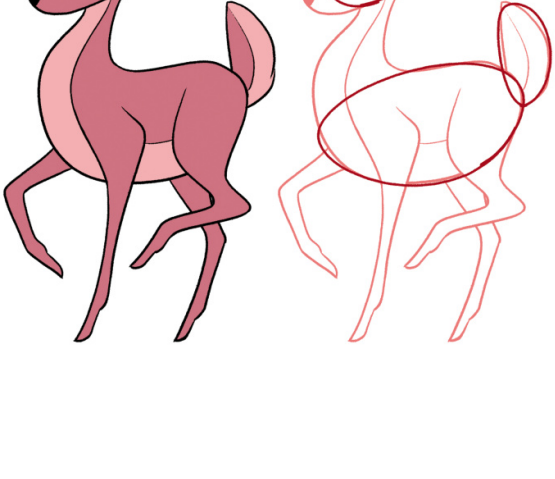
CIRCLE: The circle evokes thoughts of peace, kindness, softness, safety, and wholeness: things that we generally associate with femininity. It can also represent things like emptiness, loneliness, magic, and mystery.

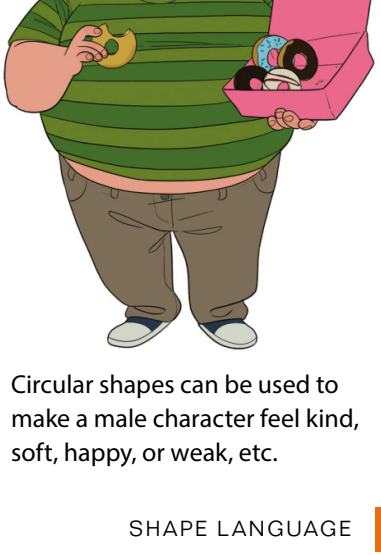








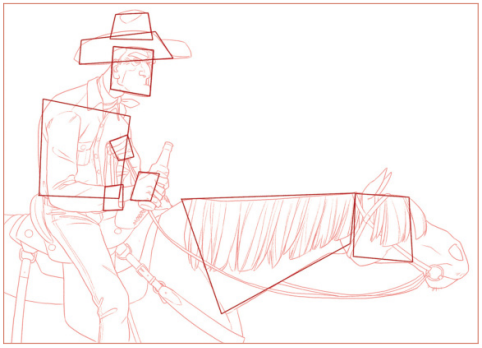


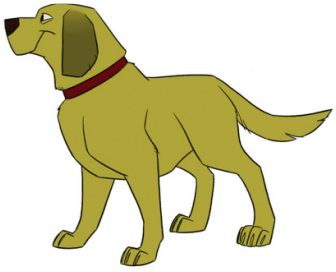


Circular shapes can be used to make a male character feel kind, soft, happy, or weak, etc.

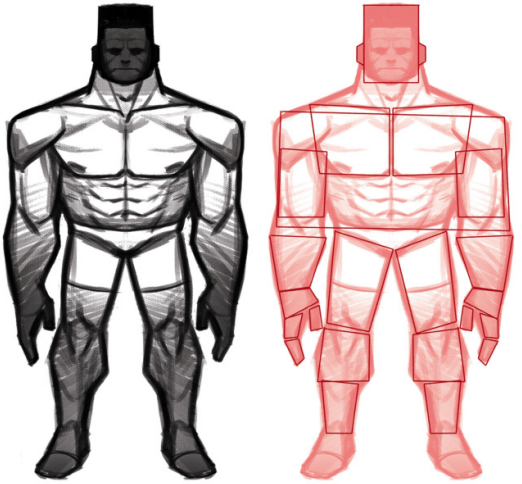
SQUARE: The square represents physicality. It represents things like stability, dependability, discipline, strength, and reliability. It's the more masculine of the primary shapes. It also represents things like boredom, stationariness, and stupidity.











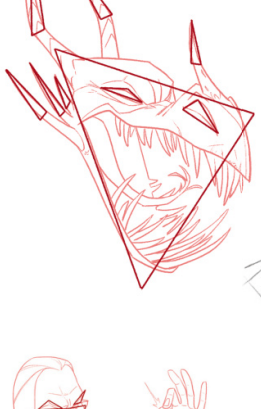


Blocky shapes can be used to make a female character feel strong, independent, or disciplined.

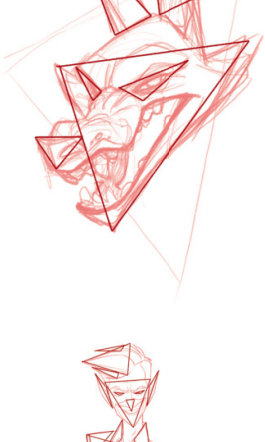
TRIANGLE: The triangle is neither masculine nor feminine. It represents movement or deviation, and sharpness. The more extreme the angle, the greater the effect. For example, villains are commonly designed with severe angles because those angles make the character feel far separated from masculine, feminine, or heroic traits; a deviation from an ideal or comfortable personality. In contrast to blocky or circular shapes, triangular shapes can make a character feel severe, unstable, and dangerous.



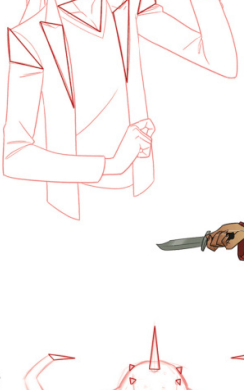
















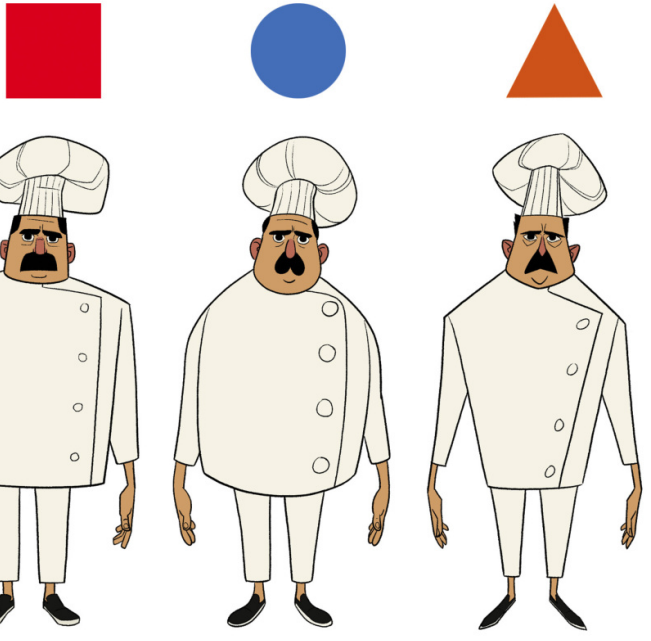




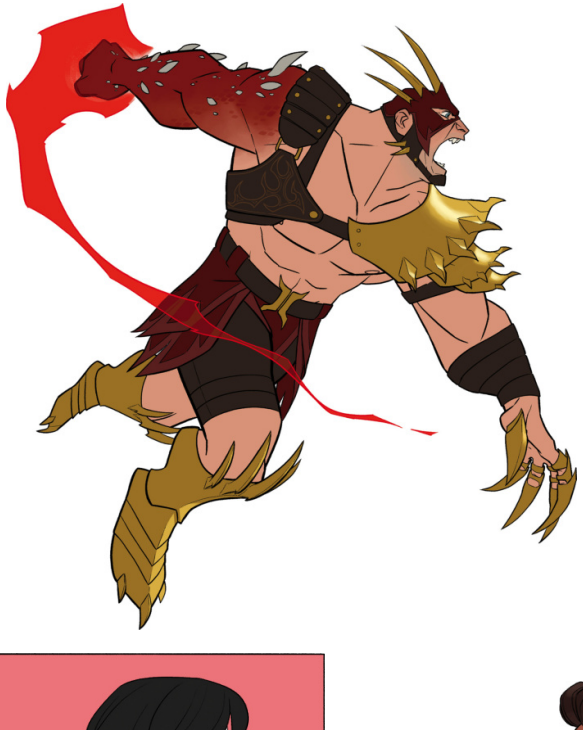
CONTRASTING SHAPES

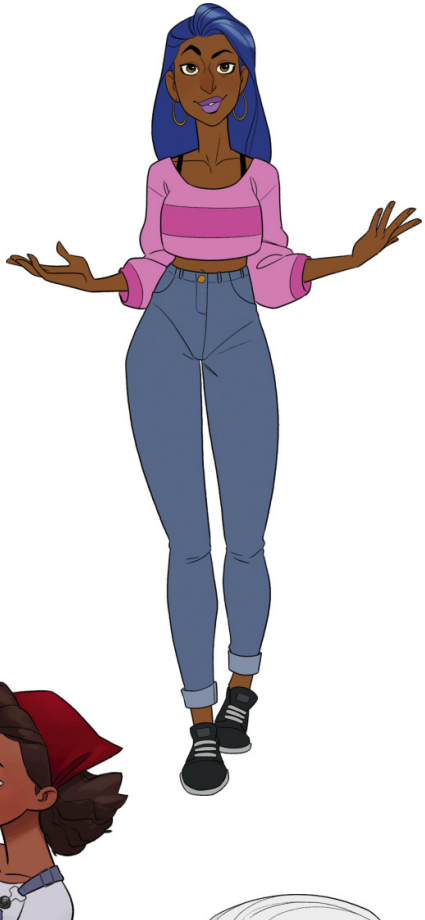
Here, notice how using blocky, angular shapes in the male character and circular shapes in the female character emphasize the contrast in their idealized masculine and feminine traits.

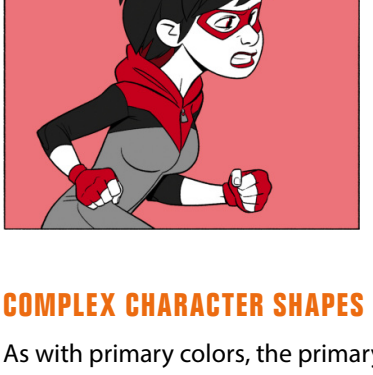




Being aware of the distinctive meanings that are attached to different shapes makes it easier to analyze design choices that other artists make. Here are three variations on a design, each using one of the primary shapes as the base for the choices made. Notice the way that the feel of the character changes, despite the fact that the proportions, pose, and expression are the same.









COMPLEX CHARACTER SHAPES

As with primary colors, the primary shapes can be altered and combined in myriad ways. These combinations help communicate more complex meanings. An absolutely square character is going to communicate something very specific to your audience. That character is likely to feel masculine, set in his or her ways, and not terribly bright. Most characters in a good story will have more complexity to them than one type of shape can adequately capture. By adding some complexity to the shape language, you add complexity to the character.

SHAPES IN A LINEUP

Any project that involves more than one character is going to require a continuity of shape language throughout a character lineup. Each character needs to look like it comes from the same world. In terms of spoken language, think of this continuity as an accent.

When visiting any area of the world, there's a dominant accent that people speak that is different than the accents people speak in other areas, even when speaking the same language. We still get all kinds of variations in speech—old voices, young voices, high voices, low voices, etc. But each voice is colored by the accent that unifies them all, making it clear where they're from. When someone speaks in an accent that isn't local, it calls attention to the person. In a similar way, if the overall shape language of any given character in a lineup isn't consistent with the rest, he or she is going to seem out of place.

Most animated feature films use shape language that is very circular, making the overall aesthetic of the film feel safe and appropriate for children. Many comics and graphic novels have a blocky, angular aesthetic, emphasizing the physicality and edginess of the content to appeal to an older audience. Learning to understand how to work with a specific "accent" when designing characters is vital when creating a lineup.

Shape is only one of the many art languages that we can use as a tool to communicate. The more we learn about the different ways that visual media can communicate to audiences, the more effective we'll be as designers.

Good luck and have fun designing with shapes in your characters!



LESSON: SHAPE LANGUAGE REVIEW

STEP 1 – DRAW CHARACTERS USING THE THREE PRIMARY SHAPES:

- **CIRCLE –** Draw at least one character that is composed of circles.
- **SQUARE –** This time focus on drawing characters using square shapes.
- **TRIANGLE –** Next draw characters that are made with triangles.

STEP 2 – PICK YOUR FAVORITE CHARACTER FROM STEP 1:

- Redraw the same character using the other two shape languages. When finished you should have three variations of the same character, one representing each primary shape. (Similar to the chef characters at the bottom of page 6.)

STEP 3 – DRAWING MORE COMPLEX CHARACTER SHAPES:

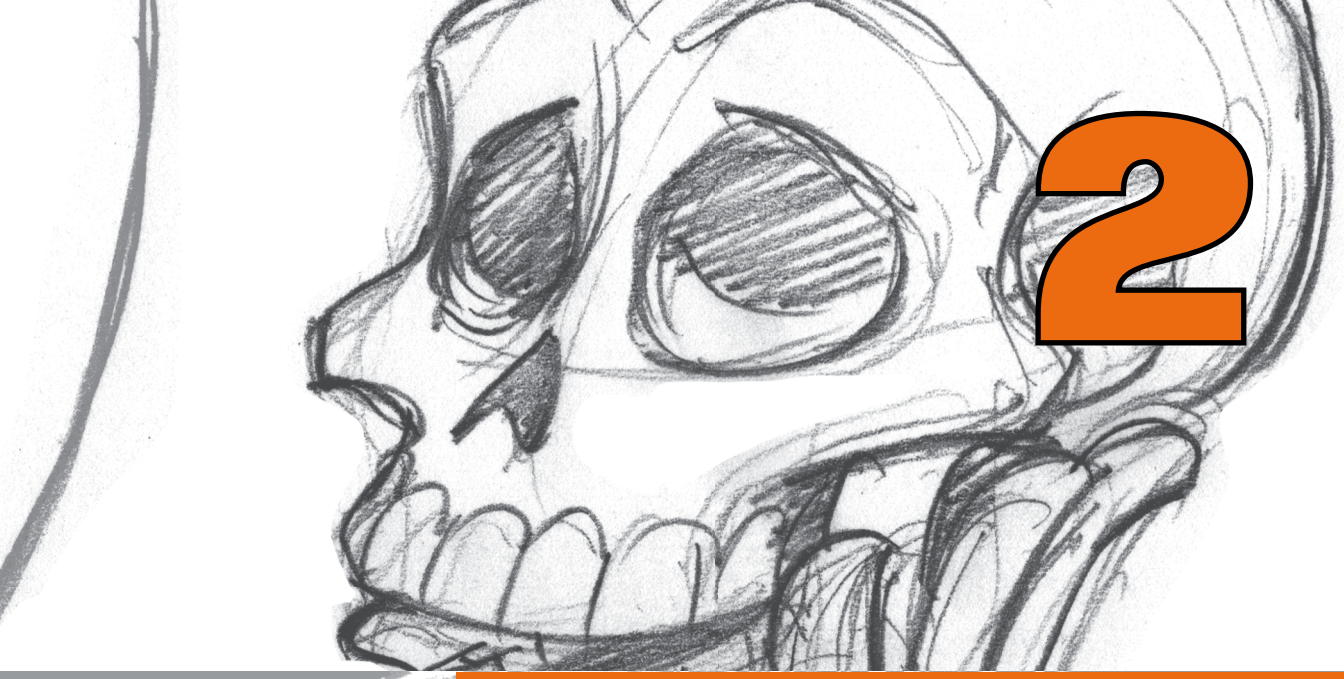
- So far you have drawn characters featuring a single primary shape, but this time choose a favorite character from the group, or draw a new character that uses more than one shape language.

  How does a more complex shape language alter the look and message a character communicates to your audience?

STEP 4 – CHARACTER CHALLENGE:

- Choose your favorite shape language combination or "accent" and design a character lineup. Make sure the characters have continuity and look like they belong in the same world.





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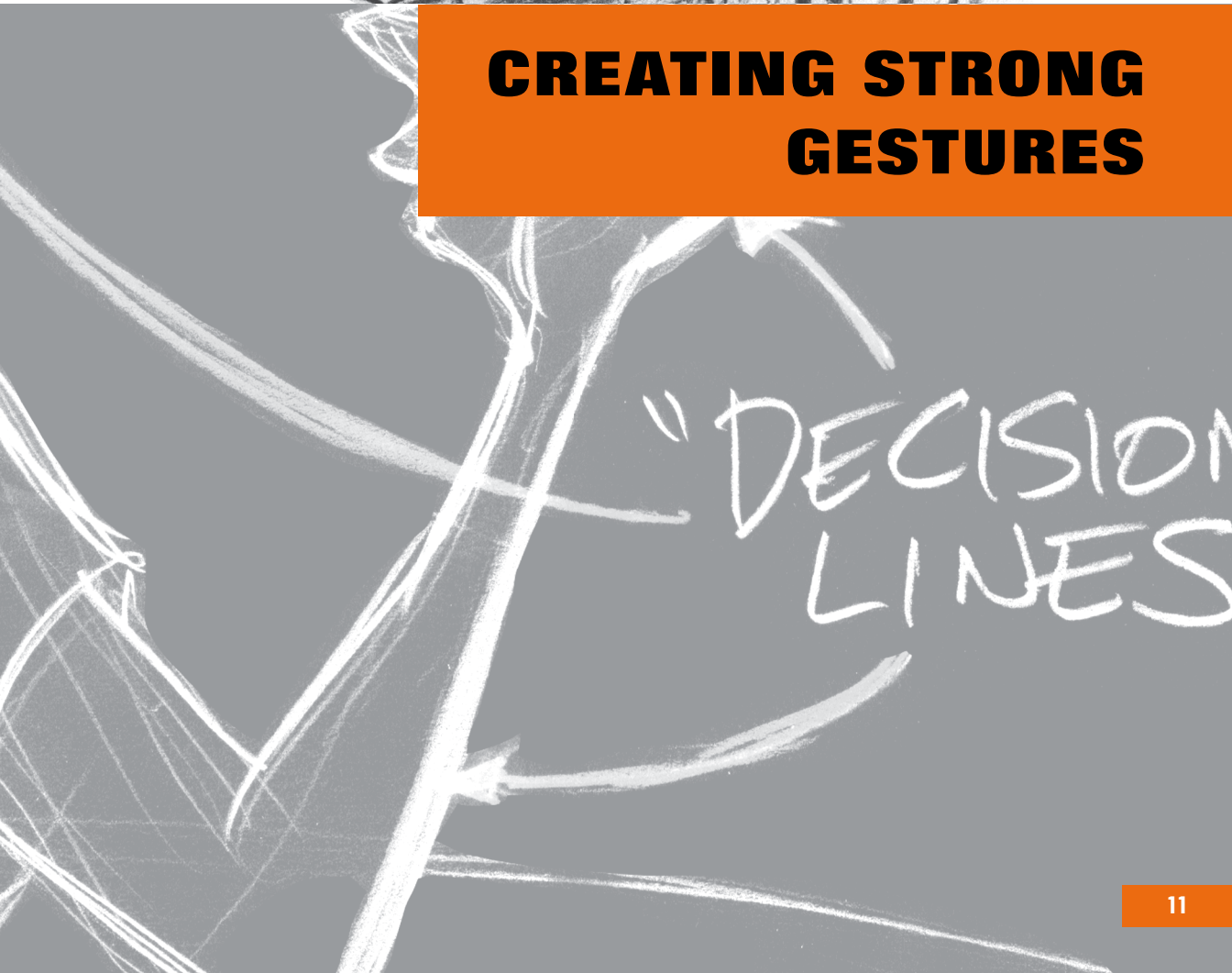
CREATING STRONG GESTURES

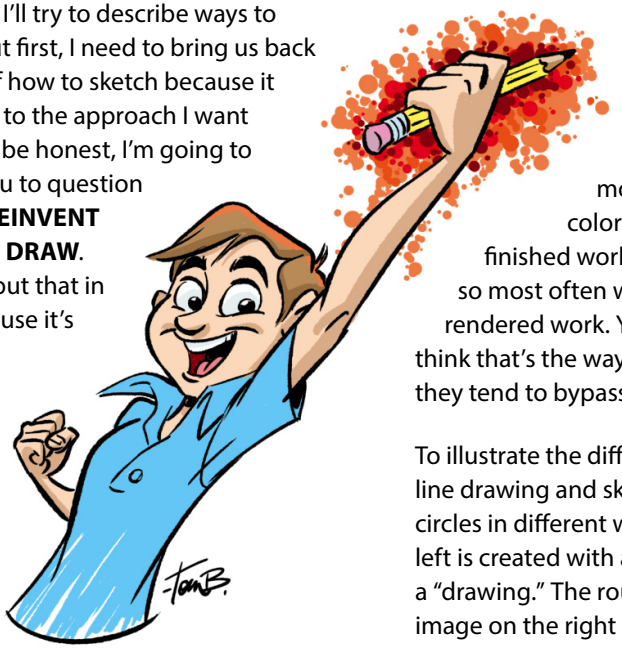


CREATING STRONG GESTURES

WITH TOM BANCROFT

How do I make my characters look "animated" or "in movement" when I draw? I get this question quite often on social media or at convention appearances. When I do, I try to understand what an artist means by wanting to create *movement* in their drawings. Most often, when I dig deeper, I uncover that they want to know how to create characters that have a sense of *flow* throughout the pose and the lines themselves. This is *gesture drawing* for the most part and *flow* is an element of gesture drawing.

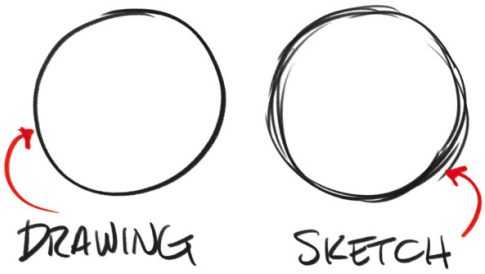
It's not an easy question to answer. It can be difficult to describe how to achieve flow in a gesture drawing because—like most concepts in art—it feels intuitive. In this chapter, I'll try to describe ways to approach it. But first, I need to bring us back to the basics of how to sketch because it directly relates to the approach I want you to take. To be honest, I'm going to ask many of you to question and possibly **REINVENT THE WAY YOU DRAW**. (That's right, I put that in ALL CAPS because it's powerful.)



WE WERE NEVER TAUGHT HOW TO USE A PENCIL TO SKETCH.

It's a bold statement, I know, but think about it. When we were young (at least in the U.S. educational system), the first instruction we received in how to use a pencil was in elementary school and it was how to write—not to draw. We were instructed to create lines (for print writing) or flowing swoops (for cursive writing) in a consistent line, without picking up the pencil very much. Later, when we start art classes, the art teachers assumed we knew how to use a pencil so there is little instruction beyond rendering tones. When did we learn how to sketch? More often than not, we didn't learn how to use a pencil as an artist uses it. To make matters worse, we live in a world of social media where artists feel the need to show only their best, most finished, revised, and colored artwork. We show finished work, not our sketches, so most often we are seeing tight, rendered work. Young artists see this and think that's the way they need to work and they tend to bypass the sketch process.

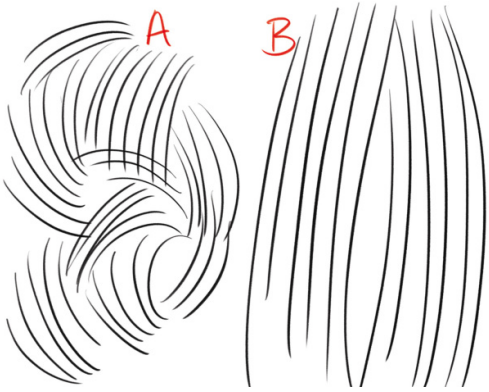
To illustrate the difference between clean line drawing and sketching, I'll draw two circles in different ways. The one on the left is created with a clean line—I call this a "drawing." The rough, multiple lined image on the right is the "sketch" version.



(To be clear, by my definition, a sketch can be a drawing, but a drawing is not always a sketch.) You can't see it, but when I did the sketch version, my pencil jumped around the circle as I drew the curved lines—from the top, to a side, to the bottom, and so on to form the circle. For the drawing on the left, I it approached like a non-artist—started at the top peak point and drew left to right around, not picking up my pencil once, until I reconnected the line at the top. This approach gives you what I call a "dead line" drawing. The circle on the right is obviously a rougher, sketchier line, but it also implies an invisible but important element that comes from sketching: volume.

You can say there's no difference in the volume of these two circles and you wouldn't be wrong. The one on the right is two dimensional and so is the one on the left. What is key is what you do not see—the thought process behind the lines—that helps you create more dimensional sketches with flow to them. It's the Zen behind it that is also something that is not being taught and here are **BOLD** letters again: **DON'T DRAW LINES, DRAW SHAPES WITH LINES.**

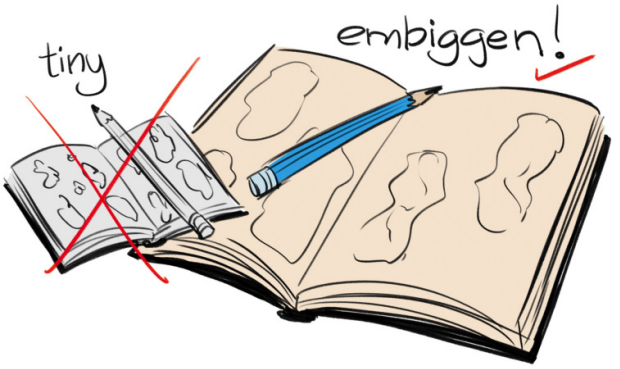
IN SHORT: SKETCHING IS SCULPTING. When I sketched the drawing of the circle on the right, I was THINKING of a sphere, not a circle. When I sketch with multiple lines and jump around the figure (if it's a character), I am finding the form and shapes of the character, not just drawing the exterior or interior lines. Animators—especially 2D animators—are trained to think of their characters as dimensional and existing in "real" space. That thinking applies to every sketch of the character they make. It's one of the elements to drawing gestures: to think dimensionally and that the shapes—not just the lines—are flowing from one to another.



LESSON 1: DRAWING LINES WITH FLOW

As basic as it sounds, I want you to practice sketching with a pencil in short strokes (A) and longer, slightly curved strokes (B), in an angled, downward action. Just like in figure drawing class, you need to learn to use more of your wrist when you draw, so you can get more flow in your lines. To do this, you should draw larger sketches if you

are someone that prefers to draw tiny sketches. It's hard to use your wrist and create flow in your lines when drawing small. If you're used to sketching 6 or 8 full figures that fill a 8.5" x 11" (letter size) page, instead draw 2 to 4 per page. Practice drawing these line strokes for a while, until you get better at creating gestures with flow.



ALL PENCILS ARE NOT THE SAME:
Before we dig too deep on this subject, I want to make a note: I will be making suggestions about types of pencils because they do different things, but I am NOT suggesting that there is ONE PENCIL that you MUST USE. Pencils are like coffee or tea; we all have our particular favorites for different reasons. When I was at Disney Animation, I was taught by my animation mentor that "the pencil doesn't matter, it's what you do with it that matters." I completely agree with that. From this point forward, stop asking an artist what kind of pencils they use, because if you don't have their art experience or training, it won't do for you what it does for them anyway.

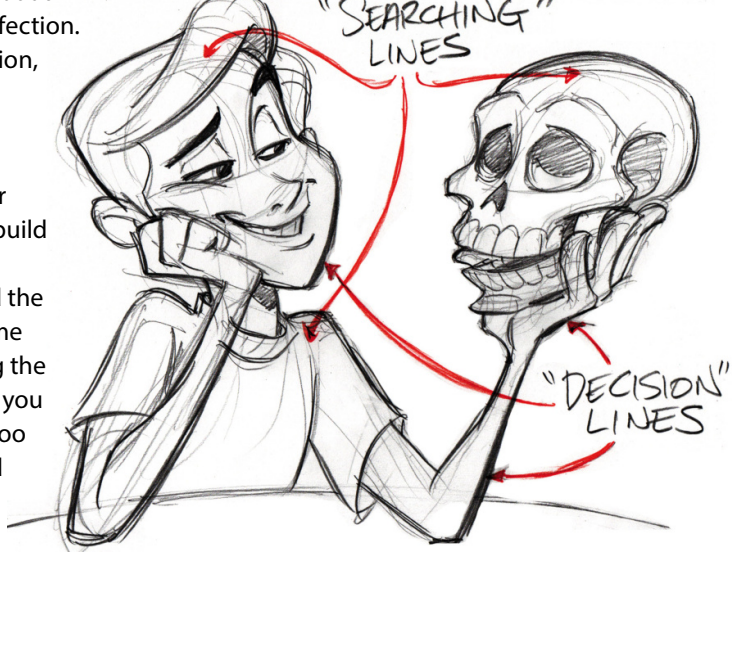
That said, there are better pencils for certain jobs. There are also better ways to use a pencil depending on the style or artistic job at hand.



For sketching, softer leads are more pleasing and will give you that smoother, "buttery" feel you want in a sketchbook as you move your pencil across the paper. I suggest anywhere from 2B to 6B, but keep in mind that the softer the lead (like the 6B), the more it will smear when you get the edge of your hand in it. I use a 3B primarily. I've found if you keep it a little stubby, instead of overly sharpened, you get thicker, definite lines, not thin, wispy lines that feel less decisive.

I don't care for mechanical pencils (though they are popular, especially with comic book artists). I am heavy-handed when I draw and tend to have them break constantly. Additionally, I don't like thin, wispy lines. I also don't want you, the student, adding too much detail in these early phases. Please try using a softer pencil for sketching; it may be hard at first, but combined with drawing slightly larger sketches, I think you'll see the rewards of more flowing lines with practice. I suggest you don't use a mechanical pencil until you've created a few sketches and then you want to create a finalized, clean version. Mechanical pencils were designed by and for architects. They have a long metal shaft at the end so it can fit into the groove of a ruler, not break the lead, and make clean, straight lines. The leads are round and give very little line variance, another plus for architecture drawing but not for sketching.

My last point for sketching is that you shouldn't erase much. Sketching is not about refinement to that level of perfection. That phase is for your last version, right before you go to color. Your goal should be to start sketching lighter as you find your gesture, then draw darker and more determined as you build up the sketch. The darker lines show your "decision lines" and the lighter "searching" lines become less important. If you are using the eraser even a third as much as you are the pencil, you're using it too much. Sketches are "built" and sometimes you need many lines to complete it.



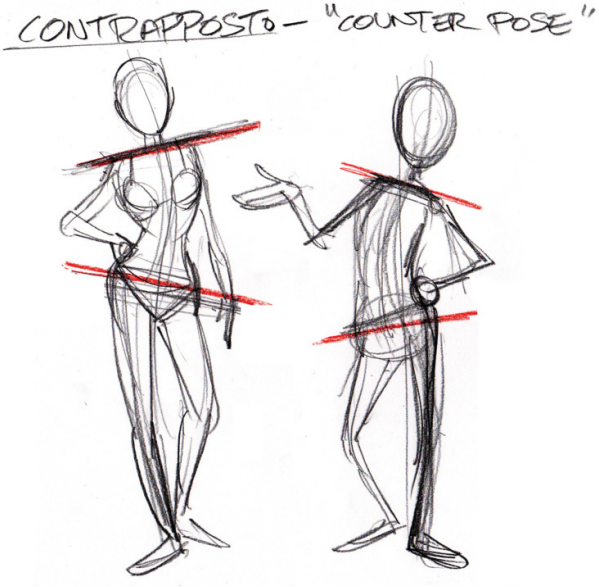
TILTS, FLOW, AND RHYTHM

In 2011, I was in California for work and made sure I got together with friend and legendary Disney animator Glen Keane for breakfast. The film *Tangled*, for which Glen served as the animation director, had just come out. I loved the film—and most of all—the character animation, so I had many questions for him. We talked about many things that morning but one thing he said—almost as a side note—was that "working with the computer animators, I was constantly stressing three things: Tilts, Flow, and Rhythm." He was in mid-story and I didn't want to interrupt him. Then we got distracted and I saw that the time had flown by and I was about to be late for work. I rushed off without having a chance to follow up on why those three elements were such a challenge for the computer animators on *Tangled*. Still, it stuck with me. The more I thought about it, the more those three concepts solidified in my mind. Those are the three areas in which computer animators—and moreover COMPUTERS—are the weakest! They are the almost forgotten basic elements that we traditional animators put into our drawings to give them that extra appeal! This started me down the road of analyzing how we create gestures that have those elements.

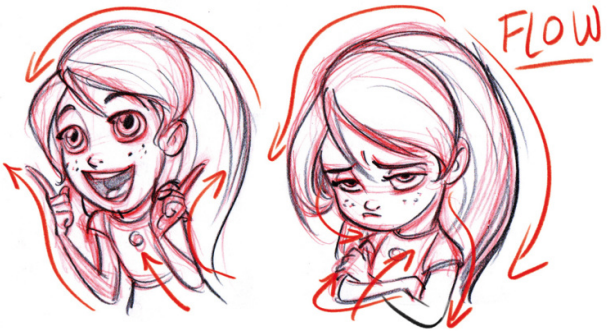
But like the concept of LOVE, defining these words is difficult. You can "feel" rhythm in a drawing, but defining it is another thing altogether. I researched the words a bit and came up with multiple definitions depending upon what they were applied to. Ultimately, I have come up with my own definitions that are specific to drawing and posing.

TILTS: The process of placing the shapes of your character at angles to create a

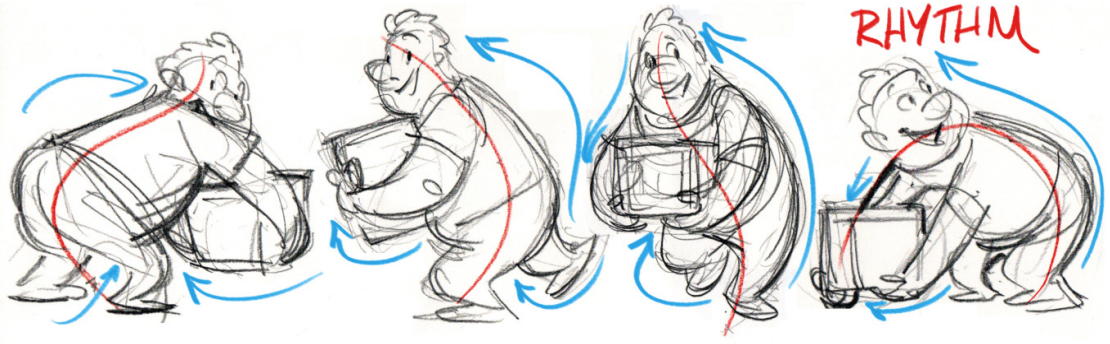
stronger visual interest and/or pose. Tilts can be used in a pose to create a stronger sense of rhythm in your drawing/pose. The Italian word *contrapposto*, which means *counter pose*, is an example of this. It is best illustrated in a counter pose where weight is more on the right foot so the right hip is pushed up higher than the left; correspondingly the right shoulder will be lower than the left, or vice versa. This results in the shoulders being at an opposite angle to the hips, which creates a more dynamic pose and contrasting curves throughout the pose.

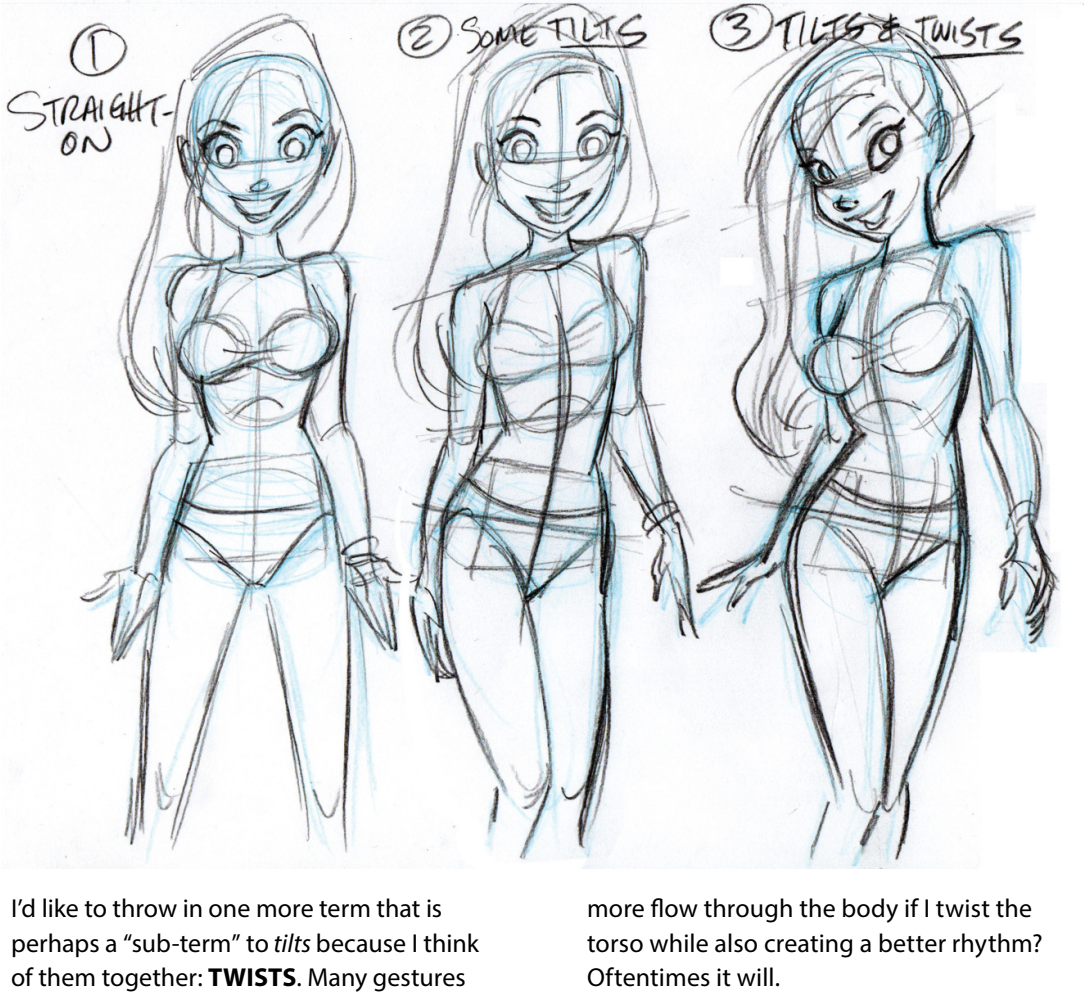


FLOW: The way the outlines of your drawing/character flow from one to another. You can have flow in a drawing or pose, but not have rhythm. Flow is made up of curved lines that move from convex (curved inward) shape to converse (curved outward) shape.



RHYTHM: The big picture of your pose. This is the way the positive and negative shapes work together to create movement in the pose. Flow can be an element of rhythm, but not vice versa. Rhythm needs curved lines, rounded shapes, and some opposing straights to work best. The terms *flow* and *rhythm* are oftentimes incorrectly used interchangeably.



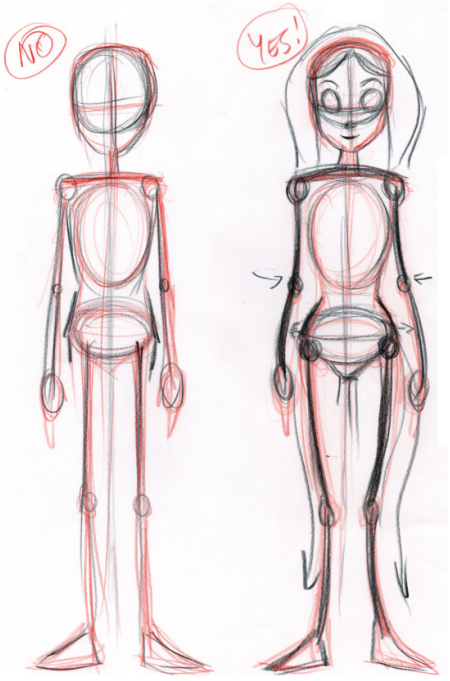


I'd like to throw in one more term that is perhaps a "sub-term" to *tilts* because I think of them together: **TWISTS**. Many gestures will be strengthened further with a torso twist. It's implied that when you tilt the torso, you may also twist it. A body twist—or even a head turn—will strengthen the appeal, interest, dynamism, and flow in a pose.

Now we can really start to apply the principles of tilts and twists, flow, and rhythm. Look closely at your poses, try to see how they can be pushed and improved. Ask yourself questions: Can the head have a slight tilt? Are the shoulders too even? Would it be stronger if I pushed the hip over to one side a bit? Does it have more flow through the body if I twist the torso while also creating a better rhythm? Oftentimes it will.

ONE LAST THING: Remember the wooden, hinged mannequins made for posing the human body so you could light it and see the simple shapes of the body in dimension? We all got them for our birthday from the aunt that knew we "liked art" but didn't know what else to get us. Throw it in the trash. They only create stiff poses because they are rigged and not well jointed. They can't even move or pose as well as a ninety-year-old man. Our real anatomy and musculature already have a natural flow to the shapes. Our arms taper

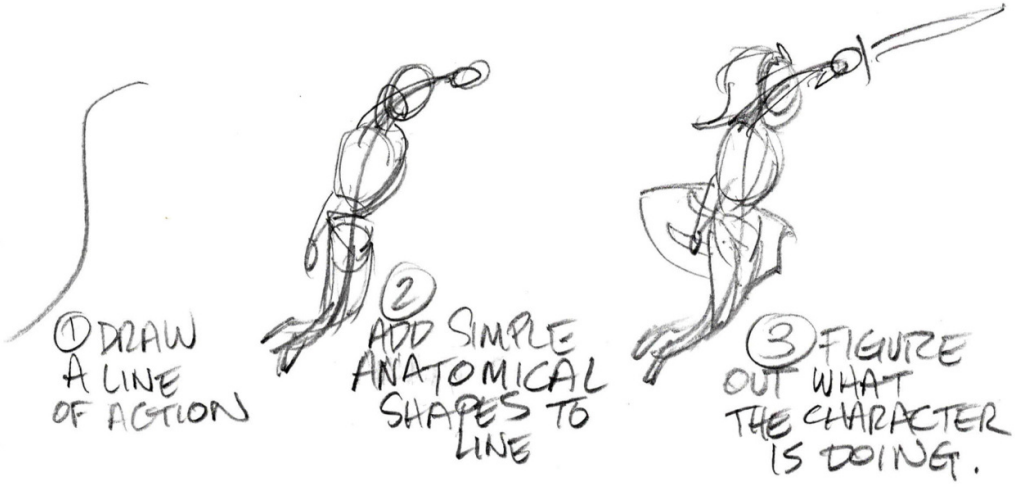
from the elbow to the wrist, our legs have a side that is slightly more curved than the slightly straighter side, and even our muscles flow over and under each other to create flowing shapes. So before we jump into drawing gesture poses, let's start with a more graceful, flowing body form. This is the way I like to draw a simplified body:



THE ELUSIVE "LINE OF ACTION"

Over the years, many well-meaning art instruction books and art class instructors have addressed how to find the *gesture* in a pose by saying, "Find the line of action in your pose." It's true, a simplified way to sum up the gesture of a pose is the curved line of thrust that is moving through a body's shape from feet to head (usually). Drawing an imaginary line through the body proves out a successful or less successful line of action. Poses that are straight up and down (like a person standing straight) also have a line of action; it's just a straight line and doesn't have much "action," which is not a very interesting or dynamic pose for an artist to use.

The line of action concept seems so simple, but why did I struggle with it—and basically ignore it—throughout most of my early days of learning? I recently discovered the way it was taught to us is broken, in my opinion. Below is the way most art books teach it:



The problem with this example is that you start with a curved line and force a body shape around it. Young Tom Bancroft struggled to figure out not only how the forms fit together to create that line of action, but more important, what the figure was actually doing. The books that used this approach to illustrate the principle didn't focus on the "why" of the pose and I couldn't get beyond it. I would create bizarre, stiff drawings that made no sense. Additionally, I don't believe that artists think in a logical, step-by-step approach. We layer information and jump from one "rule" or "principle" to another—in short, we don't think about just one thing at a time.

In analyzing my process, I realized I first think of the pose I want, then I piece together the line of action as I go. But, it's the main "thrust" of the action that is determining the pose and flow as I sketch.

Before and during the sketch I'm thinking:

1. **1:** What is the "story" behind my pose? (What am I trying to show?)
2. **2:** What is the "leading force"? (If it's a character throwing a punch, it's that arm.)
3. **3:** How would the character's core be used (convex, concave, twisted) to best show that action and story?

NOTE ON THE "CORE": I may draw the core (the pelvis and chest sections) as two separate shapes, but I tend to think of them as one shape. As if it were two ovals connected by rubber bands—our abs. The rib cage can twist very little and our pelvis does not at all, but what does create the twist is our midsection, so thinking of them as one shape helps create a good portion of your flow throughout your body.

To put this all together in a semi step-by-step process (for illustration purposes only), I'll break it down with a sketch of a baseball pitcher who is about to throw a pitch.

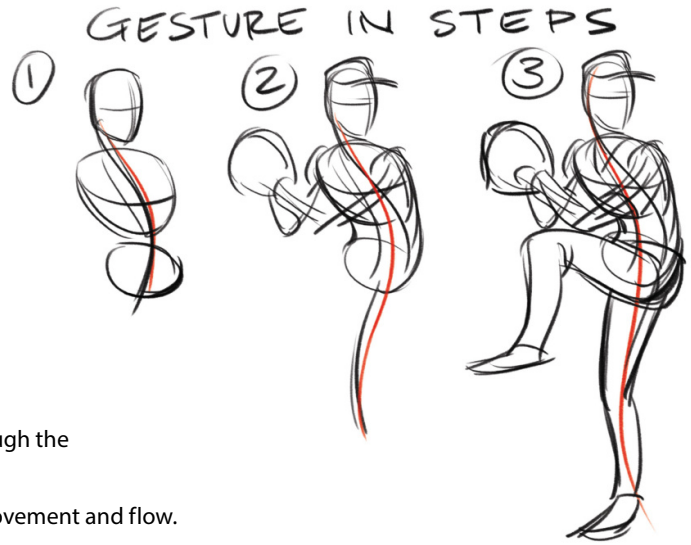


Illustration of the 3 steps to create the pose:

1: Think of the leading force and how it affects the "core."

2: Continue the flow created by the core and main thrust through the second half of the body.

3: Add details that accent the movement and flow.

However, a good gesture (and line of action) doesn't only work for bold, action poses. Even subtle poses should have a gesture. To break away from the problem of vertical poses being less dynamic, when a character isn't doing much, consider if the core should be convex or concave. Keeping a slight curve to your core will help change a straight pose to one with some flow and attitude through it.

LESSON 2: CREATE THE POSE

1: Using the 3 gesture steps, think of a pose you want to draw and the leading force of the pose. How does this pose affect the "core"? Draw the core and find the line of action for the gesture.

2: Continue the flow created by the core and line of action through the second half of the body.

3: Add details that accent the movement and flow.

4: Repeat this lesson using variations on both "S" and "C" curves.

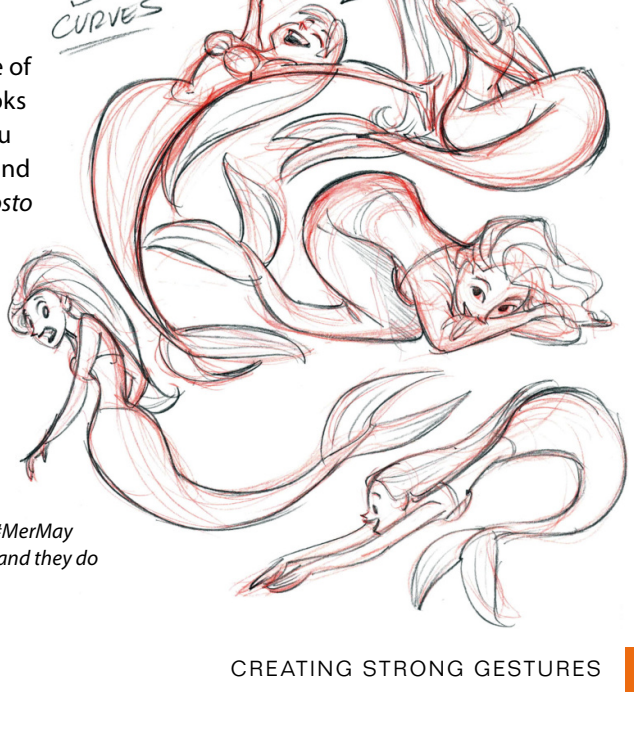


That's how I approach line of action in a step-by-step thought process. But I still want that line to anchor more directly to my pose. Then it hit me: we already have a built-in line of action—our spine. As I mentioned above, I was already thinking of the core as a simplified section of the body, now I could look at the entire line throughout the core as a simplified "through line" that makes sense to me. Additionally, I'm an animator so character performance—especially the facial expressions—are of utmost importance to me. Because of this, when I draw a pose, I tend to start with the head to determine where I'm placing it and work back from there. This works with my new simplified thought process nicely: it is a cranium with a line coming out of it. That's my line of action! Here are some mermaid* poses that show this clearly:

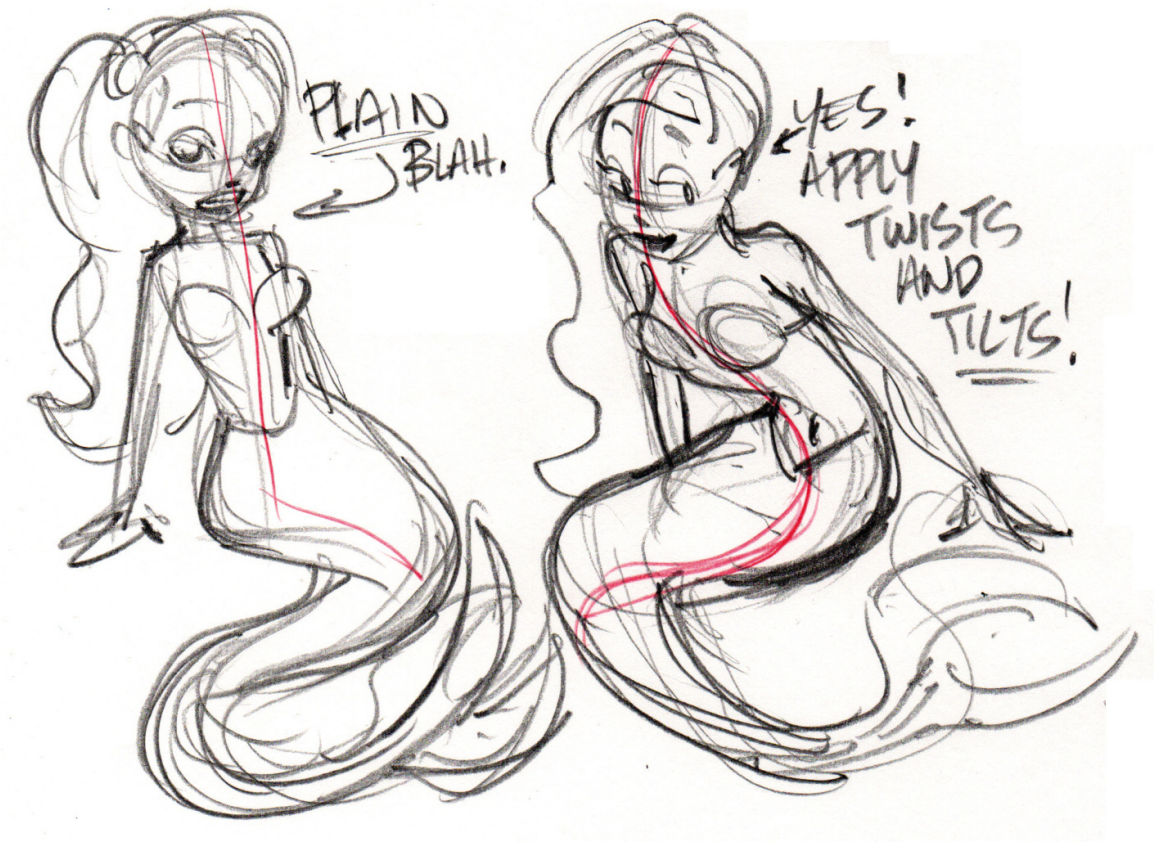


"S" AND "C" CURVES IN YOUR POSES

For animation poses, nothing beats a good "S" curve. That's the shape the line of action takes throughout the body (it looks like an "S"). Using an "S" curve shape, you get instant flow throughout your pose and it works well when twists and *contrapposto* concepts are applied. Another pose you may see is the even more simplified "C" curve. A sad or depressed character may have a simple hunched over pose that would be a good example of a "C" pose. Mermaids are pure line of action, so here's a few poses of them in "S" and "C" curve poses:



**Sorry about all the mermaid examples, I created #MerMay a few years ago on Instagram so I draw them a lot and they do tend to be good examples for creating gestures.*



To sum up, gesture drawing doesn't have to be as allusive as it may have been for you in the past. Think of all the concepts we've covered but, most of all, when you sketch a pose, take a second and consider how it could be stronger. It may look fine, but applying some of these concepts may help you to push the pose and achieve a more interesting and successful gesture to really help "sell" your character and story!

LESSON 3: APPLY TWISTS AND TILTS

1: Pick your favorite energetic pose from Lesson 2, look closely, and consider how you can take the pose further by applying the principles of twists and tilts.

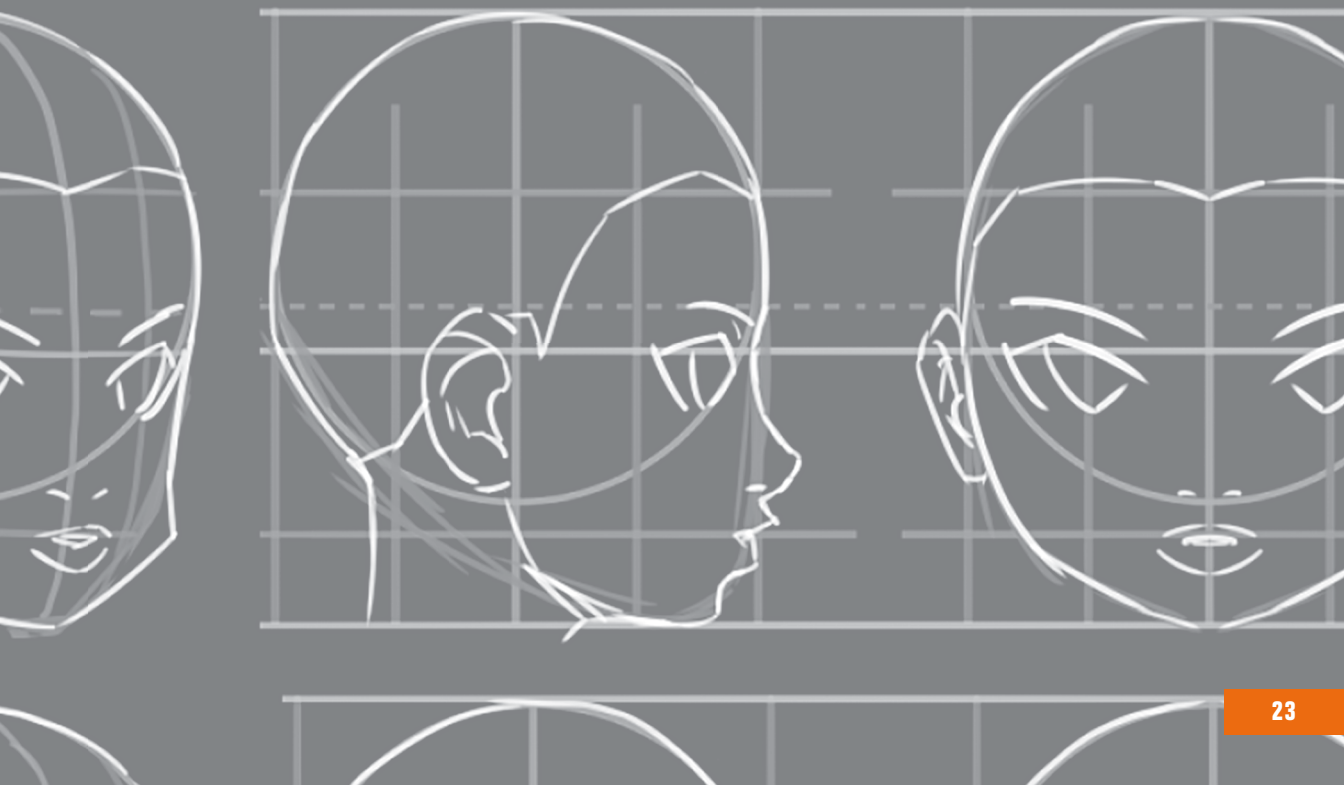
2: Repeat with another pose, but this time choose a pose that is more subtle and see how it can be improved with twist and tilt.

Enjoy the journey!

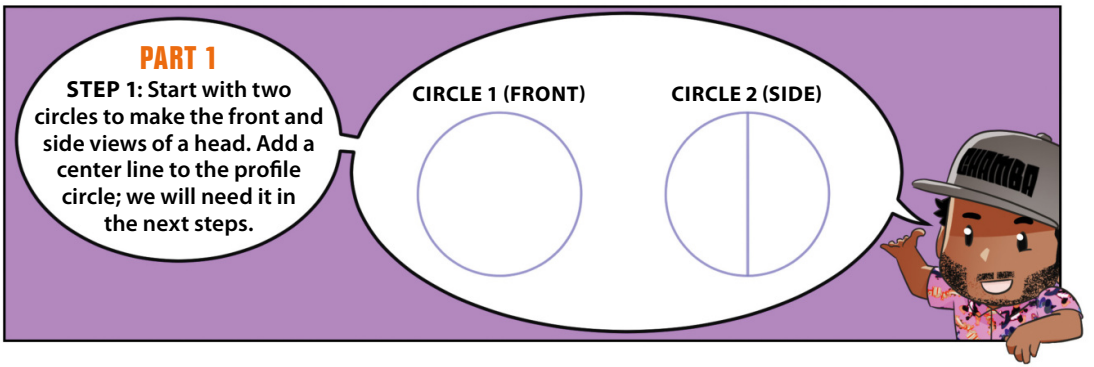


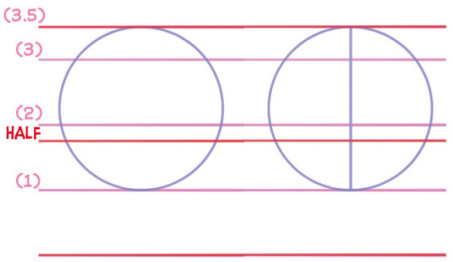
3

WHERE'S YOUR HEAD AT?





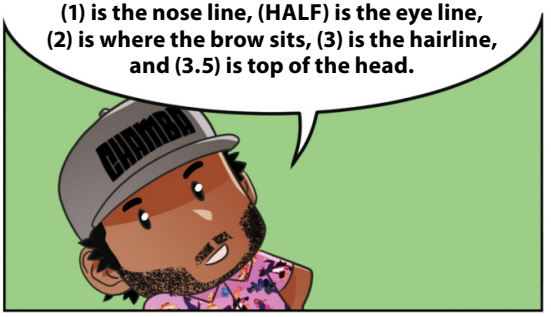


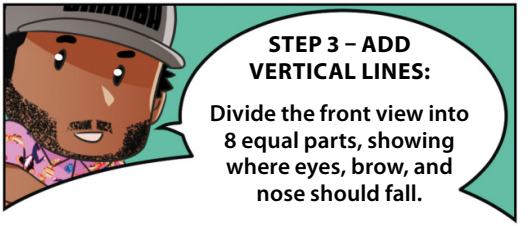


STEP 2 – ADD HORIZONTAL LINES:

These lines represent the placement of the eyes, nose, brow, and hairline. The red lines split the head in half, while the pink lines divide into 3.5 sections starting from the bottom up.

(1) is the nose line, (HALF) is the eye line, (2) is where the brow sits, (3) is the hairline, and (3.5) is top of the head.





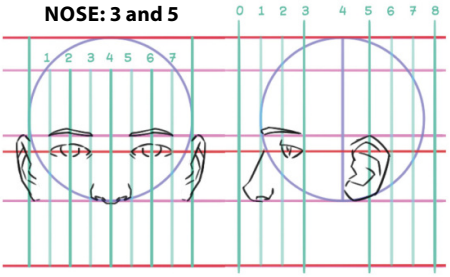
For the side view divide into 3 equal parts, then split the 1st and 3rd sections into thirds. The 1st three sections create positions for the nose and eyes, the next three are for positioning the ear.

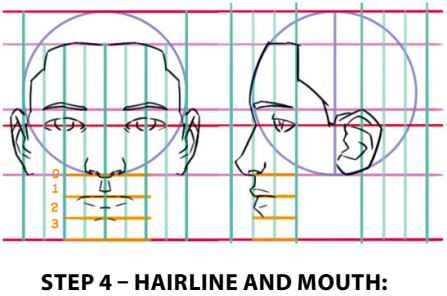
EYES AND BROW:
1 and 3, 5 and 7

NOTE: Eyes are typically one eye width apart

NOSE: 0 and 2
BROW: 1 and 3
EYE: 2 and 3
EAR: 4 and 6

NOSE: 3 and 5



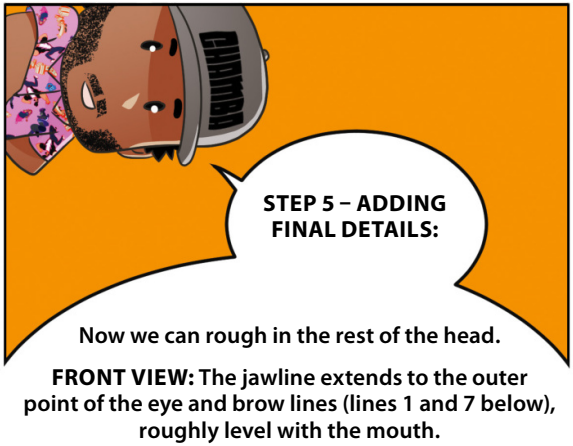


STEP 4 – HAIRLINE AND MOUTH:

Using the guides from steps 2 and 3, sketch in the hairline. There's no specific rule for the way to draw the hairline, so you can customize to fit the style of your character.

Next draw in guides for the mouth. Divide the lower section of the head into 3 equal parts (see orange lines above). Begin under the nose and move down to the chin.

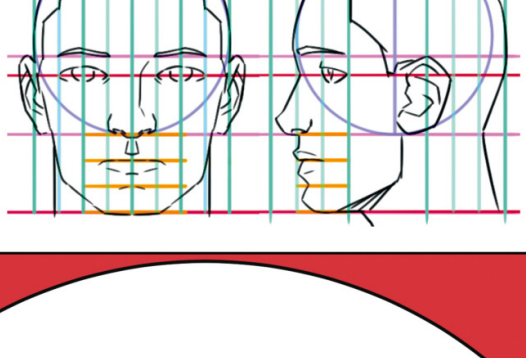


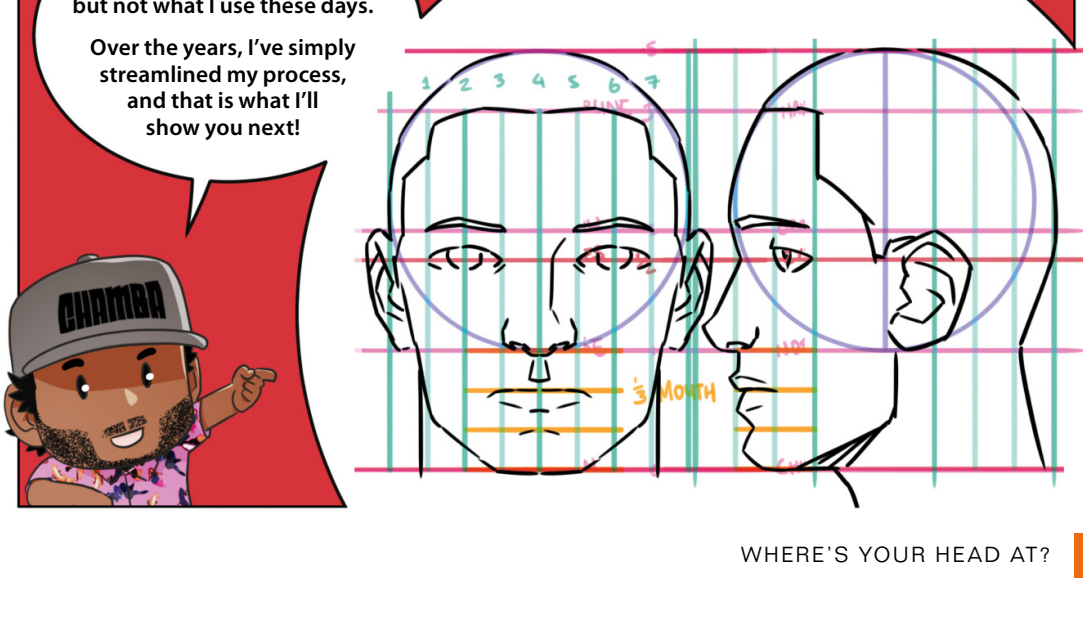


Now we can rough in the rest of the head.

FRONT VIEW: The jawline extends to the outer point of the eye and brow lines (lines 1 and 7 below), roughly level with the mouth.

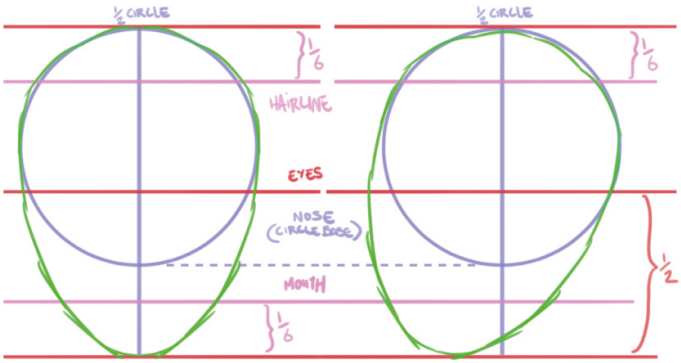
SIDE VIEW: The chin aligns with the peak of the mouth and the jawline extends to the base of the ear.





PART 2 – THE STREAMLINED EDITION

STEP 1: We start with the same circles used in Part 1, but this time we add a rough oval (egg shape) to represent the head.



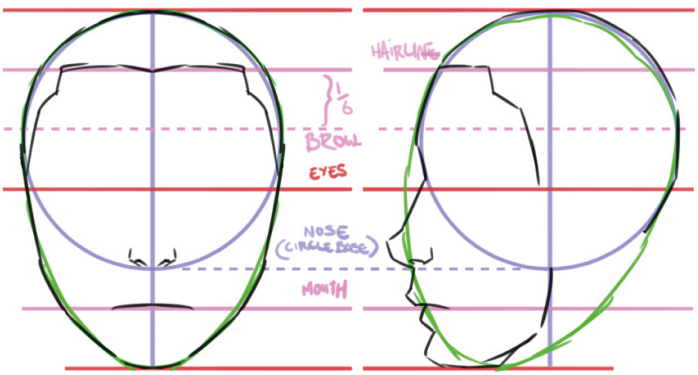
The red line at ½ the height of the head marks the position for the eyes. At 1/6 down from the top is the hairline, and 1/6 up from the chin is where the mouth is placed.

EYES: ½ height
HAIRLINE: 1/6 from top
MOUTH: 1/6 from bottom
NOSE: Bottom of circle



STEP 2: As you can see, this next step is simplified.

A new guide is added for the brow line at 1/6 below the hairline.



Now we have enough guides to draw the basic details of the head. We can add the hairline, nose, mouth, chin, and jawline.

Remember these are just basic guides; it is entirely up to the artist how a character looks. The shape of the jawline, where the hairline ends, etc. Later in this chapter I'll show more examples of how to customize these details.



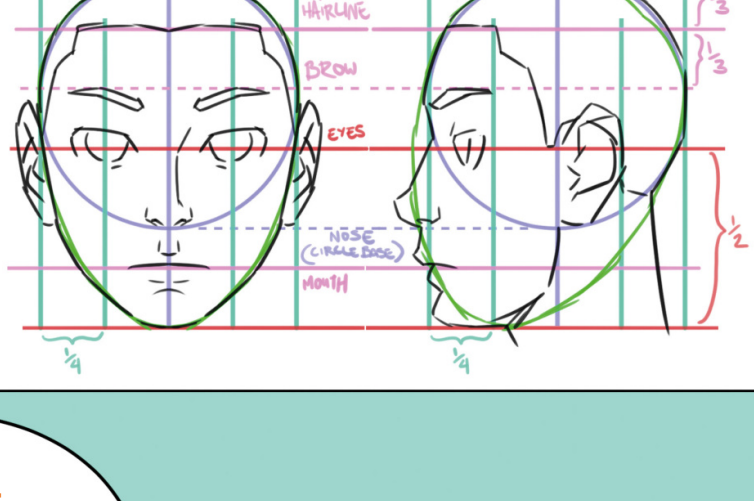


STEP 3 – ADDING FINAL DETAILS:

Divide the front and side heads vertically into four equal parts. Using these guides, draw in the eyes, brows, and ears.

FRONT VIEW: Eyes should center roughly on the quarter dividing lines.

SIDE VIEW: Both the eye and ear should stay within the quarter dividing lines.



This more streamlined approach works best for sketching stylized or unrealistic heads.

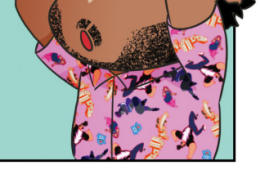
LESSON 1:

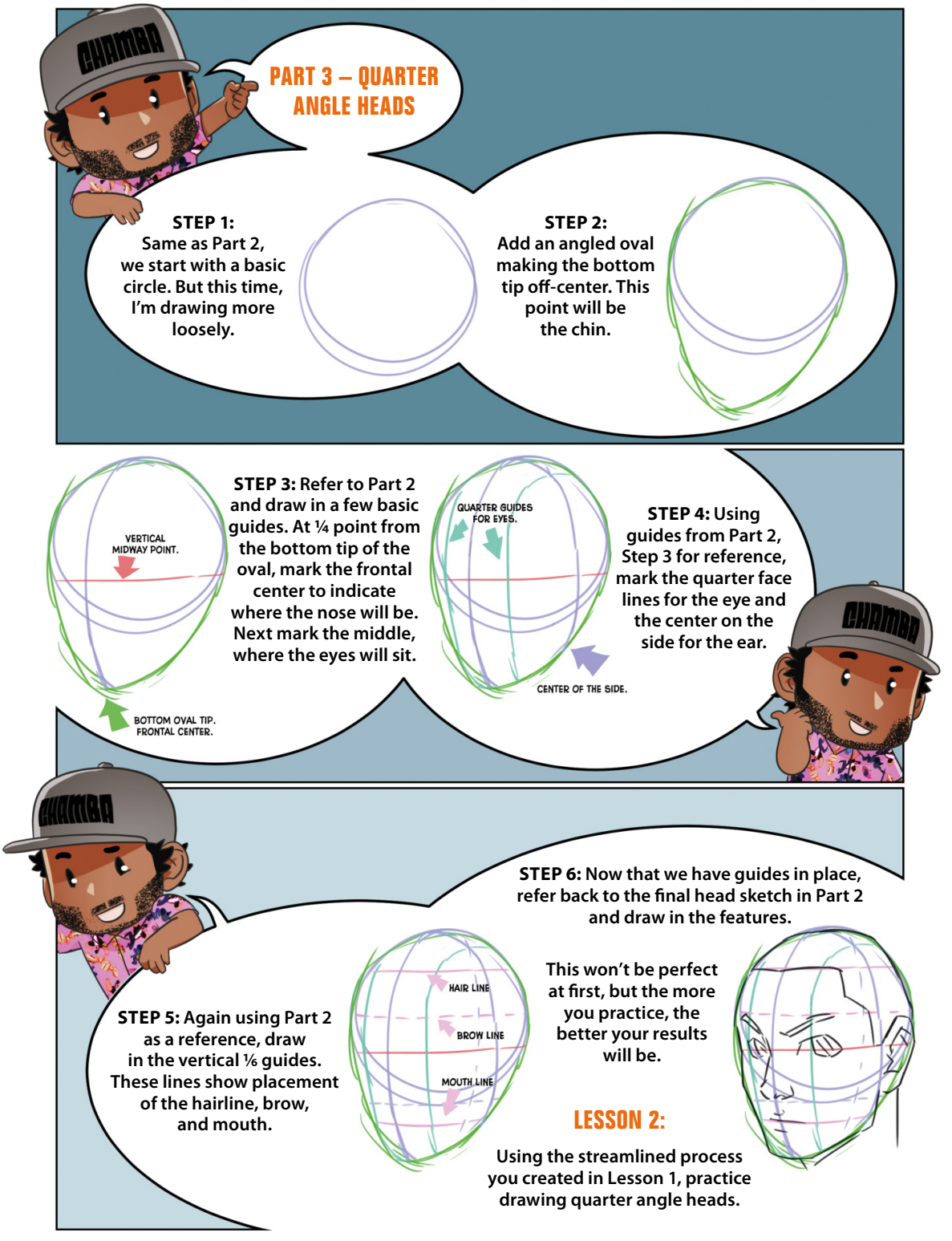
DRAW A HEAD USING THE PROCESS FROM PART 1.

Practice it enough that you become familiar with all the steps.

CREATE YOUR OWN STREAMLINED PROCESS.

After practicing Part 1, you should feel more confident drawing heads. Next, use what you learned about my streamlined process to create your own. What steps can you "skip" or "alter" to streamline the process for you?



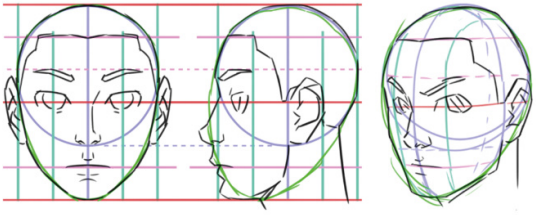

CHAMBA
PART 3 – QUARTER ANGLE HEADS
STEP 1: Same as Part 2, we start with a basic circle. But this time, I'm drawing more loosely.
STEP 2: Add an angled oval making the bottom tip off-center. This point will be the chin.
VERTICAL MIDWAY POINT.
BOTTOM OVAL TIP. FRONTAL CENTER.
STEP 3: Refer to Part 2 and draw in a few basic guides. At ¼ point from the bottom tip of the oval, mark the frontal center to indicate where the nose will be. Next mark the middle, where the eyes will sit.
QUARTER GUIDES FOR EYES.
CENTER OF THE SIDE.
STEP 4: Using guides from Part 2, Step 3 for reference, mark the quarter face lines for the eye and the center on the side for the ear.
CHAMBA
STEP 5: Again using Part 2 as a reference, draw in the vertical ⅛ guides. These lines show placement of the hairline, brow, and mouth.
HAIR LINE
BROW LINE
MOUTH LINE
STEP 6: Now that we have guides in place, refer back to the final head sketch in Part 2 and draw in the features.
This won't be perfect at first, but the more you practice, the better your results will be.
LESSON 2:
Using the streamlined process you created in Lesson 1, practice drawing quarter angle heads.

PART 4 – HEAD SHAPE



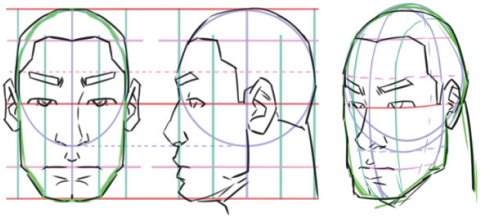
Here are the heads side by side from Parts 2 and 3.

Now we can experiment with the process a bit. First, let's play with different head shapes by altering the width of the front and side guide lines.

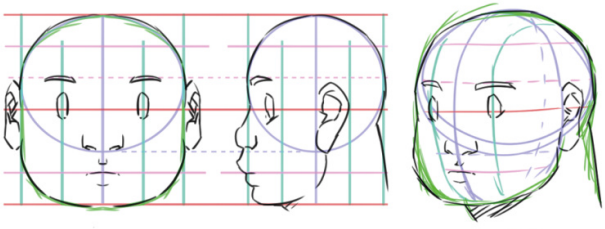


We will also change the shape of the oval to add even more variation to the shape of the head.

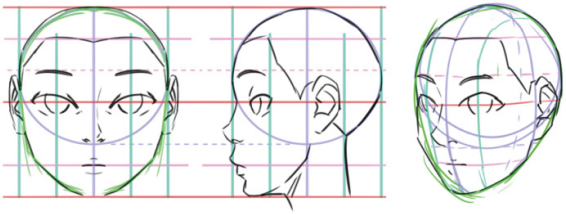
EXAMPLE 1: Guides are narrowed with a squared-off shape. Remember to also play with adjustments to the size and shape of facial features.



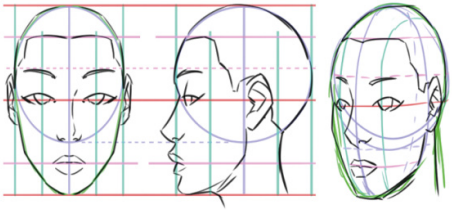
EXAMPLE 2: Widen the guides to achieve a more round and circular shape.



EXAMPLE 3: Vertically squash down the guides to make a more child-like shape. I've also used more angular eyes and rounded features.



EXAMPLE 4: Going even narrower with the guides results in a very slender look to the head.





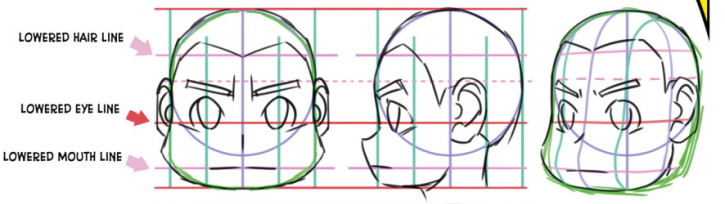
PART 5 – ADJUSTING FEATURES

In Part 4 we changed the width of the guides; this time we will shift the horizontal lines. Shifting guides up or down drastically changes how we draw the head and facial features.

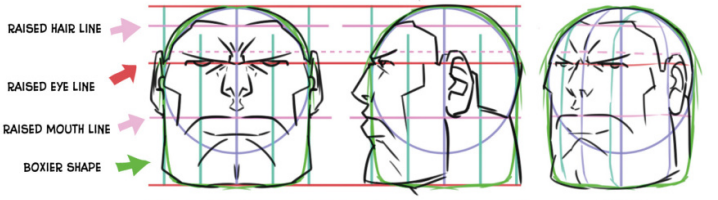
The following are examples that show how shifts to both the guides and the shape of the oval can create different drawing styles.



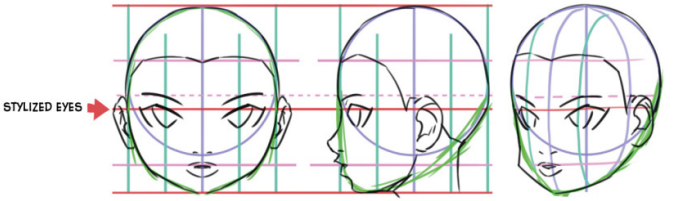
EXAMPLE 1: Shift all horizontal guides downward. This changes the proportions to a cartoon-like style.



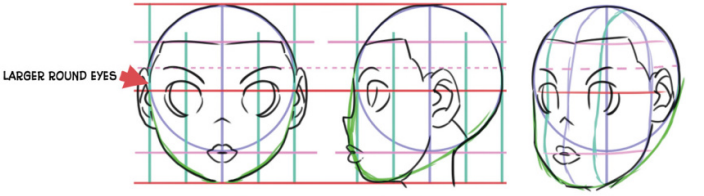
EXAMPLE 2: Shifting all horizontal guides upward gives the head a boxier look. This can work well for a robot too.



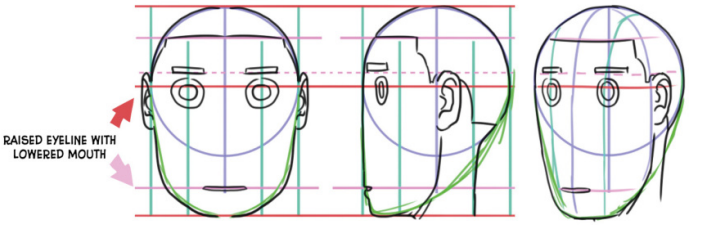
EXAMPLE 3: Hairline, brows, and mouth guides are all lowered. The facial features are positioned so larger eyes can be applied that work well for a cuter cartoon look.

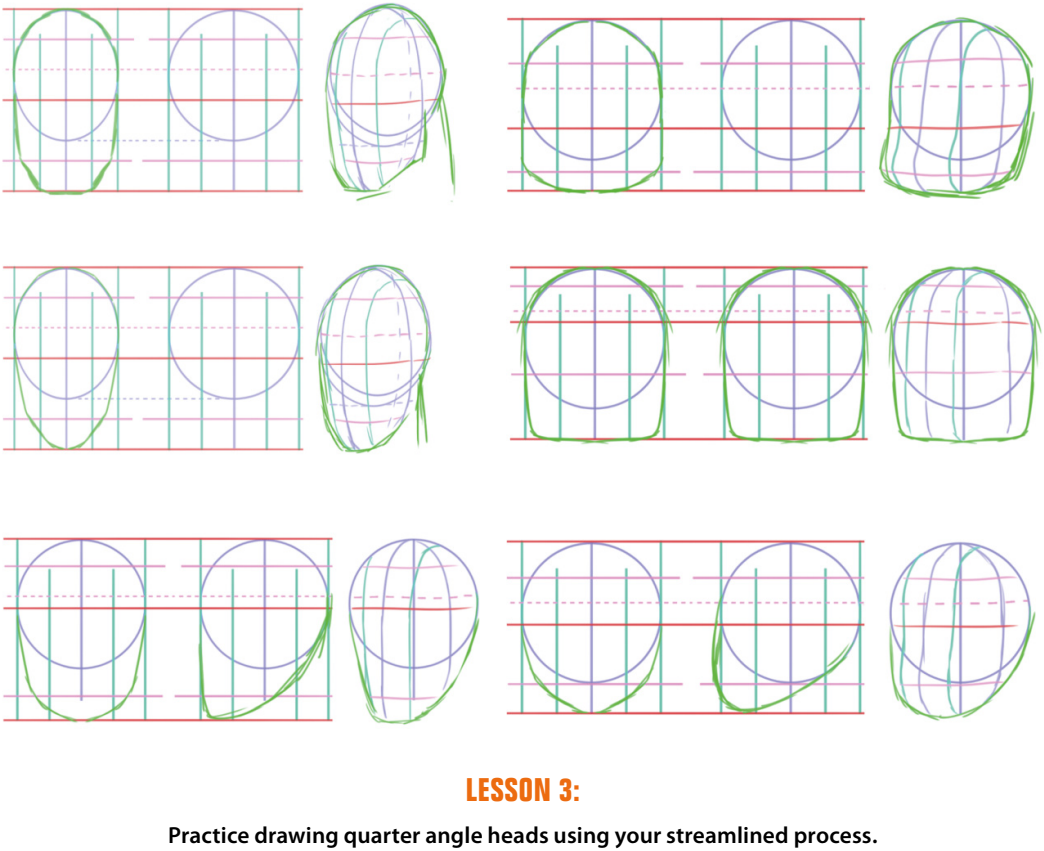


EXAMPLE 4: Move the guides even further to show a different cartoon style. Playing with the shape of features can really change the look of a character.



EXAMPLE 5: Adjusting the position of guides can lead to some truly fun results. Exploring and experimenting is the goal with this process.





LESSON 3:

Practice drawing quarter angle heads using your streamlined process. Try sketching new head designs with the base guides above.

Once you have finished, try drawing an entirely new set of front, side, and quarter views. Remember to play around with shapes and features.

EXPERIMENT WITH:

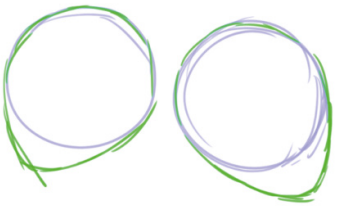
- **Changes to the oval shape**
- **Moving the vertical guides for the hair, brows, eyes, and mouth**
- **Adjust the horizontal width for the position of the eyes**

PART 6 – TACKLING ANGLES

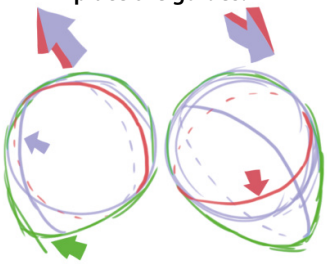


Next, we will expand on what we learned from Parts 2 to 4, using the steps to draw a basic head from different points of view.

STEP 1: Start with the basic circle and oval. By changing the direction of the oval, we change the direction the face is looking.



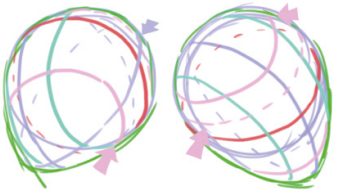
STEP 2: Pick a direction in which the heads will face. This determines where you place the guides.



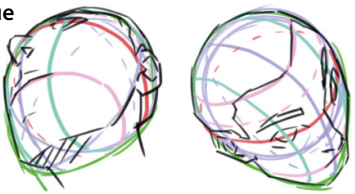
With the direction decided, we can draw in the primary guides. Mark both the vertical (nose) and horizontal (eye) lines for the face.

NOTE: Part 6 can be more of a challenge. Try not to be too hard on yourself if you don't get it on the first few tries.





STEP 3: Follow the steps used previously to continue sketching the remaining guides.



By looking at the eye and center lines, you can determine where to draw guides for the brows, hair, and nose.

If you have practiced the earlier drawings enough, you should have a good idea where to place the remaining guides. Then you can sketch in the rest of the facial features.



LESSON 4:

Use what you've learned above and challenge yourself to create a series of angled heads based on sketches from Lesson 3. See how many heads you can draw and try as many angles as you can. Remember the more you sketch, the better you'll be at drawing heads!

Thanks for joining me and keep drawing!



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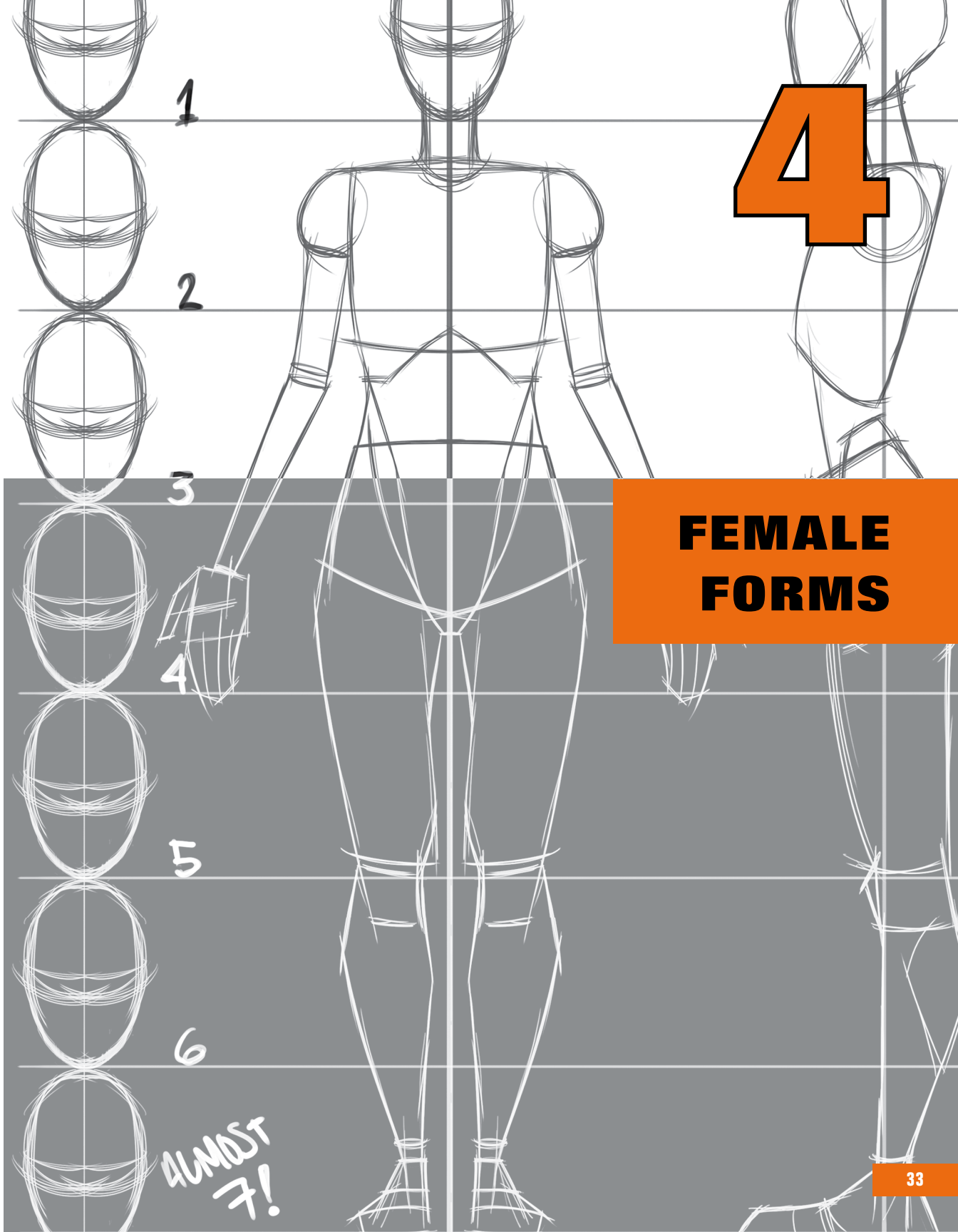
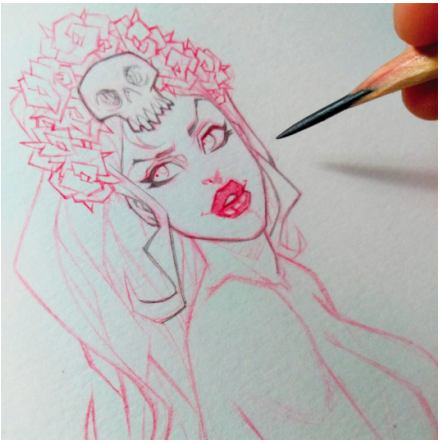


4

FEMALE FORMS

FEMALE FORMS

WITH RENE CORDOVA



I'm often asked: How can I improve my character drawings? There is no magic solution, just practice and more practice. If you love being an artist and want to improve so you can make a living at it, you must practice every chance you get. There is also no shortcut for learning to draw the human body; you must study anatomy. It is important to know how the body works. This will help you draw a wide variety of bodies—long, wide, tall, short. Understanding the rules gives you the knowledge to bend them when you want to.

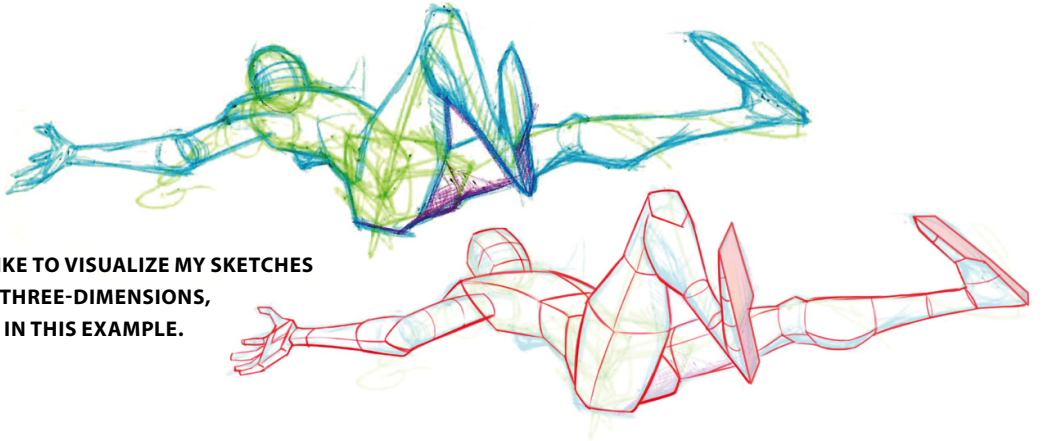
When I started drawing, I practiced using references from artists I admired. Later I realized this was a mistake because it prevented me from developing my own style and I learned some errors from other artists. I decided instead to draw from photographs, books, videos, and live models. I've been an illustrator for 13 years, but I only studied art formally for six. I'm a self-taught artist, but today you can learn from online references, art schools, workshops, and books like this one. That's what brings me to this project—I'm honored to give advice on drawing female figures. I prefer to work traditionally so let's start with a sketchbook; no need for a big one because you will need to carry it everywhere. It is very important to use a pen—not a pencil, not a marker—because we will be making quick sketches.



SKETCHING PRACTICE: When you do these exercises, try to completely fill a sheet with your sketches. Draw various poses and angles and do not leave any free space. This helps you to see progress. Use pens in different colors—*have fun!*



Think of sketching as warm-up exercises, try NOT to ERASE. When we are just starting out, we don't like to see our "ugly" sketches. We want them to look good, so we erase until we like our sketches. This is a mistake because we waste the time and opportunity to make more sketches. These sketching exercises are meant to study the proportions of the human body. That is why I prefer using a pen. Since I can't erase, I focus on being quick with my lines and use simple angles and circles.

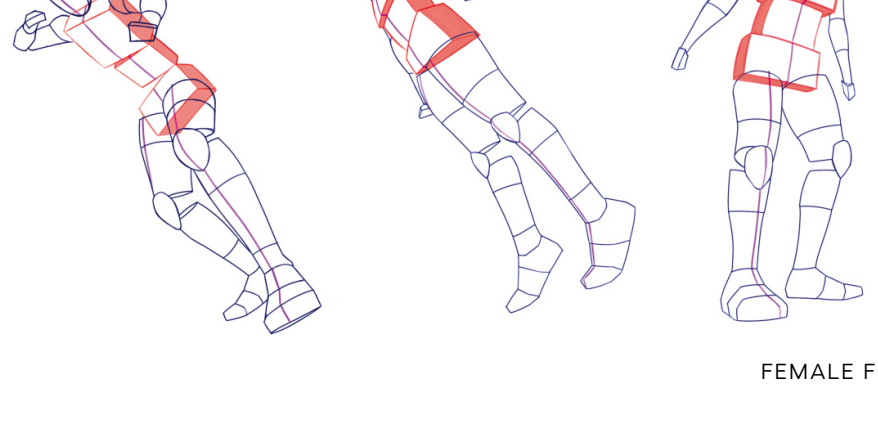


I LIKE TO VISUALIZE MY SKETCHES IN THREE-DIMENSIONS, AS IN THIS EXAMPLE.

THREE-DIMENSIONAL SHAPES: The following exercise helps us understand body shape and volume. You can take photos of a relative or friend to get visual references. My daughter Nahomi helped me with these poses.

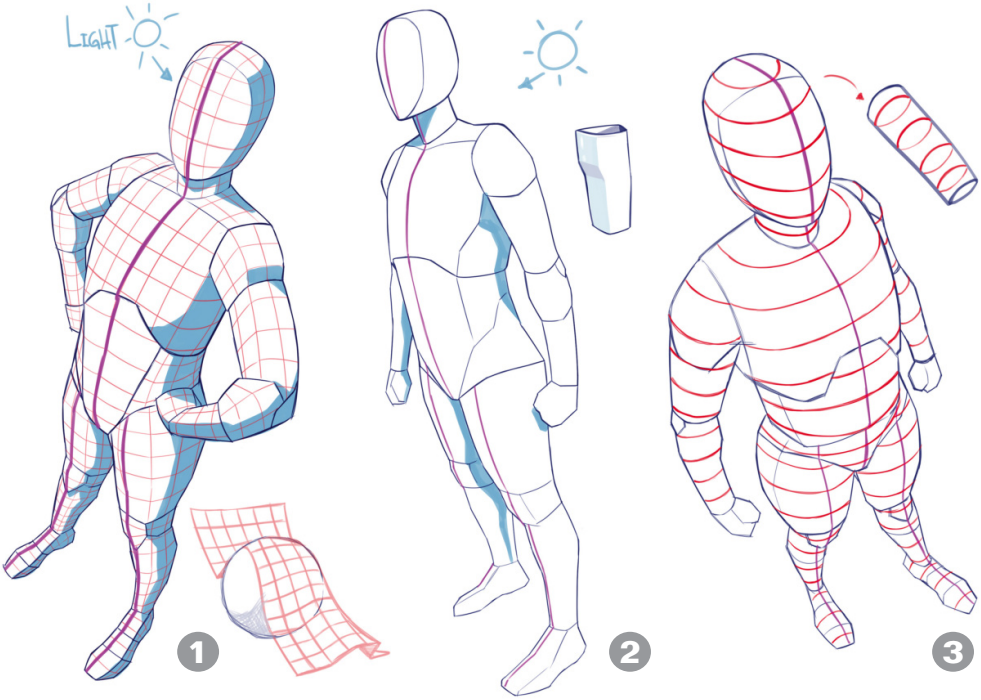


CENTRAL LINE



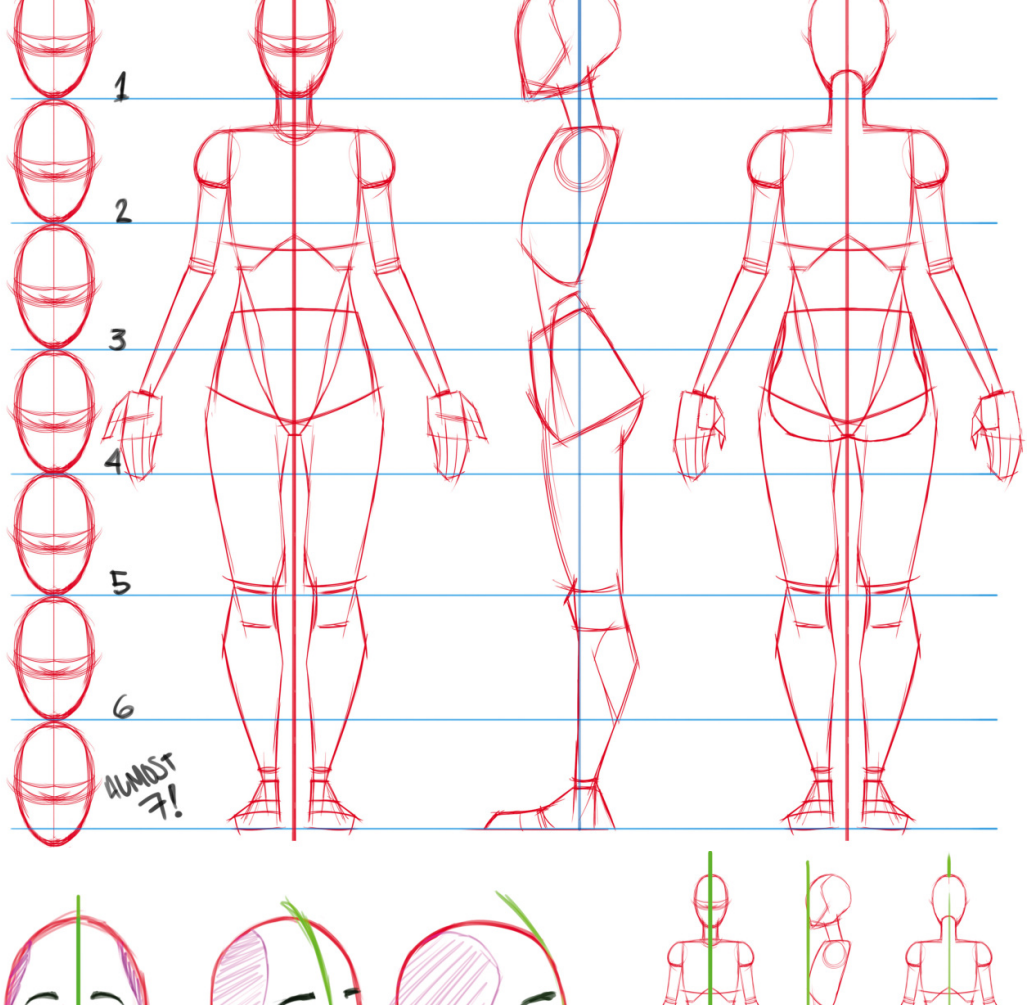
BODY VOLUME: Below are three different methods to practice drawing the volume of a human body in perspective. Here again, I'm using photos for visual reference. To help with shading in images 1 and 2, I've indicated a light source.



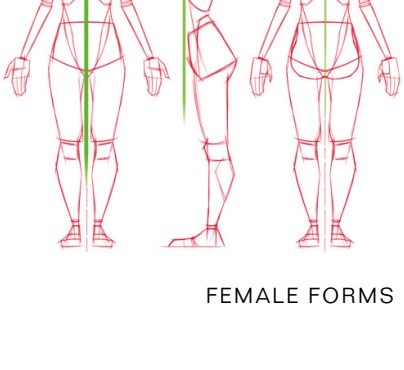


LESSON: DRAWING THE HUMAN BODY

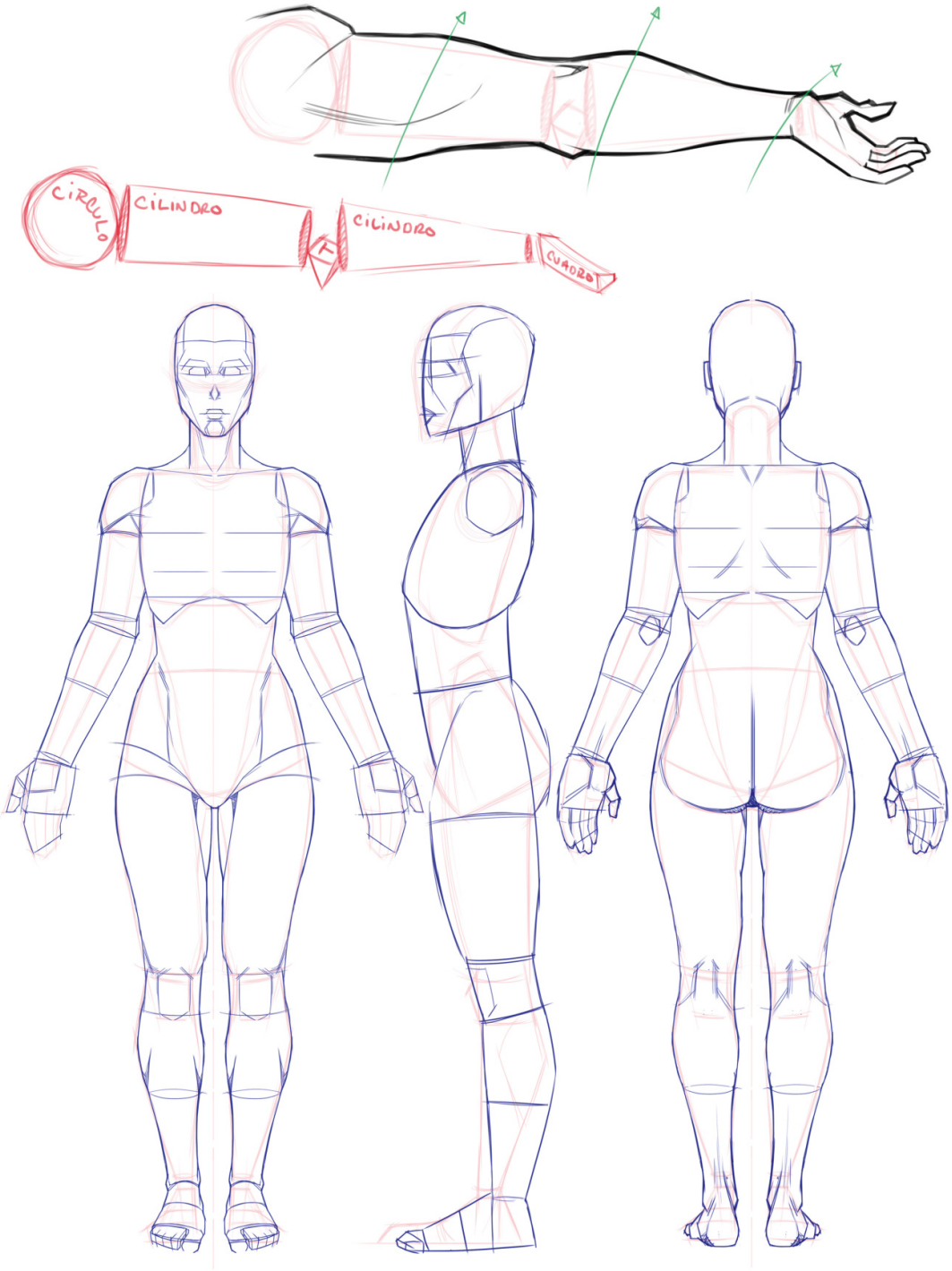
STEP 1: This format is common and essential when presenting character designs for comics, video games, or animated films. It includes front, back, and side poses. A standard measurement I use for a typical body is almost 7 heads. The center line is very important and guides us in creating the shape and volume of a body.



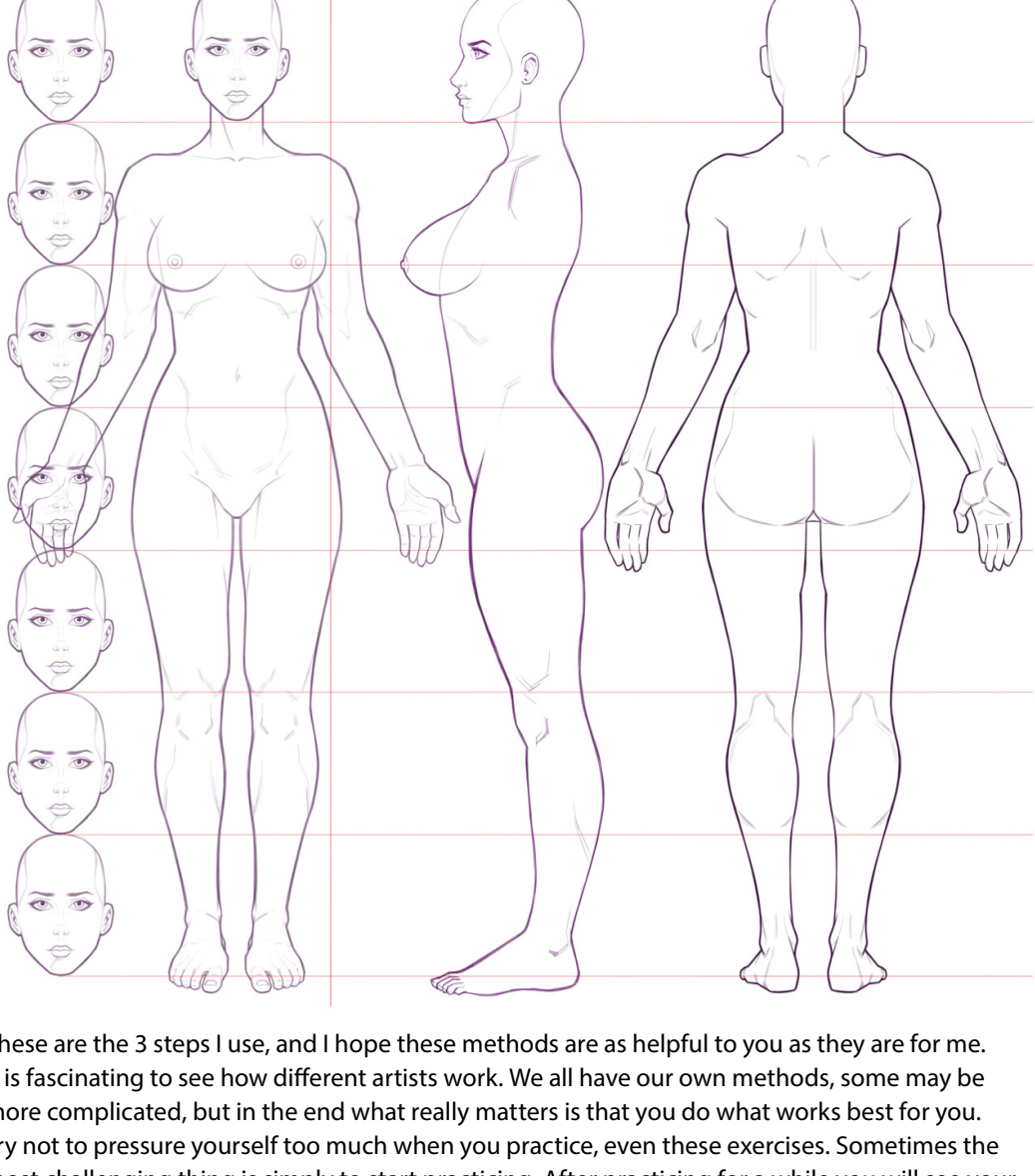




STEP 2: I draw in the volume of the body. I prefer to use angular lines but the most important point is to visualize each part of the body in geometric shapes. Note that none of the body parts are perfectly parallel to one another.



STEP 3: I create a clean outline. The contours are drawn slightly thicker and I use thinner lines for inner details. I always work from a visual reference when designing characters. Even if they are cartoons I pay attention to muscles and joints. I think this helps my characters move correctly.



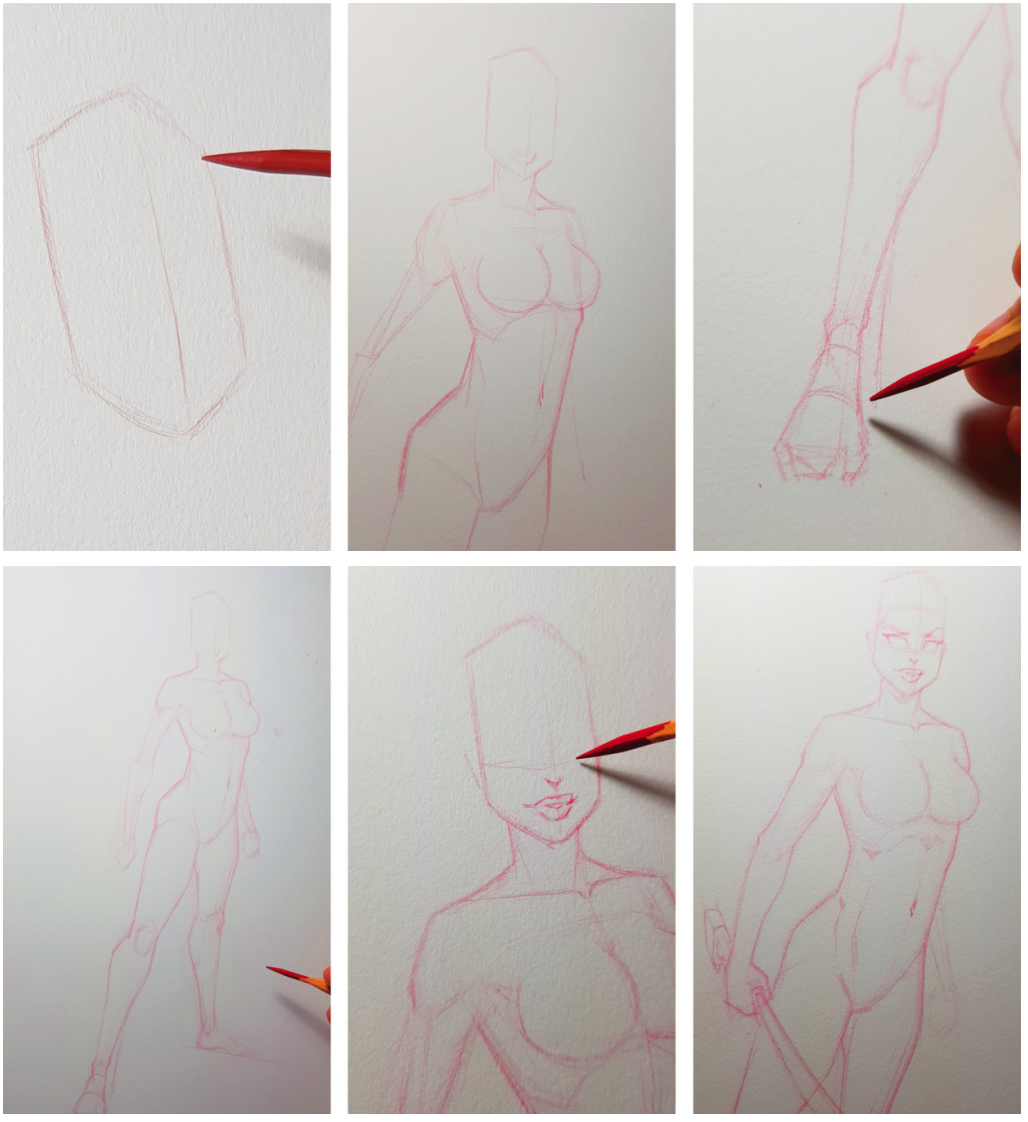
These are the 3 steps I use, and I hope these methods are as helpful to you as they are for me. It is fascinating to see how different artists work. We all have our own methods, some may be more complicated, but in the end what really matters is that you do what works best for you. Try not to pressure yourself too much when you practice, even these exercises. Sometimes the most challenging thing is simply to start practicing. After practicing for a while you will see your drawings evolve. If you have trouble drawing feet or hands, practice only hands for a week, then the following week only feet. You will start to see significant improvement in your drawings.

Try to fill notebooks with these exercises. Use a pen (or markers—whatever you like), but DO NOT ERASE, this will really help when you are making final illustrations.

PENCIL DRAWING: When we started, I asked you to use a pen only for practicing quick sketches; this was so you wouldn't be tempted to erase your lines. Now we are moving to the drawing stage and I want to recommend my favorite pencil: **Prismacolor Col-Erase**. This pencil allows you to draw and erase easily; you can use virtually any technique with it and that is why I use it to draw all of my illustrations.

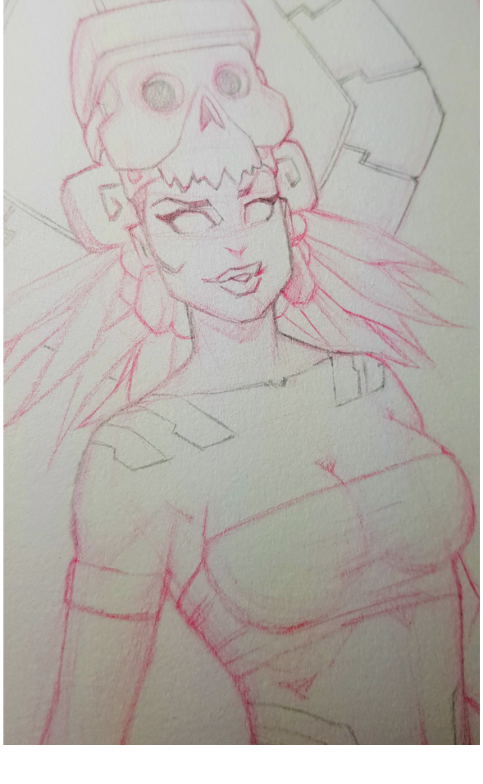


BEGINNING MY CHARACTER: I always begin with the structure of the head. Even from the start, you can see I use the center line as reference in the structure of my character.



DARKEN LINES: At this stage, I begin to emphasize areas I think are ready, darkening them with a graphite pencil. For this I use a 4-H pencil, which has a hard lead and will leave less graphite on the paper. This way I can work without smudging the paper.







ADDING COLOR: I use Koi watercolors on Canson XL paper. First I add a base color—in this case I work on the skin tones. While applying the base color I establish highlights.

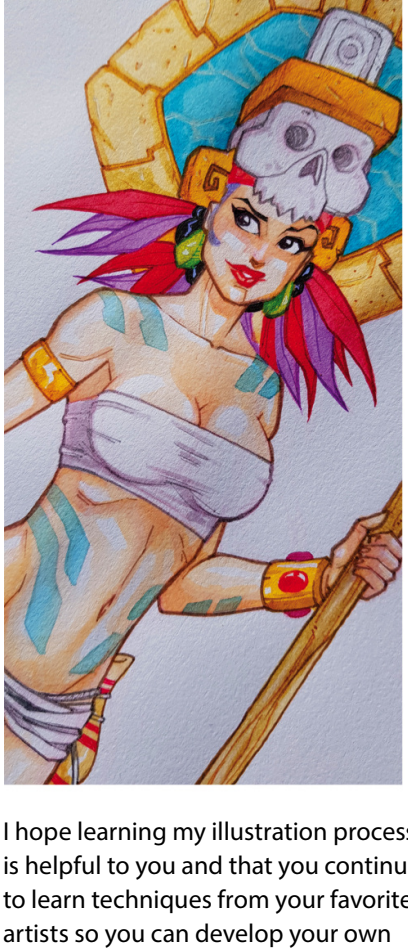


Watercolor is painted light to dark; I add layers to create volume. Typically I use cool tones for shadows, but for skin I use warmer colors. After the skin tones I add details.



FINALIZING THE ARTWORK: At this point, the traditional methods used to create my illustration are complete. But to be ready for printing, the artwork must be a digital file. The strong light used in scanning would degrade my watercolor painting, so I prefer to take a photo. There are various software choices to work with photo files—I use Photoshop to work with my digital image.

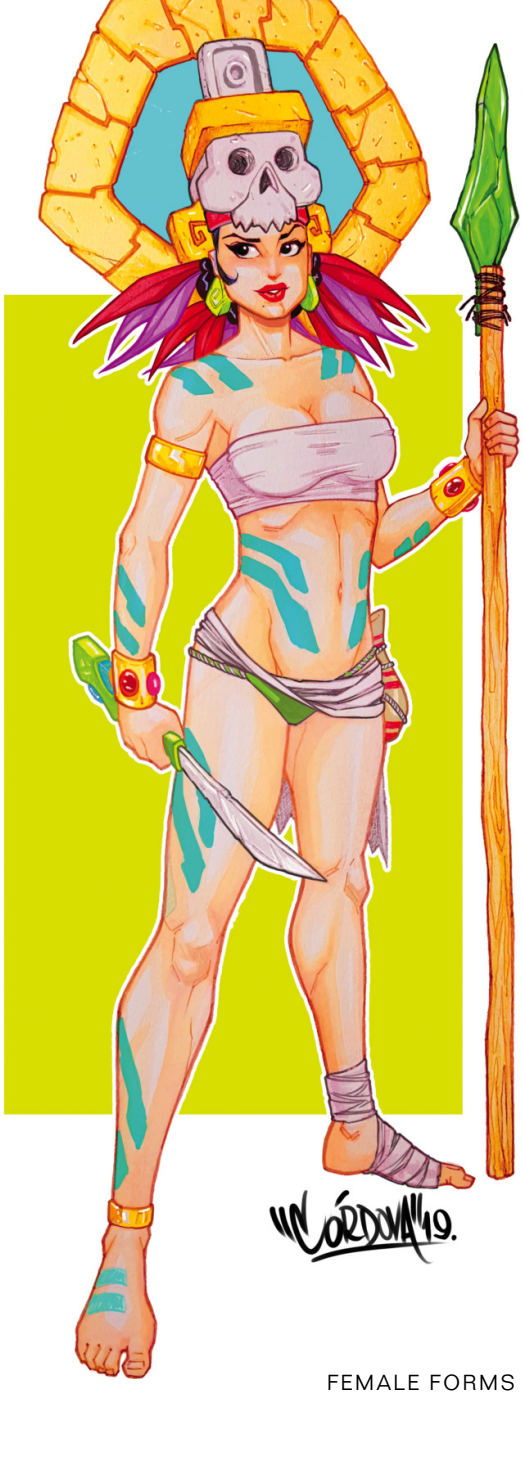
Now our artwork is finished!

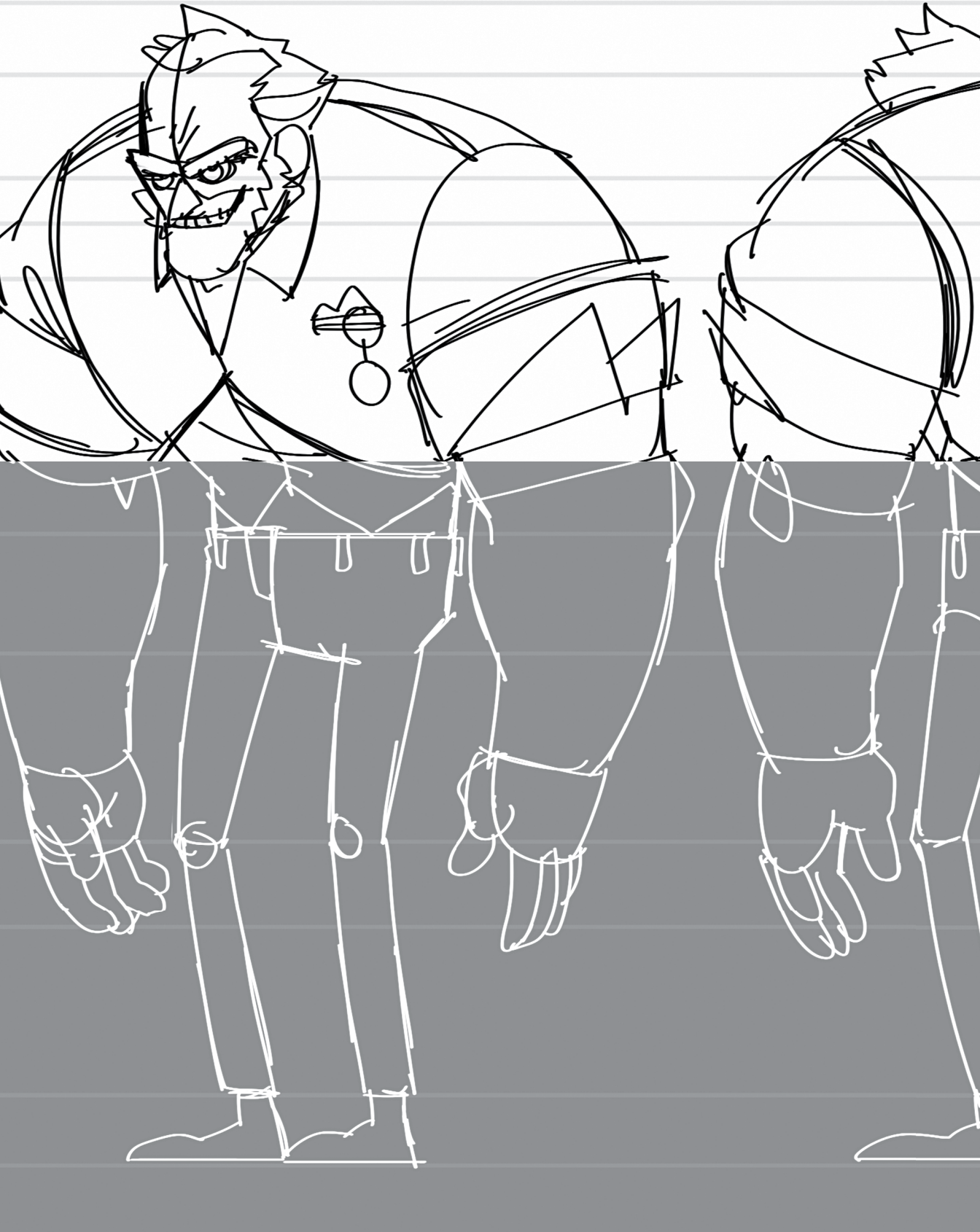


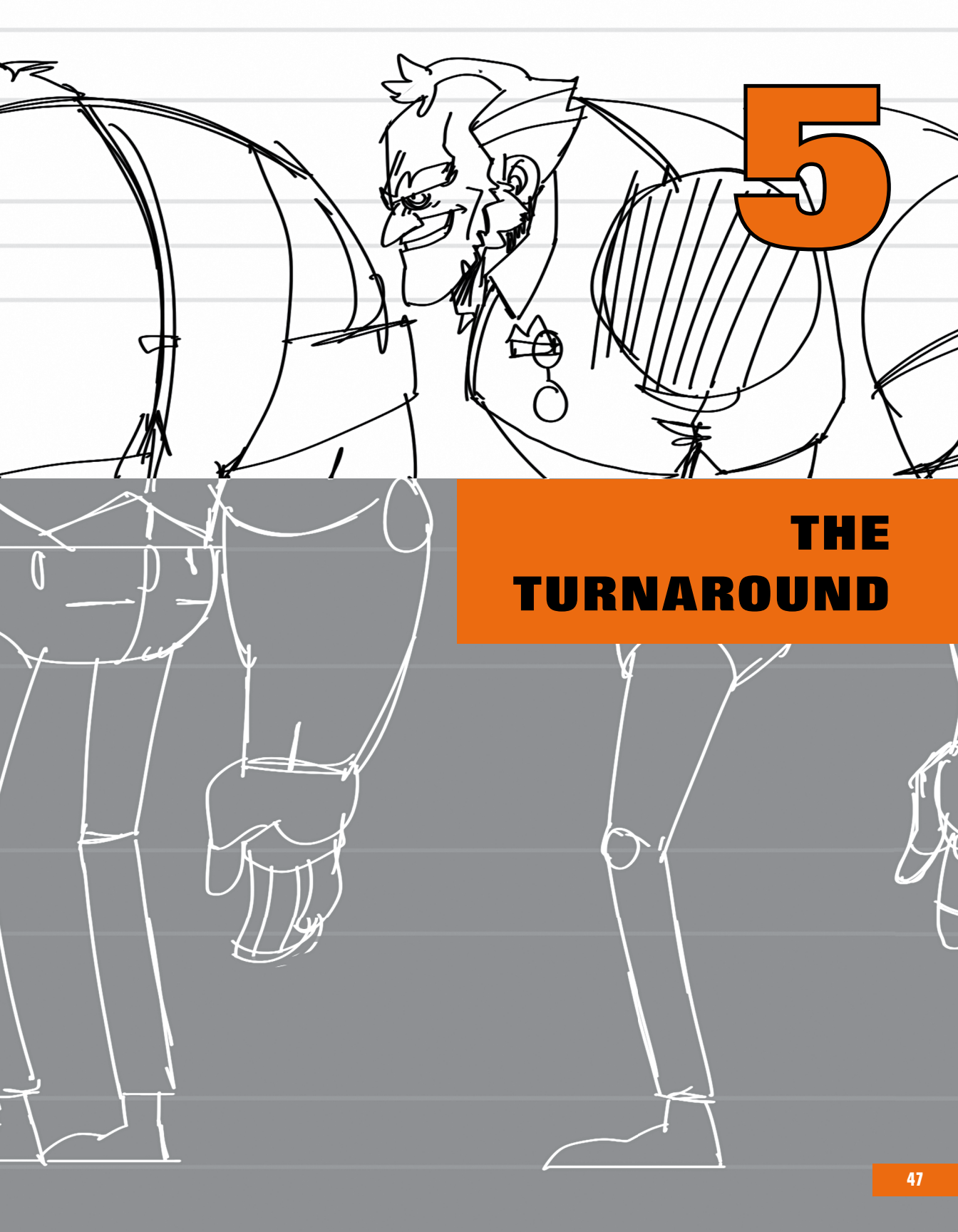
I hope learning my illustration process is helpful to you and that you continue to learn techniques from your favorite artists so you can develop your own unique style.

Most important of all, practice every moment you can, taking time to learn and improve on any anatomical areas that are difficult for you.

I hope to see your work soon!







5

THE TURNAROUND

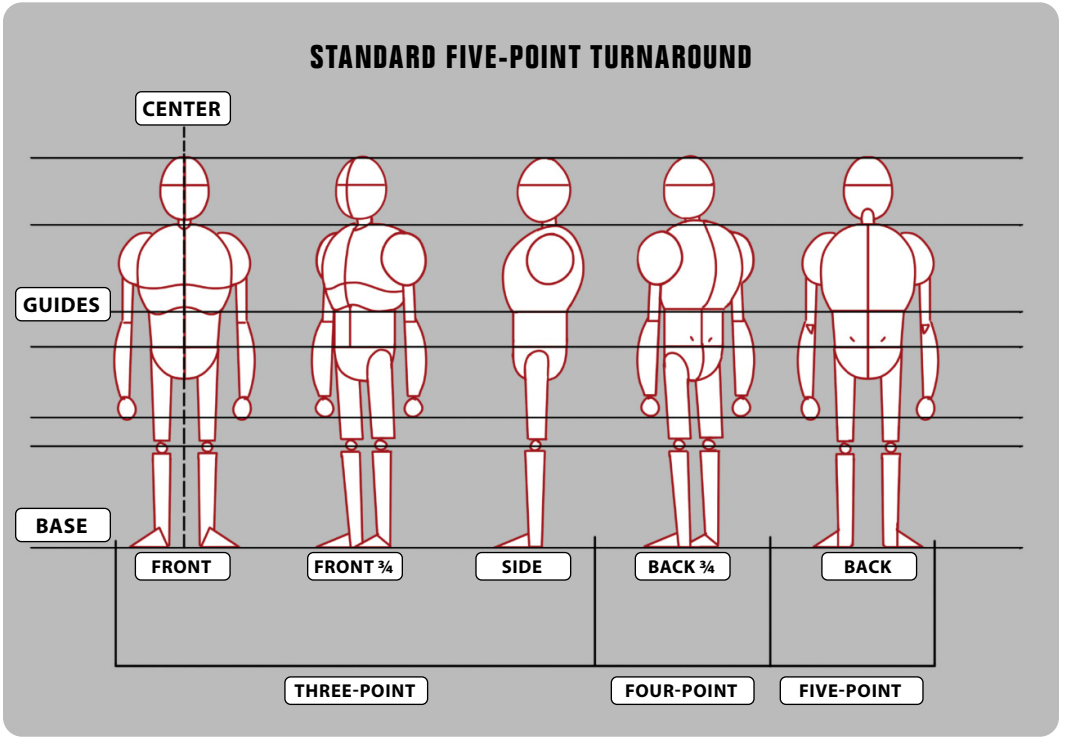
THE TURNAROUND

WITH MICHAEL BILLS

What are turnarounds? In short, a turnaround is a visual reference for a design from at least three angles (front, side, and back). It allows you to quickly view features in a design, like small details and proportions, while they are still on the model. Turnarounds are instrumental to character designers, not only to help an artist better understand their own design, but to more effectively communicate how a character looks to a client.

To understand the value of creating a turnaround, you need to consider how a design will be used in production. For example, a character designed for a video game travels down a pipeline to other artists who use it to create a 3D model. Providing these artists with multiple views removes a lot of guesswork, allowing them a much smoother creation process. In the comic industry, turnarounds can be used to help artists keep characters visually consistent from panel to panel as angles and poses change. The animation industry is very similar, where turnarounds help to ensure characters remain accurate frame to frame and scene to scene.

It's important to note that turnarounds aren't exclusively for characters. While that is the focus for this tutorial, the same process can be used to reference anything from multiple angles.



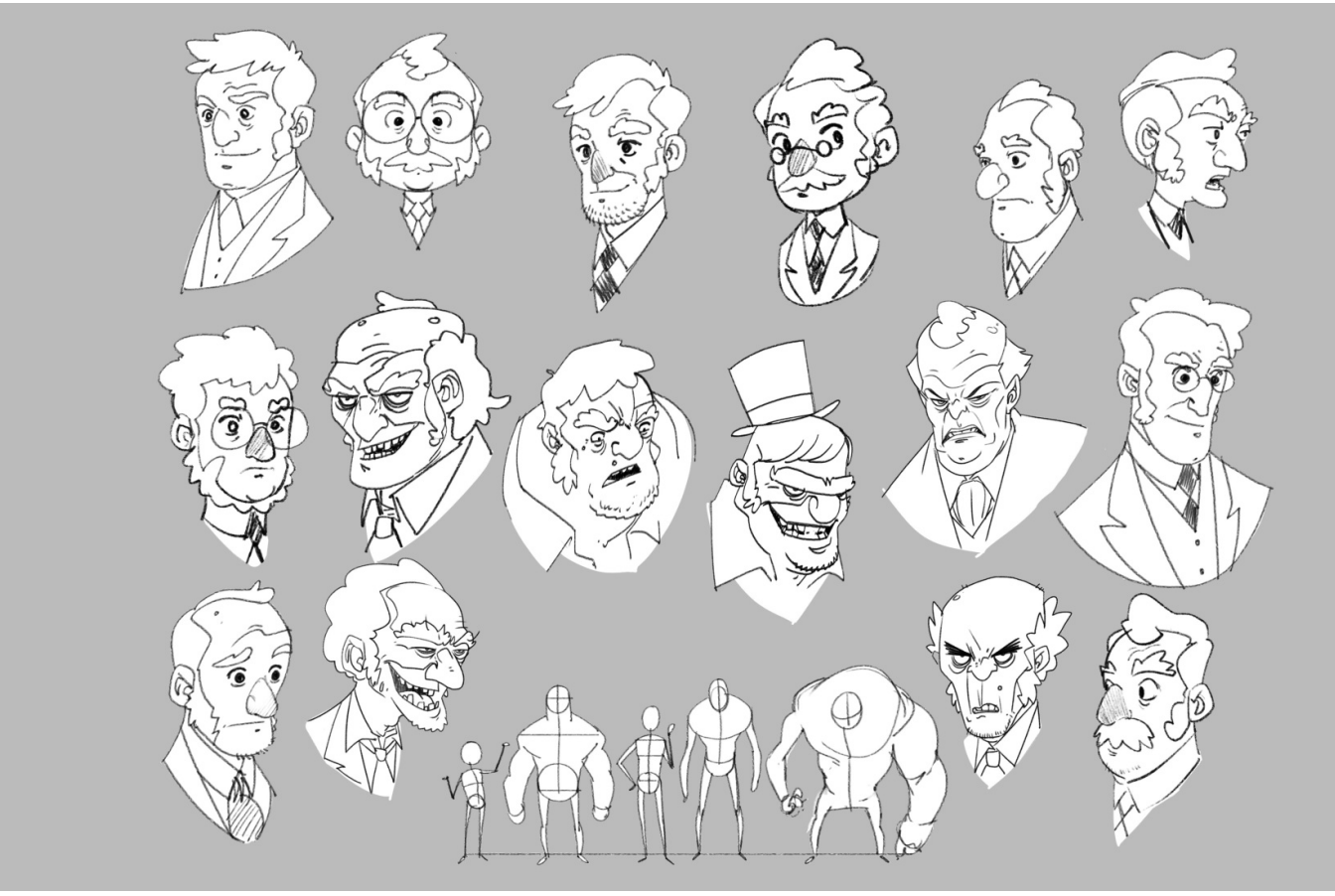
OVERVIEW

As mentioned, a turnaround gives you views of a character from at least three angles from the three-point turnaround to the four-point turnaround, and then to the standard five-point turnaround (front, back, side, front ¾, and back ¾).

When setting up a turnaround, you want to start with the ground plane. This is where your character's feet will be planted. A vertical line will indicate the center of your character and serve as the axis of rotation for the design. Horizontal guide lines are used to keep the shapes of your character properly aligned across the different angles—the sign of a successful turnaround.

DESIGN: Before you jump in and draw a turnaround, you need a character—in this case two characters. For this tutorial I decide to use Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. I have various incarnations of the characters in the back of my mind, but I choose to keep it simple and place them in the early 1900s.

I start with the characters' heads, loosely sketching ideas for Dr. Jekyll and then move to Mr. Hyde. Since they are one in the same, I attempt to design various Hyde heads as they transform from Dr. Jekyll. At the bottom of the page, I quickly rough out a few body types to prepare for the next step.



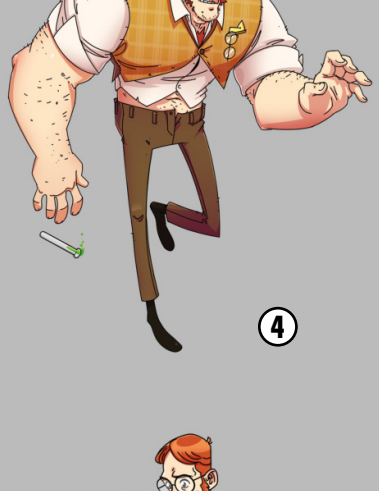


CHARACTER SKETCHES: Using the heads and features I like best, I expand into three sets of characters with varying proportions. I want to make sure certain details and features from Jekyll make it over to Hyde, keeping in mind things like clothing will change as the body suddenly transforms into something wildly different.

I decide option 3 is the design I like the most. Dr. Jekyll is too cartoony in versions 1 and 2. The first Hyde looks brutish and the second more sinister, but I think the third is a nice combination, while not too drastic a change from Jekyll.



FINAL CHARACTER DESIGNS:
From here I move to final designs, continuing to make adjustments and add details, borrowing from the other designs here and there. Starting with (1) clean line, then (2) moving on to flat colors, (3) shading, and then (4) final touches like highlights and a simple plaid texture for the vest. Full disclosure—with glasses and red hair, I may have injected a bit of myself into the final look.

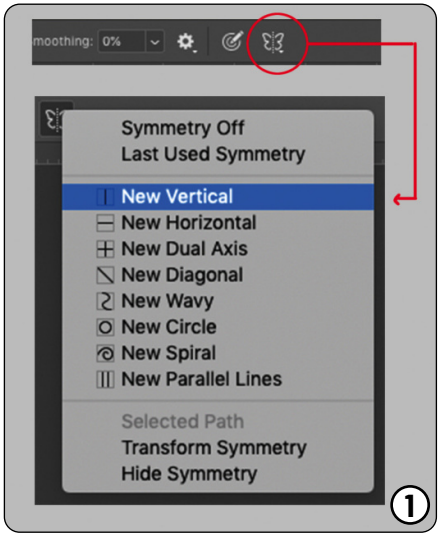




FINAL CHARACTER DESIGNS

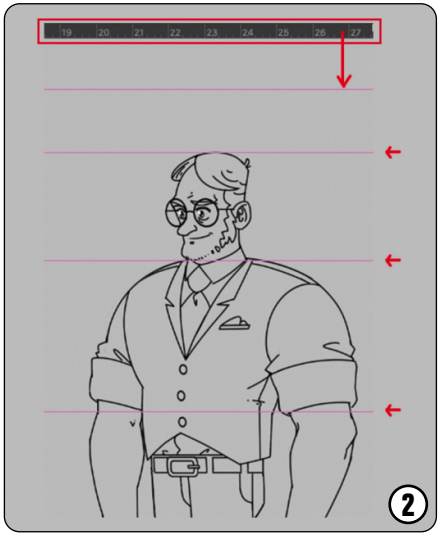
MAKING A TURNAROUND

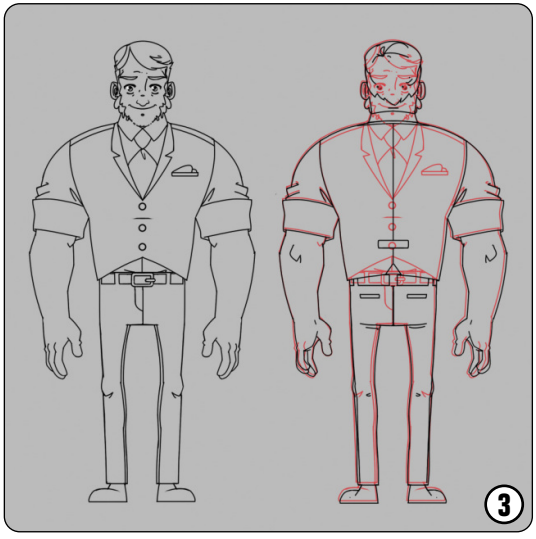
I work primarily in Photoshop, so the following steps give you an overview of how I make turnarounds using this program. The basic concepts are applicable regardless of the medium or program used. Your turnaround, unless otherwise specified, should be in a neutral pose. A neutral pose is important, because the turnaround establishes the proportions of your character without the need to account for bent limbs or dynamic poses.



TIPS BEFORE YOU GET STARTED

1. Remember to use the *Symmetry* tool to make your life a bit easier when working on front and back views.
2. Using the keyboard on a PC, press the keys *Control+R*, or if you use a Macintosh *Command+R* to enable the ruler tool. Pull down guide lines from the ruler at the top to quickly check alignment.
3. An easy way to speed up the process for your ¾ and front/back views is to copy the first image and use the silhouette to establish general proportions for the next image.

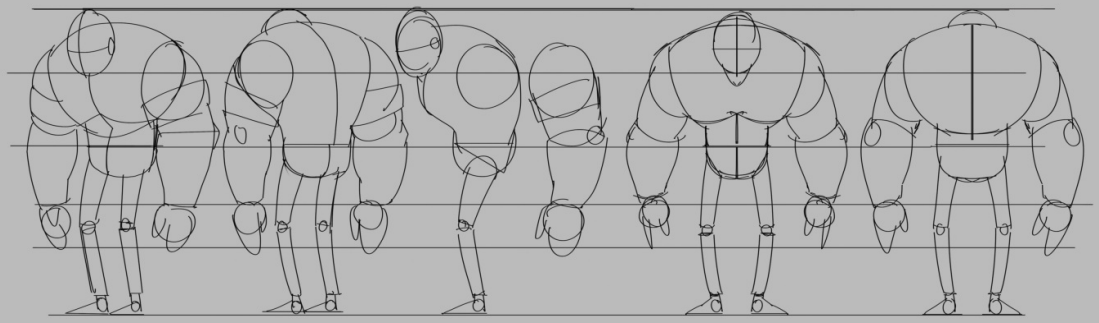


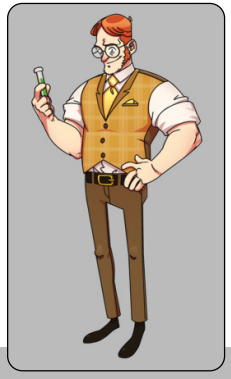




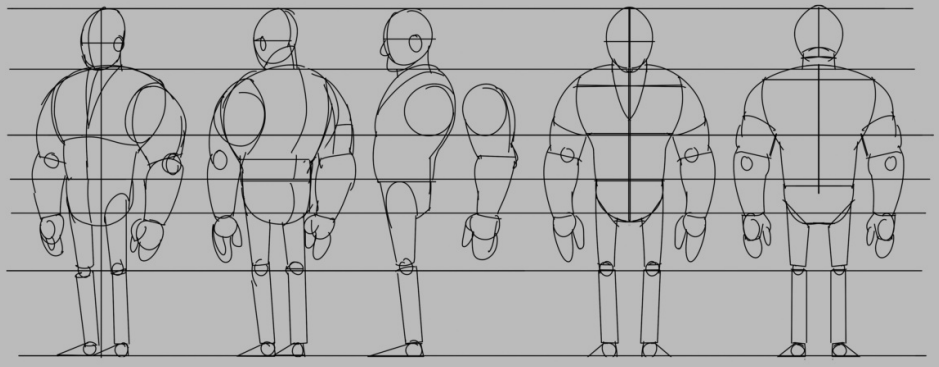
STEP 1 – START WITH SHAPES

Using your character designs as a point of reference, start your turnaround by establishing the basic shapes that make up your characters.





There's no rule for what angle you start with. Because I drew Jekyll and Hyde in a front ¾ angle, I decide to start with that angle. From there, I move to the other angles, using the horizontal guide lines to keep them consistent.



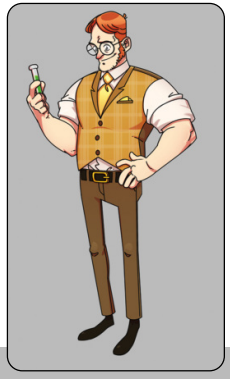
STEP 2 – ROUGH IN THE CHARACTER

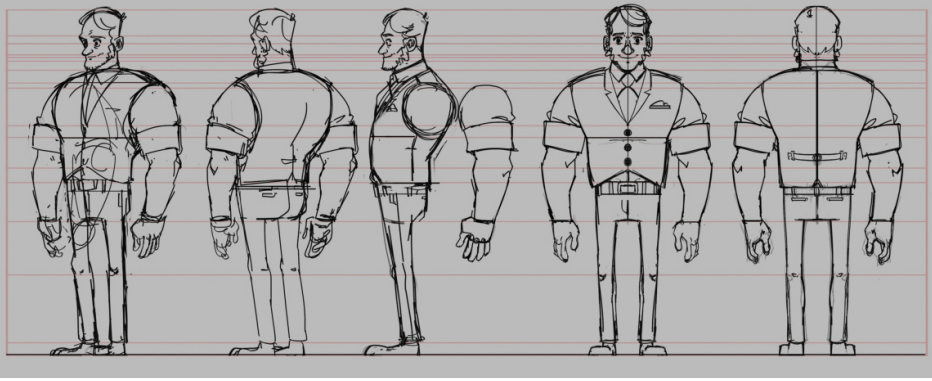
The shapes provide the groundwork for the next step, which is roughing in the character.





Again, as you work your way from angle to angle, use the horizontal guides to keep things in place. If you work in Photoshop, using the *Symmetry* tool can be handy for working on front and back views.

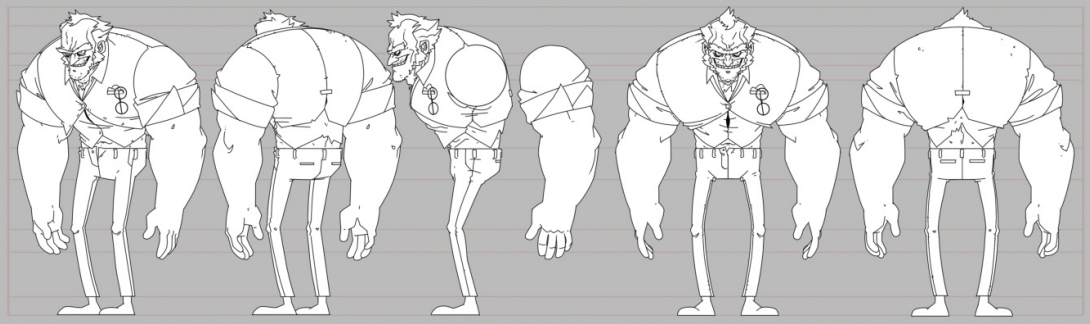


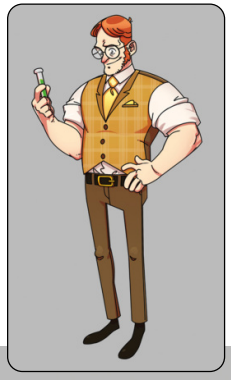




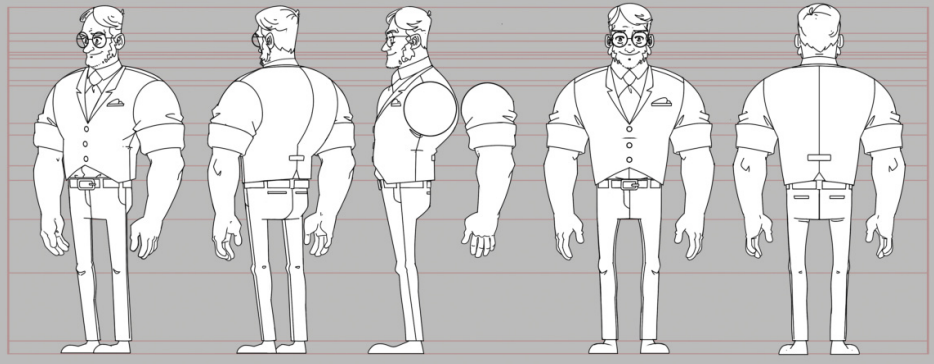
STEP 3 – LINE ART

Once the characters are roughed in, and you're happy with how they line up, the next step is to create clean line art.





Remember to reference your guide lines as you progress, making sure everything is visually consistent. To keep things clean and clear, I'm using a dark and dense line weight.



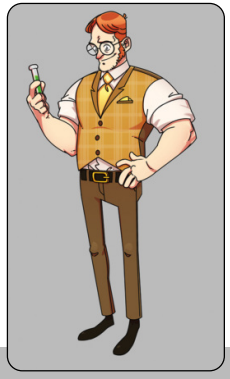
STEP 4 – FINALIZING

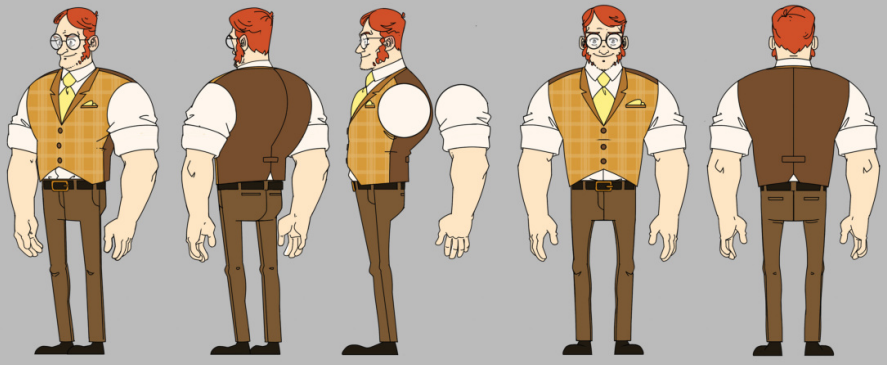
You're on the home stretch now—from here you get to decide how to finish off your turnarounds.





Depending on what a client asked for, you may need to provide finished renderings for each view in the turnaround, or only line art. I normally choose to complete a turnaround with either shading—to better communicate volume—or flat color. In this case, I am finishing using flat color.





LESSON: DRAWING A TURNAROUND

Now it's your turn—start with your favorite character design or create a new one. (Remember to review the tips on page 53 before you begin.)

STEP 1 – BASIC SHAPES:

- **First create your horizontal guides for reference.** Refer to your character design and draw in the basic shapes that make up your character. You can start with any of the five angles.

STEP 2 – ROUGH IN THE CHARACTER:

- **Sketch in the rough details of your character.** Work from angle to angle, using the horizontal and center guides for consistency.

STEP 3 – CLEAN LINE ART:

- **Block in the character's shape with flat white, then outline with clean dark lines.** Check the silhouette shape with your guides to make sure your design is consistent through the turnaround.

STEP 4 – FINAL DETAILING:

- **Now you are ready to add color, shading, and the finer details to your character.** Continue to use the guides while you add details like clothing.

How did your turnaround turn out? As you create new characters, come back and practice this process to build on your skills. Have fun drawing!

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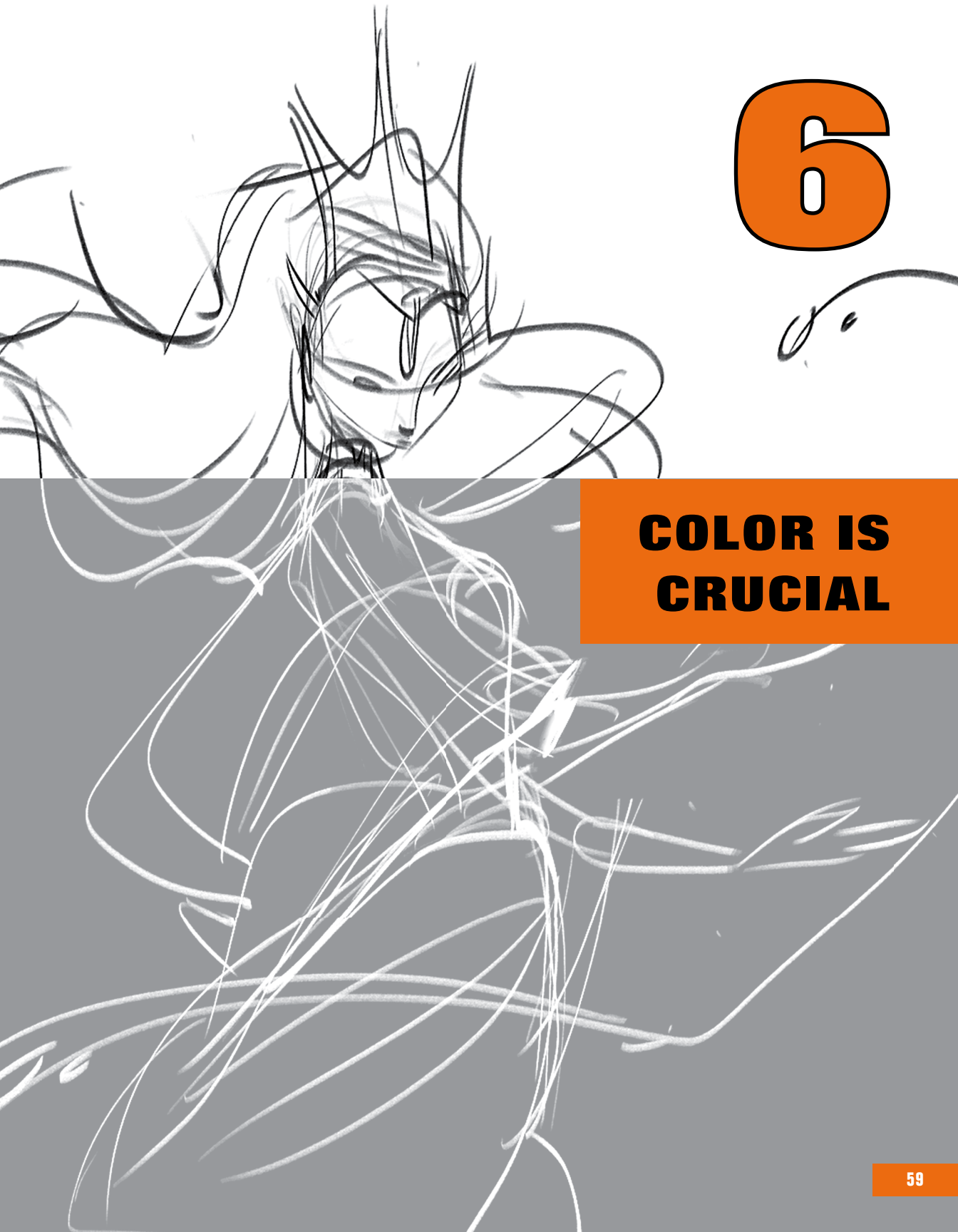


6

COLOR IS CRUCIAL

COLOR IS CRUCIAL

WITH LOISH

As a character designer, my main priorities are to work fast and generate ideas quickly. To do that, I leave the finer details until the very end of my workflow. For me, this is an efficient way of working—saves a lot of time and keeps me from overthinking or getting stuck on the details. When I create character designs for a client, it's important for the character to look appealing, interesting, and memorable. One of the main tools for achieving this is through color: I feel like an appealing and expressive color scheme is crucial for an interesting character.

RESEARCH

I start by researching my character—in this case, the Snow Queen. The original story focuses on two young children, Kai and Gerda, who become separated because Kai is drawn to the Snow Queen and is taken to her palace. The Snow Queen makes him forget his beloved Gerda and forces him to spend his days solving puzzles on an icy lake. She is an interesting villain; she likes doing her own thing—living in an icy palace and commanding her snow bees. She becomes a threat only when you decide to approach her, after which it becomes difficult to escape.

After reading the story, I reflect on the aspects of the character that are most interesting to me. The Snow Queen is comfortable in the freezing cold, and even thrives in it, which in itself is a fairly creepy personality trait—the opposite of a relatable human being who shivers in the cold. Because Kai feels drawn to her, I feel like she needs a seductive quality to her, something hypnotizing and beautiful. She is powerful and her natural habitat is the cold snow, so her pose and color scheme need to reflect that.

I also think about the moment in the story where this character appears for the first time. She's standing in the snow where the snowflakes gather, surrounded by her snow bees. I keep this moment in mind when creating my initial sketches.

SKETCHES

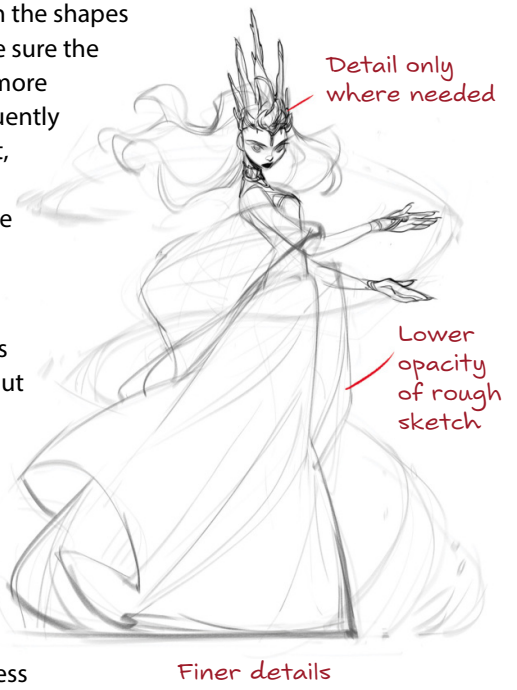
STEP 1 – ROUGHS: As soon as I get a sense of the character, I jump right into the drawing process. I try not to waste too much time overthinking or overanalyzing before setting down my first lines. I quickly start on my initial sketches, just to get my first ideas out. At this point, I'm not thinking about the details—I want to focus on the overall shapes of her design and the gesture and energy in her pose. My main challenge: How to make her look like a queen? She needs to be beautiful, but if I make her too girly or cute, she starts to look like a princess. So I'm trying out shapes and poses that give her a regal elegance.



STEP 2 – SKETCH DEVELOPMENT: I feel that this sketch is working out to be my best, mainly because of the energy created by the movement in her hair and clothing. So I take it to a new canvas and develop it further to create a full-body pose. At this point, I'm thinking about where I want the highest density of detail and where I want fewer details. It's good to have a balance of both for a strong character design.

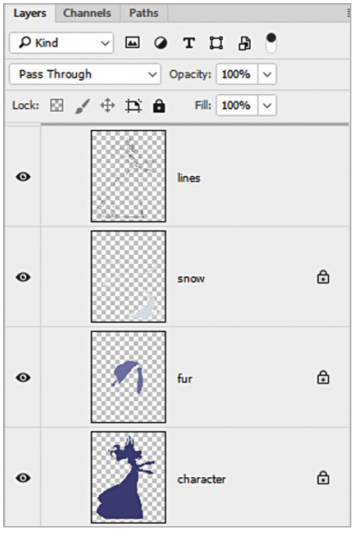
Then I create a new layer and start working more on the shapes and pose. The main challenge of this step is to make sure the energy from the original sketch doesn't get lost as more detail is added, so I switch the layer on and off frequently to compare it to the original sketch. Most important, I keep the rough sketch visible at a lower opacity underneath. I don't get rid of it at any point, because that would be a waste of those early expressive and energetic lines.

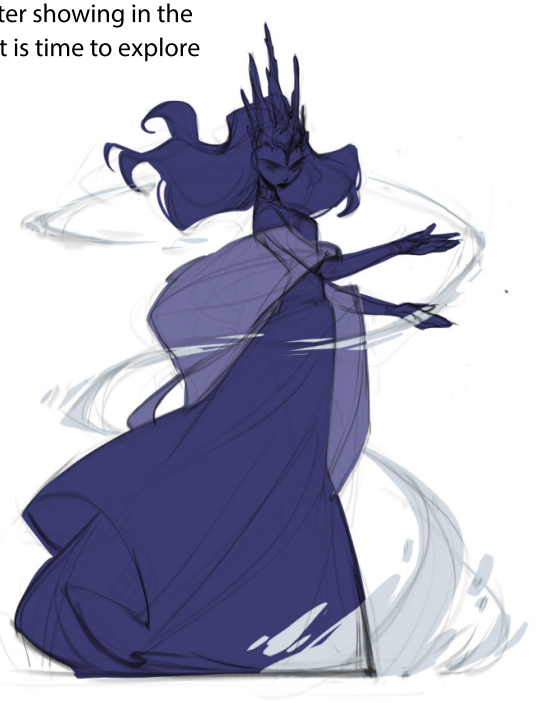
To finish this step, I work on some of the finer details in the higher-detailed areas, just enough to figure out where the colors need to go in the next step.

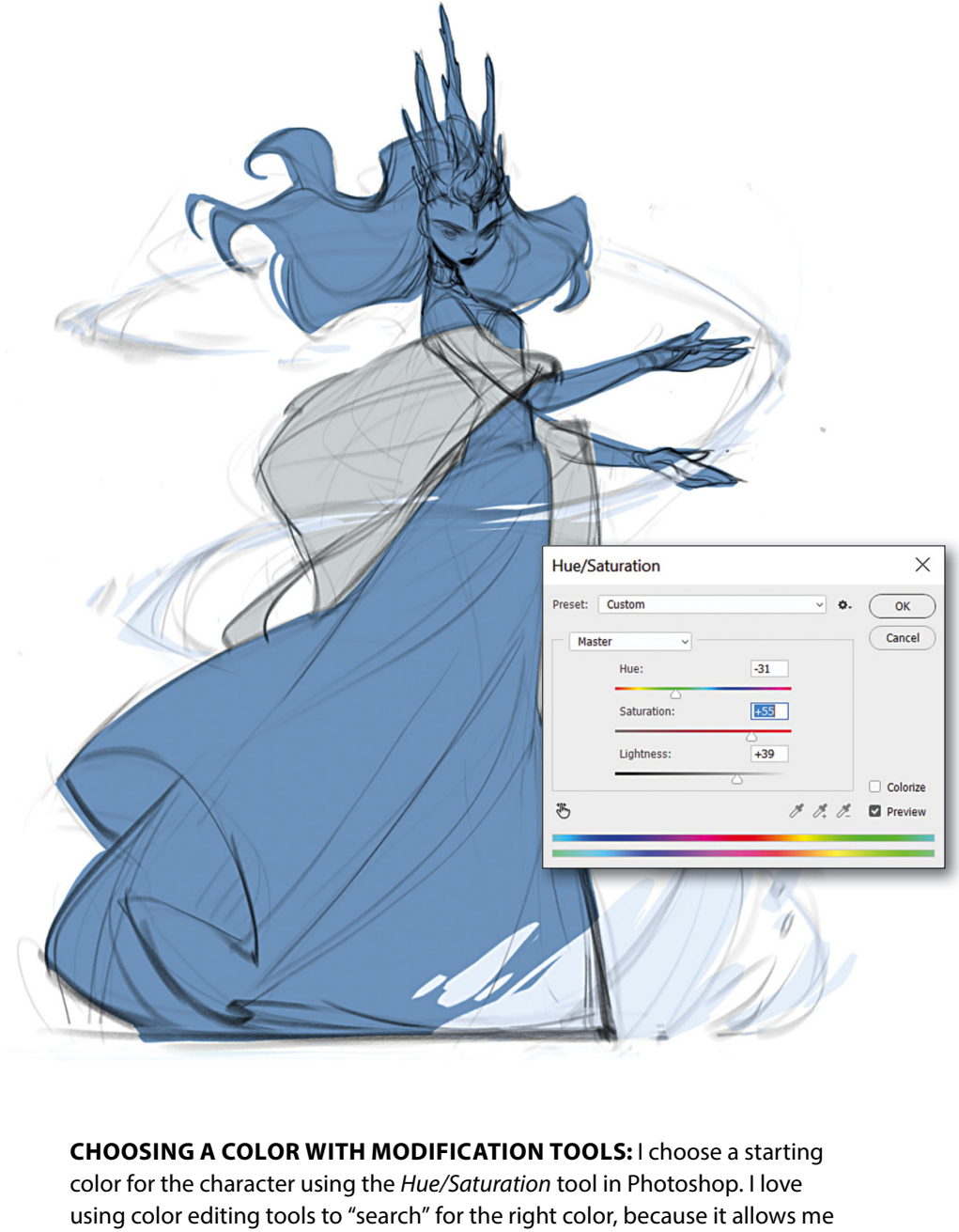


EXPLORING COLOR

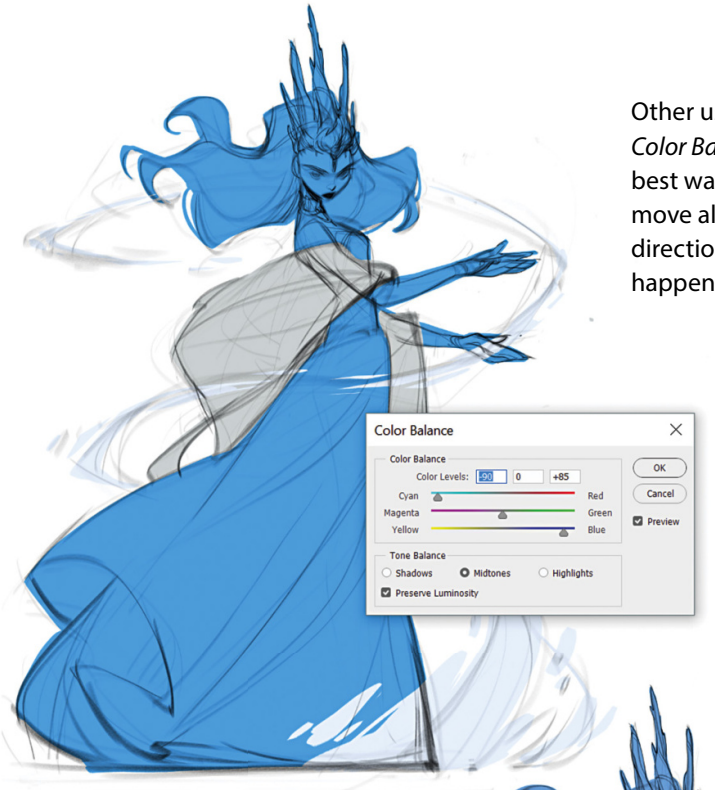
STEP 3 – ROUGH COLOR: Once I have the general shapes and pose complete, it's time to do some rough color explorations. I merge all of the lines together, including the original sketch. The roughness and messiness of these lines is not a problem at this point. I will paint over them in a later step. Next, I block in a separate color layer for the character, the fur, and the snow. Once I've done this, I can take a good look at the silhouette of the character. Is her pose still readable? Is the energy of the character showing in the silhouette? I feel like it's working well, so now it is time to explore some color combinations.







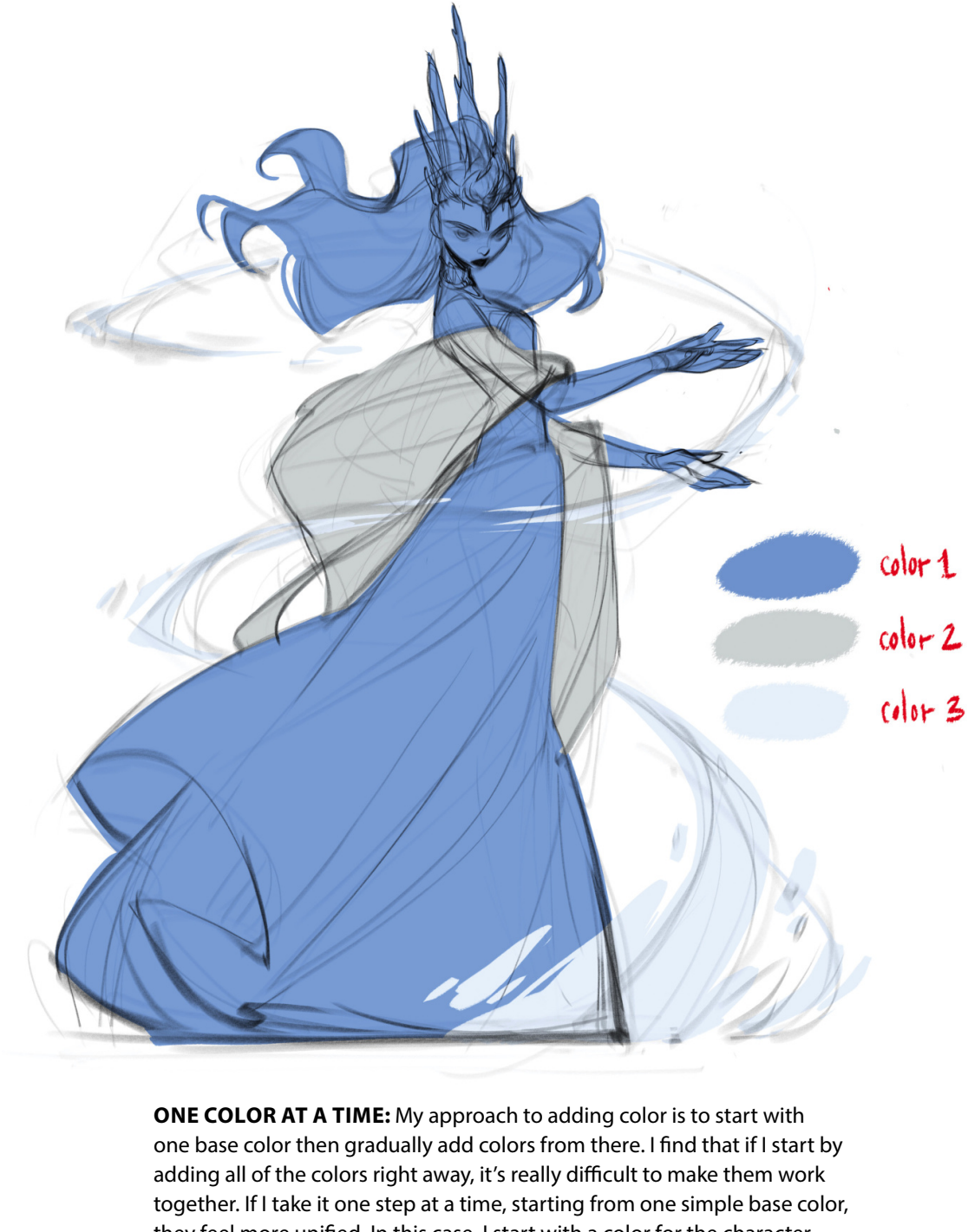
CHOOSING A COLOR WITH MODIFICATION TOOLS: I choose a starting color for the character using the *Hue/Saturation* tool in Photoshop. I love using color editing tools to "search" for the right color, because it allows me to use my intuition. I can shift the sliders and see how the colors gradually change, which leads me to the one that feels right to me at that moment.



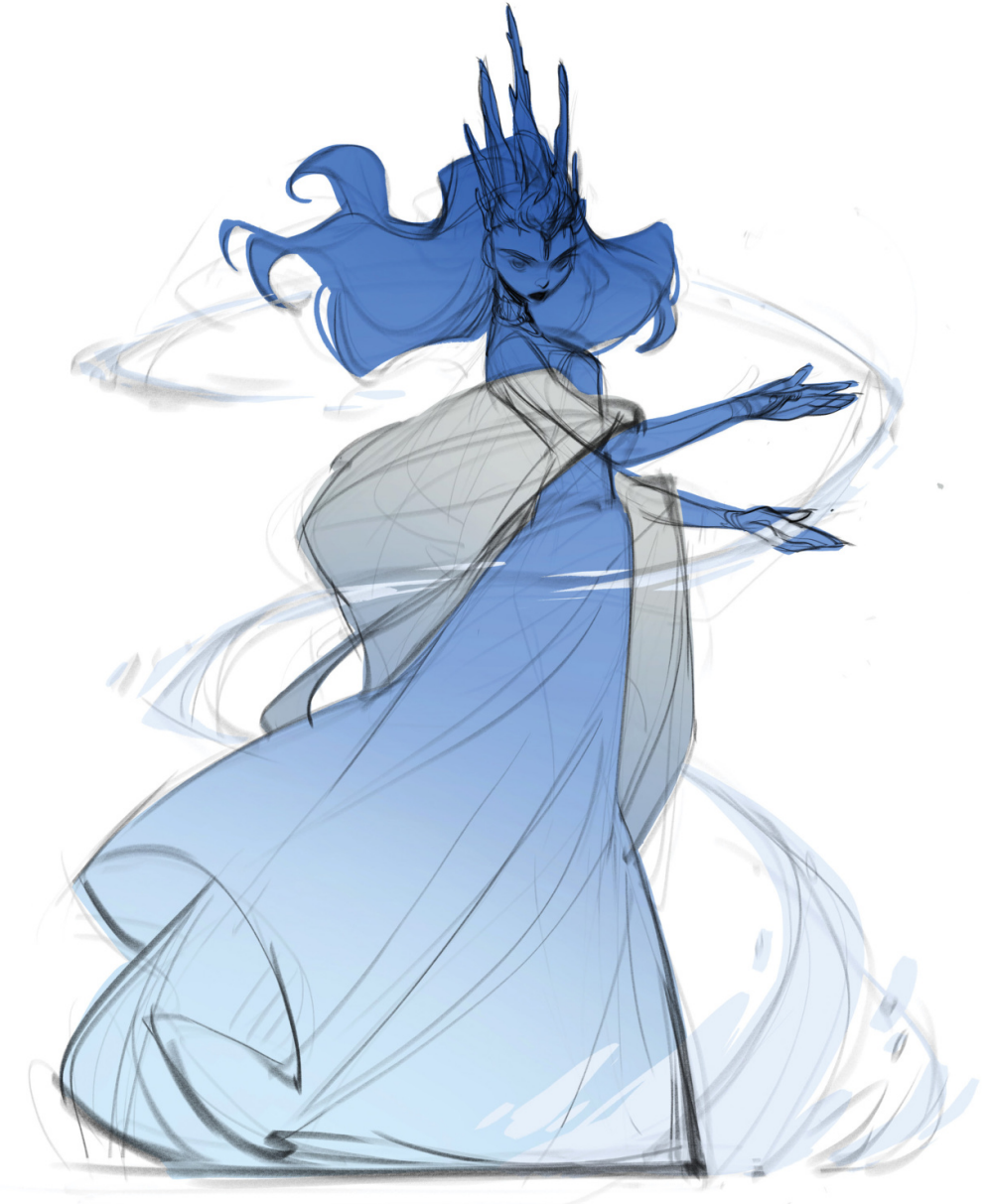
Other useful color editing tools are *Color Balance* and *Selective Color*. The best way to use these is to simply move all the sliders in random directions to see for yourself what happens!

Eventually you'll like what you see, and then you know that's the color to go with.

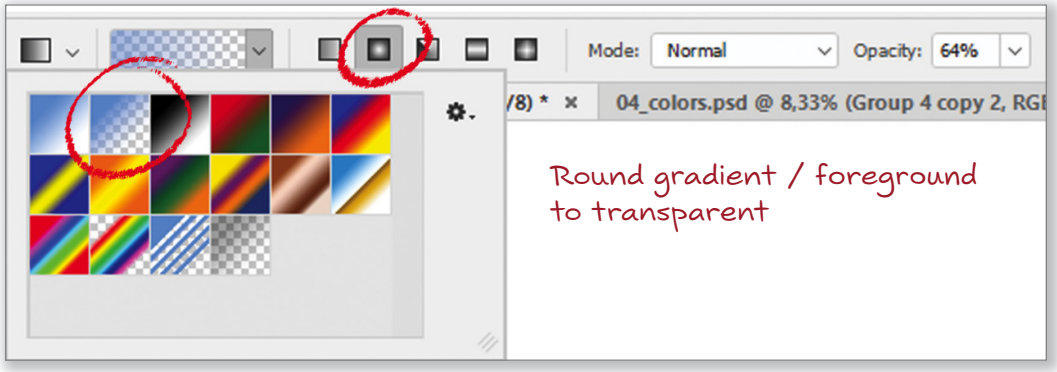




ONE COLOR AT A TIME: My approach to adding color is to start with one base color then gradually add colors from there. I find that if I start by adding all of the colors right away, it's really difficult to make them work together. If I take it one step at a time, starting from one simple base color, they feel more unified. In this case, I start with a color for the character, then search for the right fur and snow colors to match.



USING GRADIENT AND SOFT LASSO: Once I have a base color, I can start adding more color variation. I use the *Gradient* tool, which allows me to gently layer new colors on top of the base, and create color gradations which lead the eye around the image. (Tip: Be sure your layer has *Transparency* locked before using this tool.) I also use the *Feathered Lasso* tool, which allows me to select certain areas and tweak the colors in that area only, without creating hard or jagged edges. Using these tools, I layer colors on softly, which creates a lot of intermediate shades that I can later use for blending.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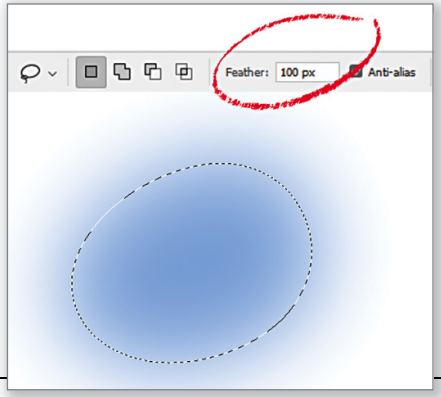
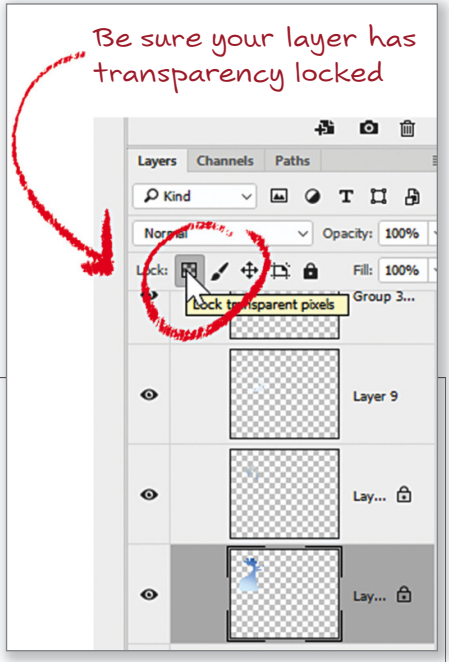

Feather:
100 px
Anti-alias


Be sure your layer has
transparency locked
Layers
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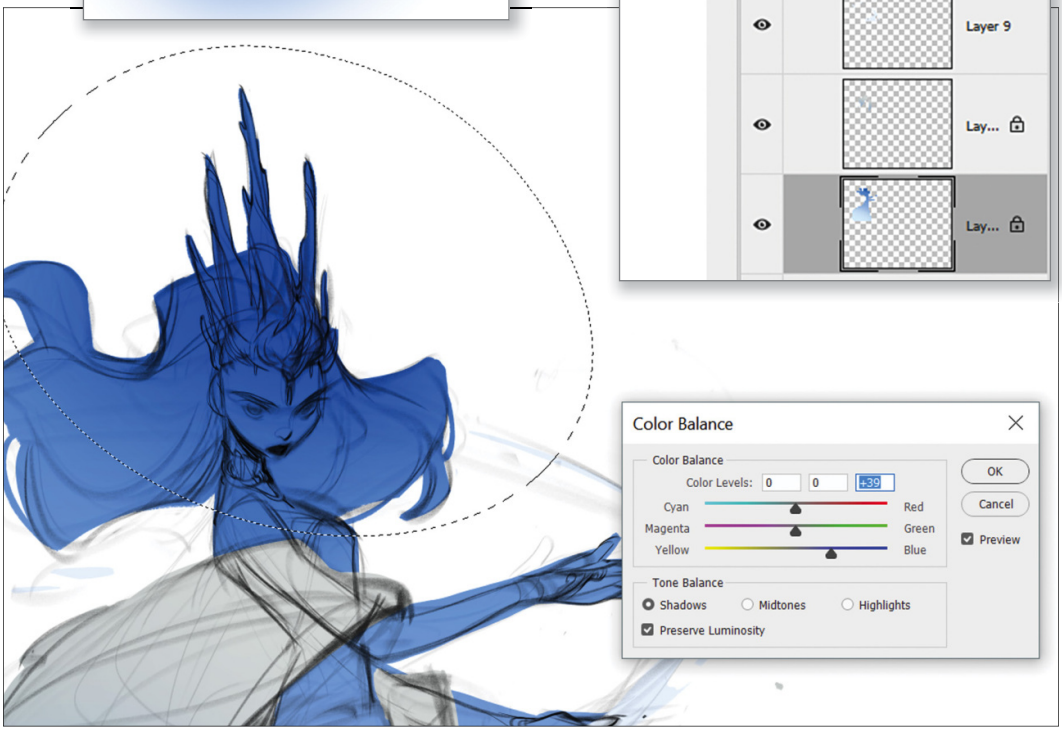

Color Balance
Color Balance
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OK
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Tone Balance
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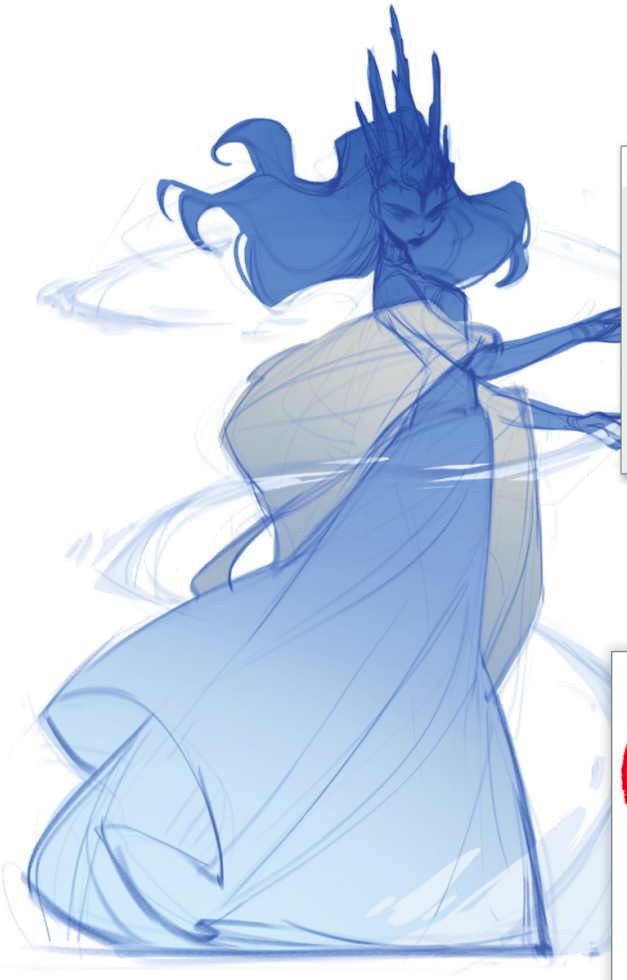
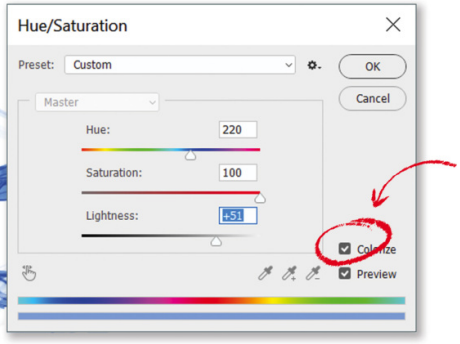
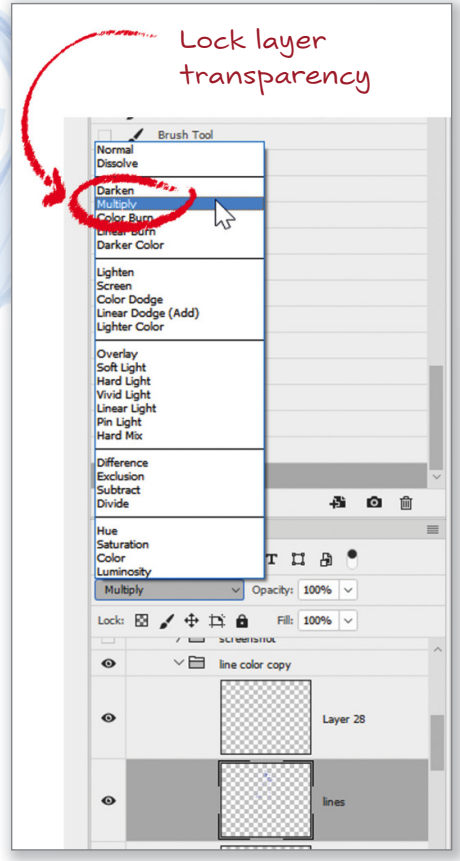
Highlights
Preserve Luminosity

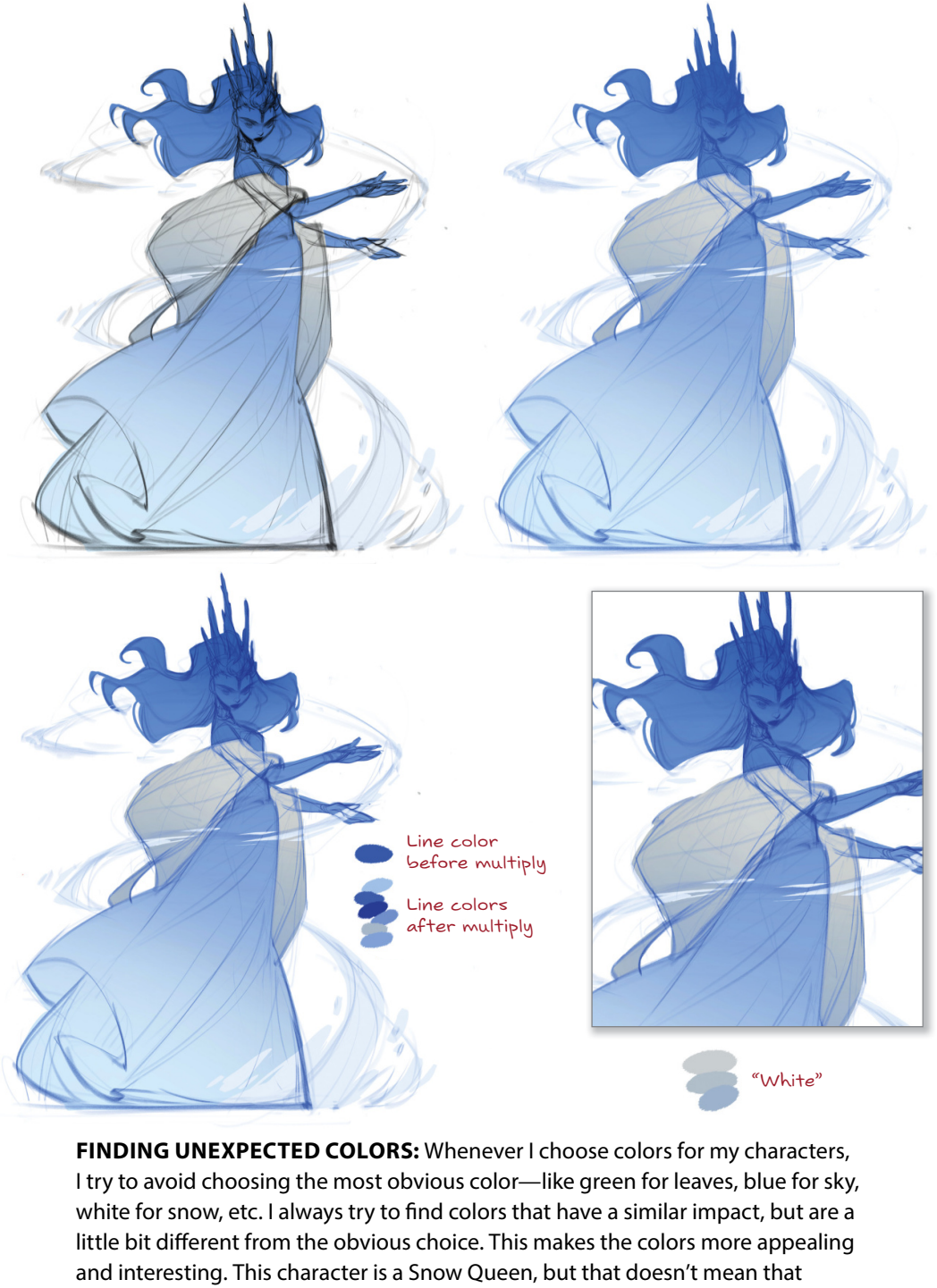




Click colorize box if lines are black.

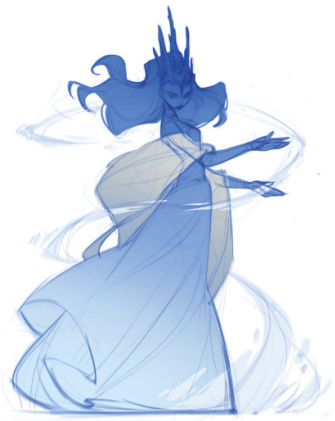


CHANGE THE LINE COLOR: Next, I set the line layer to *Multiply* and change the color of the sketch lines. **This is a crucial step in my process!** Black linework can really kill the vibrancy of the colors. Changing the line color to something more intense, like blue or pink, can have an enormous impact on the color scheme. It also interacts in an interesting way with the base colors below, creating new colors that I can later use to blend and detail. On darker areas, the lines will be darker and more pronounced; in lighter areas, the lines will be brighter, creating interesting accent colors. This step is an essential part of finding the right color scheme for the character. In this case, I choose a deep blue color, which further accentuates the icy tones in the base colors.

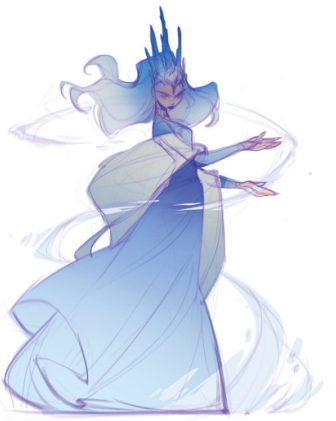


FINDING UNEXPECTED COLORS: Whenever I choose colors for my characters, I try to avoid choosing the most obvious color—like green for leaves, blue for sky, white for snow, etc. I always try to find colors that have a similar impact, but are a little bit different from the obvious choice. This makes the colors more appealing and interesting. This character is a Snow Queen, but that doesn't mean that her design should feature only white as the color. I'm searching for interesting alternatives to white, which you can see here in the color swatches for the fur.

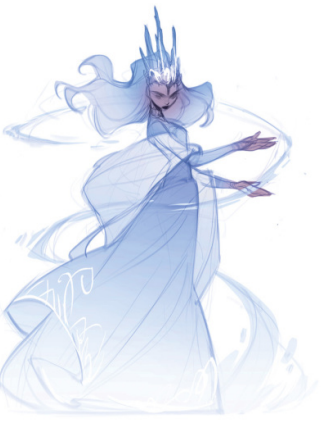
MAKE MULTIPLE COLOR SETUPS: Now that I've created one color palette, I repeat the steps and make a few more. I play around with different hues, combinations of dark/light, and particularly variations on line color. Each one has a unique effect on the character. My preference is for the fourth one, which has the light colors of snow and ice but still has something dark and mysterious.



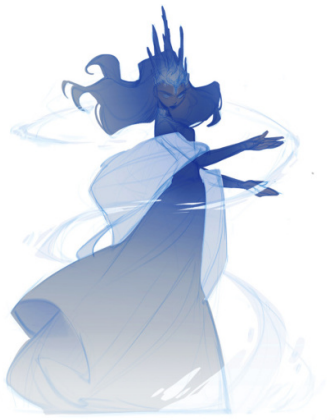
1) Too monochromatic



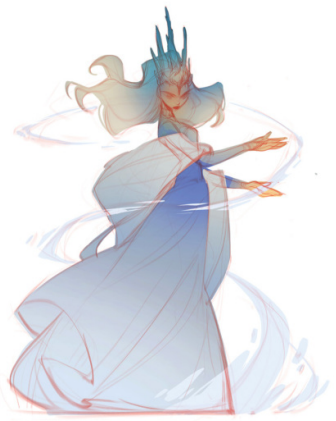
2) A little too colorful



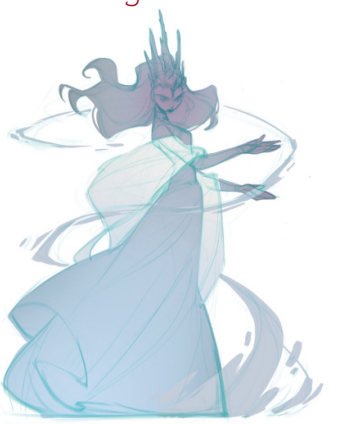
3) I like the colors, but too much of a "good witch" vibe



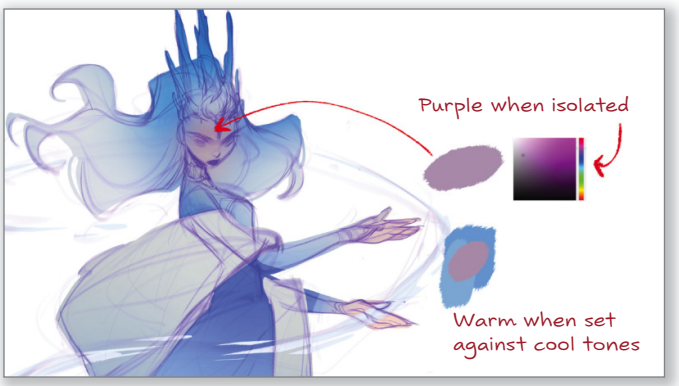
4) I like the dark face/hair



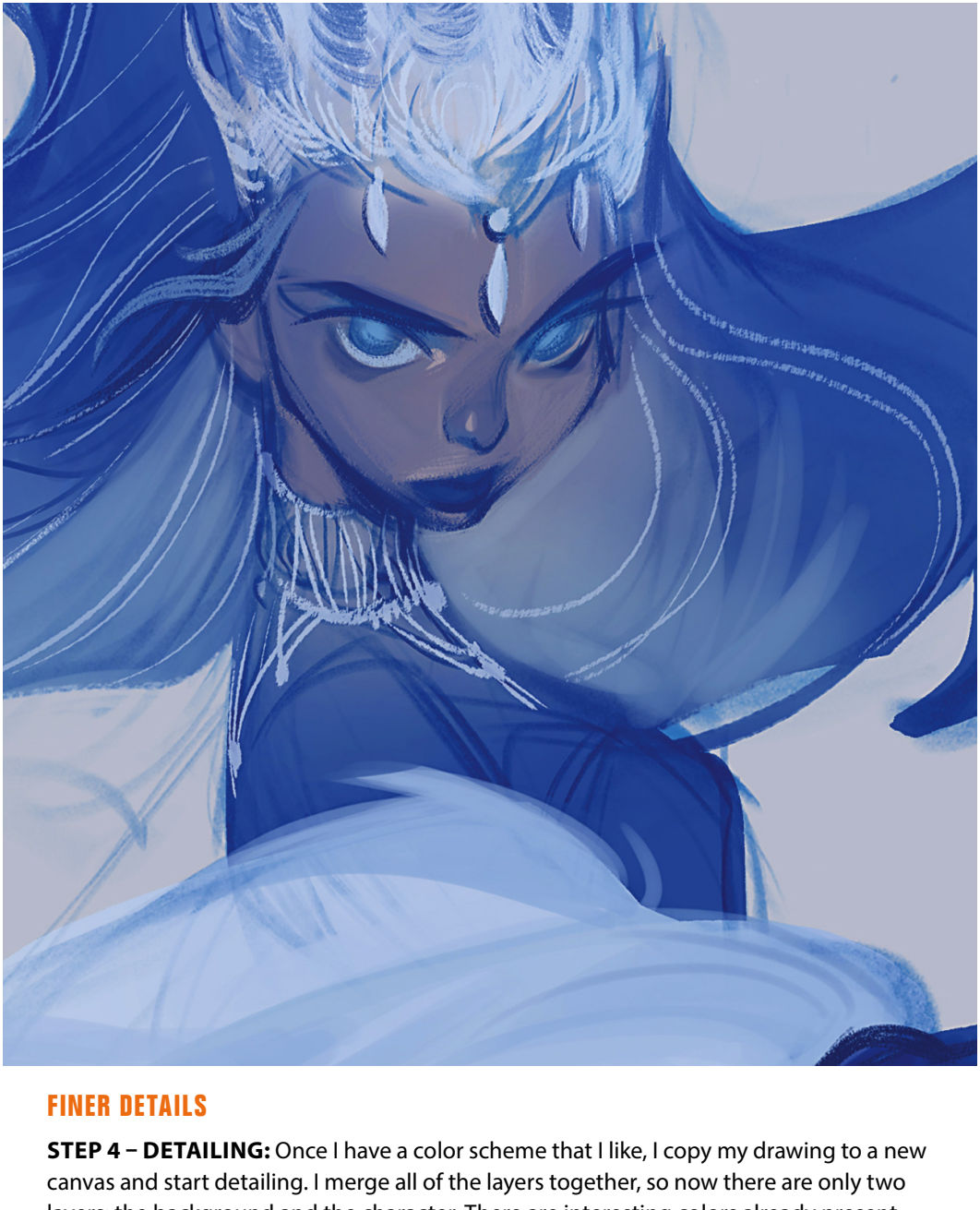
5) Warm tones, conflict with character description



6) Too minty



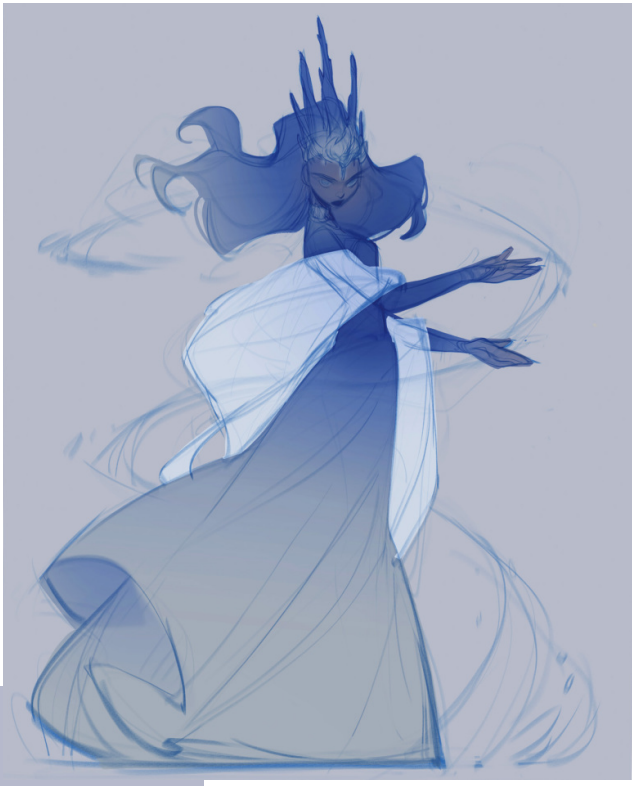
SEE COLORS AS RELATIVE: The way a color looks depends greatly on the other colors around it. A color that looks very cool or greyish when isolated, can appear as a warm hue when combined with blue or purple. I try to choose colors based on their relationship with the base color, which makes them feel more unified.



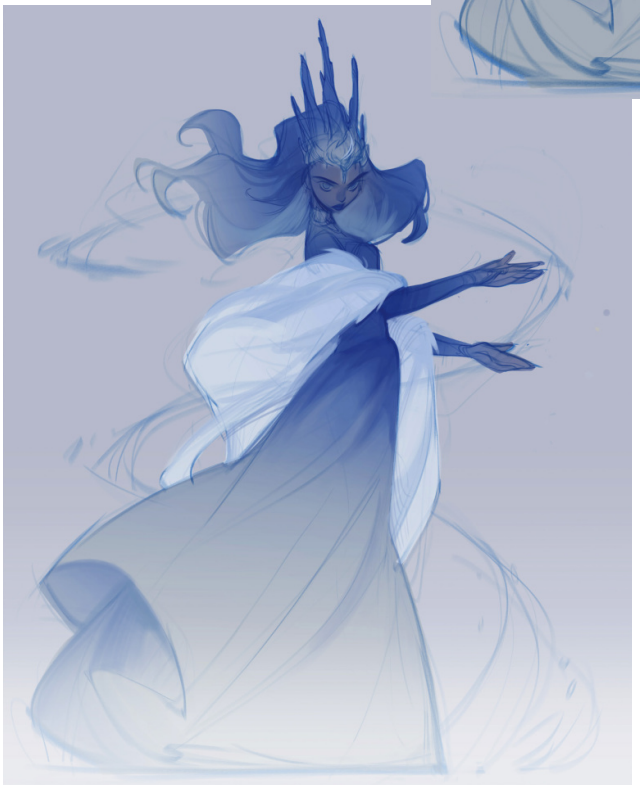
FINER DETAILS

STEP 4 – DETAILING: Once I have a color scheme that I like, I copy my drawing to a new canvas and start detailing. I merge all of the layers together, so now there are only two layers: the background and the character. There are interesting colors already present in the image that I can use to start blending and adding more definition. I zoom in and alternate between the *Eyedropper* and *Brush* tools in order to "sculpt with color." Because this character is living in an icy and snowy environment, I layer lighter details on top of the darker base, which gives a shimmering effect. I also add more decorative elements like sashes and jewelry to create movement and the feeling of icy wind.

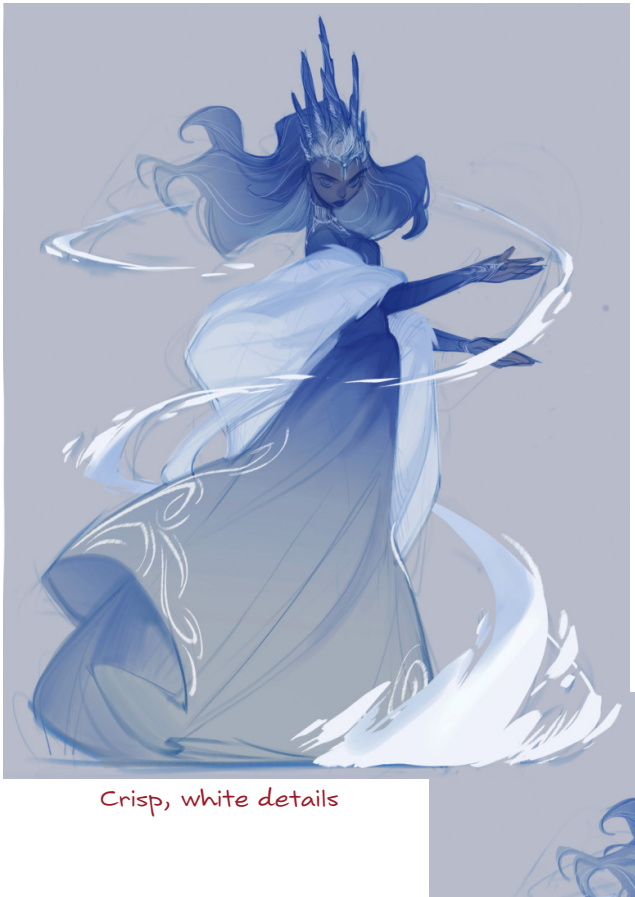
EDITING COLOR: As I paint, I continue to use the *Feathered Lasso* tool to tweak the colors and brightness of specific areas. I also continue to use color editing tools to tweak the color scheme—particularly *Color Balance* and *Selective Color*.



Rough color



Blending with soft brush

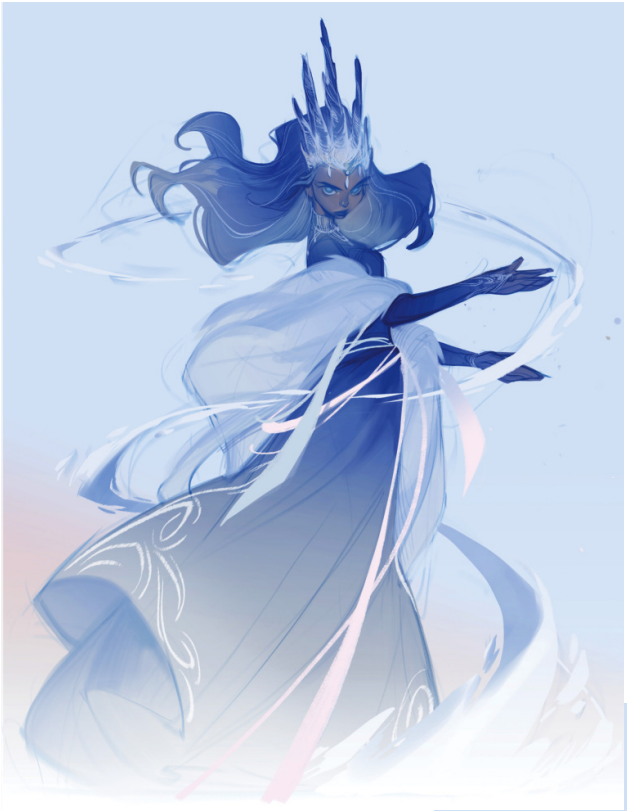


Crisp, white details

ADDING CONTRAST: As more details are added, the need for more contrast or color depth increases, which is why I continually adjust the colors as I paint. As a result, the color scheme changes and evolves throughout my process.

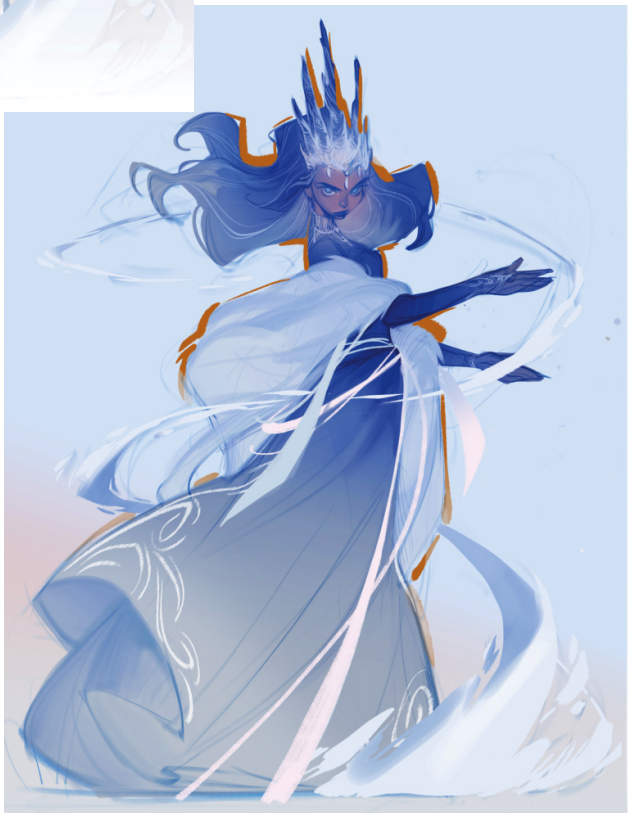


Painting the face and adding ribbons

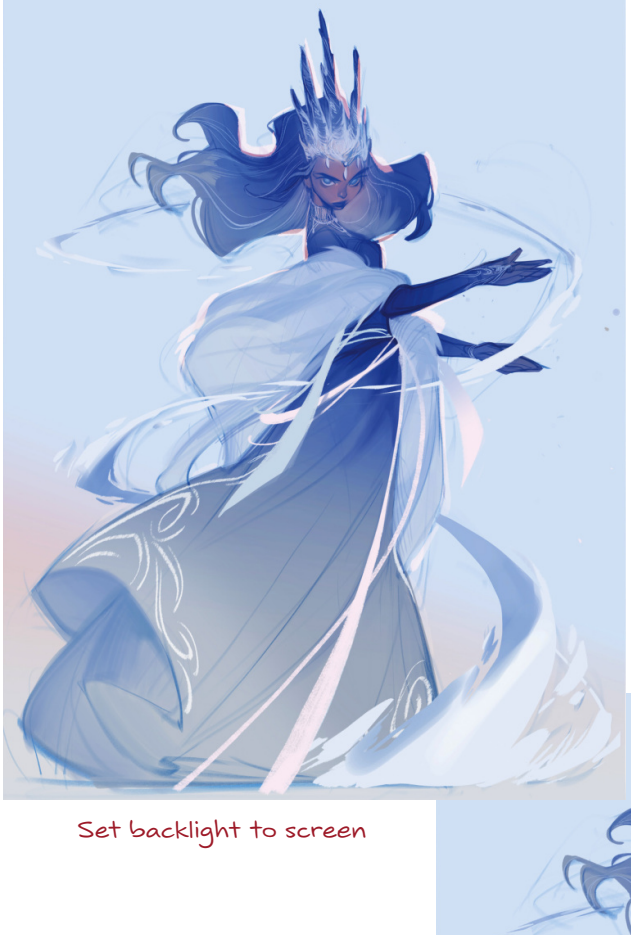


Adding gradients to background

STEP 5 – BACKGROUND AND LIGHT EFFECTS: I think the image is becoming quite monochromatic, with mostly blue hues, so I add a warm highlight coming from behind her head. This is to add some contrast to the color scheme—a combination of warm and cool tones works well to add balance to the colors, as well as intensifying the impact of the colors.

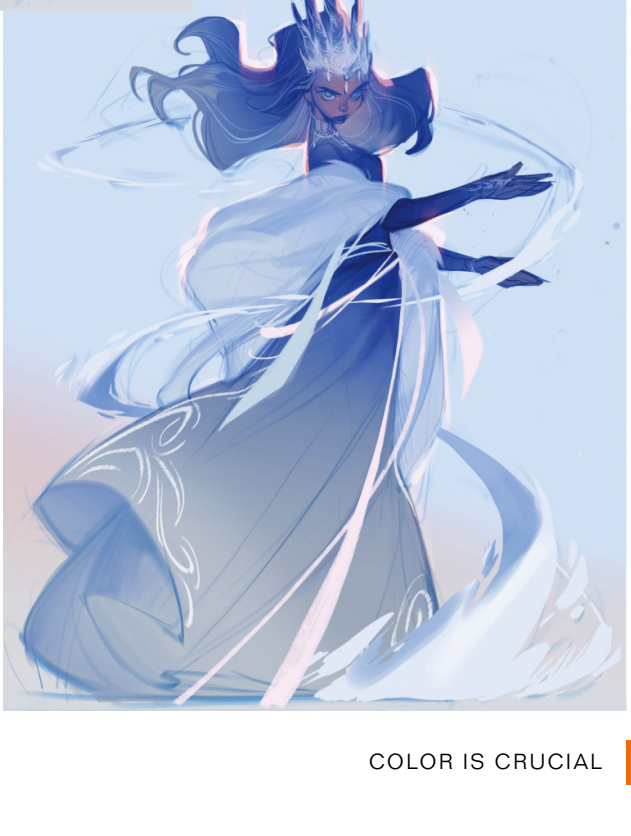


Backlight



Set backlight to screen

It also builds on the idea of her face and hair being dark and mysterious. I do this by drawing a highlight on a separate layer and setting that layer to *screen*. Then I duplicate the screen layer and apply a *motion blur* to it, softening the highlight.

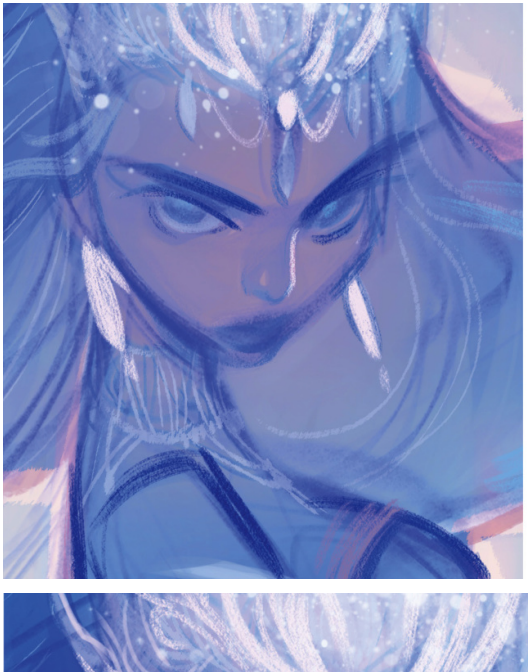


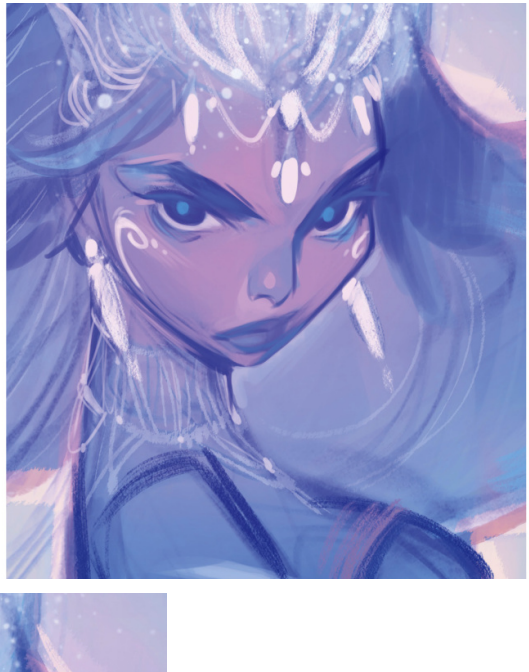
Duplicate

I also modify the background colors and add some gradients to intensify the effect of the Snow Queen rising from the snow. I use a speckly brush to add some snow effects to the swirl of snow around her.



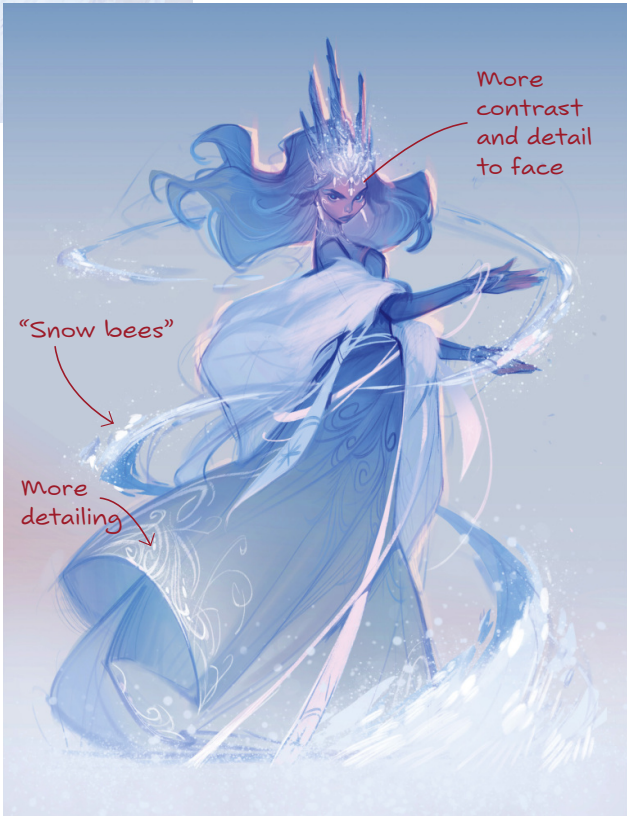
Snow effects





STEP 6 – LAST PASS: The drawing is almost done, but it's just a bit rough at the moment, so I zoom in and use the colors on the canvas to flesh out details and clean up the image a bit more.





I focus mainly on the high detail areas—I want to keep some roughness in the other areas because this adds personality. I also continue to apply color corrections as I work.



I keep adding details until I feel like the image is complete!



FINAL IMAGE

The final result is an image that still shows some of the original sketch lines, but because the color of the lines has been modified, they blend in with the rest of the image and add movement. The balance between rough, sketchy areas with more refined areas adds interest and life. Even though the main colors are white and blue, there are a lot of secondary colors, like cream, pink, purple, and light green, which is the result of changing the line color early in the process, as well as using color modification tools. Most important, the process felt fast and intuitive, because I didn't spend too much time planning out the details before starting. The drawing evolved organically, step by step.



LESSON: CHARACTER COLOR REVIEW

Let's start with a similar brief—choose a favorite character from a myth or fairytale, then follow these steps:

STEP 1 – RESEARCH THE ORIGINAL STORY FOR YOUR CHARACTER:

- **What aspects of the character are most interesting to you?** Are they good, evil, and do they have any special powers or unique personality traits?
- **Consider staging and pose for the character.** Is there a moment in the storyline that is most exciting to you? Or a time when your character becomes a main focus of the narrative?

STEP 2 – SKETCHES:

- **Once you have a good sense of your character, begin with rough sketches.** Don't focus on the details at this stage, instead draw the overall shape, gesture, and energy of your character. Create at least 10 of these rough concepts.
- **Review your sketches and choose a favorite.** Refine by deciding where you want to show the most detail. Remember to reflect back to your original sketch, try not to lose the energy of your early expressive lines.

STEP 3 – EXPLORING COLOR:

- **Decide on the character's main shapes and block them in on a new layer.** Check the silhouette to make sure it still reads well and has the energy and movement you are looking to express.
- **Use color modification tools to search for just the right base color.** Edit the colors to find a combination that reflects the personality of your character.
- **Adjust one color at a time to build your character's palette.** Try using the *Gradient* and *Soft Lasso* tools to add variation to your color scheme.
- **Next, try colorizing the sketch lines.** See how different accent colors impact your drawing and express the character's personality.
- **Repeat the process to develop several variations on the color combinations.** Which best expresses the personality of your character? Did you discover any unexpected color combinations?

STEP 4 – DETAILING:

- **Now add details to your character or "sculpt with color"** (see page 71). Copy your drawing to a new canvas and merge the layers so you are left with two layers: the character and the background.

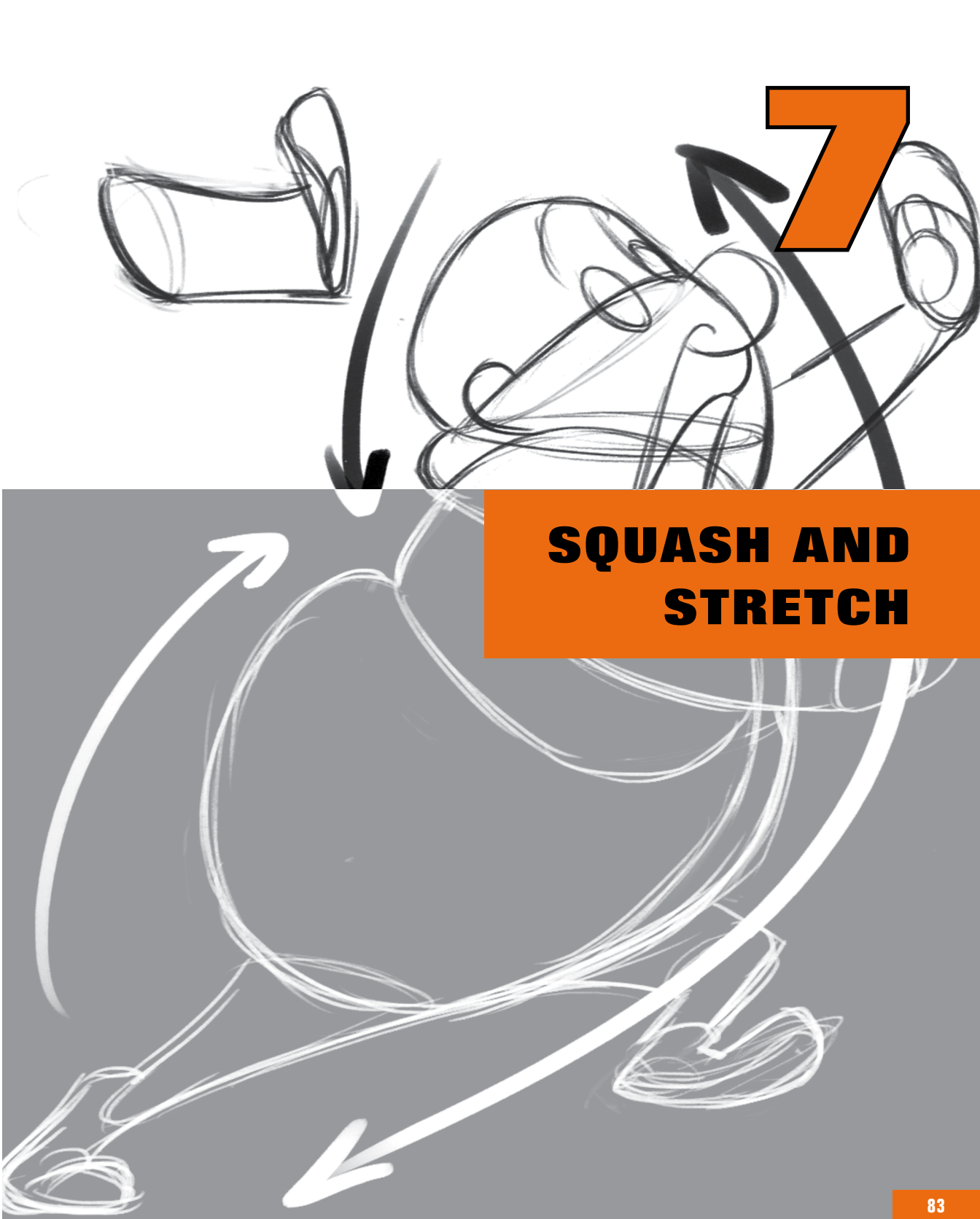
STEP 5 – BACKGROUND AND LIGHTING:

- **Add contrast to the background and highlights to intensify your design.** Experiment with color to add expression to the pose. Remember to consider contrasting warm and cool color tones.

STEP 6 – FINAL PASS:

- **Refine the design by cleaning up the edges and fine tuning highly detailed areas.** Remember to leave some of the roughness in less detailed areas to add personality and retain the energy from your original gesture sketch.

Hope you enjoyed this dive into my color process and you found some exciting new color combinations!



7

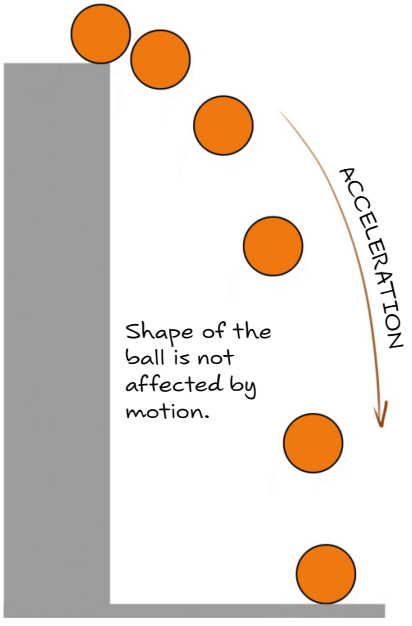
SQUASH AND STRETCH

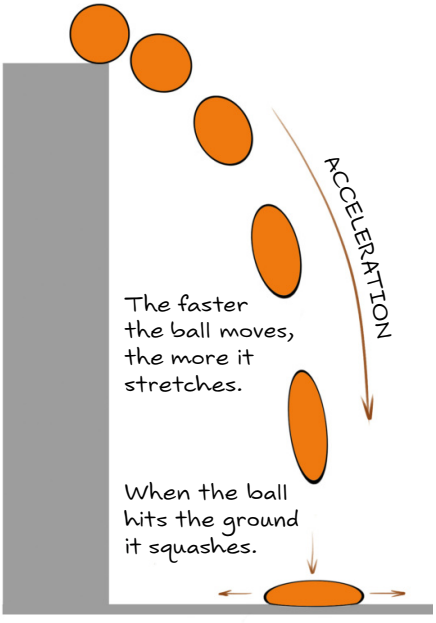
SQUASH AND STRETCH

WITH WOUTER TULP

Squash and stretch is a design principle based on the observation that some objects in motion change their shape more than others. A stiff object will remain consistent in form, while an elastic object changes in reaction to motion or pressure. Originally a useful animation technique, it can be effectively applied to two-dimensional character design to give a more fluid look to objects in motion.

To get acquainted with the principles of objects in motion, animators will often use a simple ball. In the first image below, you see a ball falling and as it drops the shape remains constant. If you took a picture at any point during the fall the ball does not look like it is in motion. Compare this to the second illustration where the ball is no longer a stiff object but is more elastic and therefore affected by motion. As speed increases the ball stretches and when it hits the ground, the shape squashes in reaction to the pressure of impact. At each point of the fall, we see its shape change and this effect increases with acceleration. You can apply this principle to character designs to express not only movement but to show the effects of gravity or force.

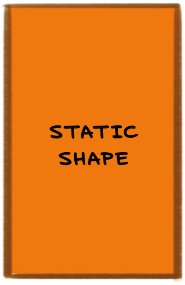




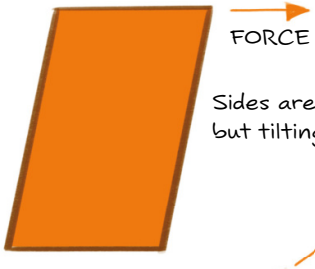
STATIC VS. DYNAMIC SHAPES

Before we apply squash and stretch to more complex shapes, like characters, let's review static and dynamic shapes. By applying force to a static shape we transform it into a dynamic shape creating the appearance of motion.

The first rectangle to the right is similar to the first ball that was stiff and did not change shape during a fall. It is a static shape and is not affected by movement, force, or gravity. The parallel lines and straight corners add to the sense of stability and lack of motion. Now imagine a force pulling a corner to the right and how the rectangle will change in reaction to the pressure.

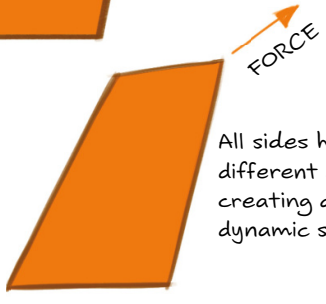


Sides are parallel with corners at 90-degree angles.



Sides are still parallel, but tilting to the right.

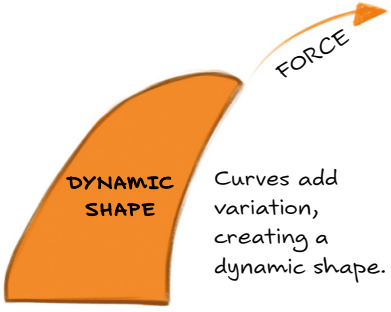
If we apply force diagonally the rectangle changes even further, losing all parallel lines. Now the shape is much more dynamic than the original static rectangle.



All sides have different angles, creating a more dynamic shape.

We can also apply force using pressure on a curve. The result is the sides and top of the rectangle push upward in arcs. Now we have an even more dynamic shape without any parallel lines, and where all sides have unique curves and angles.

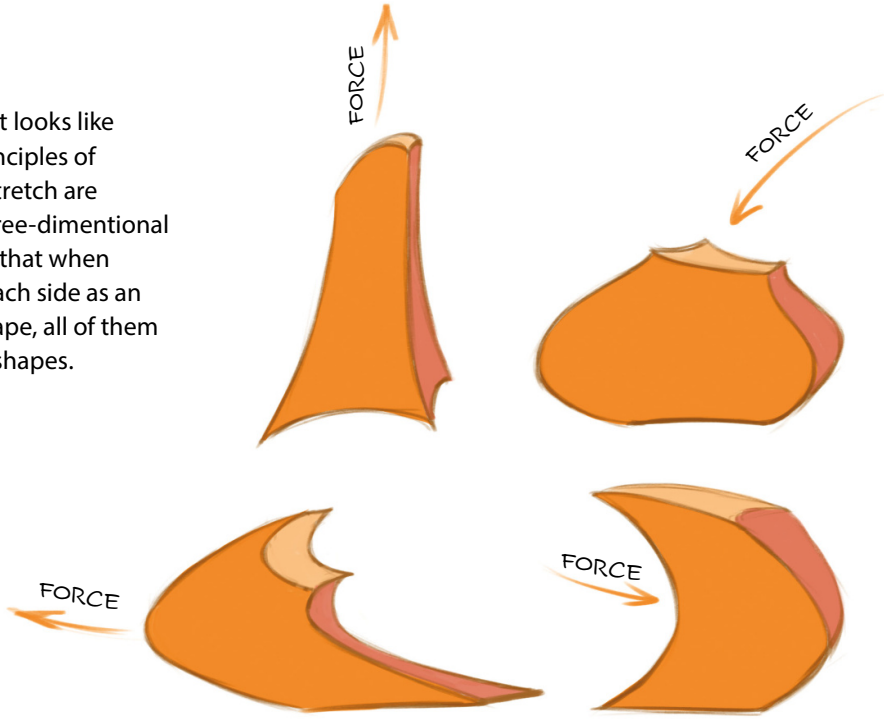
Below are more examples of how a two-dimensional rectangle can be affected by force. When we compare to the original static rectangle, we can see how the principles of squash and stretch help artists create more dynamic shapes.



Curves add variation, creating a dynamic shape.

MORE DYNAMIC SHAPES

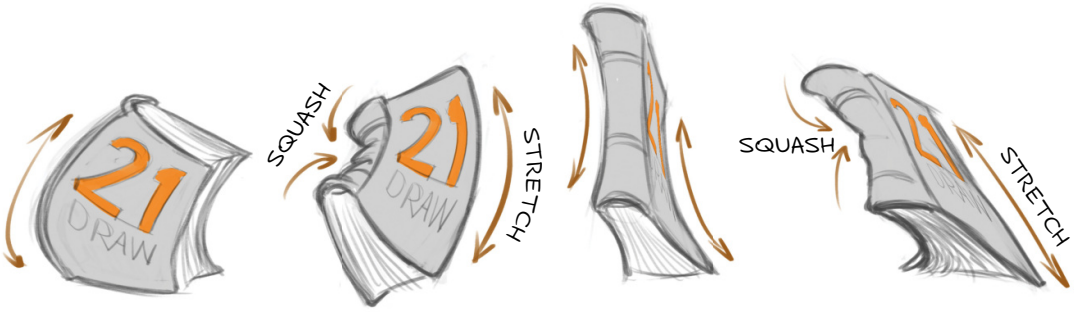
Here is what it looks like when the principles of squash and stretch are applied to three-dimentional shapes. Note that when you look at each side as an individual shape, all of them are dynamic shapes.



CREATING MOTION

We can apply squash and stretch to anything really—look what happens to the book below. *Wait, isn't a book a stiff object?* It's not made of flexible material like rubber, so wouldn't the shape stay the same in motion? In reality it would, but in our designs we can apply these principles to rigid objects as well. We can give the impression of movement to any object we want, adding a higher level of creativity to our character designs.

It is very important to apply squash and stretch consistently throughout a design. The goal is to adjust an object's shape to reflect action or force but be careful not to change the object itself.

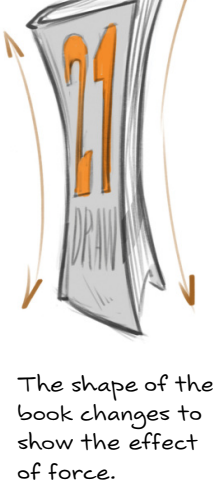


Both squash and stretch can happen in the same action.

Using the same book as an example, let's review these four images. The first is static with no force or movement applied. The second has been stretched to the point that it becomes thin in the middle, and every part of the book's shape has changed, even the logo on the front is stretched to emphasize the look. In the third image the changes are not from force or motion, only the size and width are increased. As a result it looks like a different book, one that is taller and has more pages. In the fourth we see a common mistake—a vanishing point has been used for the direction of stretch and unfortunately this skews the book's shape. Remember to follow principles of perspective when you apply squash and stretch to avoid having images that look distorted.

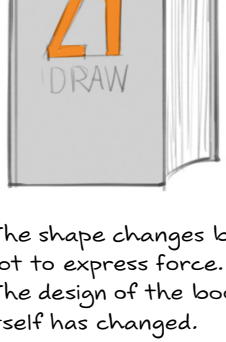
Book without force or movement.





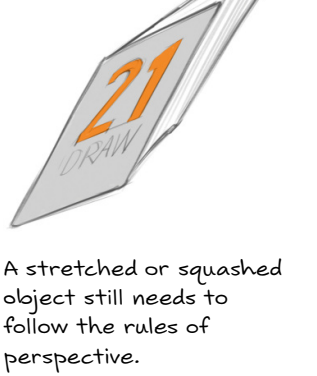
The shape of the book changes to show the effect of force.

Accidentally changing the design instead of applying squash and stretch is a common mistake.



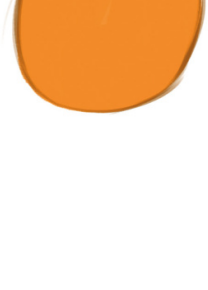
The shape changes but not to express force. The design of the book itself has changed.

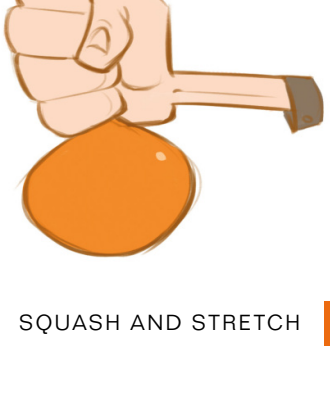
Ignoring perspective makes the book look skewed. Another common mistake is when perspective and squash and stretch get mixed up.



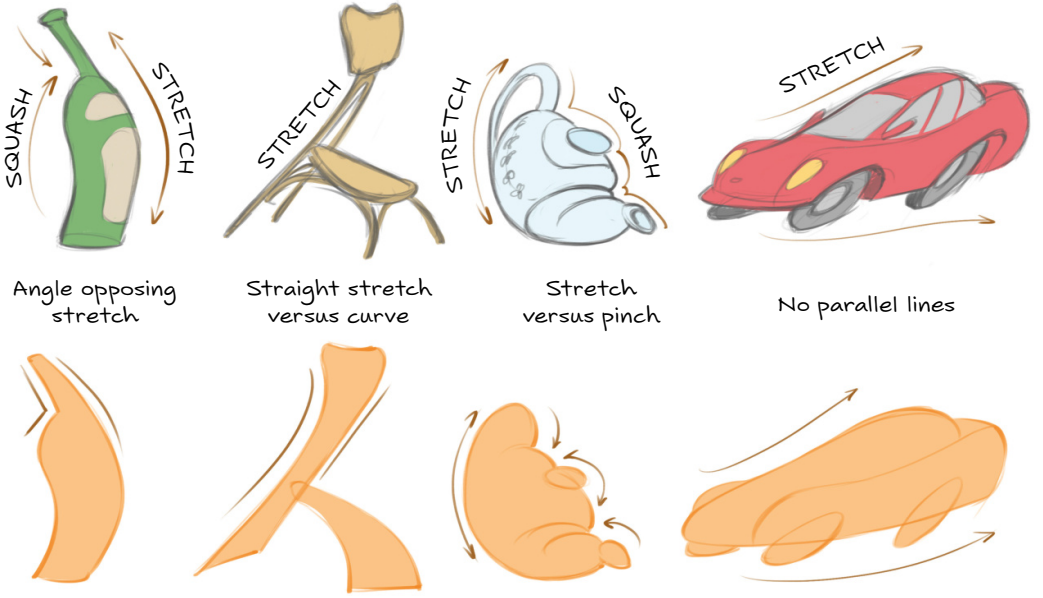
A stretched or squashed object still needs to follow the rules of perspective.

There is no limit to the variety of objects you can squash and stretch, but when the image is no longer recognizable, that is when you've gone too far. Think of squeezing a balloon—when you squash a balloon its shape changes but its volume does not.





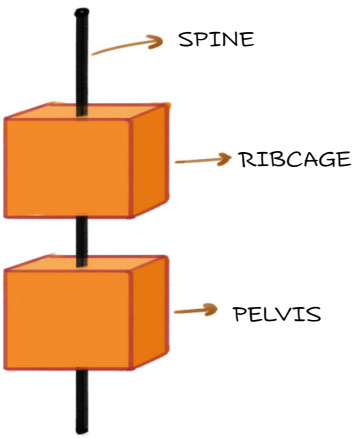
Below are objects we typically think of as solid and stiff—they have shapes that are usually unaffected by force. These objects are more complex than a ball or a book, but they can be altered using squash and stretch into objects that convey a sense of motion. When we simplify the objects, it is easier to see them as dynamic shapes.



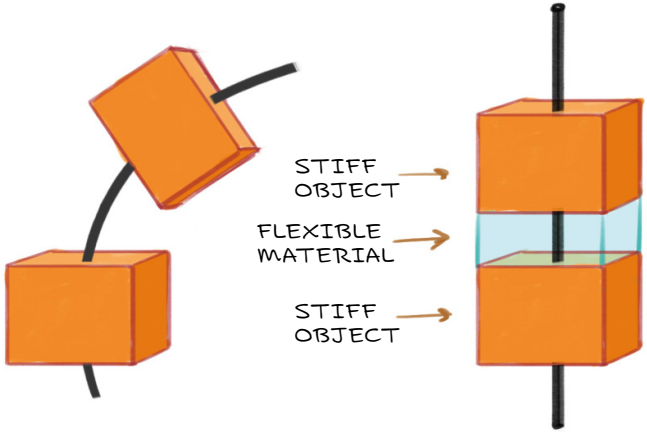
Let's review how the principles of squash and stretch work together in these objects. The first image of a bottle is a good example of how a stretch often causes a squash on the opposite side. The chair shows a long line of forward stretch, balanced by a squash down on the front legs. The teapot has a long stretch on its simple side, reflected by a more complex squashed side (see the folds and bulges on the opposite side). The car is squashed down at the front while the back stretches out which gives it the look of motion and speed.

MOVING THE HUMAN BODY

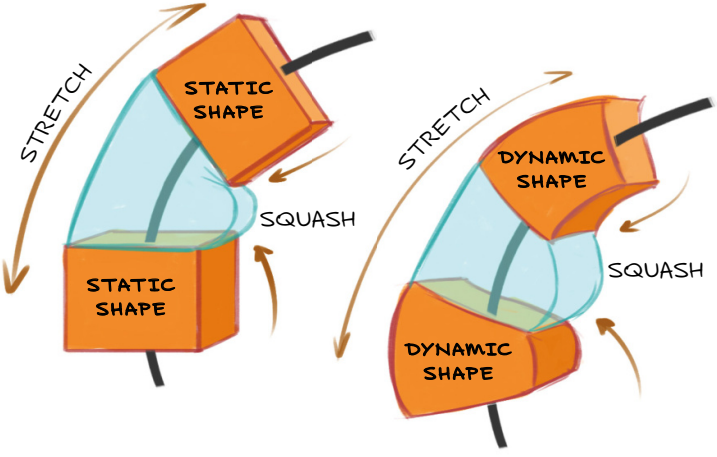
A human body is a much more complex shape. Our bodies consist of a variety of parts that move independently and in different directions. Some parts are ridged and hard, like our skull, chest, and pelvis, and some parts are softer, like our belly. These parts respond differently when they move or when force is applied. To get a better understanding of how this works, let's simplify the body into shapes. To start let's reduce the body to just the spine, ribcage, and pelvis. This makes it easier to analyze the process of squash and stretch.



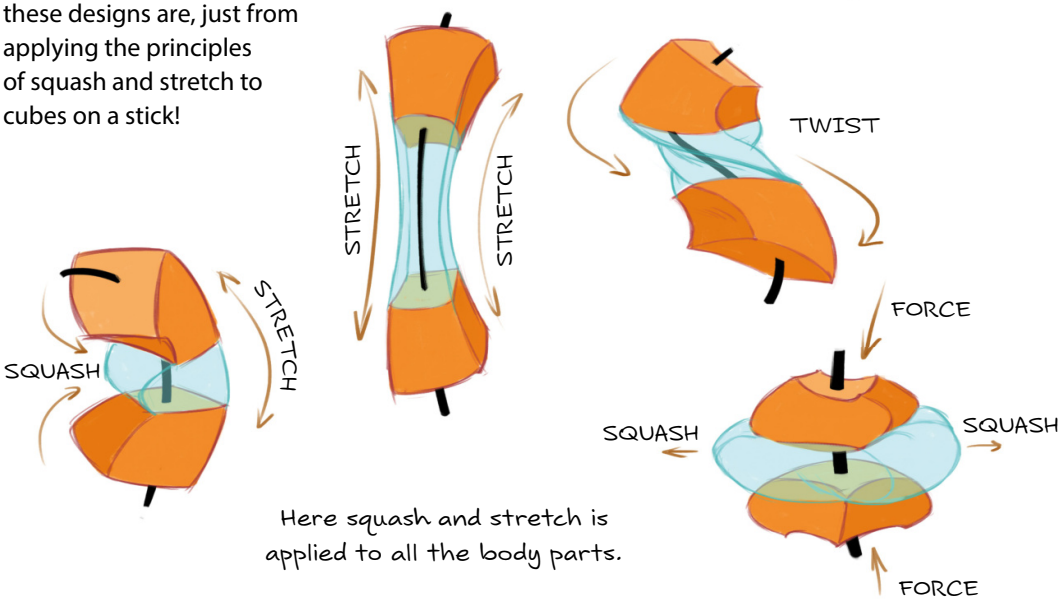
As we move, our spine bends and the ribcage and pelvis move accordingly (shown as orange boxes in the drawings). In between the ribcage and pelvis we can place the belly (the blue box). Compared to the ribcage and pelvis, the belly is flexible and soft. So as the body moves, the belly changes shape more than the ribcage and pelvis. In most body poses the direction of the ribcage and pelvis will be different for balance.



When the spine bends it stretches the back of the belly (blue area) and compresses and bulges at the inner side. In the first drawing the shape of the ribcage and pelvis both remain static and unchanged. In the second image you can see how both the ribcage and pelvis are affected by the action of the body.



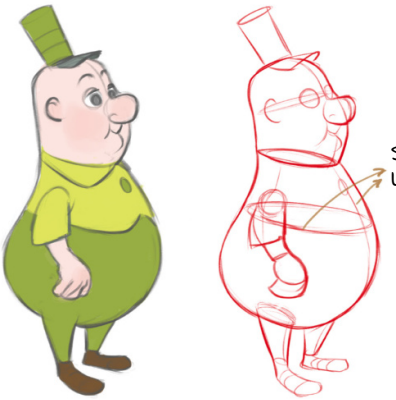
Look at how expressive these designs are, just from applying the principles of squash and stretch to cubes on a stick!



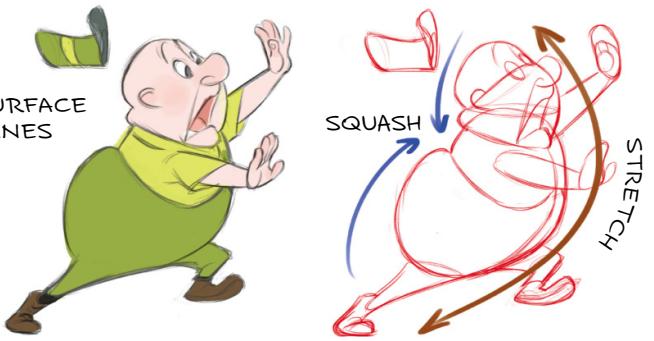
Here squash and stretch is applied to all the body parts.

Eventually we want to draw more than cubes on sticks. Before we apply squash and stretch to characters, it is essential to have a good understanding of the shapes and volumes used in a design. If shapes are not clearly defined, it can be difficult to determine if a shape should remain still or if it becomes deformed during a squash or stretch. A good way to clearly define the shapes and volumes of your character is to draw a *turnaround*. Drawing a turnaround helps you see what each shape looks like from different angles (see chapter 5).

For the example character below, I made line drawings to better see the volume of each shape. These surface lines help me understand the dimensions of the character, similar to a grid used for a 3-D model. Often a character in action has shapes affected by both squash and stretch. One part of the body stretches causing another part to squash.



It is important to understand the volumes of your character. Here I've added surface lines to show volume.



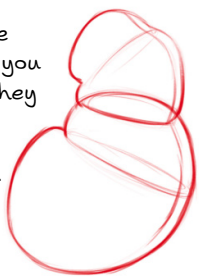
Squash and stretch both happen in moving characters.

A good way to design a complex object like a character in motion is to start with simplified body shapes. It is much easier to squash and stretch simple shapes than all the elements of a character at once. Static shapes will make a character look overly stiff; working with even slightly dynamic shapes will help characters look more alive (see first image below). Compare these basic shapes as you apply squash and stretch. You can see how the shapes become more dynamic. Note when the same motion is applied to cubes on a stick, it is reflected in the simplified character shapes.

Even here the shapes are slightly dynamic. Our character is alive, so using static shapes would make him look too stiff.



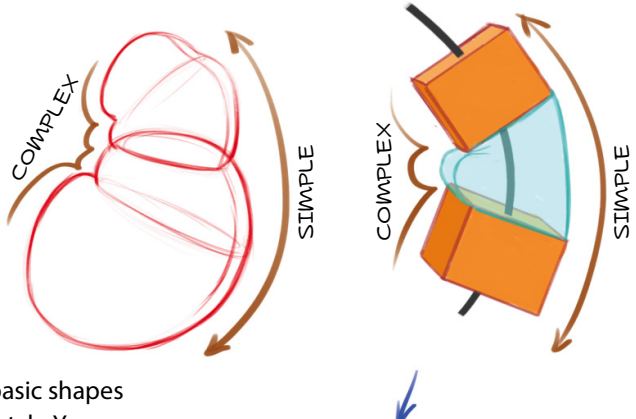
Comparing the basic shapes, you can see how they become more dynamic as the character moves.



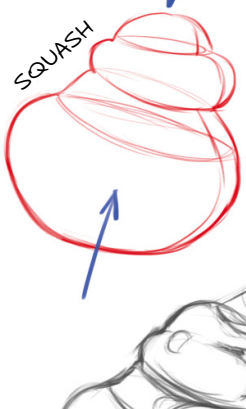
Note the schematic of the concept is reflected in the character.



In most body poses a stretched side will be opposite a compressed side. This is not always the case, but by keeping this in mind we can help clarify dynamic contrast in a pose. The stretched side will often have a simple design, while the compressed side will have a more complex design with folds, bulges, and wrinkles.

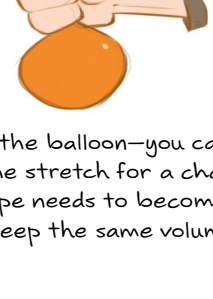


Simplifying this character down to its basic shapes makes it easier to apply squash and stretch. You can then add details to a design that is already dynamic. Remember to maintain the volume of shapes in the design. When squash is applied to one part of a shape it needs to stretch in another area. Using a balloon again, you can maximize the stretch for a character, but the shape needs to be thinner and longer to retain the same volume. Be sure to keep in mind the force affecting a character or you risk changing the design instead of showing the effect on the character.





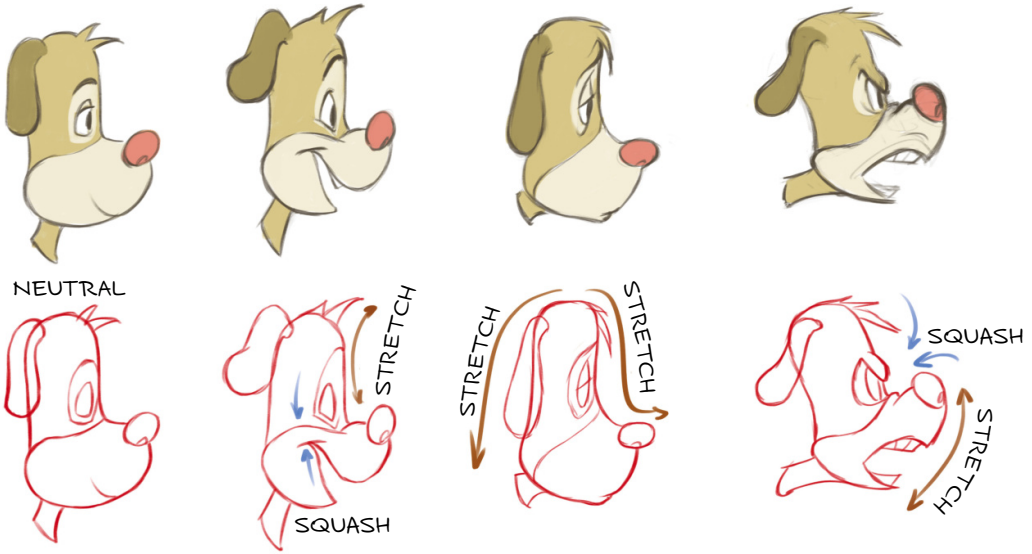
Simplifying down to basic shapes makes it easier to apply squash and stretch.



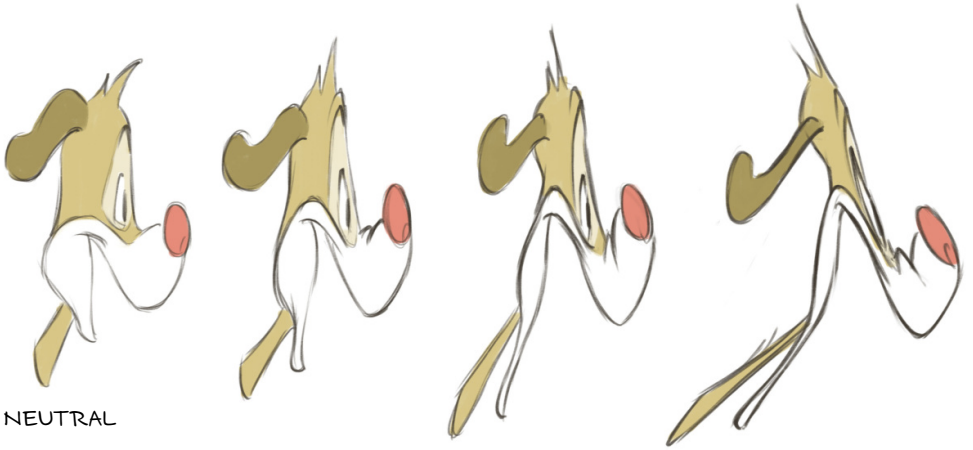
Remember the balloon—you can maximize the stretch for a character, but the shape needs to become thinner to keep the same volume.

FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

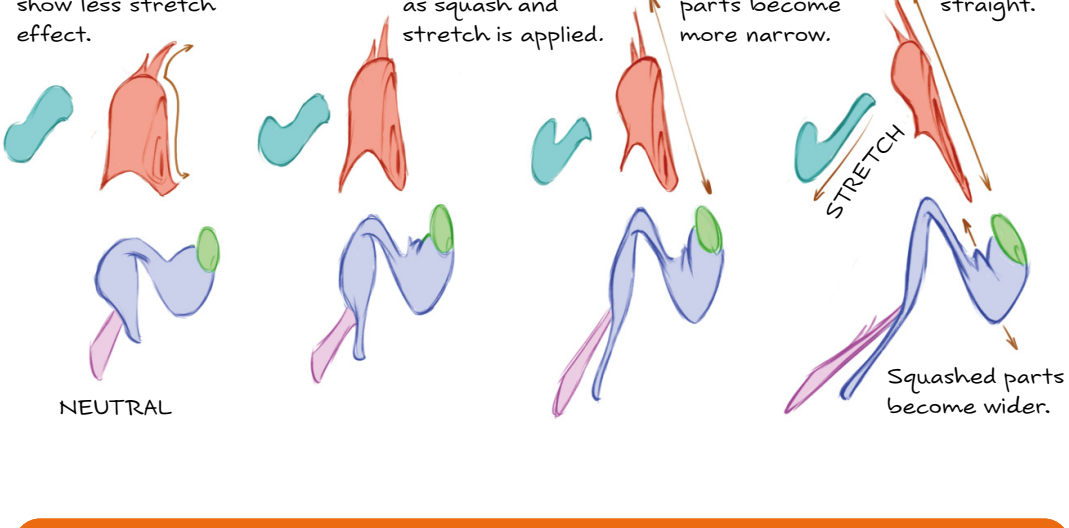
The principles of squash and stretch also apply to facial expressions. Faces are a collection of hard and soft shapes—bones and muscles—that move in relationship to one another. We use these facial movements to better express emotions in our characters. Below are examples using a dog character. I start with a neutral expression to help determine the shapes that make up my character. As the dog's expression changes, some parts of the face stretch and other parts squash. Compare the shapes from the neutral expression to see how force and movement are changing the shapes.



Below is an extreme step-by-step example of squash and stretch to show what happens when we push shapes further. We can see when we have pushed the effect too far. Doing this exercise is a great way to study exaggeration in characters.



In the example below, I separated parts of the face to better show how each shape changes with increasing amounts of squash and stretch. See how the shapes become thinner as they stretch and wider when squashed. In reality these shapes are not separate and the reason we have effects of force is because shapes are connected and they affect one another. Notice how the line on the neutral image has more curves but becomes straight as stretch is applied.

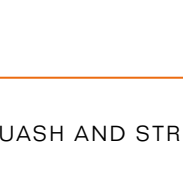


LESSON: SQUASH AND STRETCH

Now it's your turn — the following six steps review the principles of squash and stretch so you can practice the techniques from this tutorial.

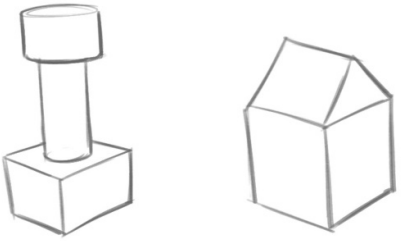
STEP 1: Apply squash and stretch to these two-dimensional shapes. First, think of the action you want to apply. Is the shape jumping or running away from something dangerous? The more clearly you imagine what's happening, the better you can express it in your design. Note the differences between static and dynamic shapes. How does your action affect the shapes?



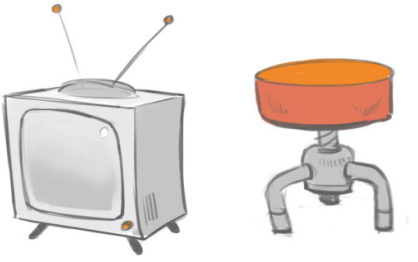


STEP 2: Next, turn the same two-dimensional shapes into three-dimensional objects. The triangle becomes a pyramid and a circle can become a sphere or cylinder. Then apply squash and stretch to the three-dimensional objects turning them into dynamic shapes.

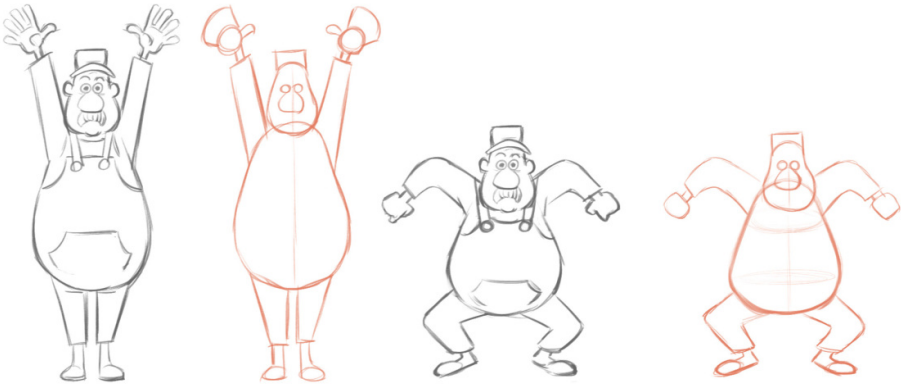
STEP 3: See if you can apply the same process using these combined shapes to the right. How do the parts of the objects react to one another when force is applied?



STEP 4: Try using squash and stretch on these normally rigid objects. In order to keep the process manageable, start by simplifying the objects into simple geometrical shapes. Make sure you have in mind exactly what action you want to convey. It helps to think of the objects coming alive and reacting to a specific situation. Then you can add in the details.

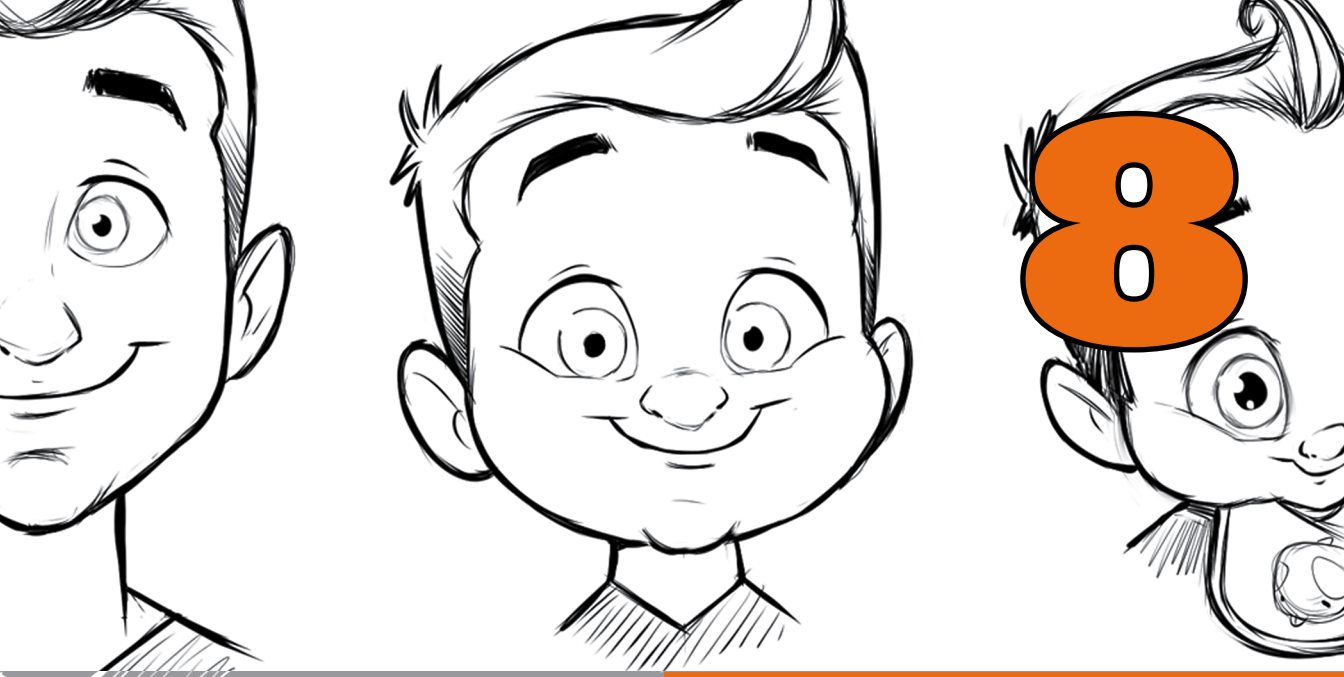


STEP 5: Look at the two characters below. They are standing in a pose but no squash or stretch has been applied. Use the knowledge gained from the previous exercises to apply squash and stretch to these characters and bring life to their actions. To go the extra mile try doing three versions, each time increasing the amount of squash and stretch.



STEP 6: Use the neutral face of this cat character and apply a variety of facial expressions. This is a more complex shape than the ones we started with, but the key to applying squash and stretch successfully is the same. Start by simplifying the face into simple geometric shapes, add lines to show volume, then you can focus on applying the overall force of action. Work from big to small shapes, adding details at the very end.





8

HOW TO AGE CHARACTERS

HOW TO AGE CHARACTERS

WITH RODGON

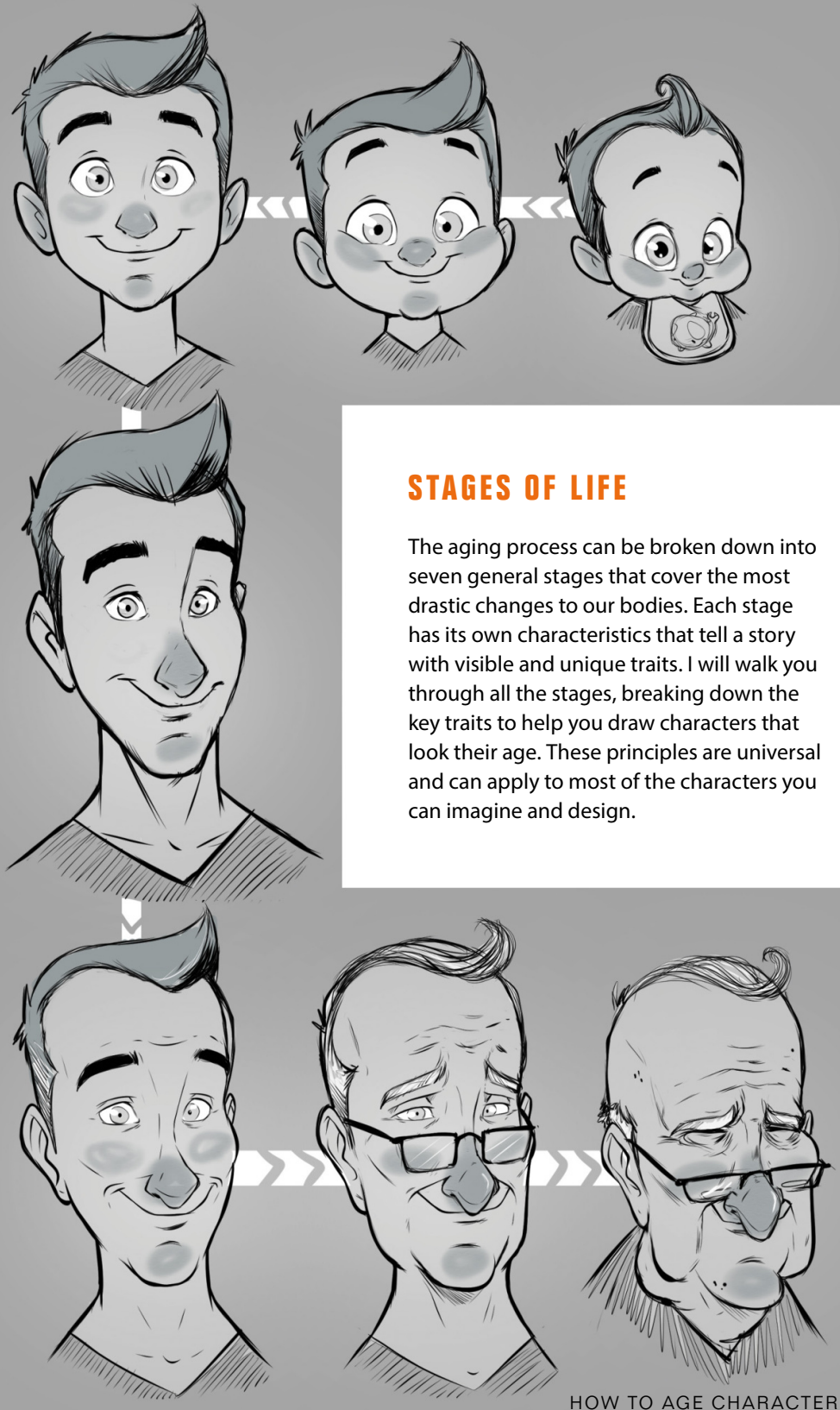
Hello Peeps! I want to teach you how to properly change the age of characters through all the main stages of life. We will identify what defines each age group and what happens to the body and personality as we grow older.

Why would you want to change the age of your characters? Perhaps you want to make a super villain into a kid, or make your favorite superhero into an aging man from outer space. Maybe you want to write and illustrate a magnificent story that changes the world, and you want the hero to age along with it.

After this tutorial, you will have the confidence and knowledge to age your characters any time you wish.



YOUNG VILLAIN **OLD SUPERHERO**

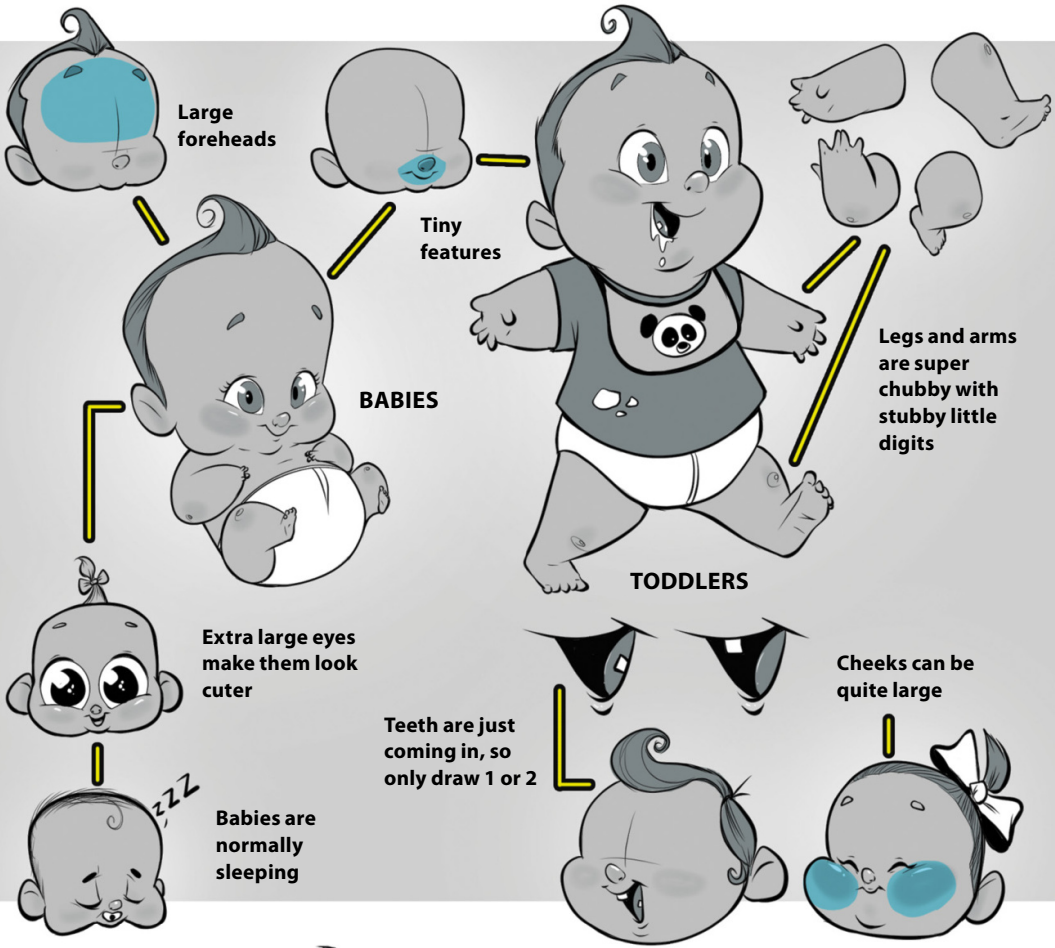


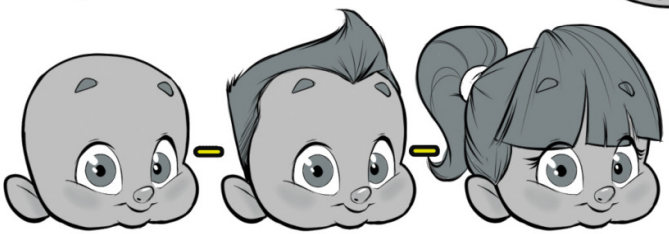
STAGES OF LIFE

The aging process can be broken down into seven general stages that cover the most drastic changes to our bodies. Each stage has its own characteristics that tell a story with visible and unique traits. I will walk you through all the stages, breaking down the key traits to help you draw characters that look their age. These principles are universal and can apply to most of the characters you can imagine and design.

STAGE 1: BABIES AND TODDLERS

BABIES AND TODDLERS are plush and bubbly. Their bodies are like little jelly beans or sacks of flour. They have a tiny body with a head to body ratio of 1 to 1. Arms and legs are stubby with short little fingers and toes. The distance between their eyes, nose, and mouth is very small and they have large foreheads (that resemble a receding hairline). Even though they are tiny, you can pack a ton of personality into their expressions. They can't talk yet, so it is all about body language. The following details can be applied to any kind of "baby" character.



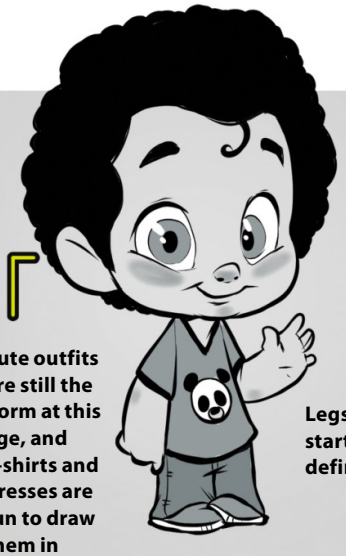


BOYS AND GIRLS

Hairstyles, clothing, and accessories are key to making a distinction between boys and girls at this young age.

STAGE 2: YOUNG KIDS 6 TO 12 YEARS

YOUNG KIDS have similar features to babies: large eyes, small features, and they are also drawn very cute. Kids retain the plushness to their features and still have soft bodies. Skin is very smooth, so not many lines show up on their faces. Hair is noticeably different at this age; it can be unruly as kids tend to have an air of adventure about them. You can use this aspect of their personality to create fun poses and features on your characters.



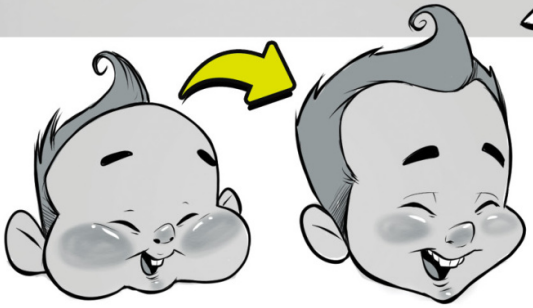
Cute outfits are still the norm at this age, and T-shirts and dresses are fun to draw them in

BODY PROPORTIONS

Kids have short bodies, typically a 1 to 1 ratio to the size of their heads. Their bodies are leaner than a toddler's and you start to see definition in their arms and legs, but fingers and toes are still pretty chubby.

Legs and arms start to have definition





CHEEKS

Cheeks are an important characteristic in young children. They may not be as big as on a baby, but they are still predominant.

FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

Kids make awesome faces that other age groups don't. At this age kids are not shy, and make weird faces all the time. So take advantage of this and have a blast drawing them!

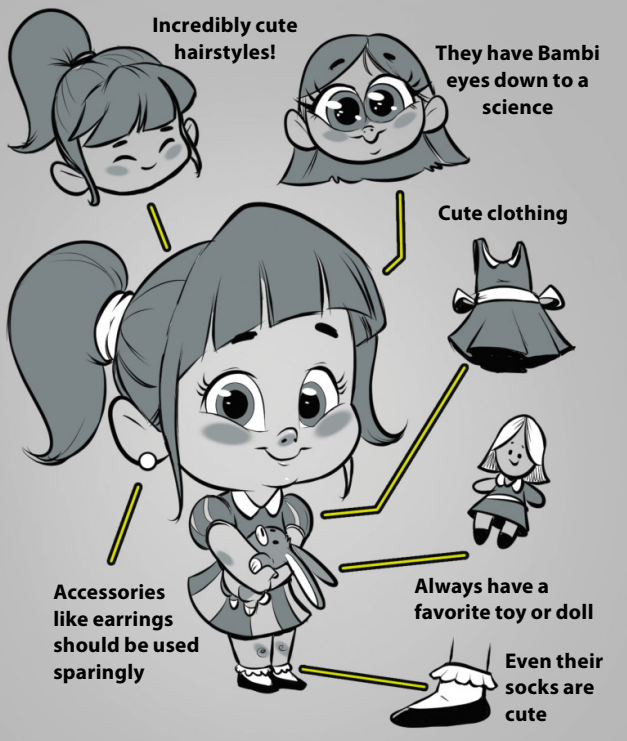
Expressions can bring your young characters to life





BOYS

- Boys this age tend to have unruly hair, since all they want to do is go outside and play.
- Little boys can be very mischievous in nature. They are always looking to have fun.
- Drawing your character with toys that reflect their age range will help to show them at the correct age.
- Boys wear what they think is super cool! So clothing will consist of their favorite T-shirts and comfiest or *lucky* pants.
- Let's be honest, boys like to play in the dirt, fight, and do not mind getting very dirty at this age (at least I did). That playful and dirty nature is a great way to show a child that will do anything to have fun!

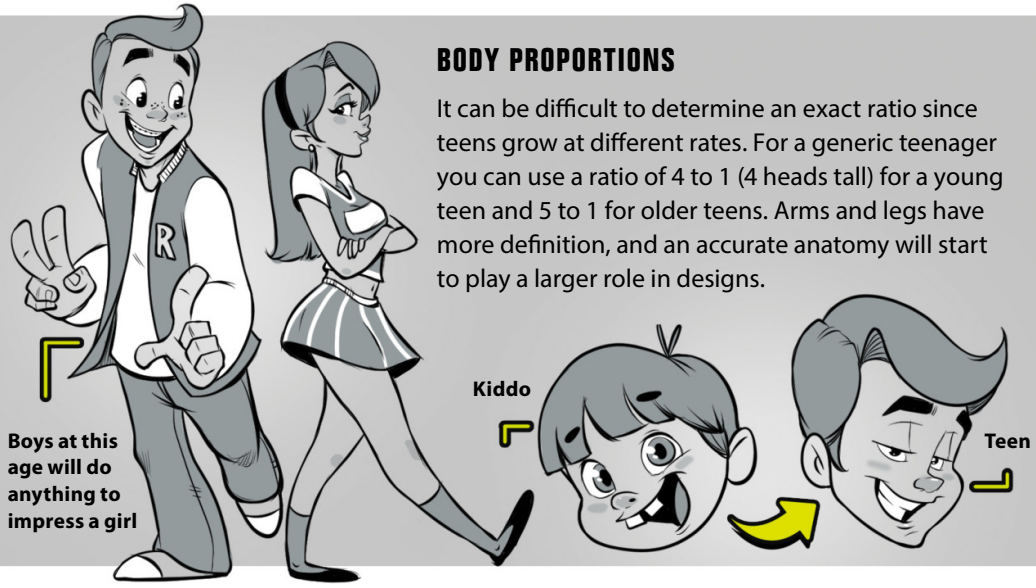


GIRLS

- Hairstyles are typically super duper cute at this age—pigtails and ponytails are common.
- Girls have a cuteness factor of ten and they know it. They can use Bambi eyes as their #1 secret weapon.
- Cute clothing is the way to go at this age. Little dresses are by far the cutest and my go-to apparel for them.
- Little girls are often shown with a small toy or doll that is always with them and they never let go of it.
- Think of the saying, "girls are made of sugar and spice and everything nice." You can draw a cute little demon or an evil little girl, but the key is to make sure they are cute looking so that they match this age group.

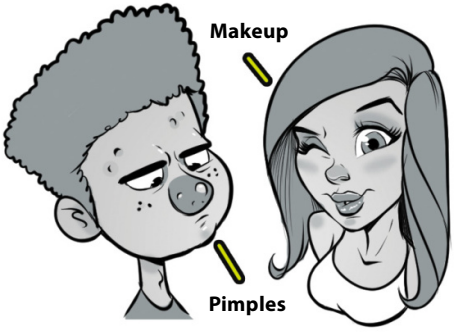
STAGE 3: TEENAGERS 13 TO 19 YEARS

TEENAGERS are very interesting to draw. Teens are going through a lot of changes in their bodies. Because of this there is a wide variety of shapes and sizes, but there are quite a few factors that distinguish this age range. This is one of the most popular character ages depicted in stories (outside of adults). Use some of the following guidelines to help your teenage characters look the age you want them to.



BODY PROPORTIONS

It can be difficult to determine an exact ratio since teens grow at different rates. For a generic teenager you can use a ratio of 4 to 1 (4 heads tall) for a young teen and 5 to 1 for older teens. Arms and legs have more definition, and an accurate anatomy will start to play a larger role in designs.

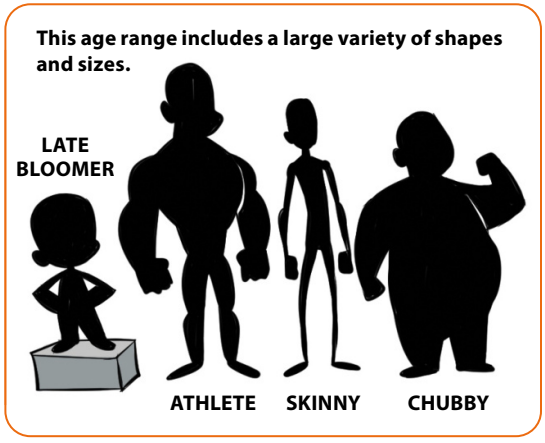


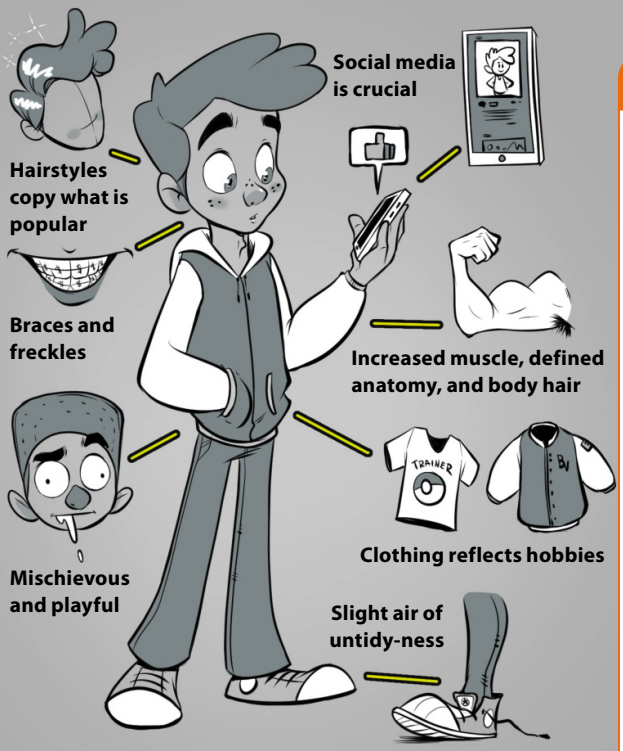
PUBERTY SUCKS

Everyone goes through puberty and this is the best way to show this age. Adding a few pimples or some social awkwardness works well. Girls tend to use makeup by this time, so drawing them with flawless skin is the norm.

LOOKS AND GROWTH

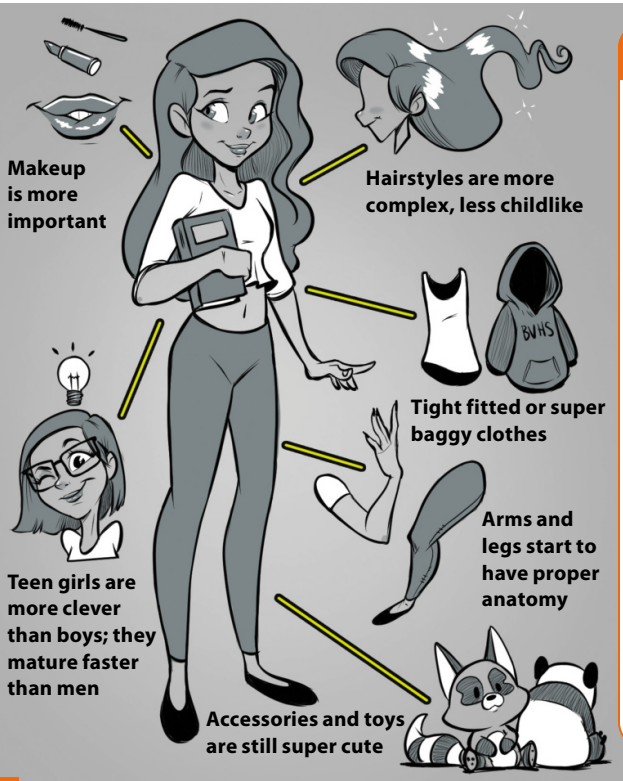
Kids grow very quickly into teens. They start to care more about their looks and the opinions of others, so hair and fashion trends start to follow what is popular.





TEEN BOYS

- Hairstyles tend to match what is popular with their idols.
- Teens are permanently attached to their phones. You can use this to show their age.
- Puberty starts with the development of muscles and body hair.
- Clothing trends include T-shirts featuring favorite things or hobbies.
- A subtle attitude of not caring about looks mixed with trying to look good. Little things like untied laces can help show this style.
- Including braces and freckles helps to identify this age range.
- Teen boys tend to be pretty damn derpy, especially when around girls.

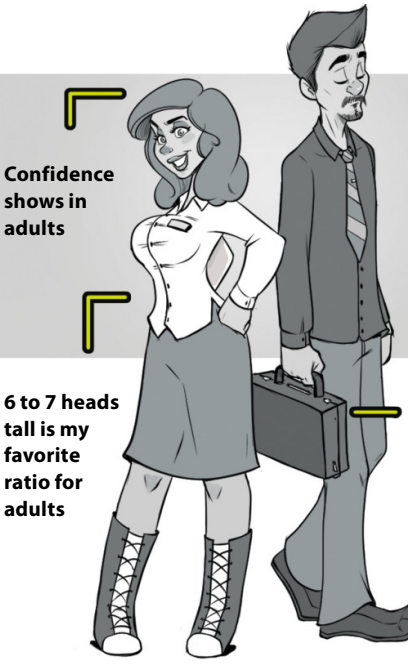


TEEN GIRLS

- Makeup starts to be more important.
- Hairstyles become more complex but can still have a childish look.
- Clothing trends are either skin tight (confident) or baggy (shy) depending on personality.
- Their arms and legs have a subtle smoothness to them, not chubby anymore and an elegance to them regardless of personality.
- Accessories and items they carry tend to retain an air of their childhood. They still have super cute items or their favorite items from when they were little.
- Different from boys this age, most girls are clever and can be composed around guys or they could be shy.

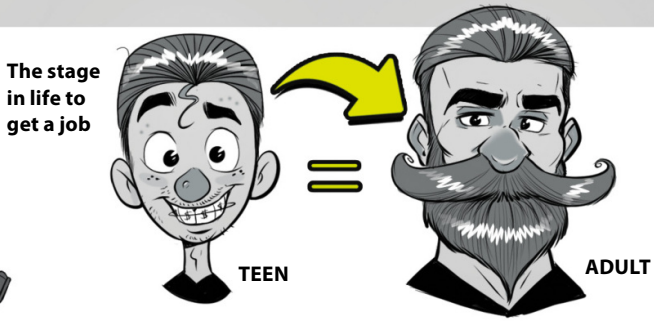
STAGE 4: ADULT 20 TO 39 YEARS

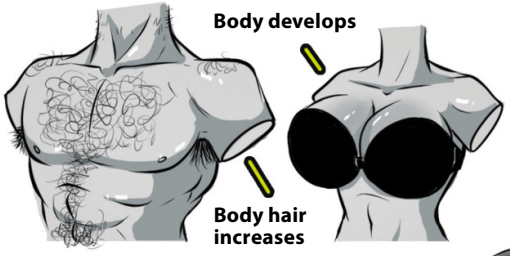
ADULTS are the most common age for characters in stories (along with teens) and this stage comes at a huge point in development. Adulthood is when you become the person you will be for the rest of your life. The following are changes to include in your drawings to create complex and fun adult characters that convey this stage of growing into maturity.



BODY PROPORTIONS

Even though there is a huge variety of shapes and sizes in adults, I like to keep body proportions to a ratio of 6 to 1 or 7 to 1 (6 or 7 heads tall). This provides a good difference between a teen (teens having bigger heads) and also gives the body a more elongated look.



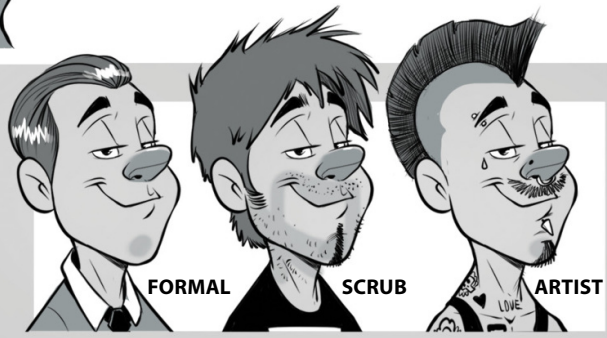


COMING OF AGE

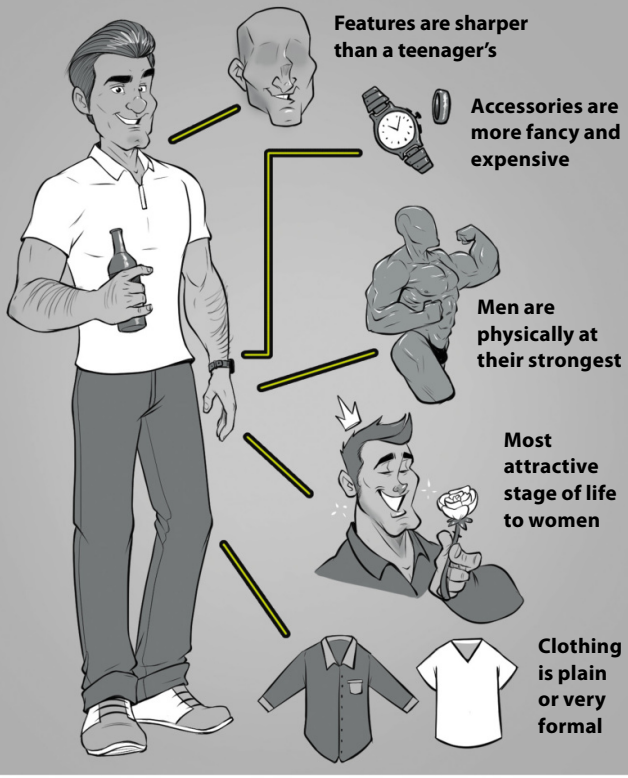
This is the stage in life when a character develops their own distinct look and personality that visually represents who they are becoming as a person.

BODY CHANGES

Growing up comes with some fun side effects. For men it comes with muscle growth and body hair. For women it comes with growth of breasts and hips giving them the look of a fully grown woman.

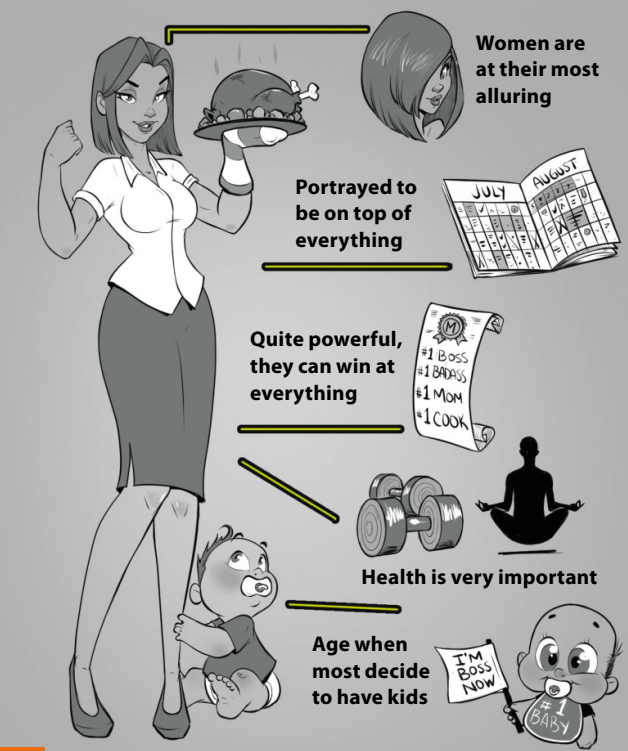


Adults come in all walks of life, shapes, and sizes. The same character can be easily changed to fit into the lifestyle you want them to reflect.



ADULT MEN

- Adult men tend to have sharper and more angled features.
- Accessories start to be more attractive and pricier. As we age we tend to have more valuable items around us.
- Physically this is the strongest point in a man's life with more muscle, stature, and better looks.
- This stage in life is also when men are the most attractive to the opposite sex, and when they tend to start thinking of marriage and starting a family.
- Clothing can be incredibly varied at this age. For the most part keeping their clothing plain with fewer graphics will portray an air of maturity, but like any rule this can be broken when you want to.

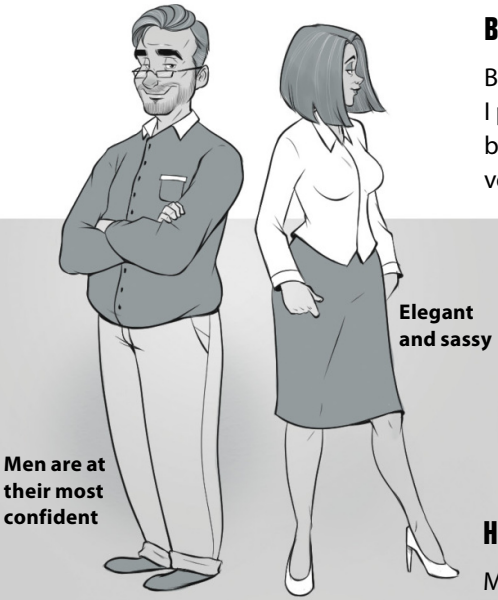


ADULT WOMEN

- Tend to be the most confident and strongest at this age of their lives.
- Learn how to be sensual and are more aware of their looks. They are the most alluring in this age.
- Most adult women are portrayed as incredibly busy and on top of everything, with personalities that are both strong and confident.
- Taking care of their bodies becomes a very important part of daily life, so they tend to be in very good physical shape.
- This is also the time when many women decide to become mothers. Maternal instincts are natural and portraying them in your characters will help them to look like adult females.

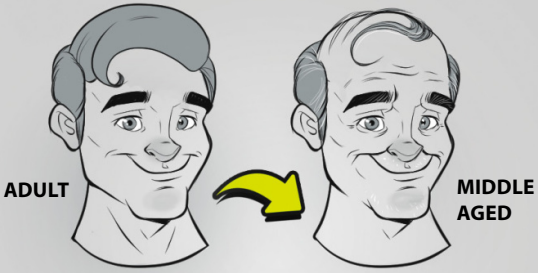
STAGE 5: MIDDLE AGE 40 TO 65 YEARS

MIDDLE AGED characters are very similar to adults, but they are distinguished by certain details that make this stage in life unique. At this age characters should have confidence and an air of authority in their lives. They are still close to their prime but now have life experience and better understand themselves. They are not surprised by what life throws at them and tend to be the characters with the most common sense in stories. They are often portrayed in the role of older parents, wise uncles, young grandparents, and bosses at work.



BODY PROPORTIONS

Body proportions are very similar to an adult, I prefer to use ratios of 6 to 1 or 7 to 1. Their bodies can be a little wider than their younger versions, but not a drastic change at this age.



HAIR LOSS, WRINKLES, AND WEIGHT

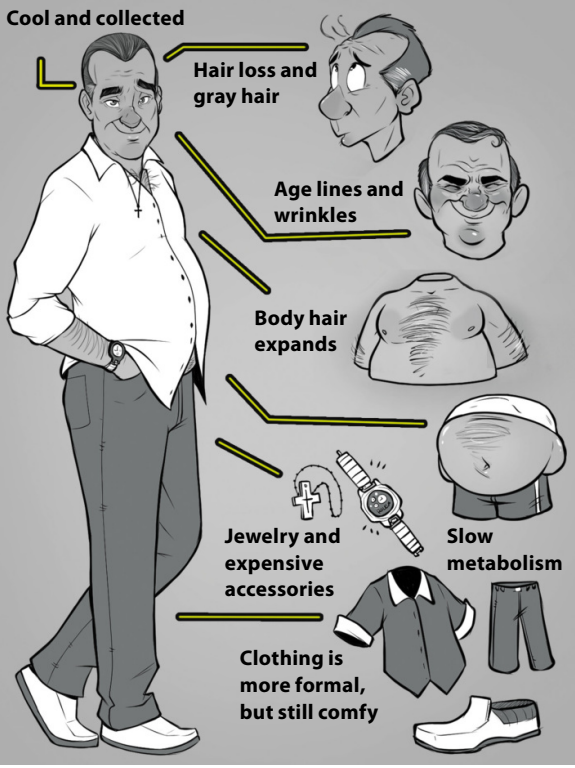
Men and women start to develop wrinkles, men have hair loss, white and gray hair begin to pop up on both men and women. Hair dyes are used more by women than men. To show this age opposed to a younger version of the same character, you can add body fat, wrinkles, and changes to hair.



GOOD AND BAD

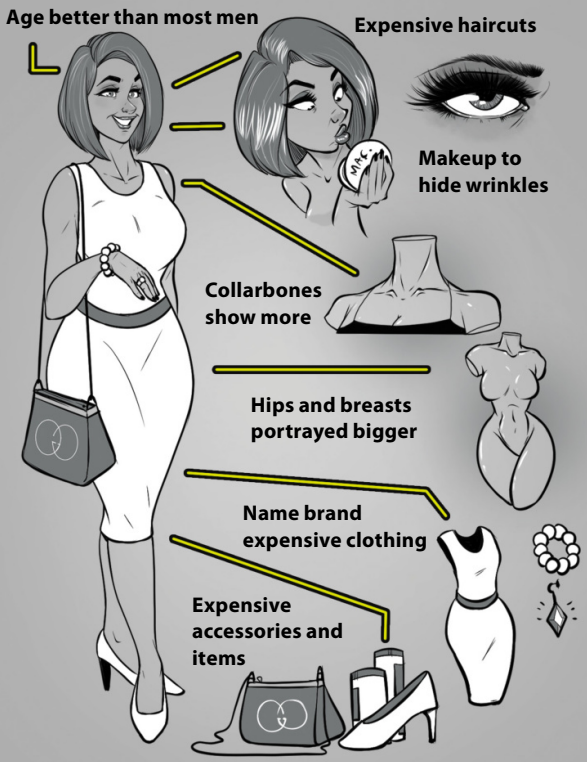
Age is typically portrayed in two different ways: women are portrayed as hating to age and try to slow it down, while men just let it happen and go with the changes to their bodies, but exceptions do exist.





MIDDLE AGE MEN

- Hair loss begins and gray hairs start to grow in as well.
- Age lines and wrinkles start to be more apparent, especially around the eyes, nose, and forehead.
- Body hair takes over large areas of the body and can stick out from clothing.
- Body metabolism slows down, so portraying your character slightly fatter works to show aging.
- They have a finer taste for things, so using more expensive accessories and flashy jewelry is good.
- Clothing at this age is targeted toward comfort and is a status symbol. You won't often see men this age in graphics or tank tops, more likely khakis and dress shirts with loafers.



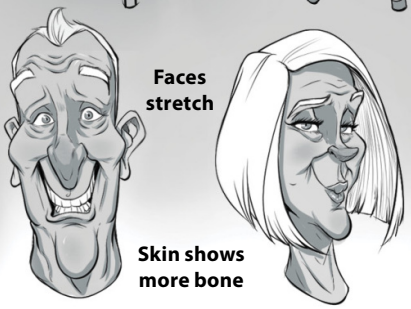
MIDDLE AGE WOMEN

- Tend to age better then men because of the skin care products they use.
- Typically use a hairstylist so their hair is impeccable.
- Are experts with makeup to hide any signs of aging so they look younger.
- More and more of their bones start to show, especially on the cheeks, collarbones, ankles, and wrists.
- Metabolism slows down for women so body fat increases at breasts, hips, stomach, and booty, more of a curvy hourglass figure compared to a younger adult.
- Clothing, jewelry, and accessories represent their status in life, so you see women at this age go all out for these things.

STAGE 6: SENIORS 66 TO 89 YEARS

SENIORS experience a significant increase in aging at this time. This is often the final stage of life for characters in stories, so you can depict them with more experience and physical wear. Visual signs of an exciting life include scars, lost limbs, or whatever you can imagine. When it comes to creating realistic bodies and characteristics, the following tips will help you achieve this age range in your characters.



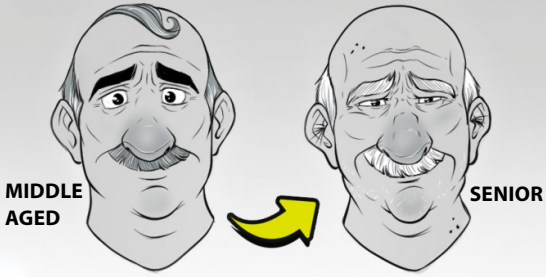


WHAT HAPPENS AS WE AGE?

Wrinkles happen when our skin loses elasticity and becomes loose and starts to overlap. More of our bones show as skin drapes over our bone structures. We also lose definition in areas like our neck and arms.

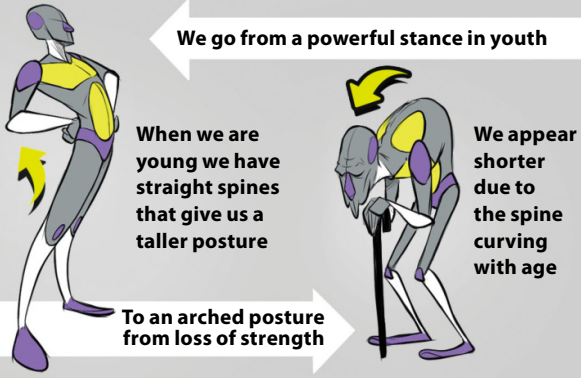
BODY PROPORTIONS

At this stage in life people become shorter, so a body ratio of about 4 to 1 works well. We also start to become bottom heavy with larger bellies and an increase in body fat.



GROWING INTO OLD AGE

Show further signs of aging with more wrinkles and age lines around nose, mouth, and on the forehead. Men have extra hair loss and both men and women have more gray hair.

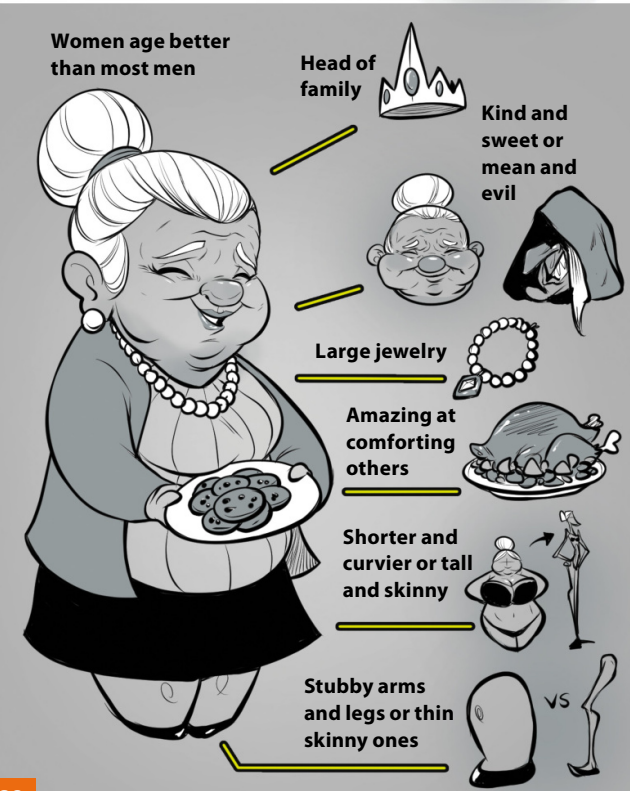


Our bodies are not as strong as they once were, drawing characters hunched over or in need of assistance in walking will help to show this stage.



SENIOR MEN

- Hair loss is extreme at this age. If they are lucky they are left with a small circle of hair around their head, with the top mostly bald. Showing this amount of hair loss will help to age a character to this stage.
- White hair starts to take over even facial features such as mustache, nose hairs, and eyebrows.
- Body fat tends to accumulate in areas such as the arms and stomach; due to loss of skin elasticity it creates an overall sagging effect.
- Colorful or very calm colors tend to be the norm and comfort is key when it comes to clothing. These men are done with work and their clothing reflects this. From shirts to their choice in footwear—it all reflects comfort.



SENIOR WOMEN

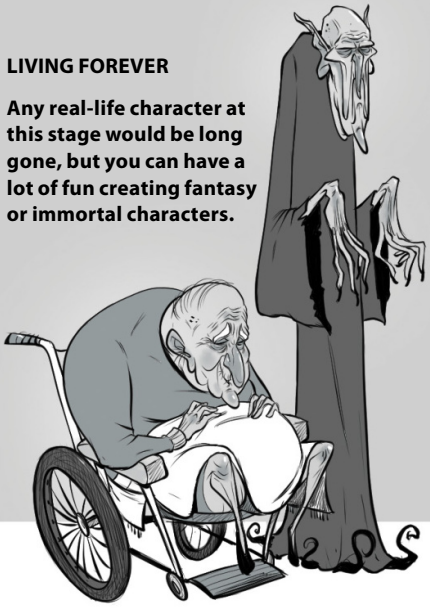
- Senior women are often the head of their households and the queen of their realm.
- A typical depiction of an older woman in stories is either with a pure heart or one that is ice cold.
- Extra large jewelry, aka, family jewels are normally worn by this age group.
- Tend to be incredibly comforting and look out for younger characters.
- Portrayed in opposite ways, either short and stubby or really tall and thin and normally not much in between.
- Along with their body shapes their appendages and personalities tend to be in extremes. So you have to decide what your character will be like, short and evil, tall and happy, etc.

STAGE 7: ELDER 90 TO ∞ YEARS

ELDERS are beyond old and you can depict this in various ways. I like to reserve this level of aging for immortal, mystical, or magical characters and for normal people in their final days. Characters like vampires, gods, village elders, etc. The goal is to make the aging effects on the skin extreme and show posture very curved. Most need assistance with mobility and are weak but also are the most knowledgeable characters in any story.

LIVING FOREVER

Any real-life character at this stage would be long gone, but you can have a lot of fun creating fantasy or immortal characters.



BODY PROPORTIONS

Elder bodies tend to be worn down, beaten, and weak. I like to make the mass of their bodies much larger than their heads. Tall or fat, I use a body ratio from 6 to 1 (or higher) and this works well to convey an incredibly old character.

There is a big step in aging from a senior to an elder. The limit of how far you can go depends on how many folds and wrinkles you can add to the face.

Eyes tend to be hidden and facial hair is very long.



AGING BODIES

The rest of our bodies age, too, not just our faces, so be sure to add details from aging to all visible parts, hands, feet, and torsos.



SYMBOLS OF WISDOM

Elders tend to be symbols of wisdom to those around them. Their age and experience can be shown by giving them staffs, pendants, and robes.



Elders are teachers to younger characters



LAST STAGE BEFORE DEATH



Most people at this age (if not from a magical realm) will need assistance to move around since their bodies are too weak to support them. They often need medication and look sickly or just worn out and tired.

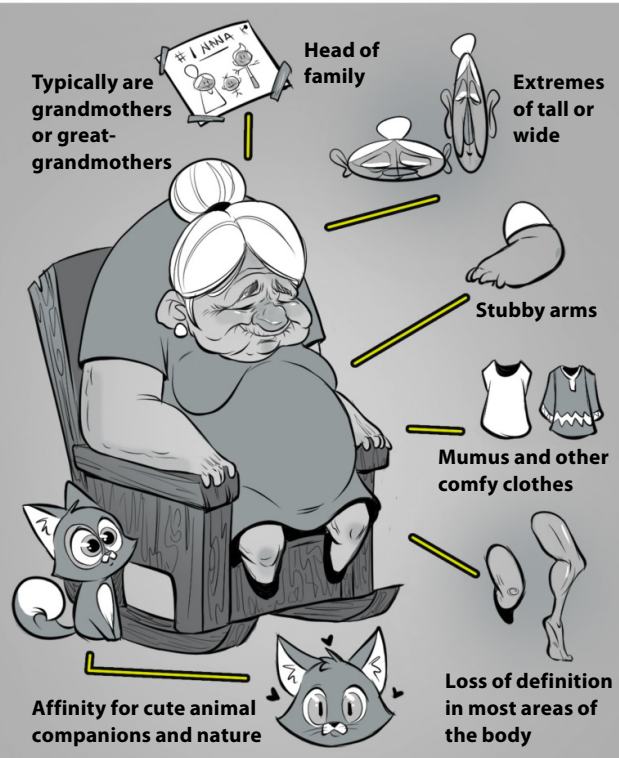
To depict this age correctly, add details such as wheelchairs, being bedridden, walkers, or having an assistant at all times. Be creative with this.





ELDER MEN

- Eyes tend to be closed; this is a sign of often being tired.
- Facial hair is an easy way to show this age and extremely long beards work better than anything else.
- Jewelry, pendants, or any accessory typically has significant meaning.
- Fingers and hands tend to be thinner with more bones showing; this gives them a bit of a witch-like look.
- As we grow older we lose height considerably (think of Yoda), and the older you get the wiser you get.
- Items that help a character look like an elder: staffs, canes, walkers, or anything else that helps them get around, and very large glasses.

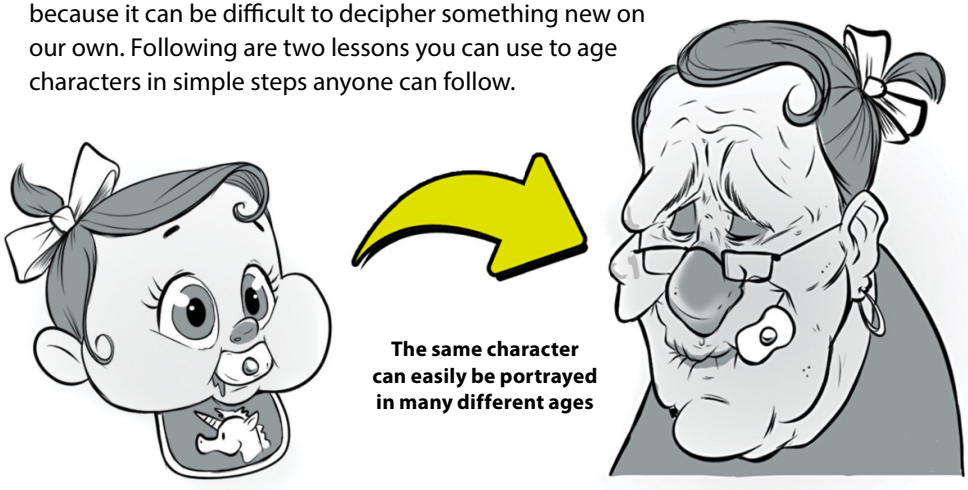


ELDER WOMEN

- Elder women are at the standard age for being great-grandmothers or great-great-grandmothers.
- Portrayed as the head of their family more often than men at this age.
- Arms and legs tend to become stubby once again, like a baby but wrinkly.
- Clothes become completely simple. We are talking mumus or long dresses that keep you comfy.
- Definition in extremities starts to diminish or becomes exaggerated (in skinny elders).
- Calmness and serenity are key aspects for elders. A natural affinity for animals and nature is greater at this time and creates an air of peace more than younger age groups.

QUICK AND EASY TIPS TO GET YOU STARTED

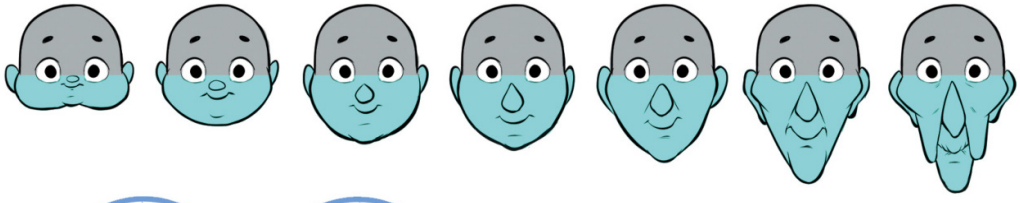
Everyone would like a magic trick to help us quickly learn new things, because it can be difficult to decipher something new on our own. Following are two lessons you can use to age characters in simple steps anyone can follow.

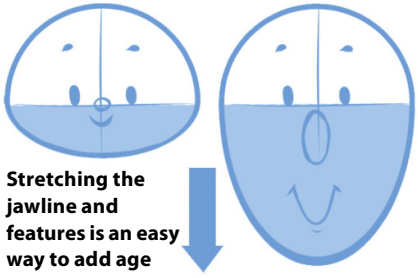


The same character can easily be portrayed in many different ages

LESSON 1: THE STRETCHING JAW METHOD

A simple technique I learned from doing caricatures for 15 years is the **STRETCHING JAW METHOD**. This method shows how simply stretching the jaw down will age a character and in turn make it younger by moving the jaw up. Facial features should be stretched as well to retain the overall look of the character. See the graphics below to understand the general idea of how this works.



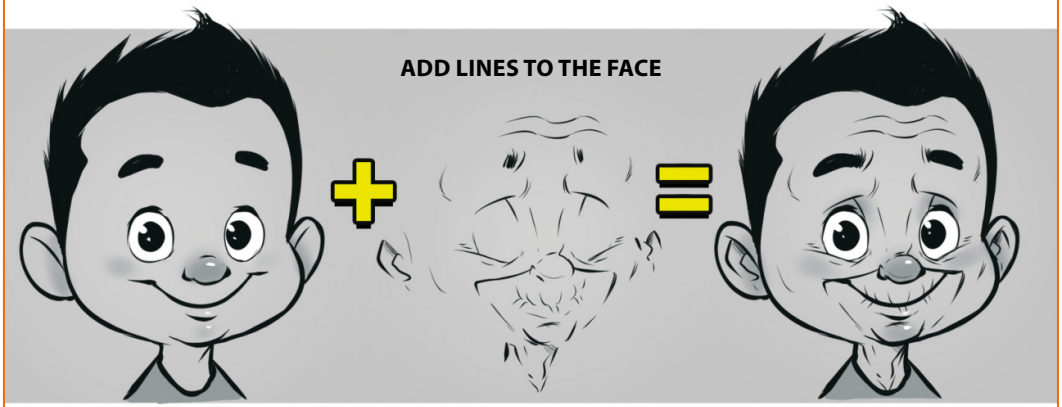


Stretching the jawline and features is an easy way to add age

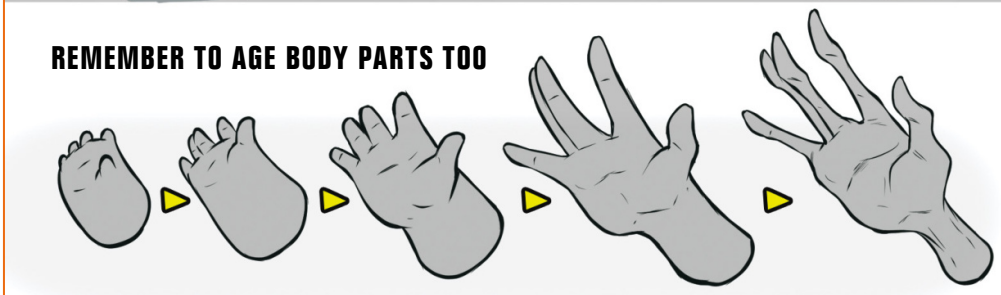
By stretching the jawline down you can easily add years to your design, and adding tiny details can make the effect dramatic and more accurate. This works on most characters and it's a simple and effective way to achieve variation in your designs.

LESSON 2: ADDING DETAILS AND LINES

What is the first thing we think of when picturing an aging person? The first thing I think of is wrinkles and more wrinkles. This method uses that perception of aging and implements it in your drawings. The simple act of adding lines and small details to your characters will instantly add years to them. As you can see in the graphic below, just adding a few lines to the same drawing creates an elderly man from the face of a child.



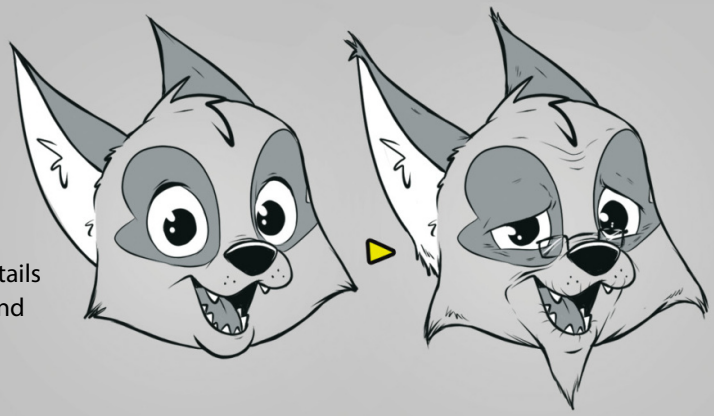
REMEMBER TO AGE BODY PARTS TOO

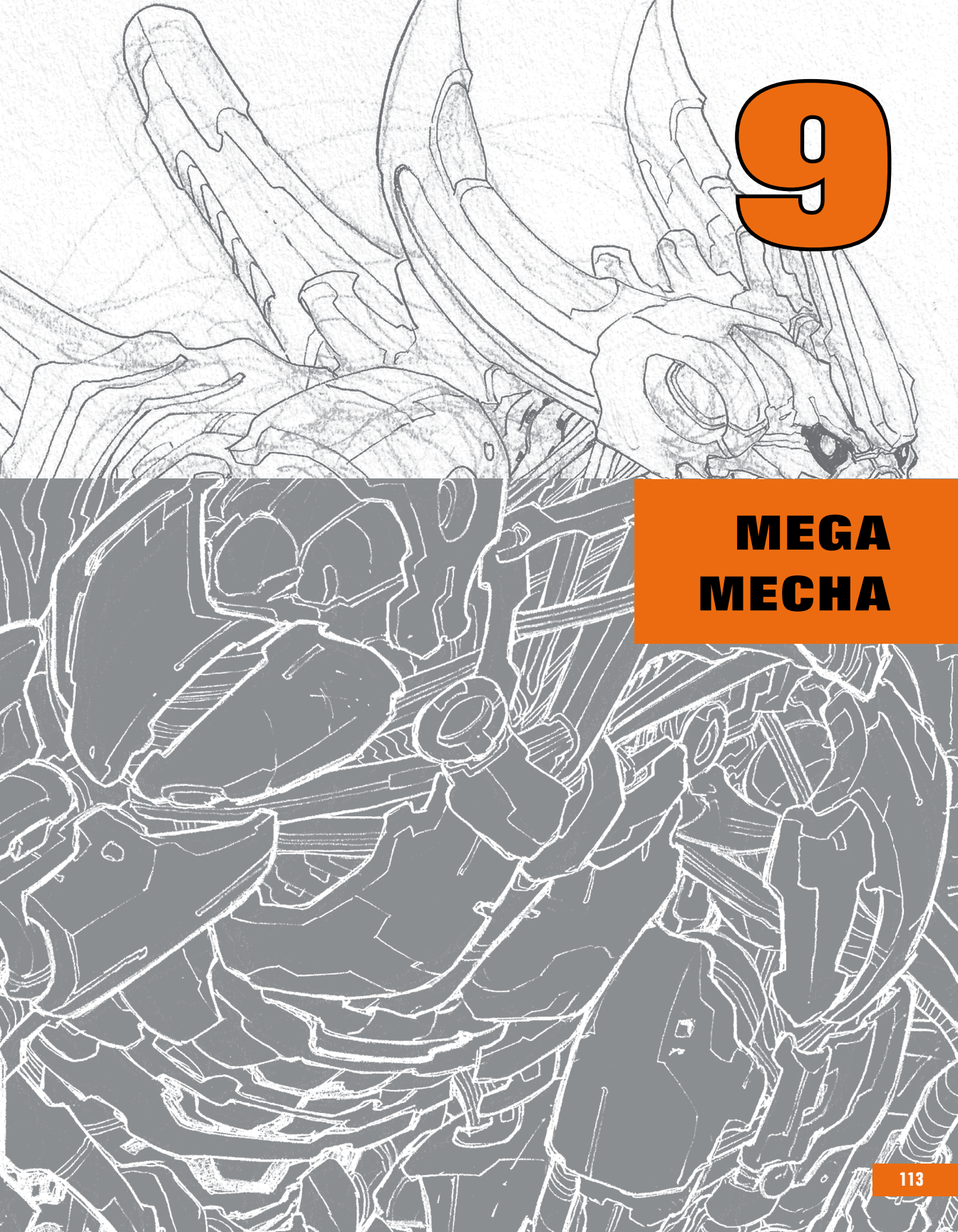


Babies are soft, smooth, and have cute little fingers. As we grow older, definition and details start to show on our bodies. Remember to add the appropriate level of detail to your characters' body parts as well as their faces.

YOU CAN EASILY APPLY TO ANY CHARACTER

This process can be applied to non-human characters too—**ROBOTS, ANIMALS, ALIENS,** or whatever you come up with. Adding extra lines and small details to your designs can add years and years to them—easily.





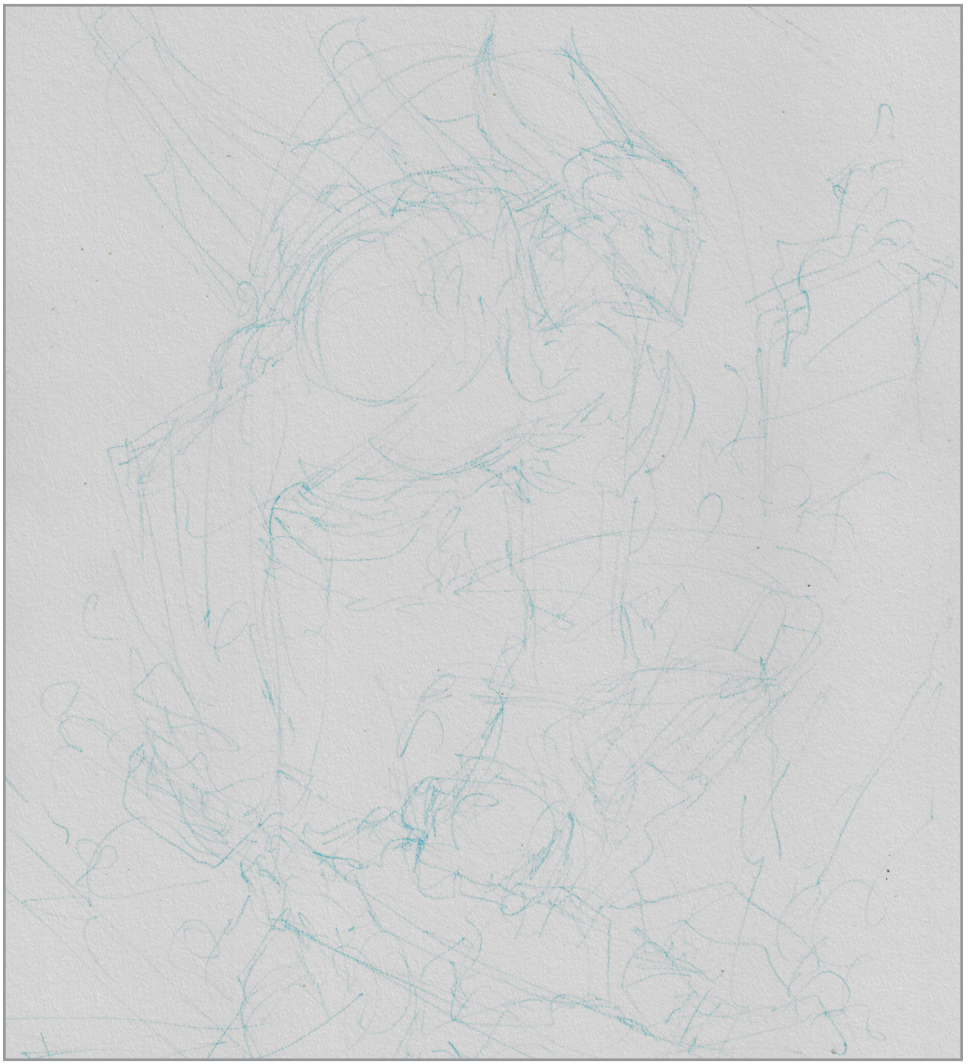
9

MEGA MECHA

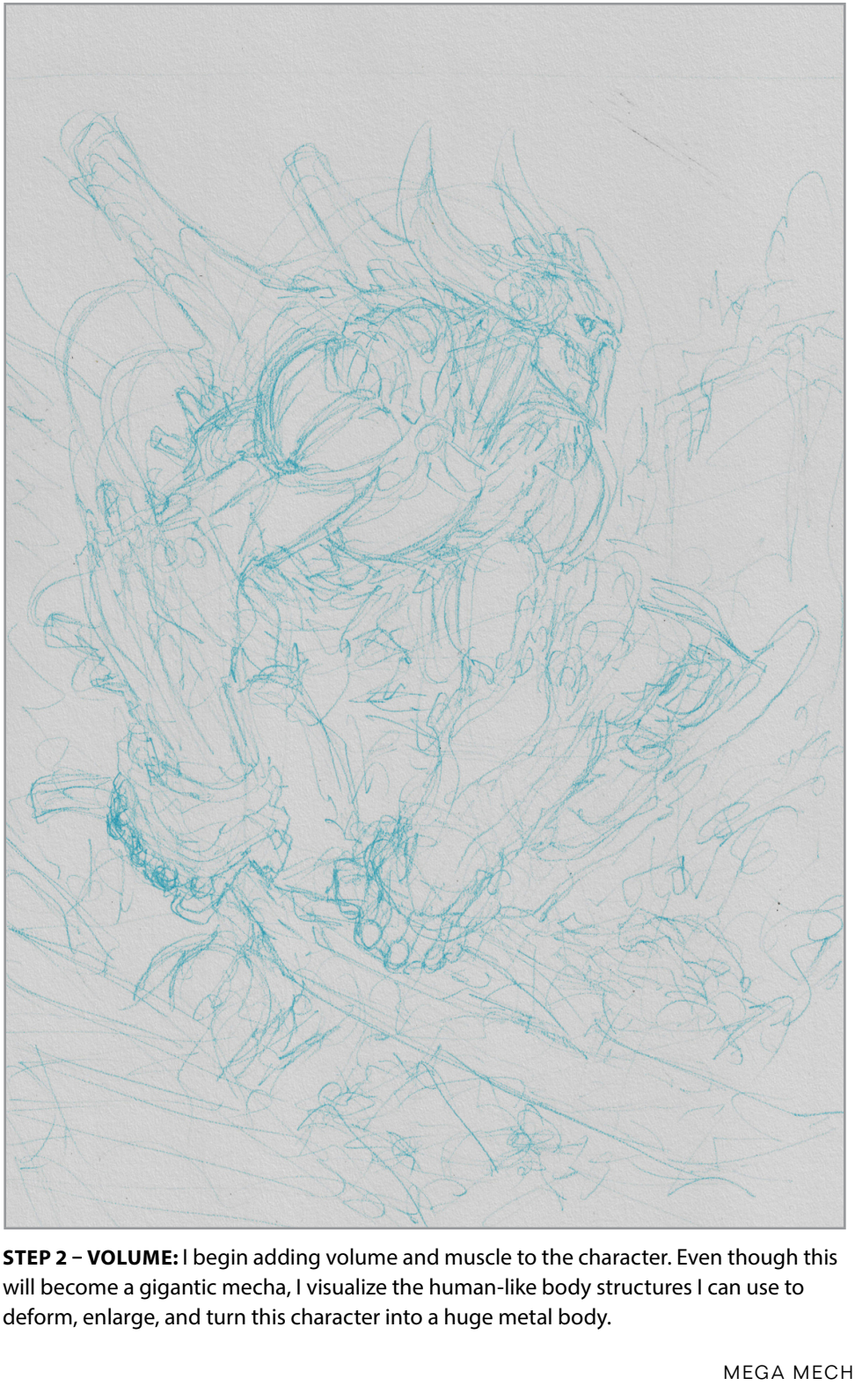
MEGA MECHA

WITH GERARDO SANDOVAL

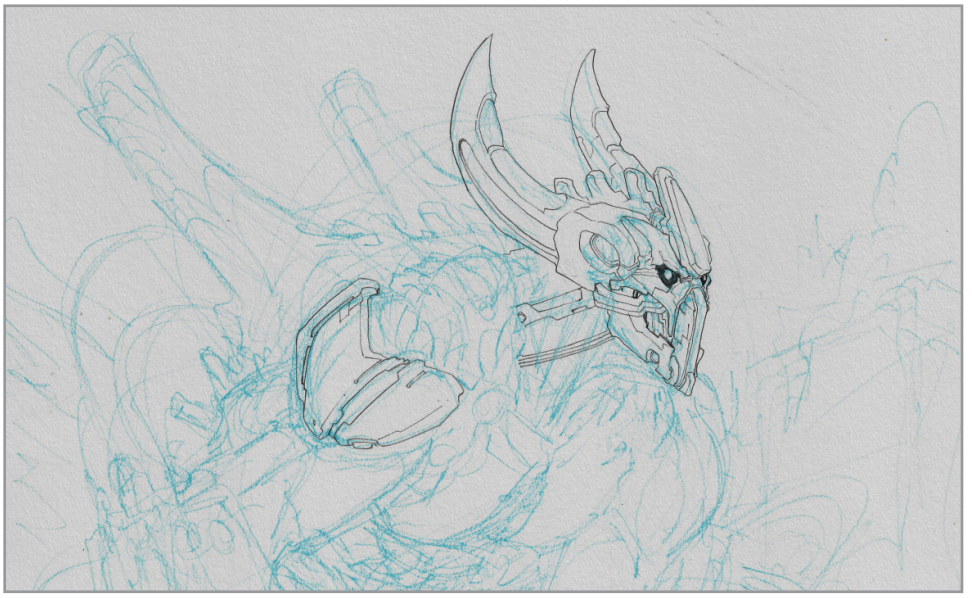
To create my mecha character for this tutorial, I start by using traditional tools. I prefer a pencil with a hard, blue colored lead. This method allows me to easily remove the blue sketch lines during a later scanning step, leaving only my darker, more refined charcoal line work. I've included images of each stage in my process, so you can follow my methods step by step from concept to completion.



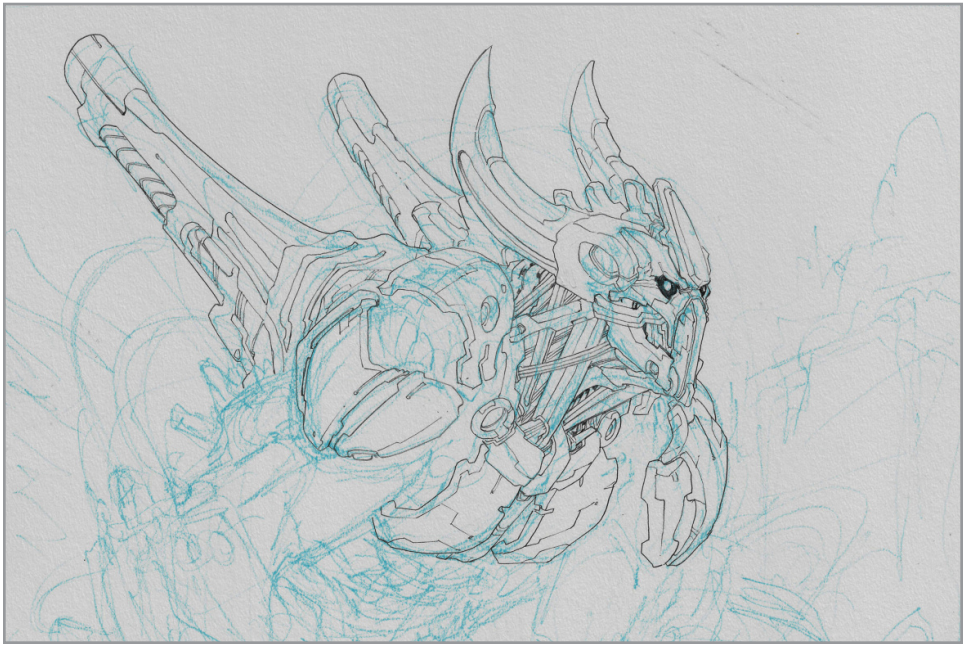
STEP 1 – ROUGH SKETCH: Drawing with blue lines at my early sketch stage, I can be more free and fluid with my early concept sketches, focusing on the posture and proportions I want to see in my character.



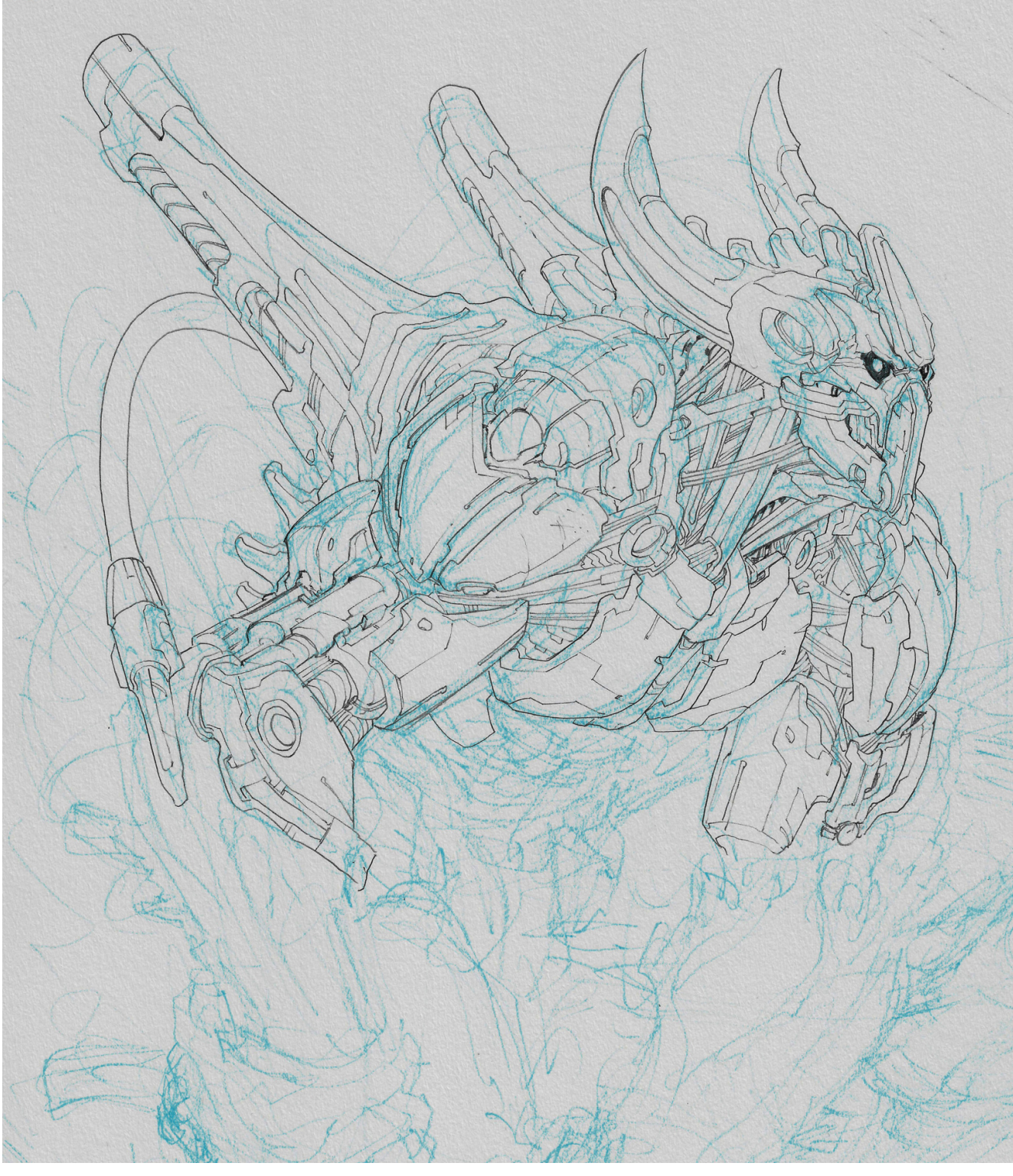
STEP 2 – VOLUME: I begin adding volume and muscle to the character. Even though this will become a gigantic mecha, I visualize the human-like body structures I can use to deform, enlarge, and turn this character into a huge metal body.



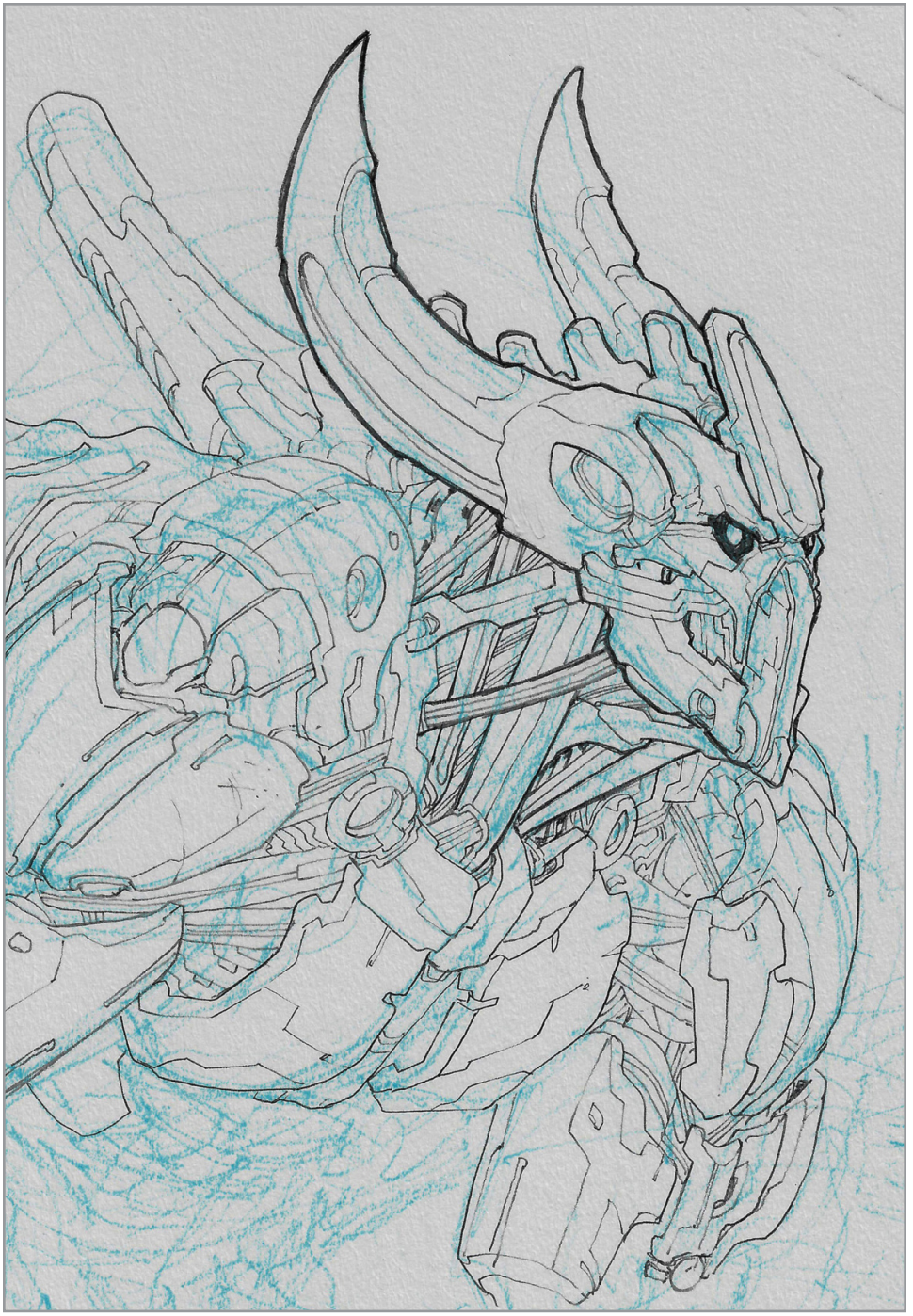
STEP 3 – FINALIZING THE SKETCH: This is the step where I begin to place darker charcoal pencil strokes. I start with the most important parts of the character, such as the shape of the head and shoulders.



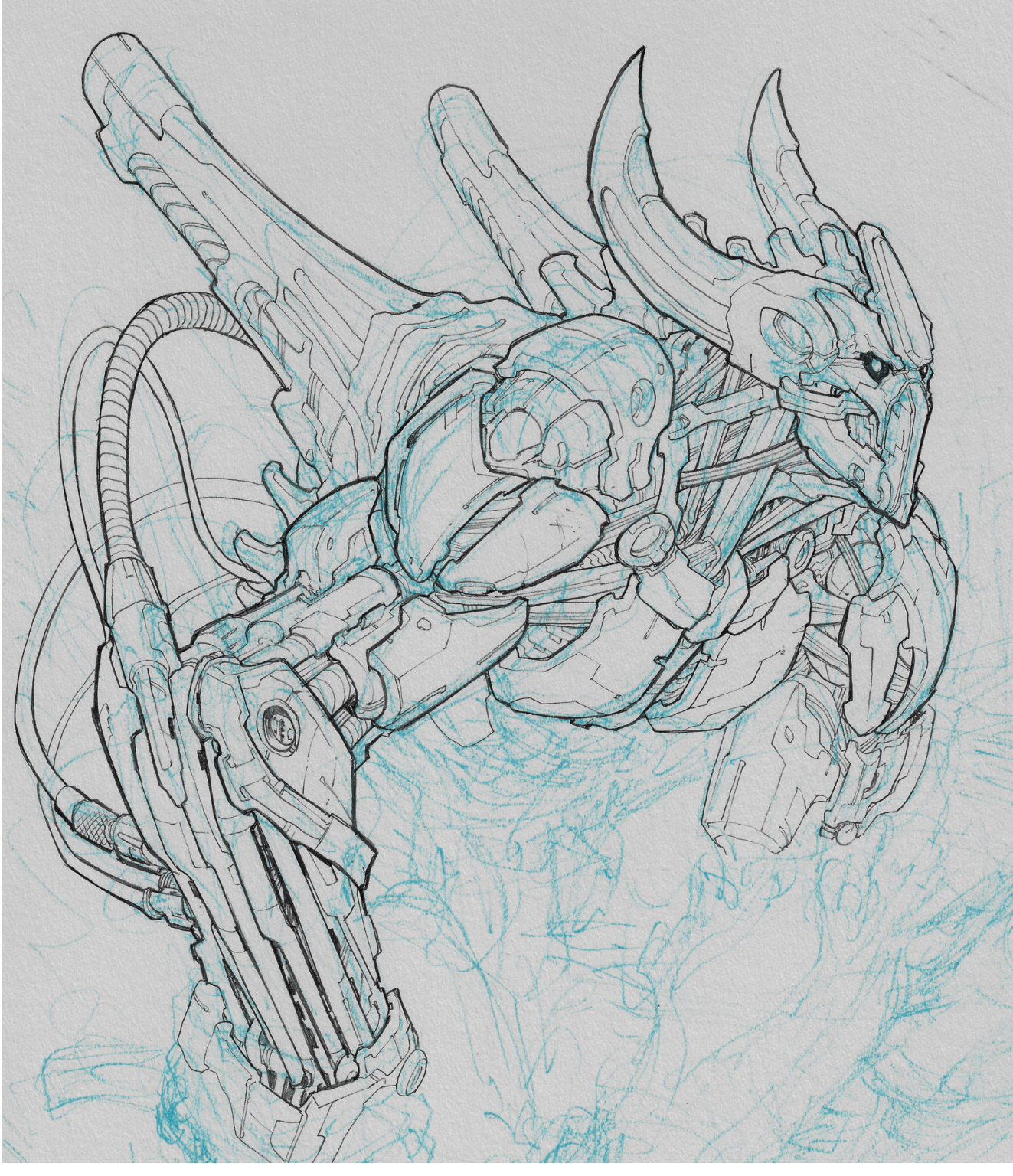
I always draw from top to bottom, this is so I can lay my hand on the paper while I am drawing without smudging the charcoal pencil lines. This helps to keep the paper clean as I work.



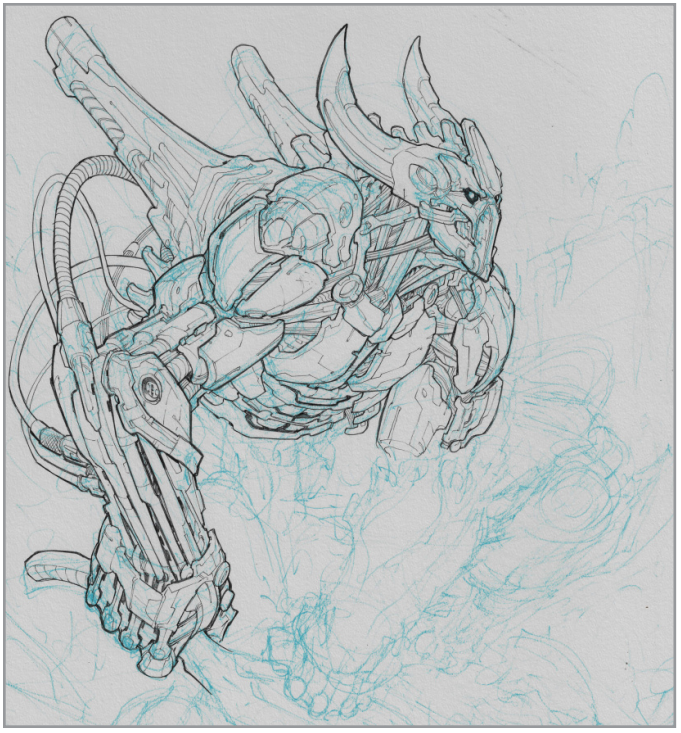
At the same time I am creating the anatomical proportions of the character's body, I layer on mechanical textures based on the structure of human muscles.



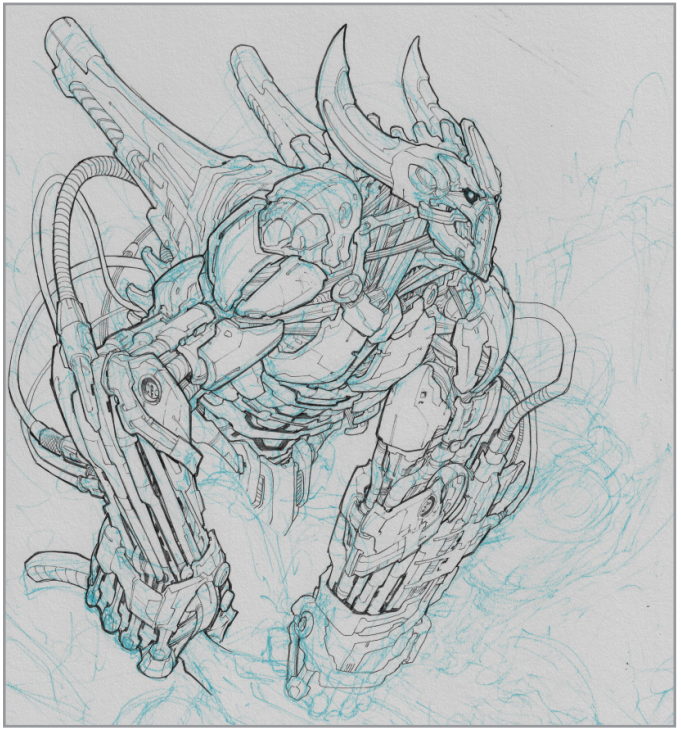
STEP 4 – THICKENING LINES: Before going any further at this stage, I go back to the first charcoal lines and increase the thickness in all the areas I consider to be the most prominent features. This process adds depth and more volume to the drawing.



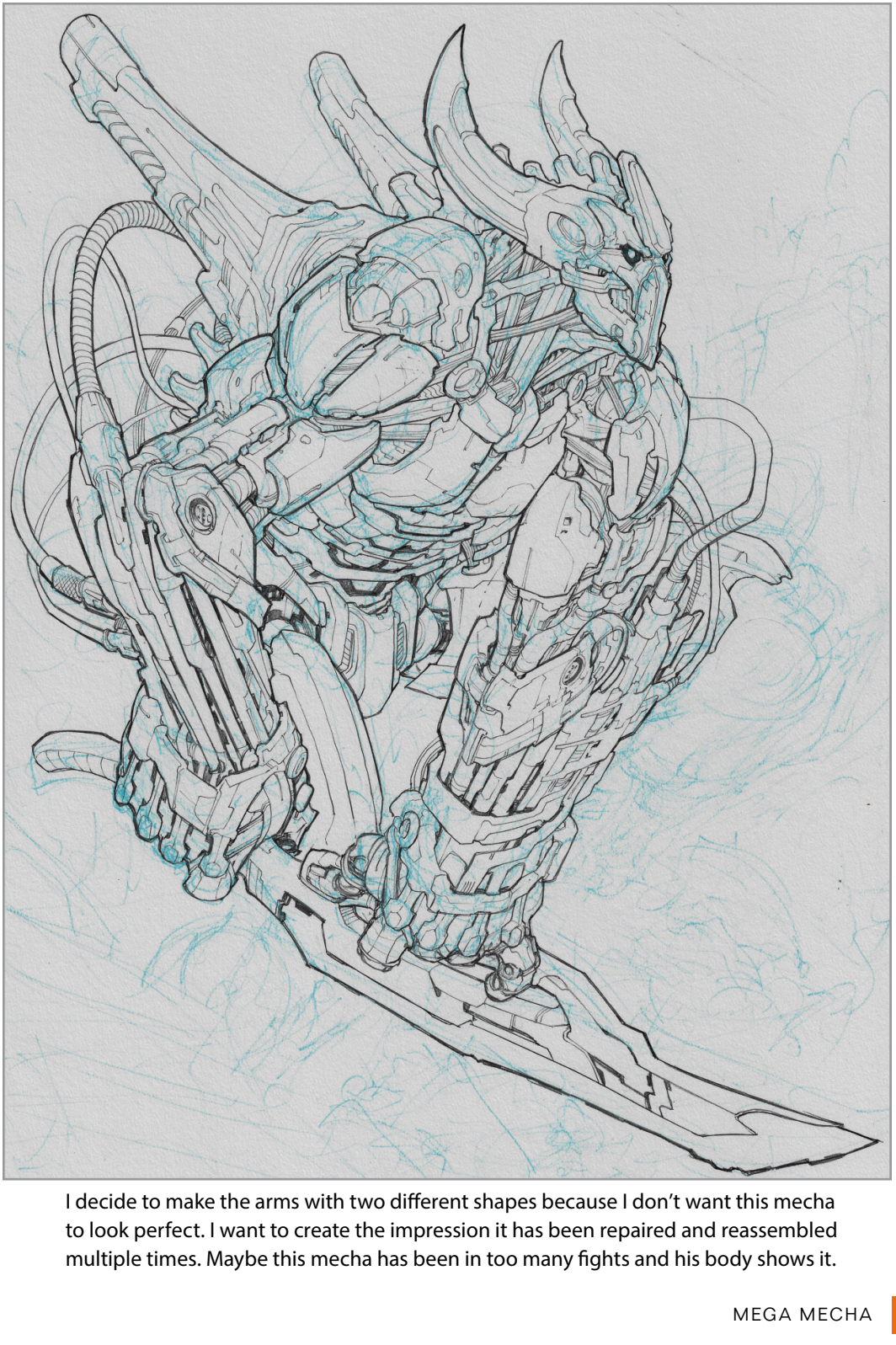
Everything I have traced and darkened looks stronger because of the added volume from thicker lines in the contours and the most important “muscle” areas.



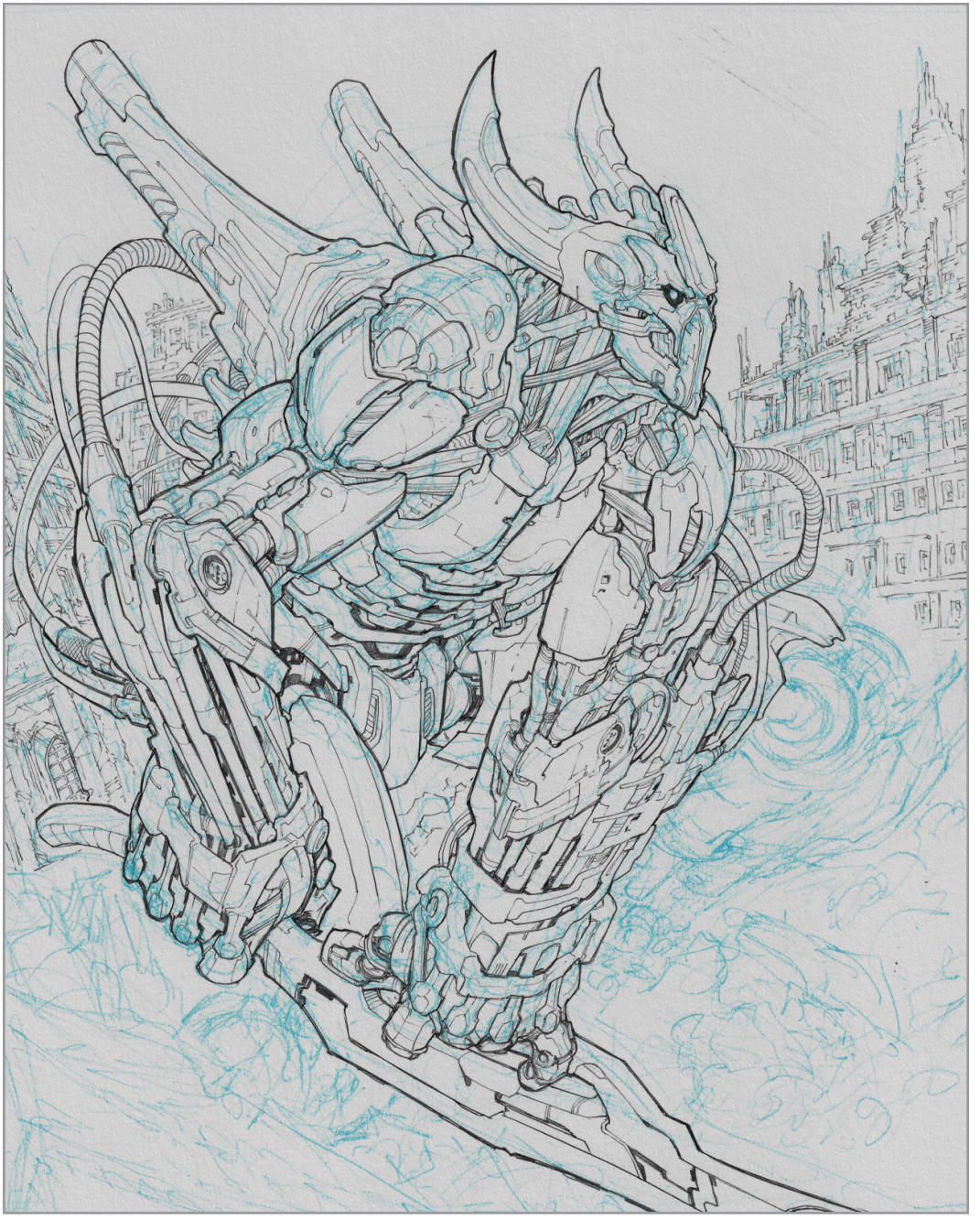
From here, as I draw in more areas of the body I add darker and thicker lines as I go. Creating the first lines on the torso, I determine the perspective for each element of the body.



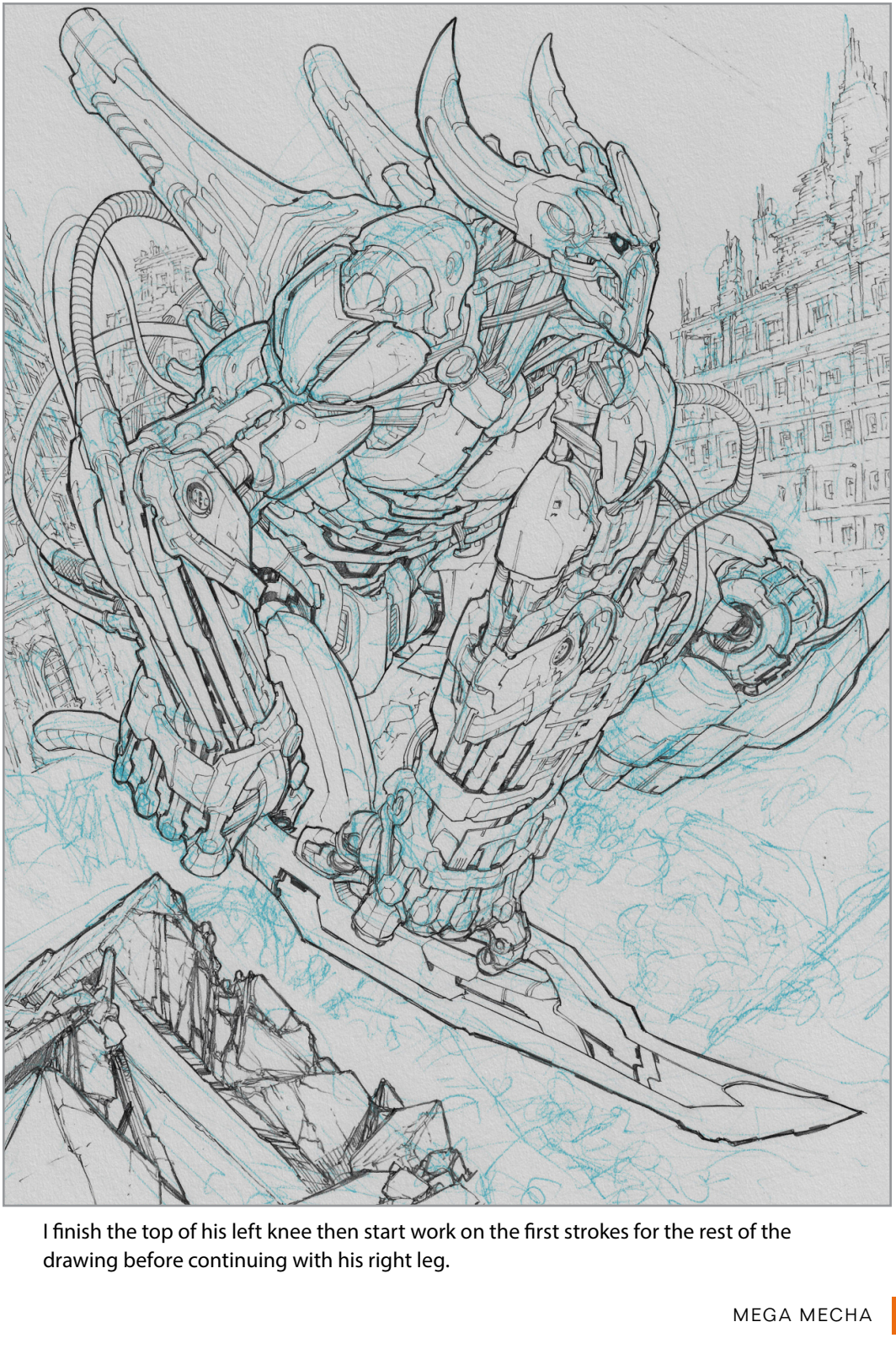
It is very important to understand where to thicken the lines in just the right areas so the drawing is clean and solid.



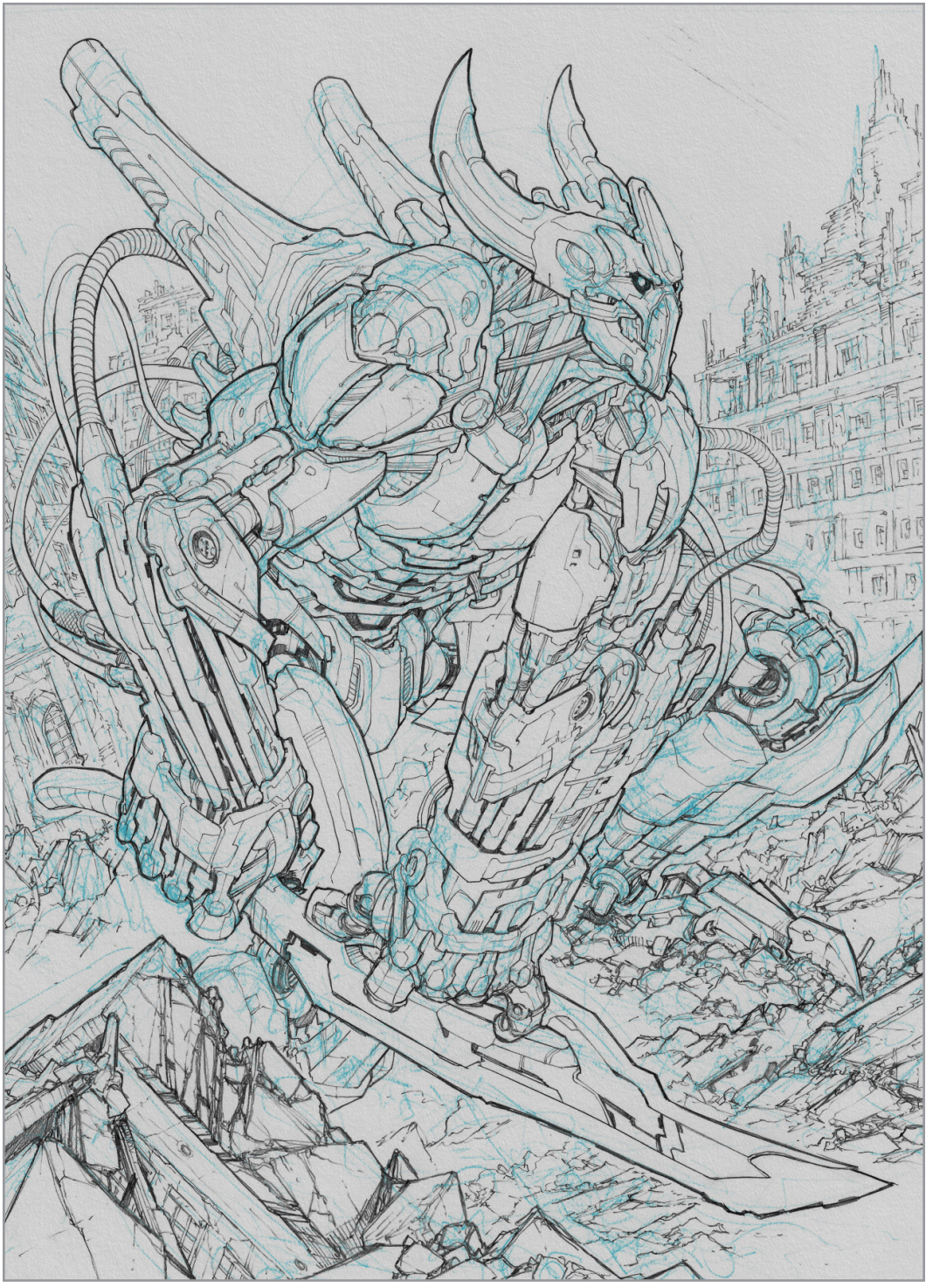
I decide to make the arms with two different shapes because I don't want this mecha to look perfect. I want to create the impression it has been repaired and reassembled multiple times. Maybe this mecha has been in too many fights and his body shows it.



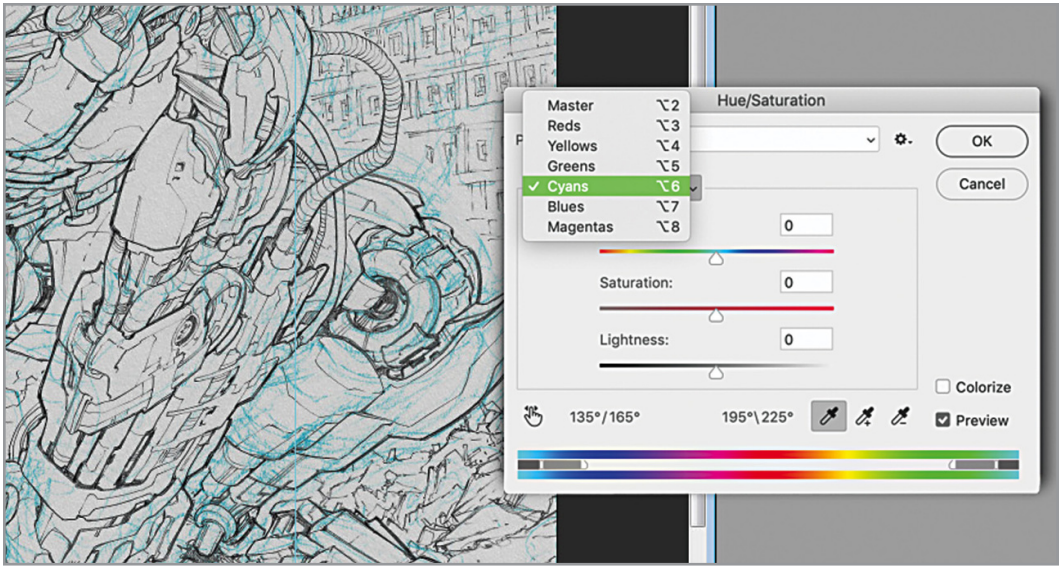
STEP 5 – BACKGROUND: Before continuing downward on the drawing, I return to the top and begin drawing in the background setting. While doing this step, special care must be taken not to touch the charcoal pencil lines with your hand. Placing a clean sheet of white paper between your hand and the drawing can help keep the drawing from smudging.



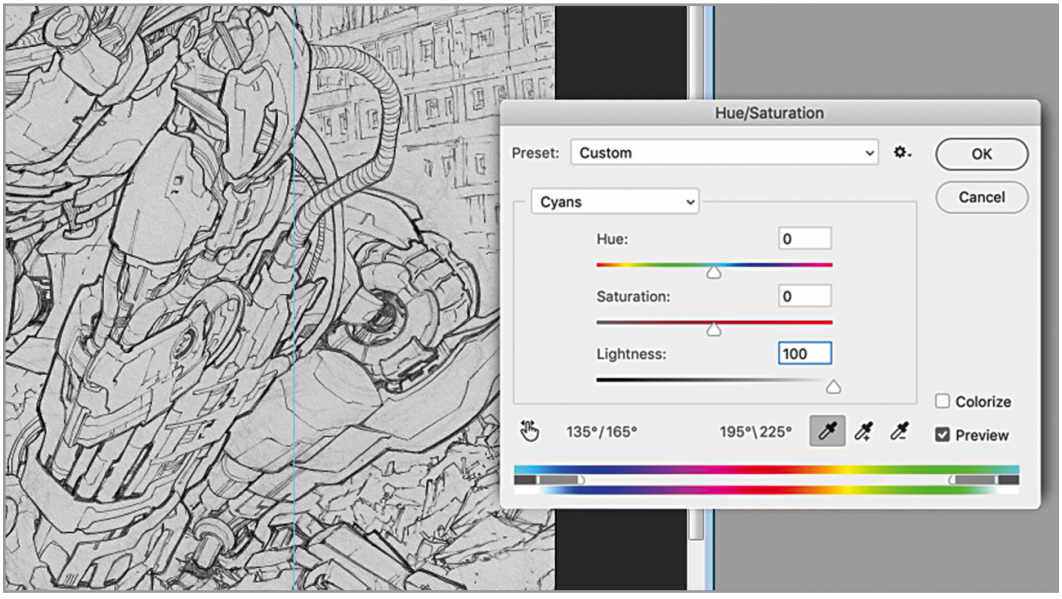
I finish the top of his left knee then start work on the first strokes for the rest of the drawing before continuing with his right leg.



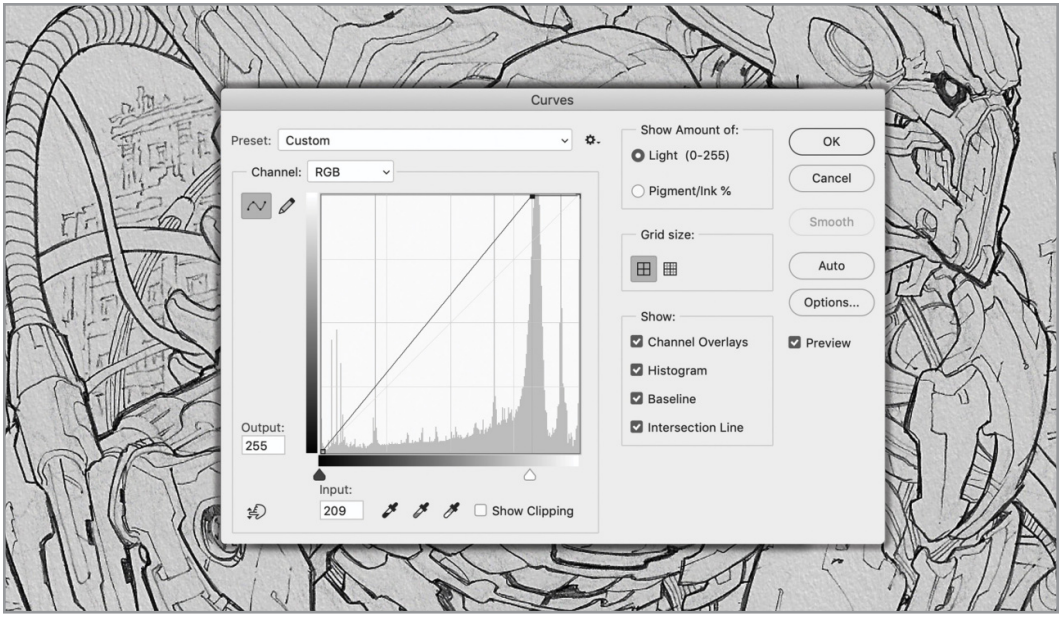
I add in the final details and now the pencil drawing is ready for the next stage.



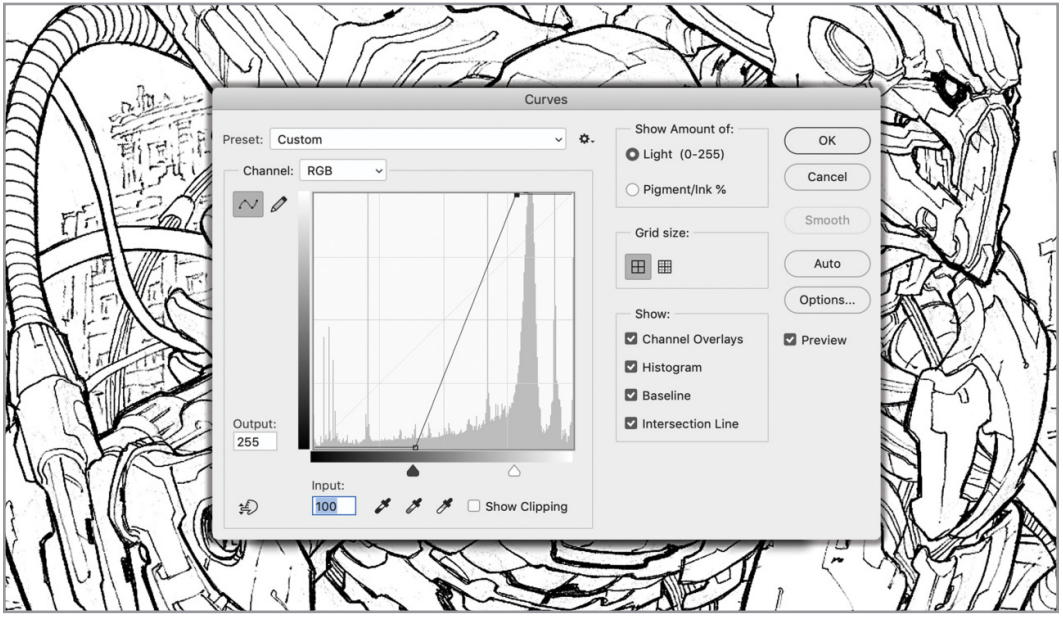
STEP 6 – SCANNING ARTWORK: Let's begin the digital process! First I scan the drawing at 300 dpi (dots per inch) to have good resolution in pixels for the final print production. Next, I open the scanned artwork in Photoshop. I still use the older version of Photoshop CS3 Extended, but this is not a problem. All versions of Photoshop have the tools needed to retouch the image. Using the keyboard on my PC, I press the keys *Control+U* or if you use a Macintosh, *Command+U*. This opens the *Hue/Saturation* window.



STEP 7 – REMOVING BLUE LINES: I click on the *Master* menu and select the color *Cyans*, then I increase lightness all the way to 100. Now the blue lines disappear and only the charcoal lines remain.

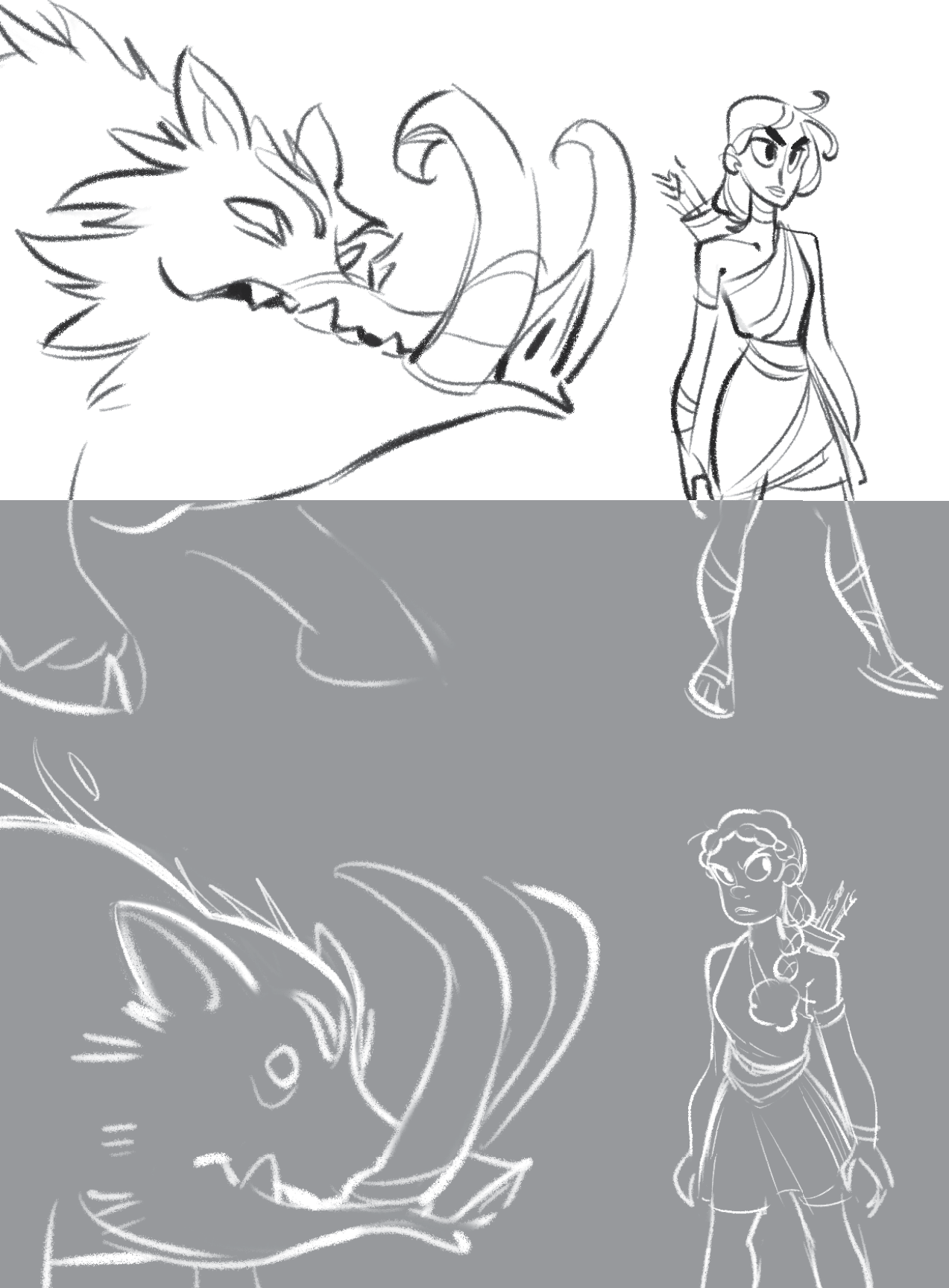


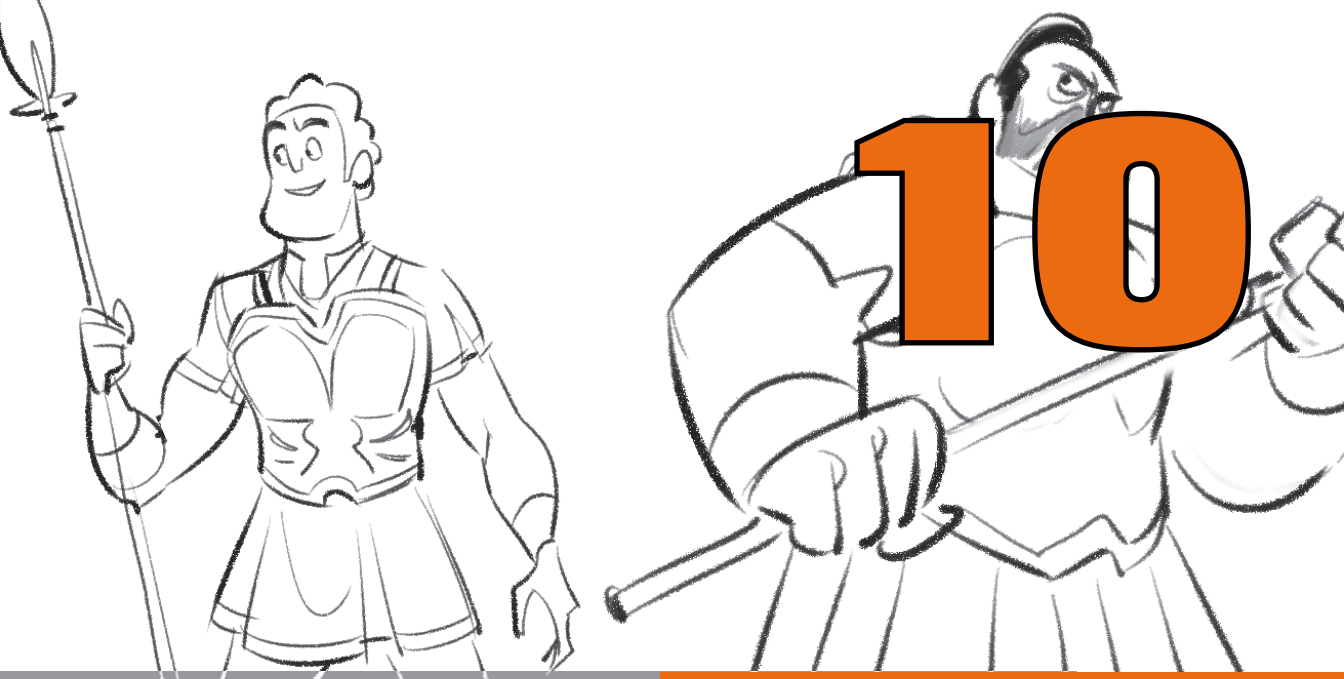
STEP 8 – ADJUSTING CONTRAST: From my keyboard on my PC, I press the keys *Control+M* or if it is Macintosh, *Command+M*; this opens the *Curves* window.



In the *Curves* window, I move the shadow point to the right and the light to the left as seen in the example image above. I can adjust these tab settings until I achieve the contrast I want to the line work. ***Our line art is now complete and the digital image is ready for color!***







10

CAST OF CHARACTERS



CAST OF CHARACTERS

WITH KENNETH ANDERSON

What is a character archetype? Not to be confused with a character *stereotype*, a character archetype is a common character idea that reappears in stories and myths throughout history.

Carl Jung suggested these types form part of the deep human unconscious. Joseph Campbell identified archetypes as universal character types found throughout many historical human myths, an idea he popularized alongside the Hero's Journey in his book *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*.

Drawing on myths from around the world, Campbell suggested the concept of the monomyth, a common mythic structure found across time and cultures, featuring a common cast of archetypal characters. We find a form of this monomyth acted out in films such as *Star Wars*, *The Matrix*, and *The Lion King*.

A deep analysis of character archetypes and the Hero's Journey is beyond the scope of this tutorial, but I recommend reading more on the subject. However, we will take time to explore common character archetypes and the role they play in stories.

And what better way to do this than visualizing an actual myth? Let's start by looking back into Greek mythology and the myriad colorful characters found there. We can build our cast of characters around the fantastical archetypes we discover!

THE BRIEF

I start by imagining that a client has come to me with the concept for an animated feature film. It is based on a classic Greek myth and needs to include five characters that fit into common archetypes.

Before designing a cast of characters, it is important to be very clear on what is needed. For this tutorial our goal is to complete a key pose in full color for each character. These poses will form a visual lineup of all five characters. We can complement our character designs with expressions, weapons, and any other details that develop during the design process.

A key thing to keep in mind when designing a cast is to make all the characters distinct and unique, but also harmonious with one another.

THE MYTH

Our myth is *The Calydonian Boar Hunt*.

This may be a lesser known Greek story, but it features cool characters and high drama. What follows is a quick outline of the myth, adapted slightly for the purposes of this tutorial but still accurate to the essence of the original.

King Oeneus of Calydon has failed to duly honor Artemis, the goddess of hunting and wild animals, and she is not pleased. In retaliation, Artemis sends a wild boar to

ravage the countryside of Calydon, destroying crops and farmlands. This is no ordinary boar however—it is huge and monstrous! With his people starving, King Oeneus's son Meleager calls together a vast band of heroes to hunt the boar. Many men pledge their support but so does Atalanta, the only woman to put herself forward. Meleager's uncle, Toxeus, dismisses and refuses her but Meleager decrees she can join them. A good thing too—no one can outpace Atalanta nor can anyone match her ability with a bow. It is Atalanta that lands the first hit on the boar with one of her arrows. In turn, Meleager is able to spear it, bringing its chaotic destruction to an end. In her honor, Meleager presents Atalanta with the boar hide. That act does not go well with Toxeus who believes Meleager deserves it for landing the killing blow. A fight ensues, then Meleager defends his decision and Atalanta's honor by killing his uncle, which ultimately leads to his own death. Artemis looks on, pleased with the discord she has sown, her revenge against King Oeneus complete.

THE CAST

Let's review—*who are the characters in this story?*

There are many ways to interpret this myth depending on the point of view we take. This myth has passed down through the centuries, so it is not a perfect story with a clear hero, villain, and character arcs. To a certain extent, we can add our own ideas to the story.

I decided to interpret this myth with Atalanta as our hero. Let's start with her, then develop the rest of the cast.

ATALANTA—HERO/PROTAGONIST: Every story needs a **hero.** This doesn't necessarily mean they are heroic in the traditional sense of the word (though in this case it does). They could be the protagonist (the leading character) following a journey through conflict toward fulfilling their desire.

In our cast, Atalanta wants to participate in the boar hunt to prove herself as a hunter and hero. But she is up against a wall of doubt and sexism represented by Toxeus, Meleager's uncle. To achieve her goal, Atalanta must help slay the boar to prove her prowess to Toxeus and the whole kingdom. Atalanta has an interesting backstory. Abandoned as an infant by her father, an Arcadian king, a bear finds and suckles her. Later she is taken in and raised by a band of kind hunters who teach her the ways of the hunt. Atalanta dedicates herself to the Goddess Artemis and vows to remain unmarried.

Immediately we see layers of conflict in her story. (Conflict is the lifeblood of any good story!) There is the obvious conflict between herself and the negative attitude of Toxeus, but another conflict arises as she is dedicated to Artemis yet decides to help bring down the boar Artemis created. This should place her in conflict with Artemis, unless Artemis hoped for chaos and the role Atalanta could play in making it happen.

It is important to think about the story metaphorically. Atalanta is not just overcoming the boar, she is overcoming the prejudice and negative attitudes of the kingdom, which are manifested through the character Toxeus. We can take it one step further—Atalanta was rejected at birth by her father. Taking part in the boar hunt is an act of defiance but also of seeking acceptance. It is an internal wound she must heal; maybe she is saying to her father: "Look at me! I have survived against

all odds!" This is the basis of any good character arc: a character with a wound or flaw who must overcome the flaw while facing a great challenge, ultimately growing as a person. Usually this is the role of the hero.

MELEAGER—THE ALLY: A hero rarely makes their journey alone. They rely on many characters who help on their quest and enable them to move forward. One of the most common character types to do so is the **ally**.

Meleager is a hero of Greek myth who joined Jason on his quest for the Golden Fleece. We could create the cast with Meleager as our hero, but our interpretation puts Atalanta front and center. Meleager aids and supports Atalanta when others do not and they slay the boar together. He recognizes her prowess. Even though Meleager ultimately slays the boar, this is Atalanta's story and his role is mainly a supportive one.

TOXEUS—ANTAGONIST/ SHAPESHIFTER/THRESHOLD GUARDIAN: Every protagonist needs an **antagonist**, the opposing force to their forward momentum in pursuit of their goals. An antagonist could be another character, or it could be an act of God. In our case, the force holding Atalanta back is the prejudiced attitudes of the kingdom, manifested in the character of Toxeus.

Toxeus also fits the **shapeshifter** archetype since we never really know his true intent toward Atalanta at the start—it is changeable, unknown. He expresses his distaste of her fighting with them but reluctantly agrees. It is only when she is presented with the prized boar skin by Meleager that his true colors and potential to harm come to light.

Toxeus could also be a **threshold guardian**, a character type who tries to put the hero off their quest, testing their mettle early in the story.

ARTEMIS—TRICKSTER/SHAPESHIFTER/ ALLY: A story is driven by conflict and sometimes conflict needs to be stirred up. This can be achieved by the **trickster** archetype.

As a goddess, Artemis can sow discord among the human world for neglecting her. Her goal is to establish a new order. Artemis is like a puppet master, manipulating the human world in pursuit of revenge and punishment. Never get on the wrong side of the gods and goddesses of Greek myth!

Could Artemis be the antagonist? If we interpret the story from the viewpoint of Meleager or Toxeus, perhaps. But this is Atalanta's story, and therefore Artemis's role becomes more complex. Did Artemis want Atalanta to participate in the boar hunt to sow discord? Does Atalanta know Artemis created the boar? The Greek myth doesn't answer these questions.

Either way, it makes sense to cast Artemis as a puppet master, meddling in the lives of humans. It wouldn't be unreasonable to suggest Artemis is an ally of Atalanta, giving her an opportunity to achieve her goals. All the ambiguity also means that we can interpret her role to be a shapeshifter!

BOAR—SHADOW: The boar's role is a tricky one. It is not immediately clear what character it is meant to play. As a mere beast created by Artemis, it has little self-determination, so it is difficult to determine character motivation or a subtextual theme.

If we think metaphorically, however, the boar serves well in the role of **shadow**, the physical barrier in the way of Atalanta's quest to prove her worth as a hunter. The boar can also represent the oppression she is faced with. A manifestation of two things: the negative attitudes of the kingdom and Toxeus toward Atalanta as a woman joining the hunt, and Atalanta's own self-doubt about her place in the world and the inner wound she must overcome. The boar is negativity, self-doubt, and oppression, manifested into a single monstrous form. It is this she must overcome!

We do not have time in this exercise to cover all the common archetypes found in myths and stories. I recommend reading more on the subject for a greater understanding.

RESEARCH AND REFERENCES

The best way to start any design process is research. I have three main goals for research on this project:

- To understand the original Greek myth, the characters, and their backstories. Even though I plan to play with the myth and tweak some details, it is important to remain true to its source. I found a couple of books and audiobooks on the subject of Greek myths and trawled the internet and the library. I also read a good deal about character archetypes.
- I want costumes, hairstyles, armor, and weapons rooted in the correct time period and culture. (I will take a few liberties in the name of creating a good design though!) I have a reference book on historic costumes to refer to, and I will also do online research on Greek attire, weaponry, and armor.

- I want to create a design style that emulates Greek art. But I don't want this influence to be too strong; I want the designs to look modern and to fit well in the film. I looked at Greek pottery, which includes stylized depictions of mythical characters. I thought the artwork was interesting and decided to bring some of these elements into my design.

Due to copyright restrictions I cannot share the images I researched. So instead, I made sketches so you can see the type of references used and how it informed my design process. The key to remember is the importance of research, so you do not design in a bubble. Research leads to new ideas and will lend authenticity to designs, and when working with mythical stories authenticity is essential.

DESIGN PROCESS

Time to start designing!

When designing a cast of characters, it is important they are unique and individual from one another, each with a unique silhouette and shape language. Also consider the overall visual language of the film. Think of it as a hierarchy—the design rules governing the animated film world bring unity to the cast, while the design rules for each individual character say something about their distinct personality and role in the story.

My research helped to identify key concepts to consider while designing each character:

ATALANTA is youthful and energetic; she must look strong and independent. She was raised by a bear and then hunters, and because of this I don't want to give her fancy armor. Her costume should tell us something about her background and also be practical for hunting. She is often described as tall with long flowing hair. I will keep this in mind but may play around depending on other cast members. She will likely wear a single shouldered, knee length chiton (Greek clothing). Her bow and arrow are essential to her design; she uses it to land the first blow on the boar.

MELEAGER is renowned as a great hunter and warrior. He is often described as tall, strong, and noble. I may base his appearance on some sculptures of him I found gathering references. He generally has short hair, curled in a traditional Greek style. He is often depicted naked or semi-clothed, so I need to refer to my historical costume research to infer what he may have worn. As a prince and therefore nobility, I imagine him wearing over his tunic a type of ornamental muscle cuirass (metal armor which covers the torso and is designed to look like the human physique). He kills the boar with his spear so that is an essential part of his costume.

TOXEUS is not as famous in Greek myth, so there are fewer depictions of him for reference. So I can play around and see what I come up with. As Meleager's uncle, he may have similar characteristics and is likely royalty too. He is described as a great hunter so this needs to be made clear. Since Toxeus is going to be antagonistic toward Atalanta, I want his design to suggest the conflict, partly through his shape language. Since he is also a shapeshifter, I can play around with the ambiguity of his shape language—maybe a cloak would help.

ARTEMIS is often depicted in free flowing robes, sometimes long, sometimes short. As the goddess of hunting, wild animals, and the wilderness, she often has a bow and arrow. In order to differentiate her

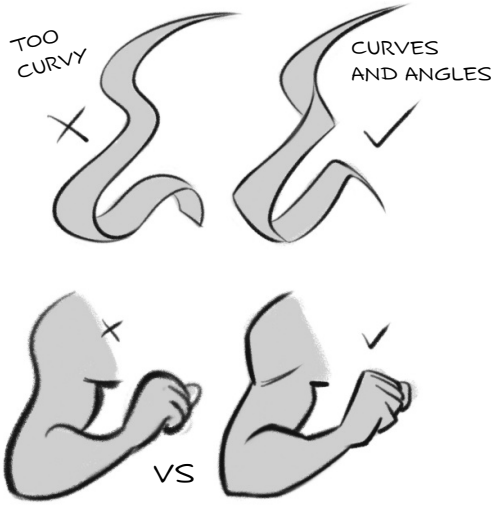
design and costume from Atalanta (who must carry a bow and arrow and should probably wear a short tunic style dress since she does a lot of running!) I decide to depict Artemis in a longer, more regal peplos (a full-length typical Greek women's attire) with adaptations to reflect that she is a goddess. Perhaps she will wear ornamental jewelry or armor? I can represent a bow and arrow in her design rather than her holding one, or I can focus instead on a moon motif she is associated with. Artemis is often depicted with an animal; I could include a deer as her companion or allude to wildlife in her costume. She is a goddess, so I want to make her stand out from the rest of the cast. Perhaps she has a supernatural look, or stands taller than the rest. Artemis is the trickster in this story, and I need to consider how to suggest that as well.

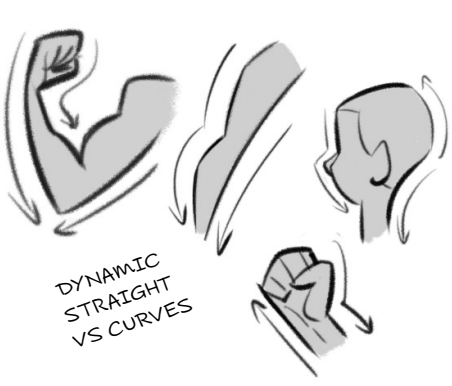
THE BOAR has some interesting depictions in Greek art. In my design, however, I want to exaggerate the boar and turn it into a real monster. It was spawned by Artemis, so I think it should look and feel almost supernatural. It must look huge and indomitable to require such a force to take it down. If the boar looks small and weak, the danger is not believable and it will not fulfill the role properly. This boar design in our cast is where I can really let go and have a bit of fun!

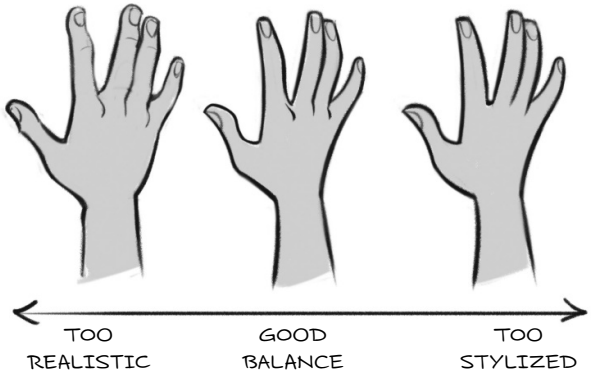
DESIGN RULES

I have the following design rules to keep in mind while drawing:

- The designs must be modern and stylized but also reflect classic Greek art.
- The target audience are children who are preteen and teenagers and even young adults, so with that in mind the designs can be a little edgy.
- I also need to keep in mind the limitations of the medium (2D animated film), so characters cannot be overly complex. Based on the above rules and the nature of the story, I plan to use subtle angles, avoiding large curves and flowing lines.







EARLY THUMBNAILS

Thumbnailing is the stage where anything goes, a time of pure experimentation. It is also a stage where it can be difficult to get the process started. To avoid this, I find that drawing anything, no matter how bad it is, can kick-start the process!

When I design a cast, I want to pay close attention to all the characters from the beginning. I need to ensure they work well as a group but also individually. I will give more attention to our hero, Atalanta, and let key decisions about her design influence the design of the other cast members.

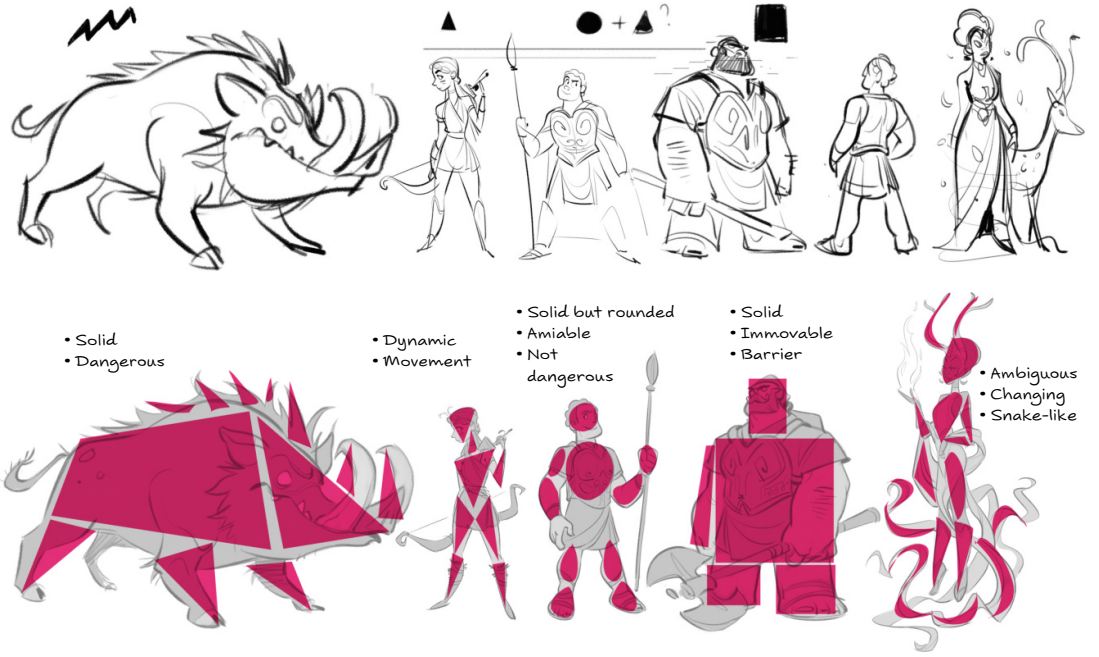


I start by drawing a page with all the cast members, pulling ideas out of my head and putting them on paper. At this stage, anything goes! I base ideas on my research and our adjustments to the myth but also on their archetypes. I want the designs to reflect their character. I experiment with ethnicity, rather than restrict myself even though our characters are based on Greek myths—after all, the Greeks were in contact with people from Africa and the Middle East. I think we can take liberties there while staying true to historical context. This also helps me create a distinctive cast of characters.



DEVELOPING THUMBNAILS

At this stage I experiment with the drawings that have the most potential by lining them up and sketching over them. Developing ideas as I go, I end with a foundation for the next stage, a basic idea for each character.



ATALANTA is created using dynamic shapes alluding to her athleticism and hunter nature. I combined dynamic triangles with subtle curves. I want her to give an impression of being athletic and dangerous, but not too sharp, except for the tip of her arrow!

MELEAGER is rounded and solid, implying a nonthreatening nature; giving him a strong and reliable look. I use blocky, rounded forms, since he needs to look powerful yet unthreatening to visually reinforce his role as an ally.

TOXEUS is huge and built using square blocky shapes. This gives the impression that he is an immovable object, set in his ways, and a physical and metaphorical barrier to Atalanta's goal. His character design is in direct contrast to Atalanta's.

ARTEMIS is created using an ambiguous mix of curves and triangles. Her clothing shifts and swirls around her like snakes giving her an air of mystery, suggesting her trickster nature. I need to convey an air of otherworldliness about her, maybe long slender limbs and fingers.

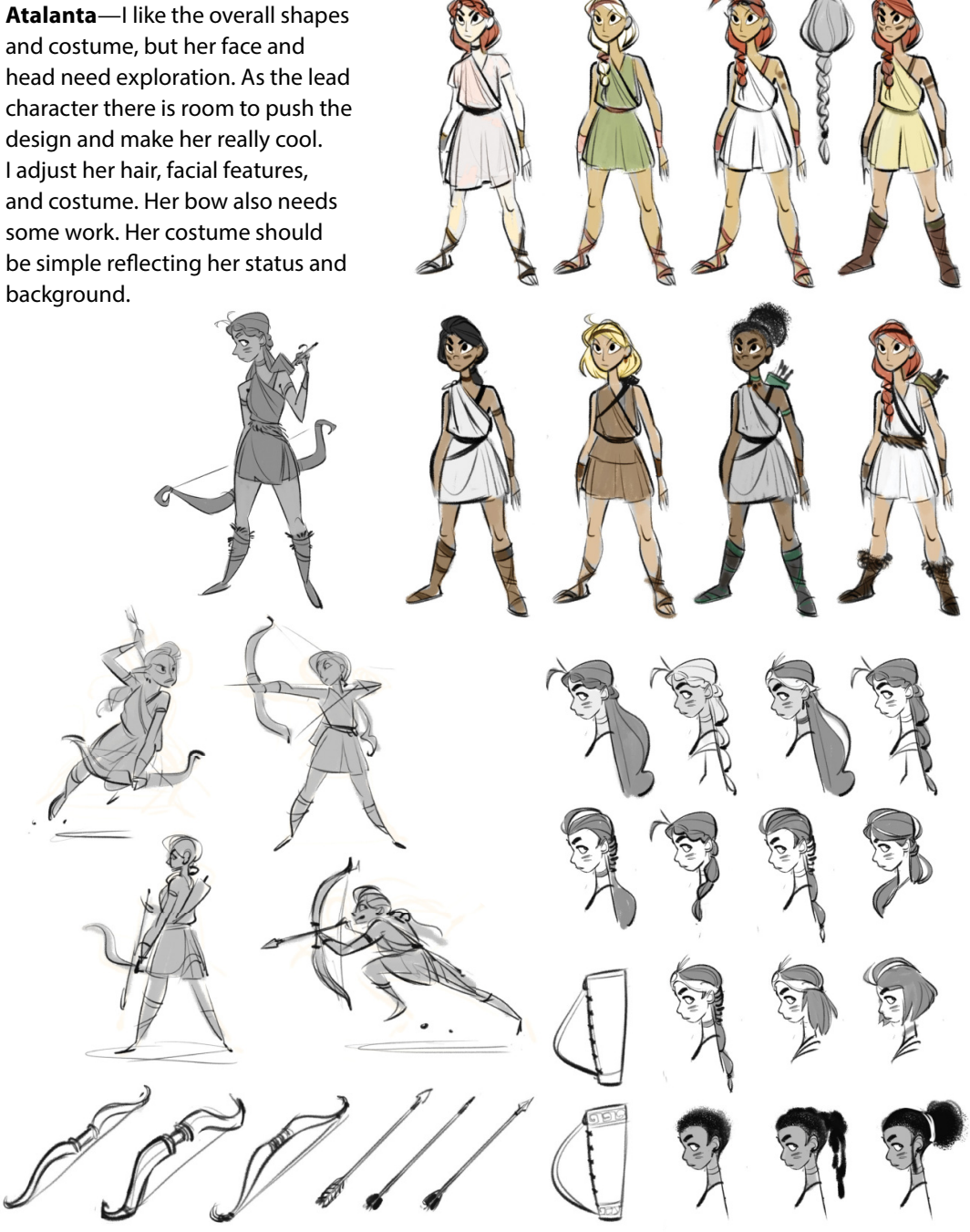
THE BOAR is solid and large reflecting the size of the metaphorical obstacle at hand. I add spiky erratic triangles to symbolize a dangerous and unpredictable nature. Maybe I will experiment with his fur becoming flame-like and ethereal. I need everything in this design to scream "danger."

The cast is at a good stage now. Each has a unique shape language and silhouette alluding to their character, and they all look different from one another.

EXPANDING CONCEPTS

I take each character and think about specific areas in their design: face, costume, attitude, and posturing. Now I start considering color and tonal composition.

Atalanta—I like the overall shapes and costume, but her face and head need exploration. As the lead character there is room to push the design and make her really cool. I adjust her hair, facial features, and costume. Her bow also needs some work. Her costume should be simple reflecting her status and background.





MELEAGER—I like him! He might need more of a hero vibe—this can be accomplished through posing and expression. I also explore adding visual interest to his design, perhaps a round shield?









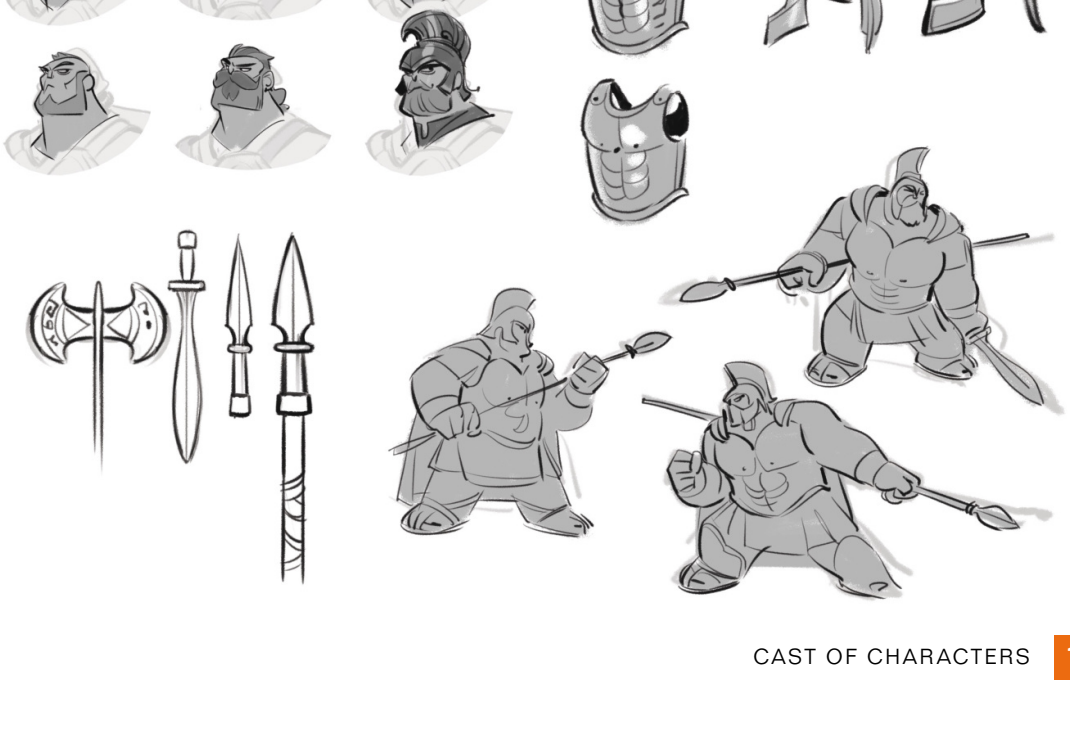




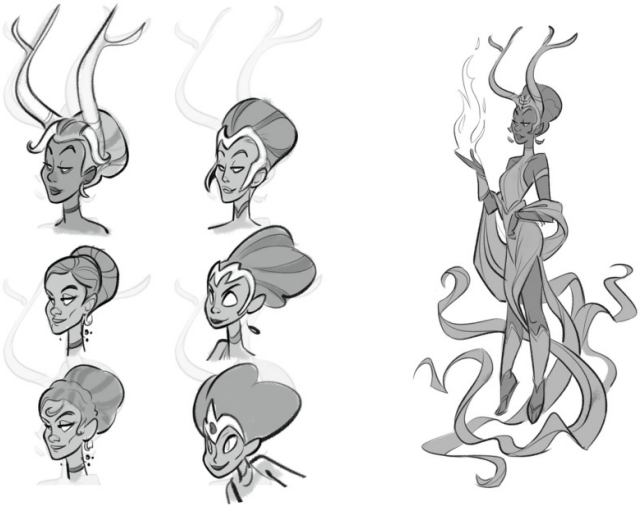


TOXEUS—I like his overall design, but I want to further adjust his face, hair, and weapon. I want his design to be different from Meleager's and Atalanta's while still true to ancient Greek culture. This leaves me few options. I start toying with an axe until further research reveals this was a symbolic weapon for the Greeks! So, I revert back to a spear, then add a cloak. This will emphasis his square shape language and silhouette. The cloak is also malleable and can soften the look of his shape when needed.





ARTEMIS—I think she is coming together and is quite different from other depictions of her. The posing needs to be pushed and extra flare added to her costume to reflect she is a goddess. I decide to add deer horns to her costume rather than a deer by her side.



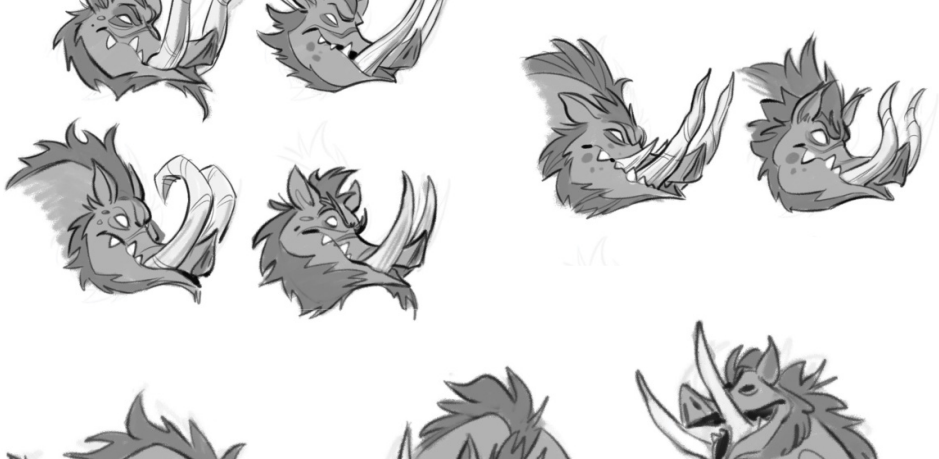






THE BOAR—I think this is going in the right direction, but I need to dial it up a notch while also stylizing further to align with the other characters. The boar needs a little extra flare, perhaps glowing evil eyes?







REFINING CHARACTERS

I've explored each character in depth, established their designs, and experimented with color. I filter through my ideas, cutting and pasting to form a revised lineup. I take this lineup and push further, contemplating my color choices and what they mean.

THE BOAR—Reddish pink. These colors imply magic and danger, while also standing out from the other characters. I have some fun and give him cool flaming eyes. *Why not?*

ATALANTA—Earthy colors. No gold and minimal silver in the arrowheads. A hint of green suggests her connection to nature. I may use color to tie her design to Artemis.

MELEAGER—Regal colors, gold and silver. I chose a more neutral palette since he is our ally.

TOXEUS—Similar colors to Meleager to indicate the royal connection. I use red in the cloak and helmet plume to symbolize danger.

ARTEMIS—Ethereal blue plus gold to reflect her status as a goddess.









CHARACTER POSES

I have identified the poses that might work best for full color character rendering.

THE BOAR—Grounded but dynamic. I want to feel the boar's energy, a "ready-to-fight" pose.

ATALANTA—First I consider a confident, preparing-for-action pose. But it seems more appropriate with her in a dynamic-action pose so I explore this further.

MELEAGER—Confident and rooted but also charming and amicable.

TOXEUS—Dynamic and dangerous; the clenched fist says it all!

ARTEMIS—Cool, collected, and in control. I need to push this look further so she has a more powerful vibe.



FINAL STYLE EXPLORATION

At this point my basic characters are decided, and I'm fairly certain on their shape language and design elements, such as costume and facial features. I also have a pretty good idea of the final design aesthetic. Straight vs. curved lines, but the curves should be subtle or angular in form. I want a nice balance between stylization and realism. These choices suit the story while creating a modern and edgy style.

I need to decide on final design styles. By this I mean, will there be outlines or no outlines? Flat colors only or a suggestion of shadow?

Note that typically final art style will be dependent on things such as background designs and any technical limitations of the chosen medium. For this tutorial, I don't have backgrounds or technical restraints so I can be less restrictive in my approach.

Using Atalanta I explore the final design style. I experiment with lines, no lines, shadow, no shadow, and I test in greyscale to see what works well. I settle on colored outlines, limited shadows, and white lines used sparingly.

















FINAL DESIGNS

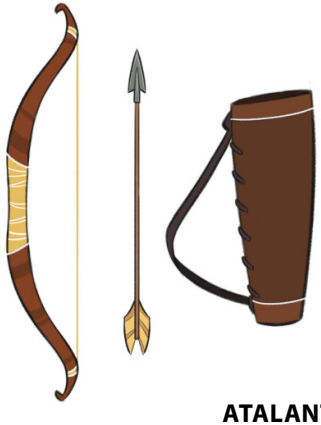
I have fleshed out designs, poses, costumes, hairstyles, weapons, and other bits and pieces. I'm also happy with my choice on the final design style. It is now time to lock in a final design!

From the previous stages I choose a pose for each character as the basis for my final character design. When choosing the pose, I make sure it best suits the character and their role in the story. I will complete this design in full color.











ATALANTA—I think it is important to show her in action, running if possible, but also using her bow. She is the hero and her pose should reflect that.



MELEAGER—I chose a pose that suggests stability and openness which helps support the idea of him as an ally.



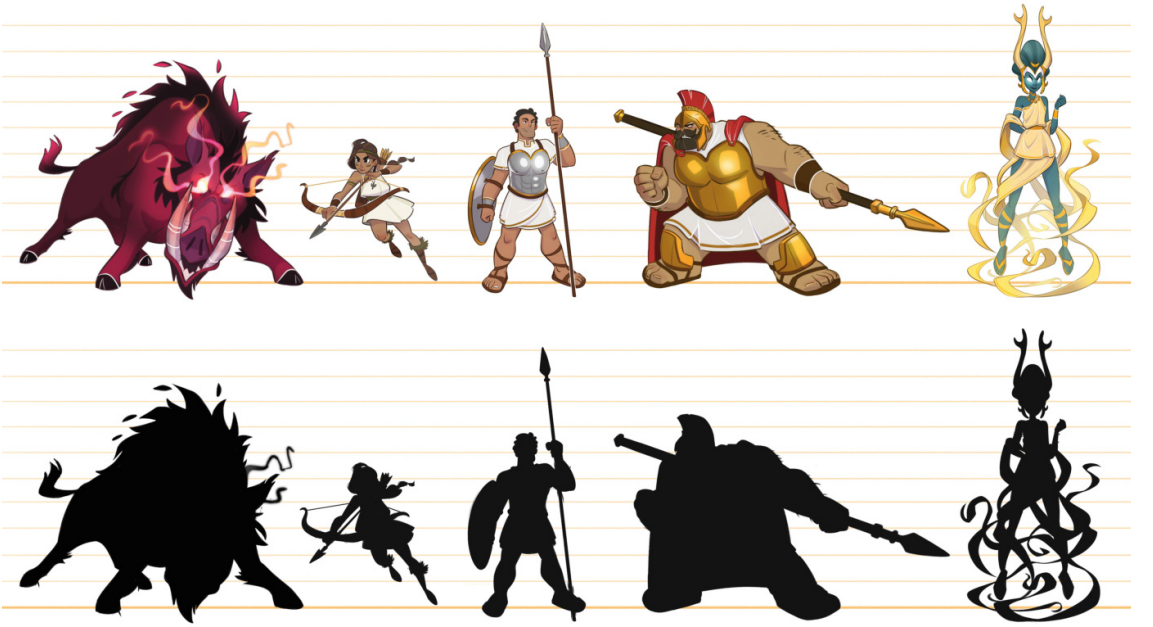
TOXEUS—I use a full-action pose, aggressive and powerful. His clenched fist and grounded footing suggest he is immovable and stubborn, perfect for his role as antagonist.



ARTEMIS—I pick a pose that alludes to her power and control, both in the situation and of herself. There is an air of mischievous calculation around her.



THE BOAR—My chosen pose is full-battle mode, ready to pounce, maim, and destroy.



As I draw up the final designs, I focus attention on the following:

- It is not enough to do nice colors. I must ensure the designs have a good tonal structure so they read well. I check this regularly by desaturating colors so the tones are exposed.
- I want the three human characters to feel ethnically "Greek." But I want Atalanta's skin tone a bit darker than Toxeus's and Meleager's, since she has lived mostly outdoors exposed to the sun.
- Drawing expressions at this point helps me understand the form and design of the head in three dimensions. This helps me refine the head design, making sure it works from various angles.
- The hands and face are the most expressive parts of any character. Therefore, I take time designing the hands for each, making sure they reflect the character's shape language and personality.
- I add details to help convey the overall story. I give Toxeus squarish Greek geometric patterns on his helmet, and on Meleager's shield I add rounded patterns. These design details match each character's shape language. I felt it important that something link Atalanta and Artemis to show her devotion to the goddess. So I give Atalanta a moon necklace which matches the moon motif in Artemis's design.
- I fine tune final design styles until they are coherent throughout the lineup. I constantly check characters beside one another to make sure they work as a cast. I add guides to the lineup as reference to help determine final heights, making sure they are all different.
- I draw the final weapons with the characters' design languages subtly extended into them.

FINAL THOUGHTS

We now have a final cast of characters. Since I designed this cast myself, design choices are subjective and to my own personal taste. Had this been for a client, I would need to deal with feedback and input from others in the design process. I am happy with how these turned out, but a real design process involves input from many sources! That said, using the Greek myth as a base and the concept of archetypes gave me a solid direction to start.

LESSON: CREATE A CAST OF CHARACTERS

Now it's your turn to choose a story and design your own cast:

Archetypes can be a useful tool for understanding and creating characters. The important thing to remember is they are just a tool—don't become a slave to them! Not all characters will conform to rigid character types. However, don't underestimate the flexibility and broad range of characters that can spring from these archetypes either.

Hopefully I have demonstrated the importance of understanding a character and their role in a story. This is essential as it makes designing characters easier and provides a strong foundation to move forward from. Design decisions are less complicated and more objective when each character's personality and role are clearly defined. Thinking about archetypes can help in that respect.



Let's summarize this design process:

- Each character conforms to design rules which govern the whole world. This is the top of the design hierarchy and overrules all other design rules!
- Each character has their own unique design rules which differentiate them from other characters, particularly in shape language and color choices.
- Your design choices and individual shape language of each character reflect their role in the story and their particular character archetypes.
- Your designs work well for the intended final product and are appealing to the correct audience. (My example designs were for 2D animation and may be a tad too complex to be efficient to animate, however, it wouldn't take much to simplify them.)
- The designs honor the original story and history you researched while not being too restricted, so they are unique and follow your own concept, vision, and imagination.

Remember that the design process is iterative and not a straight line between A and B. It is a journey toward a final endpoint with many twists and turns along the way with problems blocking our path and trials to overcome—***just like any good story or myth!***

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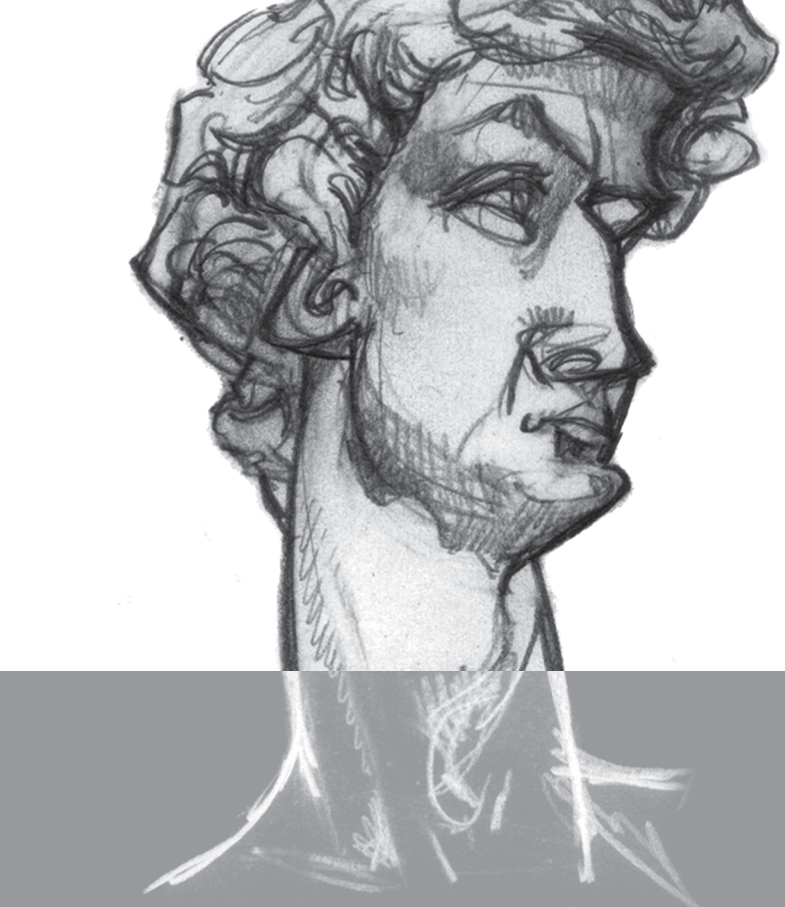
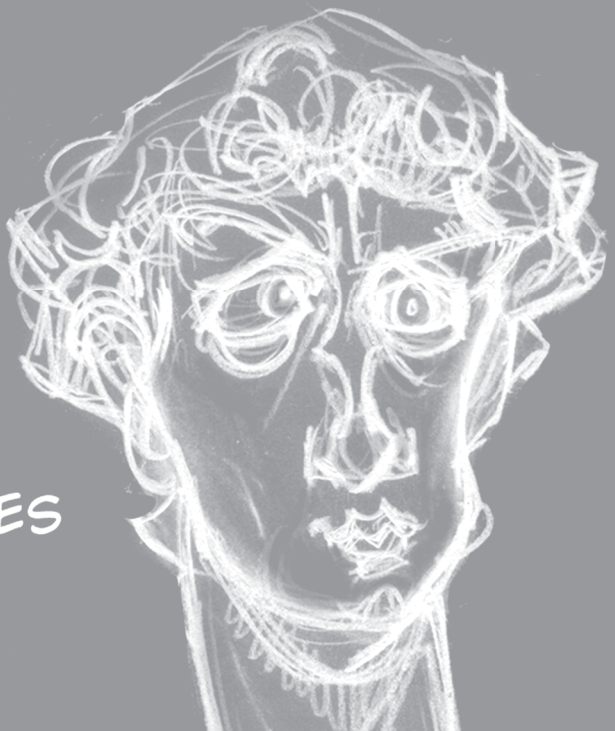


LONGER HEAD



PLAYING W
ASYMMETRY C



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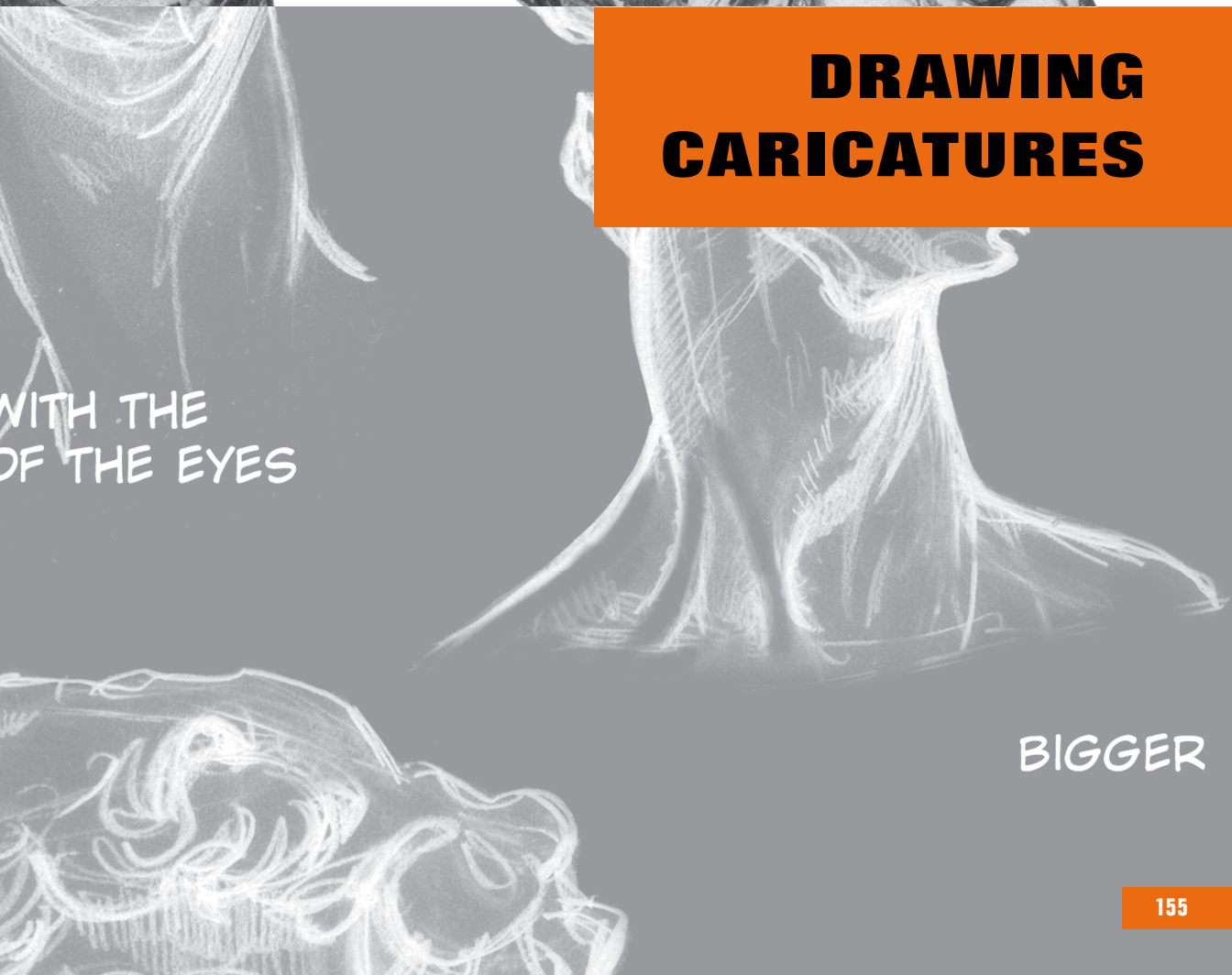
11

DRAWING CARICATURES



DRAWING CARICATURES

WITH LOOPYDAVE

Welcome to drawing caricatures with me, Loopydave. I will be your guide and instructor on our little adventure in rearranging people's faces.

First a little about how I approach caricatures. As with all areas of art, everyone has a different take, style, and area of interest. I'm a product of a hybrid background in drawing both cartoons and more realistic portraits. Consequently, I have never considered myself a "proper" caricaturist, though I have always loved drawing faces. What I've learned comes from filling sketchbooks with people I see on the train, in meetings, etc. In fact, I refer to my faces as "portrait-catures" or "toon-catures" where the extreme (admittedly not very extreme) elements come more from playing with shapes than a desire to push exaggerations.

In saying this, one of my earliest memories of successful caricaturing involved a drawing of my younger sister. I gave her enormous ears and consequently she refused to speak to me for a week. Remember when caricaturing—with great power comes great responsibility. If you want to avoid a crying sister and lectures from your mother, don't make your sisters ears too big.

In this tutorial, I'm hoping that I've included something for whatever approach you want to take, no matter how wild or big you like to draw ears!

SO, WHAT'S WITH THIS CARICATURE STUFF?

Caricatures come in a broad range of styles and approaches. In essence they are a portrait that uses some level of exaggeration for effect—whether it is used to amuse, mock, make your sister cry, or enhance the recognizability factor.

Caricatures are fundamentally about recognizability and exaggeration as opposed to portraitures, which are about recognizability and accuracy. I'll throw cartoons in there as well as they are arguably about recognizability and simplicity. While cartooning is a separate thing, it can also serve as a particular "lens'" through which to approach caricaturing. But more about that later!

There is overlap between these three disciplines and working on any of them will help with the others:

- **Portraits** help you understand structure.
- **Caricatures** help you to better observe differences in features and their relationship to one another.
- **Cartoons** help you to break things down into simpler and more interesting shapes.



THE EVER-STRIKING DANISH ACTOR, MADS MIKKELSEN, FIRST AS A PORTRAIT, CARICATURE, AND THEN A CARTOON.

As you can see in the portrait above, he is a man with a strong brow over heavy lidded eyes, a distinctive mouth, and cheekbones you could sharpen a battle axe with. These are the features I've exaggerated in the caricature, building them over a facial form made from simple shapes. In the cartoon version (though it could be argued is still a caricature), I simplified the face shapes even further, trying to find the minimal number of lines to highlight the same features as in the caricature.

RECOGNIZABILITY

In some way caricatures have an advantage over portraits—without being restricted by the need for total accuracy, a successful caricature can bring in less tangible elements like personality and the overall impression a person makes. These extra elements can lead a viewer to say "that's them" in a way they may not when looking at a traditional portrait.

EXAGGERATION

Exaggeration is the defining characteristic of a caricature, but it doesn't necessarily mean just making a feature bigger. Exaggeration can also be about reducing the size of elements, moving them closer together or further apart. What you pick to exaggerate will come from what you choose to emphasize. What this means is there is no single "right way" to create a caricature of a person—though some work better than others. We'll go through a few examples to help you discover where you can emphasize.

ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

Whatever the topic, style, or subject matter in art, finding the right questions to ask is one of the quickest ways to understand what you want to achieve. For example, if when working on an initial design, you ask "Where do I want the focus to be?" can help get your layout right.

When I'm painting a texture, I ask myself a series of questions:

- **What is its color and pattern?**
- **What is its surface quality?**
- **How does it interact with light?**
- **How does it interact with other objects?**

This helps me understand the texture and gather the right information to get the result I'm looking for.

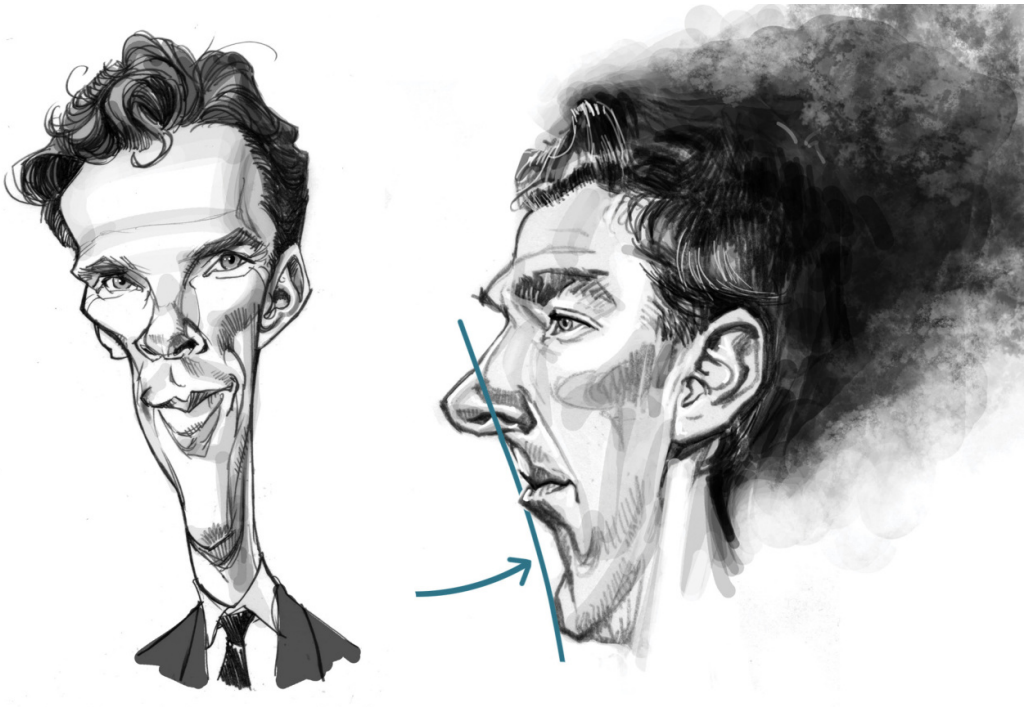
For this tutorial we first need to decide on the questions to ask ourselves in order to create a successful caricature.

Let's work through the process I use and highlight the relevant questions as we go.

STEP 1 – REFERENCES

Find multiple references of the person you wish to draw. This is even more important when drawing someone you've never met. Lighting, angle, or an uncharacteristic expression can make a person appear very different from the way they are usually perceived. Multiple shots will provide a better understanding of just the right pose and expression to use so your caricature truly reflects the person.

View images from various angles. When I'm drawing the front of a person, I also use a side reference, particularly when drawing a caricature. This gives me a better idea of the depth of eyes, nose shape, slope of the face, etc. Even when drawing from a live model, I start by looking at their head from different angles than the pose I will be drawing.



LOOKING AT A SIDE PROFILE OF BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH HELPED ME DECIDE HOW MUCH TO PULL IN THE LOWER JAW AND CHIN FOR THIS QUICK CARICATURE.



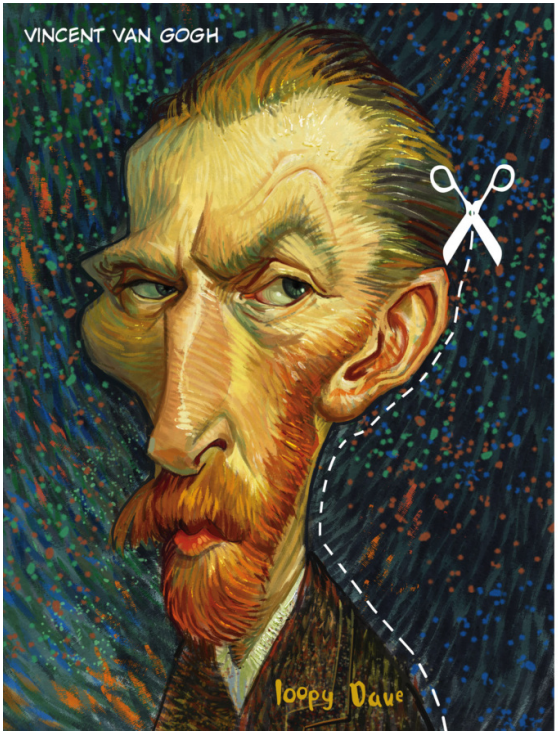
FIND A SIMPLE SHAPE TO USE FOR THE HEAD.

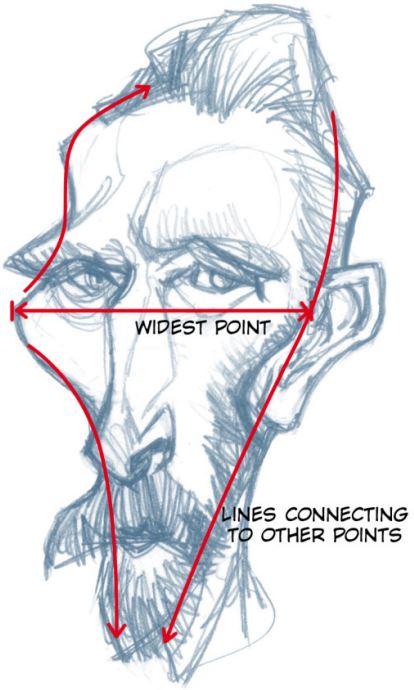
STEP 2 – BUILDING HEAD SHAPES

How can I simplify the shape?

I begin by creating a good head shape and find it helpful to see things through the lens of cartooning. Cartooning is mostly about refining a subject down to its most simple forms and playing with the shapes.

Try not to get bogged down by all the little differences and variations, but find the long lines or large curves that make up a subject's face. Drawing a box may be going too far, but try to find the most simple shape you can that expresses the build of the face.





FIND THE WIDEST POINT ON THE FACE, THEN USE IT AS A POINT TO DEVELOP YOUR SHAPE.

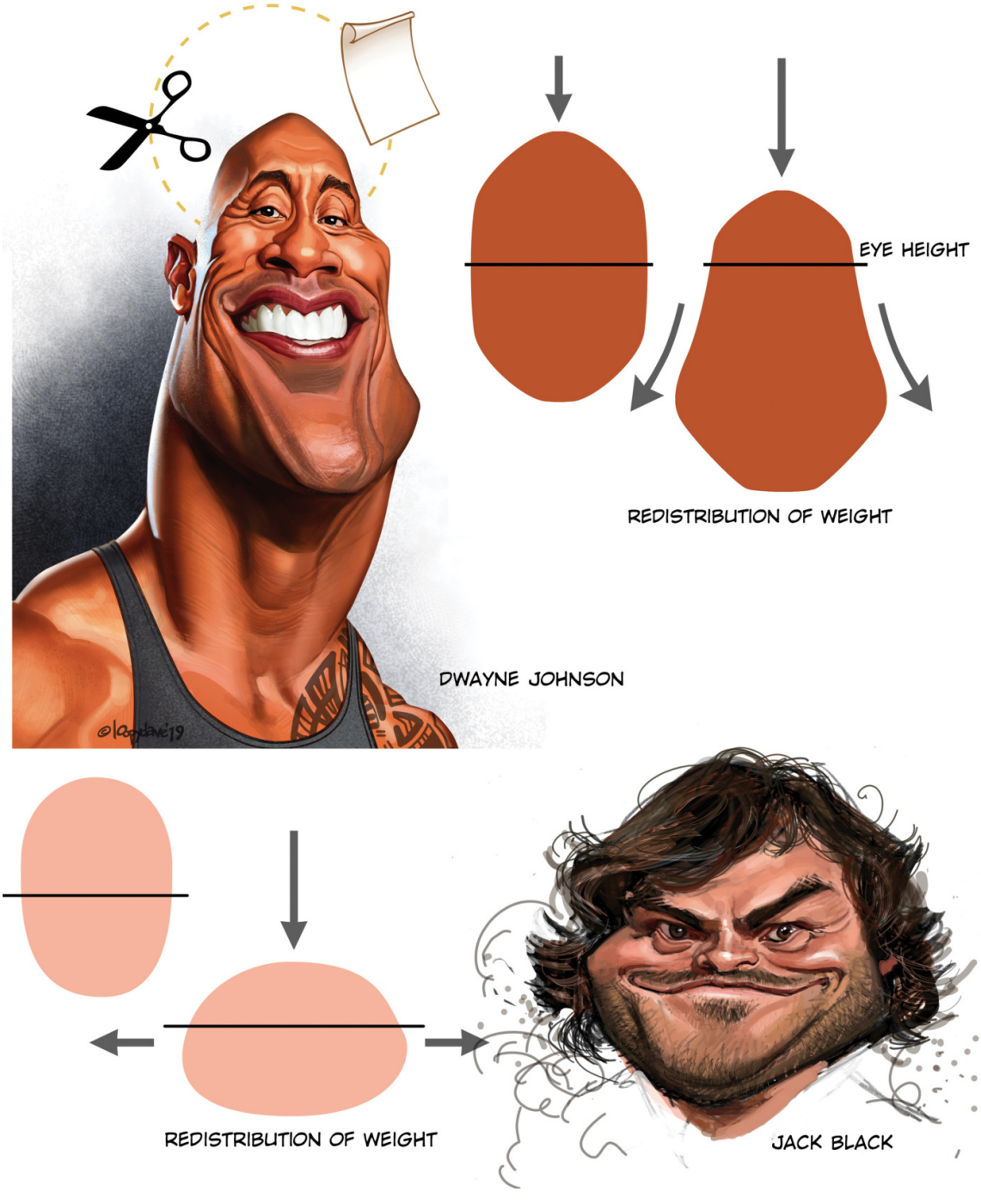
Where is the widest point on the head?

A good start for working out your shape is to find the widest area of your subject's head. This gives you a reference point to work from and you can use it as a comparison to other areas of the face. What are the shapes connecting this wider area to narrower ones?

You don't necessarily need to keep this point the widest in your actual caricature. For example, if your subject's cheekbones are wide and the forehead seems low, you could connect the chin to the cheekbones then run that line up into an upside down triangle. This is a good way to help define your shape.

Where do I put the weight?

In a traditional portrait, you want to divide the head using an equal distance from the top of the head to the eyes and the eyes to the chin, but since this is a caricature we push that division around to exaggerate the form. Look at your subject and study where the weight feels the heaviest. Is it above the eyes or below them? It can be helpful to think of the head as a giant squishy balloon. If you push down the top of the head, the weight distributes to the lower half of the head, as in the drawing of Dwayne Johnson. If you squish the shape flatter, it will bulge out the sides. Playing with how to push and pull the head is a helpful (and fun!) way to find a good shape for your drawing.



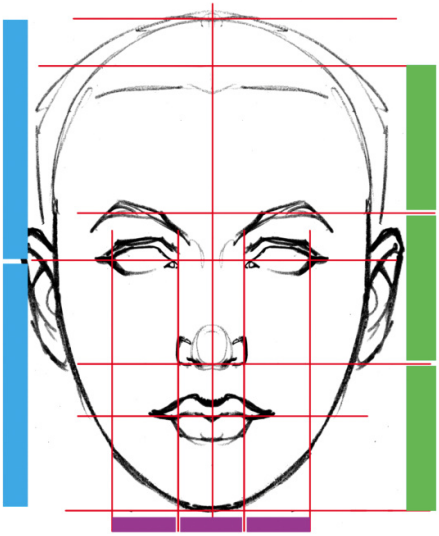
LOOK AT THE HEADS' WEIGHT DISTRIBUTION. THE BIG GUY WITH TATTOOS SAYS, "YOU'VE GOT A GIANT SQUISHY BALLOON FOR A HEAD!"

STEP 3 – FACIAL FEATURES

What makes this face different or stand out?

We've all seen books on drawing faces where the features are carefully divided up by their relationship to one another. In the classical example, the eyes are across the center line of the head, the head is divided into even areas, and the eyes are one eye apart. Not the most fun face to caricature because everything is symmetrical and perfectly aligned, but fortunately almost nobody looks like that. Caricaturing is about being attuned to variation, however subtle. Understanding "traditional" proportions can help you become aware of the differences that define one face from another. These variations from the "standard" are usually the best choices for exaggerating by emphasizing an increase or decrease in size, an unusual placement, or relationship to other parts of the face.

DIVIDING UP FACIAL PROPORTIONS



What are the immediate impressions?

Caricatures are a kind of "impression" of a person, a shorthand of what they look and "feel" like. You can add details as you go, but I start with a mental list of my immediate impressions of a face. It doesn't need to be a complete list of all their features. In fact, a short list can be beneficial because these areas will become the details to pay the most attention to and/or exaggerate. This is an important skill. . . . and you don't need a pencil and paper to develop it. As you go down the street, look at the faces you see and make a mental note of the features you feel define that person. Some faces are easier than others and can be recognized by just a few elements, while others require all the features together.



Sometimes you only need a few elements to get a caricature right. Marilyn Monroe is pretty recognizable even when reduced to just the eyes and lips. If you thought the first image was your uncle Harold and not Marilyn, that says a lot about his amazing abilities with makeup.

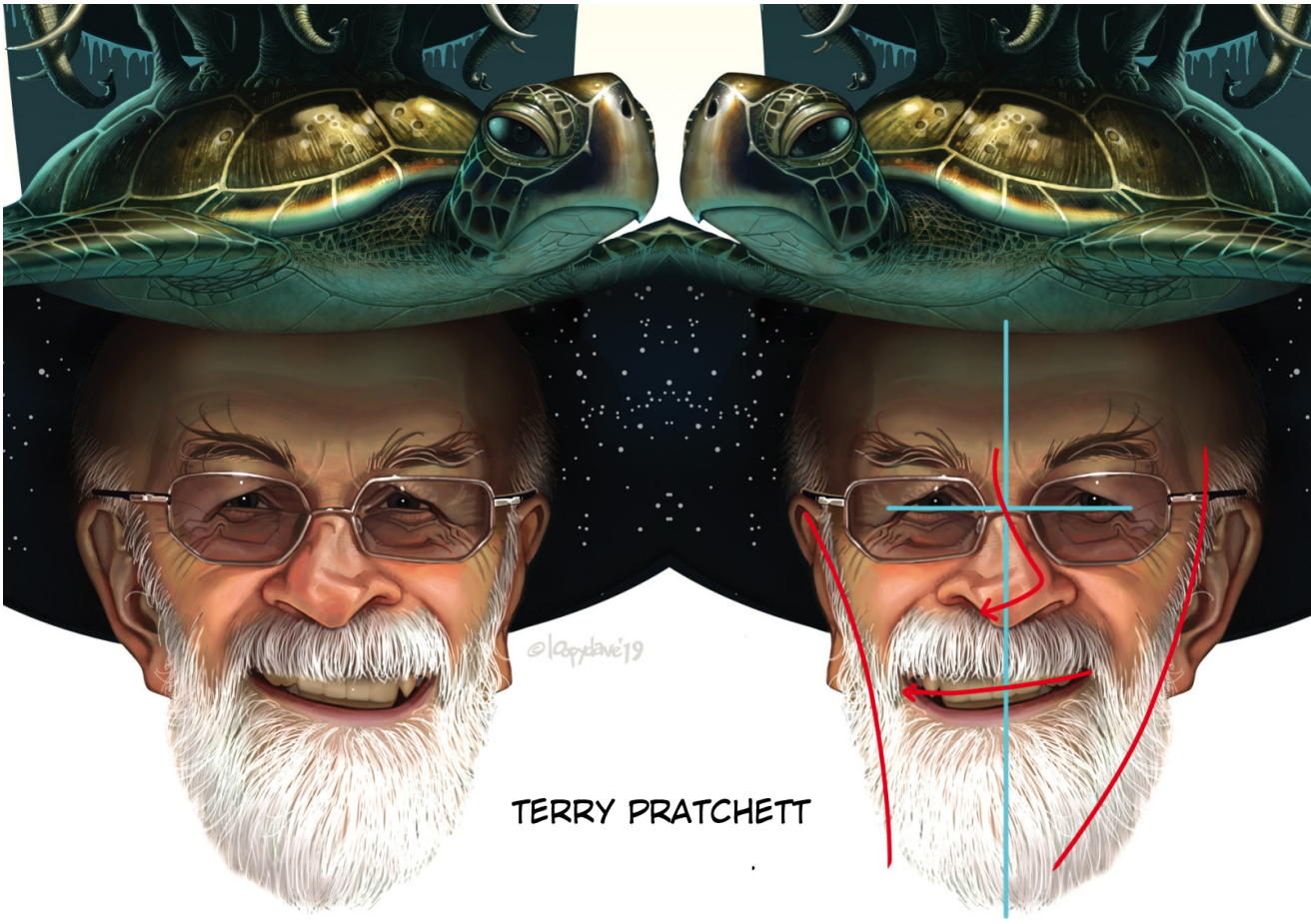


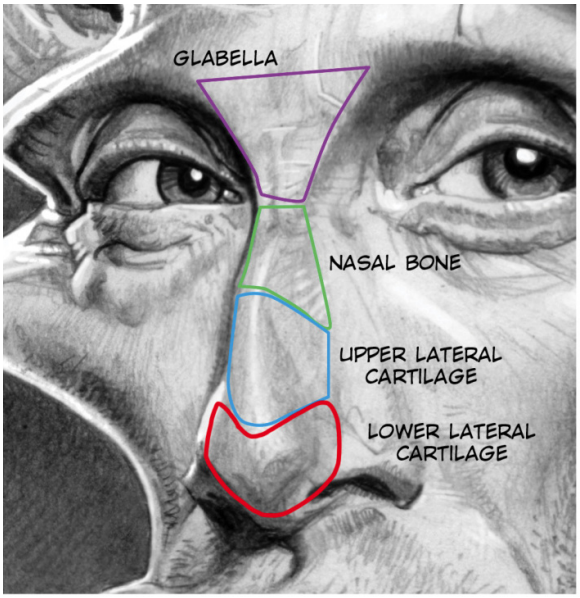
Can you find the asymmetry?

Faces are rarely symmetrical and the ability to spot the differences between two halves of a face gives you more "fuel" to work with when drawing caricatures. This is why some people think their photos don't look right; they are used to how they look reversed in a mirror. We can use the same trick for our subject—flip the reference photo and compare how it looks in both directions. This can highlight facial features we can twist or move out of alignment.

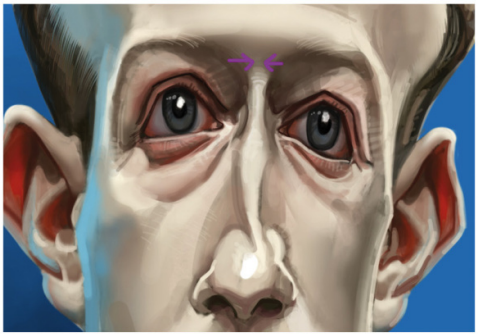
The key to achieving the likeness I wanted in this painting of author Terry Pratchett was finding the asymmetry in both his expression and facial shape.

THE ASYMMETRY BECOMES MORE OBVIOUS WHEN THE IMAGE IS REFLECTED.









QUICK TIPS ON FEATURES

NOSE: The nose is often the biggest feature on a face, so it's not unusual for me to start my drawings with it. This may sound like a peculiar choice, but it can be a dominate shape and the area between the eyebrows (glabella) can affect the distance between the eyes.

The nose has four distinctive areas and if you are aware of them, and where they meet, you can find excellent points to exaggerate and create a stronger nose shape.

EYES: Interestingly, aside from a little stylization and playing with scale, I tend to not exaggerate a character's eyes much. Things to look for when drawing eyes are the angle from the inside of the eye to the outside (up, down, level) and how the eyelids and brows hang over them.

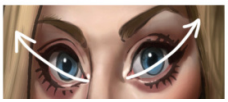


BETTIE PAGE





DEBORAH ANN WOLL



LIPS: There is much more variety to a mouth than what it may seem at first. The trick to getting a good shape is to follow the center line and really exaggerate any variations from straight that you see. It is usually best to avoid painting in all the teeth, you can simply hint at their shape as a line in the gums.



STEP 3 – DOODLE TIME!

As we've discussed there is no one "right way" to create a caricature of a person—though some choices about shape and exaggeration are more successful than others. This is the stage where I take my impressions list and head shape ideas, then create half a dozen or so quick sketches of the subject. I place a varying degree of emphasis and exaggeration on the elements in an effort to find the best solution. Once I decide on a sketch I'm happy with, I refine and work it into a finished image.

RANDOM TIPS: Sometimes a caricature just isn't working. A few things to look for that may be helpful.

- Are you trying to do too much? Sometimes you only need to exaggerate a single feature and work around that.
- Do you need a different reference? Maybe the angle you have just isn't working.
- Are you getting lost in the details? Try looking closely at an image, then put it away and draw what you can remember. This can give you a fresh start to work from.

LESSON 1: CARICATURING DAVID

Now that we've reviewed the process and worked out the questions we need to ask, it's time for us to create a caricature together. I was going to work from photos of my sister but she's still upset about that ear thing. So instead we will go high-brow (maybe even literally) and do a caricature of the face of Michelangelo's sculpture of David. Apparently *he* doesn't mind what you do with his ears and there are plenty of references to be found online.

COLLECT REFERENCES

Your mission is to Google Michelangelo's David and collect various angles and images. Even if you know what angle you want to draw him from, the other angles will help you to better understand the facial structure.

HEAD SHAPE

Before going further, look through your references of David's face, grab a piece of paper, and work out your basic shape:

- How can I simplify the shape?
- Where do I want to put the weight?
- Where is the widest point on the head?

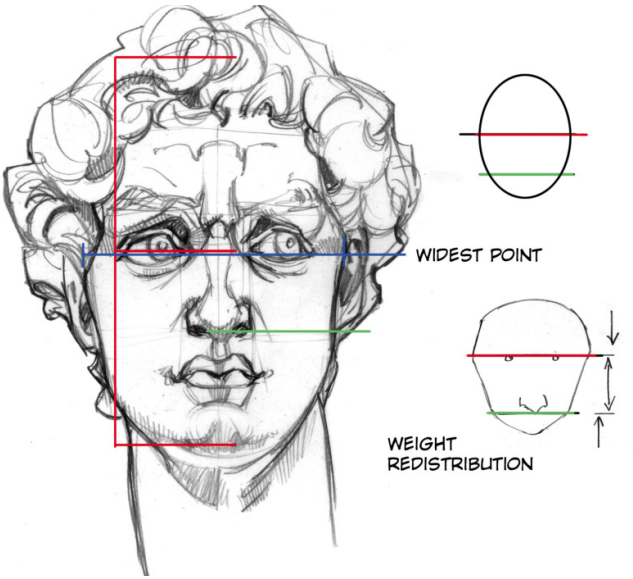
Next create a list of your initial impressions, areas of the face that stand out and any noticeable asymmetries.

Once you're done, come back and we can compare lists. You may have noticed details that I didn't, but there is no "right" or "wrong" to this process, just a chance to work out what features we want to use to create a caricature.

DONE? EXCELLENT!

Here's my take: Even though David's eyes are exactly in the middle of his face, his hair comes down far enough that his forehead appears small. To enhance that look I'm going to push down the "giant squishy balloon" that is his face and flatten the top of his head. I will move most of that mass to the middle third of his face, since his chin is quite dainty and small.

Quick initial impressions: His eyes are large, his brow is quite prominent, his nose is strongly defined, and his lips appear to be quite small above a little blob chin.

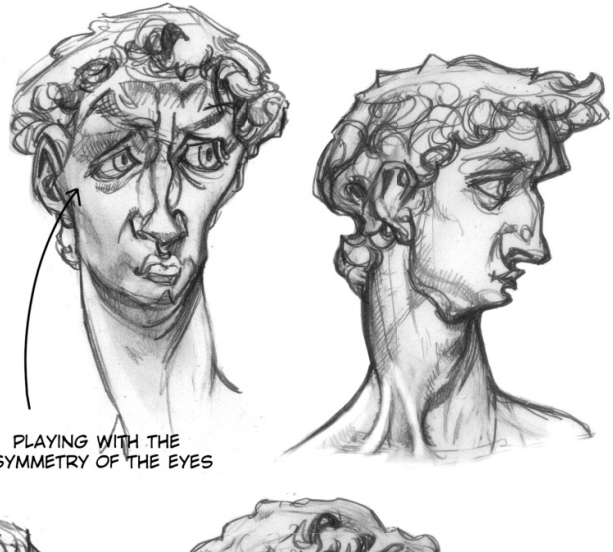


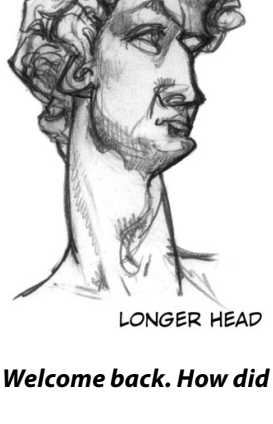
CREATING A SIMPLE SHAPE FOR DAVE AND HIS HEAD MADE OF ROCKS.

Can you find any asymmetry?

It may simply be a byproduct of the way David's head is turned, but his right eye appears to slope down a bit more than his left. I may not end up emphasizing it a lot, but I will play with this difference in at least one of my quick doodles.

Time to use our notes and observations to create some quick doodles, familiarize ourselves with the subject, and play with various takes on David. To the drawing table!




LONGER HEAD


BIGGER EYES



Welcome back. How did you do?

Let's review my quick sketches playing around with the features we discussed. Usually I end up with more variety of shapes in my sketches, but this time my initial impression of a longer lower half and starting with a wide to tapering narrow shape stuck with me. Large eyes tend to make an image feel more "cartoony" but in this case it kind of works. Because of the strength and definition in the nose, I chose to exaggerate its size, then pull back on the size and distance of the mouth from both the nose and lower chin.

In the final painted version, I simplified the face and made the nose even bigger. Not sure this is an improvement but it still feels like Mr. Michelangelo's boy.


FINISHED DAVE!

LESSON 2: CARICATURE EXERCISES

Let's wrap up this tutorial with a few exercises you can try that I find helpful to improve my skills.

Exercise 1: Find a magazine, flip through it, and draw the first 10 noses you see. Next do the same for the eyes. Then repeat for the mouth and the ears.

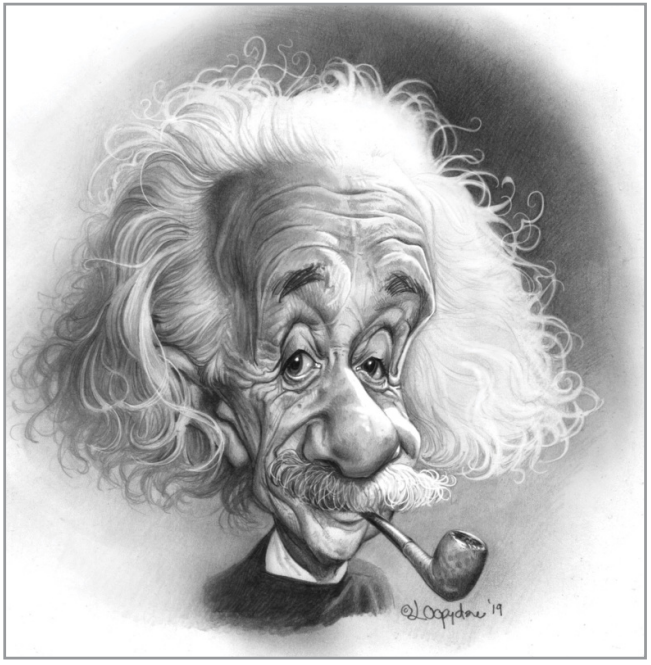
Drawing each part in isolation helps you pay attention to their elements and it's an exercise I did to increase my understanding of each feature.

Exercise 2: Caricature someone a bunch of times, but for each drawing place the emphasis on a different feature or facial shape. You will find that some drawings work better than others, and it's good practice to gain an understanding of how certain features affect recognizability.

Exercise 3: Find half a dozen images of a single person. Quickly draw an image from each, paying attention to shapes as you go. Then put away your drawings and make a caricature of that person without any reference, working from your accumulated memory. I find this exercise helpful for learning to pay attention to features and use it when I'm having difficulty finding a caricature look I am happy with.

Happy drawing!

I hope you found something useful in this chapter. Have fun rearranging other people's faces and if you see my younger sister, tell her I'm sorry about the whole ear thing.



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12

MEET THE ARTISTS



KENNETH ANDERSON

CHARACTER DESIGNER
ILLUSTRATOR

CharacterCube.com
Facebook.com/KennethAndersonArt
Instagram.com/charactercube
Twitter.com/charactercube



Kenneth has done a variety of work from inbetweening on Sylvain Chomet's *The Illusionist* to illustrating for board games and magazines. The past few years he has predominantly been designing props, environments, and characters for children's television productions for a variety of networks, at home and abroad.

Currently he continues to freelance in games, animation, and illustration, while working on personal projects—developing his own kids TV show ideas, illustrating a graphic novel, and producing short films and online tutorials.

Kenneth Anderson is a freelance character designer and illustrator currently working out of Glasgow, Scotland, where the rain keeps him indoors and drawing most of the time.

After studying 2D animation, he started his career in 2005 working in the local Scottish games scene. Soon after, Kenneth began working in animation production. Then in 2009, he opened his freelance business, Character Cube, to focus on designing characters and illustrating full time.



TaughtByAPro.com
Instagram: @tombancroft1
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TomBancroftStudio.com

TOM BANCROFT

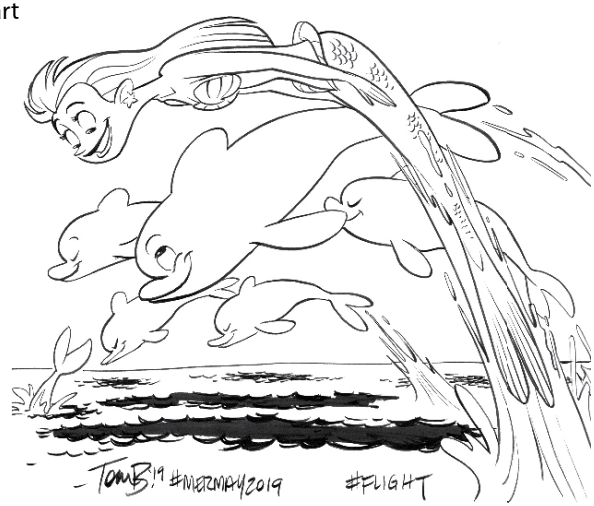
CHARACTER DESIGNER
ANIMATOR





Tom Bancroft has more than 30 years of experience in the animation industry, much of which was for Walt Disney Feature animation where he was an animator for 12 years on films like *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Lion King*, *Aladdin*, *Pocahontas*, *Mulan*, *Tarzan,* and *Brother Bear*. For the film *Mulan*, Bancroft designed the character of Mushu the dragon, voiced by Eddie Murphy. He has been nominated for Annie and Rueben division awards, spoken at the Kennedy Center, and awarded an entry into the Chicago Children's Film Festival. After Disney he worked with Big Idea Productions as a supervising director/co-creator for a *VeggieTales* animated DVD series.

Tom's popular character design instruction books, *Creating Characters with Personality* and *Character Mentor*, have become the most recognized books on designing characters and are required textbooks at many art schools around the world. Tom is half of the popular *The Bancroft Brothers Animation Podcast*, with his twin brother Tony, as well as creator of the annual, worldwide Instagram drawing event #MerMay and producer of the in production 2d Animation documentary feature film, *Pencil Test*. Additionally, Bancroft is artist in residence of the new animation undergraduate program at Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tennessee, where he lives with his family.





MICHAEL BILLS

CONCEPT ARTIST
2D GENERALIST

MichaelBills.com
Artstation.com/MichaelBills
Instagram.com/MichaelBills
Twitter.com/MichaelBills



Michael Bills is a professional napper and sandwich connoisseur. He's also been working in the mobile games industry for more than 10 years as a character designer and concept artist. After graduating Savannah College of Art and Design in 2007 with a bachelor's degree in sequential art, he moved to Charleston, South Carolina, to work as a concept artist at a startup mobile game company. Eight years later he joined a remote team in Charleston and began working for San Francisco-based mobile developer N3TWORK, the creators of *Legendary: Game of Heroes* as an artist on their upcoming mobile titles.

Michael also works as a freelance illustrator and character designer. He's contributed work to Image, Boom!, provided tutorials for online artist reference resources, and most recently, character design work for Marvel's animated series *Avengers Assemble*.

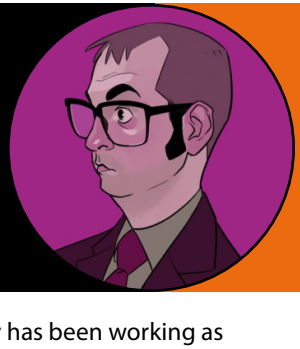
Currently he still resides in Charleston with his wife, Emily, recently born daughter, Riley, and his dog, Korben Dallas, where he continues the struggle to keep an active sketchbook.

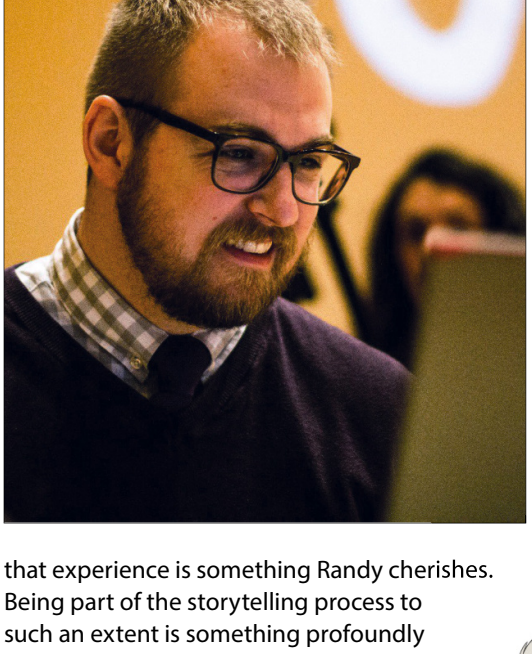


Facebook.com/RandyBishopArt
Instagram.com/RandyBishopArt

RANDY BISHOP

CHARACTER DESIGNER
CONTENT CREATOR





Randy has been working as a character designer and illustrator for several years from his home in Eastern Idaho, where he lives with his beautiful wife and four children. His work has been featured in numerous books, magazine covers, graphic novels, video game cinematics and trailers, television shows, and feature films.

Randy loves the opportunity that his work gives him to infuse characters with life and story. Audiences experience stories through their characters and so the opportunity to be a part of shaping that experience is something Randy cherishes. Being part of the storytelling process to such an extent is something profoundly interesting and exciting to him.

In addition to the work he does for clients, Randy has several personal projects he's pursuing and looks forward to the opportunity to share them with the world. He has a passion for storytelling and believes in the power it has to affect the way we think and act as human beings. He looks forward to a long and exciting career as an artist and storyteller.





CHAMBA

COMIC BOOK ARTIST
ILLUSTRATOR

theCHAMBA.com
Instagram: @theCHAMBA



Jeffrey "CHAMBA" Cruz is a Melbourne-based comic book artist and illustrator. His credits include: *Street Fighter x Mega-Man* (Capcom), *Overwatch* (Blizzard Entertainment), *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, the animated comic (IDW), *Big Trouble in Little China, Mighty Morphin Power Rangers* (BOOM! Studios), *I Hate Fairyland* (Image Comics), *Street Fighter II Turbo* series and *Super Street Fighter*, vols. 1 and 2 (Udon), and *Skullkickers* and *Wayward* (Image Comics).

He has also created cover art for *Red Sonja* comic by Dynamite, along with concept design for DC Comics Bombshell statues and the feature film *Sucker Punch*.

In 2019, CHAMBA wrapped up the second volume of his original comic *RandomVeus* (published through UDON Entertainment), which he hopes will be released sometime in 2020.



Instagram.com/Rene_Cordova
Facebook.com/elrenecordova

RENE CORDOVA

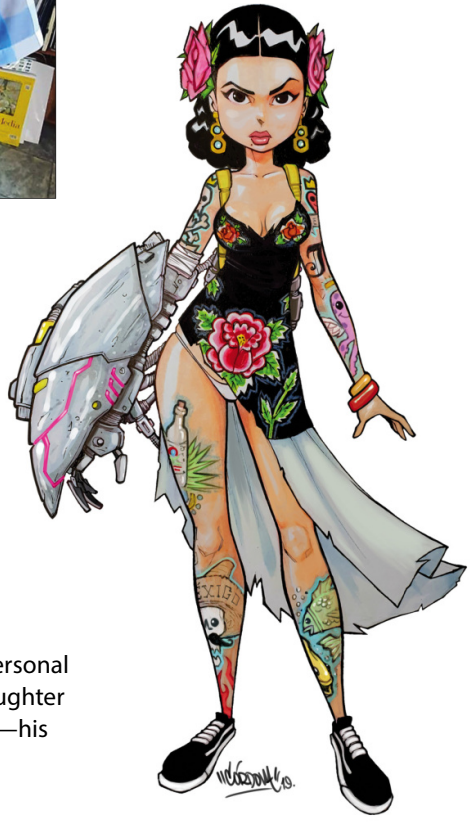
CHARACTER DESIGNER
COMIC BOOK ARTIST





Rene Cordova has 13 years experience in the illustration industry. He started out as a cartoonist which he really enjoys.

In Mexico, he has published his own comic, art, and sketch books. Rene has worked for both comic and children's book publishers and was the art director and creator of characters for the film *Day of Dead*.



Outside of Mexico, Rene's work includes collaborations on magazine covers and creation of character designs for use in sculptures, video games, and animated feature films.

Rene is currently working on children's books with his daughter, Renata, while working as a freelance artist for Scholastic on *Lego Batman* comics and as a character designer on Marvel's *Spidey and His Amazing Friends*.

Rene plans to continue publishing his own personal stories as well as children's books with his daughter and to never stop creating character designs—his favorite activity!



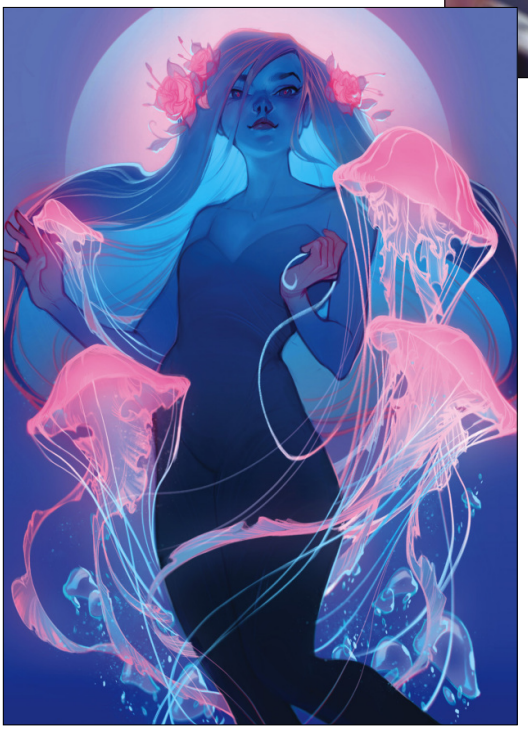
LOISH

CONCEPT ARTIST
CHARACTER DESIGNER

Loish.net
Facebook.com/loish.fans
Instagram.com/loisvb

Lois van Baarle (Loish) has been drawing her whole life and decided to study animation because she thought it was a good way to expand on her drawing skills. Loish started learning animation in Ghent, Belgium (at the Hogeschool Gent), followed by another four years in Hilversum, the Netherlands (at the Utrecht School of the Arts). She completed a European media master of arts and a bachelor in design.





Loish currently works as a concept artist and character designer for clients such as LEGO, Guerrilla Games, and Amazon.

She has published two books: *The Sketchbook of Loish* and *The Art of Loish*, both of which were successfully funded through Kickstarter.

Lois is very active on social media and has more than one million followers on Instagram and Facebook. You can find her work on loish.net and on instagram: @loisvb.

Loopydave.DeviantArt.com
Facebook.com/Art-of-Loopydave

LOOPYDAVE

FREELANCE ILLUSTRATOR





Loopydave likes to draw and paint—both in his chosen profession as a freelance illustrator and his hobby as one of those kooky creative types. These don't leave much time for hang gliding, cow wrangling, or admiring his fine collection of small plastic objects, but they are the sacrifices he makes for his art.

He lives in Australia, which, contrary to popular opinion, DOES NOT mean he walks around upside down or wears a loin cloth made from koala pelts.

His work has appeared on: DVD box sets, advertising pieces, comics, character designs, festival posters, books, children's magazines, and most important, his mother's fridge (admittedly he was much younger then). He's been illustrating long enough to know that doing unpaid work just for the "excellent exposure" is never really a good idea.

Loopydave is currently working on art to pay his bills, and when he has the spare time, his own graphic novel.





RODGON

CARTOONIST
ILLUSTRATOR
TEACHER

RODGON.com
Instagram: @RodgonTheArtist
YouTube.com/c/RodgonTheArtist



Rodgon (aka Rodrigo Gonzalez) is a San Diego-based cartoonist and illustrator. A late bloomer into art, he began his journey at 18 and has not looked back since. Having worked in comics, animation and apparel, as well as a freelance illustrator for more than 15 years, he is most proud of his daily drawings and YouTube channel. There he reaches thousands of people sharing his perspective on the daily struggles we all go through. He aims to inspire as many up-and-coming artists as possible with his videos and lessons, so that they can achieve their dreams.

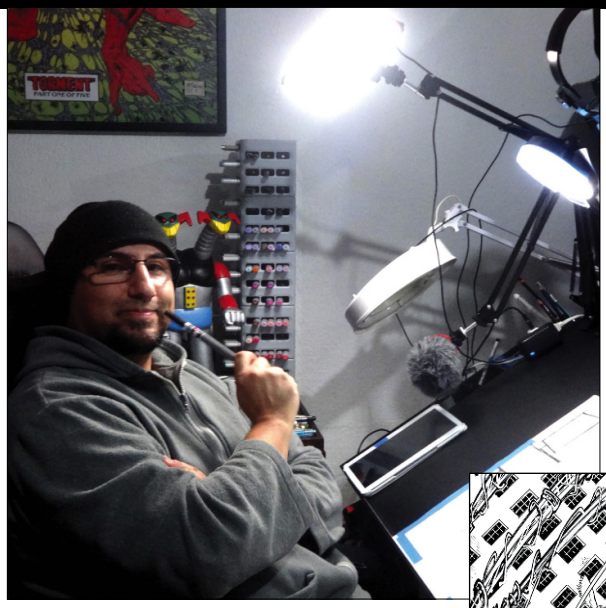


Even with a new comic series called *ZOOKS* in the works, and many other wonderful things happening to him, Rodgon still welcomes anyone to reach out and say, "Hi." He has countless stories and lessons to teach—you can always see something new on his social media, where he welcomes everyone to pick his brain and get to that next level!

Twitter: @SandovalBox
Facebook: Gerardo.Sandoval.Art
Instagram: SandovalArt

GERARDO SANDOVAL

COMIC BOOK ARTIST



Gerardo Sandoval is a professional comic book artist from Mexico. He started his career more than 28 years ago creating comics for Mexican companies like Grupo Editorial Vid and Editorial Ejea. He was hired on at Marvel Comics six years ago, where he worked on titles like *Amazing Spider-Man*, *Venom*, *X-Men*, *Guardians of the Galaxy*, *SpiderPunk*, and *Avengers*. Currently he is working on the new version of *Spider-Man 2099*.



His early career was in graphic design as an artist—in *Tomb Raider* for Top Cow, in *Insane Clown Posse* and *Evil Ernie* for Chaos! Comics—and in book design for Stone Arch Books.

Gerardo's first love is comic books, but he also enjoys character design, storyboarding, and creating posters.



WOUTER TULP

CHARACTER DESIGNER

WouterTulp.com
Facebook.com/woutertulp
Instagram.com/woutertulp



Wouter Tulp is a freelance character designer from the Netherlands. Starting out as a freelance illustrator in the Netherlands, Wouter created many different kinds of illustration, like children's books illustration, book covers, newspaper illustration, and caricatures. This variety of work made him a versatile artist that eventually led him to becoming a character designer for feature animation, now working for international clients from the movie industry, such as Sony Pictures Animation, Paramount Pictures, Locksmith Animation, Marza, and many more. Wouter also teaches online at Schoolism.com.



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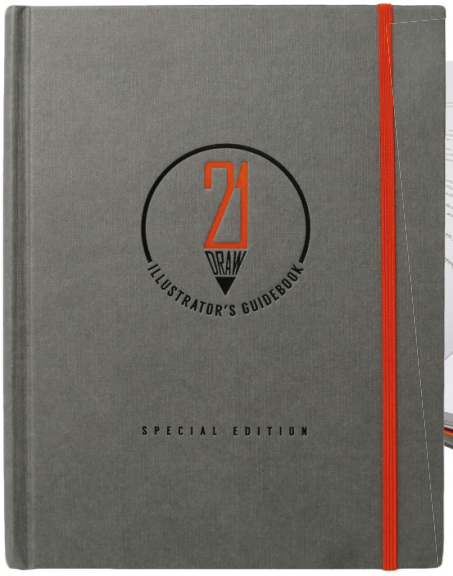



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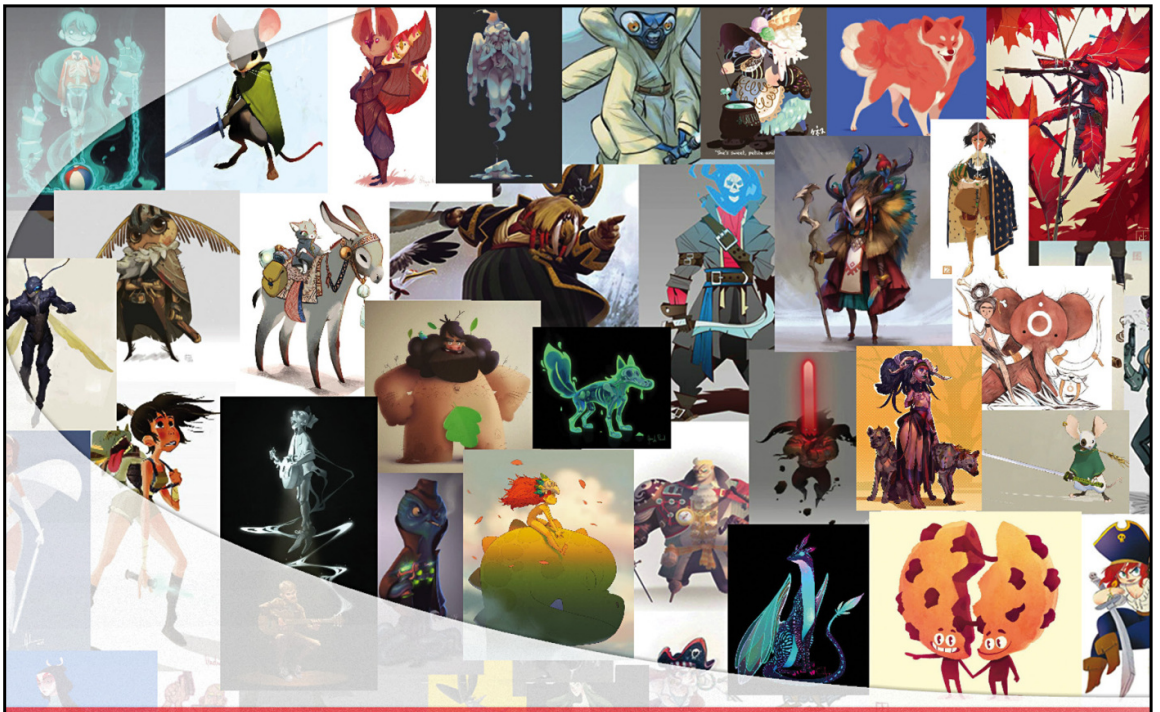

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