21 DRAW

ILLUSTRATOR'S GUIDEBOOK

SPECIAL EDITION

CONTENTS

For Lisa, Sally, and Sigsten

THANK YOU

THANKS TO:

Mohmmad Almutairi
David Bardsley
Issabella Brandywine
Ian Brookings
Jonathan Cham
Jenn Dahlen
Will DeSain
Ayesha Drew
Erik Franzon
Chris Greene
Ashley Hill
JUNE
JV
Damon Kasberg
Yves Macasalabang
Anthony O'Reilly
Maria Rago
Kim Schumacher
Vivek Singh Sidhu
Anastasia Tircuit
Josh Tzue
Branislav Velikic
Jimmy Vetayases

A big thank you to all the Kickstarter backers. This project would not have been possible without all your support, input, and patience.

EXTRA SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Christopher Lok
Anna-Lucia Stone

THANKS TO ALL THE ARTISTS:

Tom Bancroft
Dave Bardin
Randy Bishop
Bleedman
Charlie Bowater
Chamba
Lorenzo Etherington
Genzoman
Kim Jung Gi
Jazza
Loish
Loopydave
Warren Louw
REIQ
Steve Rude
Gerardo Sandoval
Otto Schmidt
Raul Trevino

Thank you all for your efforts in getting this project off the ground. It couldn't have happened without your support and your help in spreading the word. It was a pleasure to work with you all!

AND A MASSIVE THANK YOU TO:

Tom Bancroft and Lorenzo Etherington for your advice, time, and support during the past two years!

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for purchasing *Illustrator's Guidebook*! The pagesthat follow were created to give you an insight into theminds of some of the most popular comic book illustrators,and animators in the world today. They will show you their unique methods for creating stunning images and how to go about achieving your own objectives in art and design. They have done their best to condense their long years of training and professional experiences into this one volume.

The biggest problem with most "how-to-draw" books today is that there is only one contributing artist. You are only given one opinion on how to draw something. In the *Illustrator's Guidebook*, you'll get to compare the methods and insights of 18 top industry artists from companies like Disney, Marvel, Dreamworks, and more. You'll learn how they approach concepts like figure drawing, perspective, character design, composition, plus loads more.

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HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Feel free to read the book from start to finish in its entirety or just randomly browse its pages to check out some amazing artwork. Alternatively, you can look up the specific artistic areas you are interested in exploring in the contents section. If you're interested in learning more about a particular artist, you can skip directly to his/her pages or biography. Please also visit our website www.21-draw.com or our YouTube channel where we will be uploading videos that supplement the book's contents.

It's important to note that there was a real effort to keep the artists' own words and actions as close as possible to what they submitted. This is important as it allows you, the reader, to get an understanding of the exact process each artist goes through when completing an image from start to finish. Some artists use roughs, proportion lines, and other guides when drawing, and others start with clean lines and adjust as they go. In most cases, the artists followed the briefs exactly, but in some instances, they provided additions or minimizations that were even better than the original briefs. When this occurred, the artist's version was chosen over the original brief.

All of the above facts make this book unique in comparison to other "how-to-draw" books. But this book is unique in another way. In October 2015, almost three thousand people, from 25 different countries, came together on the crowdfunding website Kickstarter and pledged funds to get this book printed. It was the second book that was created by 21 Draw. The first book was also a highly successful crowdfunded campaign on IndieGogo back in May 2014. *21 Draw salutes you and thanks each and every one of you who helped make this book happen! Please enjoy it!*

21 DRAW

ONE

CREATED FOR ARTISTS BY ARTISTS

This book is intended for anyone interested in learning about illustration, from the novice to the professional who wants to study a specific skill or style. A unique benefit of this book is our wide array of artists providing you a broad range of knowledge and techniques. Some of the illustrators in this book are self-taught, while others have professional training, and quite a few are art instructors themselves. What they share is a love of drawing, a devotion to the ongoing study of art, and agreement on the importance of practice to achieve results and success.

Many of our artists have shared that they began drawing or *doodling* at an early age. Maybe you, too, have been drawing for a long time. No matter the level you are starting from, let's prepare to follow along with the tutorials by warming up with simple line exercises. You can draw these using either paper or tablet; please use what is available and comfortable to you.

Try to make your strokes as even and straight as possible. Work on vertical and horizontal lines as well as diagonal. Then try some dots, and practice making them in a specific shape as well as making them as consistently spaced as you can. Another great warm-up is drawing spirals. It can be a challenge to keep the line consistently spaced and steady as you spiral toward the center. Then reverse and spiral out from a center point. You can experiment with various pens, pencils, and brushes to discover more about line quality and weight.

Drawing these *simple* shapes can be deceivingly difficult — it's not easy to make a straight line with an even pressure. There is a saying that the most difficult thing to draw is a circle, and that it is impossible to draw a perfect circle by hand.

Why start with lines and shapes? Lines and circles make up the basic structure of anything you want to draw. By mastering the surprisingly difficult task of drawing simple lines and shapes, you also develop dexterity and hand-eye coordination. Both of these skills are very important to an artist, no matter the style or medium they use. Once you feel good about drawing simple shapes and lines, you can challenge yourself further by practicing them more quickly.
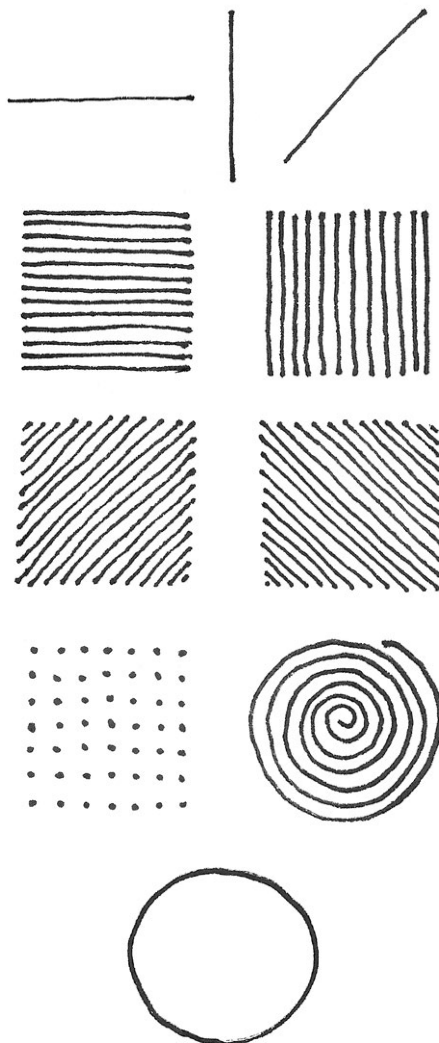
CREATING VOLUME

Once you have an understanding of drawing simple shapes, you can start adding light and shadow to create a sense of volume. Illustrators develop their own unique style and process for creating the illusion of dimension in their artwork. At the right are examples of shading from several of our artists. Some shading is achieved with line work, other shadows are made using gradients or painting in a darker colour.

The key is to know where your light is coming from and then to create a consistent and accurate rendering of the shadows. Highlights can be lighter colours added over a darker colour, or they may simply be the absence of colour or shadow in an area. Artists often use visual references for this step; you can use live models or photo references. Many of the tutorials in this book include examples on how to add dimension to your illustrations, along with tips on creating shadows and highlights.

GOING DEEPER INTO DRAWING

We drew the warm-up line work based on exercises featured in *The Fundamentals of Drawing* by Barrington Barber. Barber's book is full of detailed lessons on how to improve your drawing skills, and we recommend it as a reference for further study.

Another technique to improve hand-eye coordination is drawing without lifting your pencil or looking at the paper; this method is called *blind contour drawing*. Your drawings can start out a bit odd looking, but the practice can greatly improve your ability to draw with your hand what your eyes truly see. This process can also improve the speed and quality of your drawing, because you learn to trust your hand to directly interpret what your eyes see without the need to check your work as often. Blind contour drawing can also be used as a warm-up to get your mind and hand working together. This method and many other practices are in *The New Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain* by Betty Edwards. Edwards's book is considered the world's most widely used drawing instruction book.

Learning from other artists and a lot of practice will help you to draw what is in front of you but also anything you can dream up. One of the most impressive qualities professional illustrators have goes beyond their ability to render realistic figures and forms. Illustrators use their imaginations to create characters and worlds for others to enjoy. The artists in this book all have world-renowned drawing talent, many have studied life drawing and human anatomy for years, but they also have worked to develop their imaginations. Don't forget to seek creative inspiration as well as practicing skills. Our artists share what inspires them in their bios (see p. 163).

TRADITIONAL, DIGITAL, OR BOTH?

In this section, we focus on the specific tools illustrators in this book recommend and use in their tutorials. Many of our artists work in both traditional and digital mediums, while some are 100% ink to paper and others are devoted users of digital. We believe the diversity in their style and technique offers you expanded insight into the tools used by professional illustrators today.

Our artists share tool preferences in their bios (see p. 163), so you have a peek into an artist's toolbox while using his/her tutorial. Note that many of the principles work for either traditional or digital mediums. For example, when learning from an artist that uses a soft graphite pencil, you can use the exact pencil, or you can try a similar digital pencil setting that emulates the traditional tool.

Even the most die-hard traditionalist can't go completely off the grid; before going to press a high resolution scan of an illustration is needed. The file needs to be a minimum of 300 DPI (dots per inch), and should not be enlarged from the original scan size. Enlarging a rasterized image adds pixels, creating a visibly pixelated look at the edges of line work and contrasting colours.

TRADITIONAL DRAWING TOOLS

These time-tested tools have some strong advantages compared to digital: you can take them anywhere, most are water resistant, no need to pull them out of your bag at the airport, and they are not as expensive to replace if you lose them. Some favourites used by our artists:

PENCILS: Prismacolor pencils, Col-Erase also by Prismacolor, and graphite art pencils 2B–6B, HB. The numbers and letters are for two different rating systems which make a difference in the marks made (see blue pencils at right). H is for how *hard* the writing core is; the higher the number, the harder the writing core and the lighter the mark. B is for *blackness*; the higher the number, the darker the mark.

PENS: Pentel Pocketbrush, Kuretaki brush, Tombow, Pentel Stylo, Sharpie, and coloured pens like Copic Markers. Many art pens are available with two sides for creating both thick or thin lines and are sold individually as well as in sets.
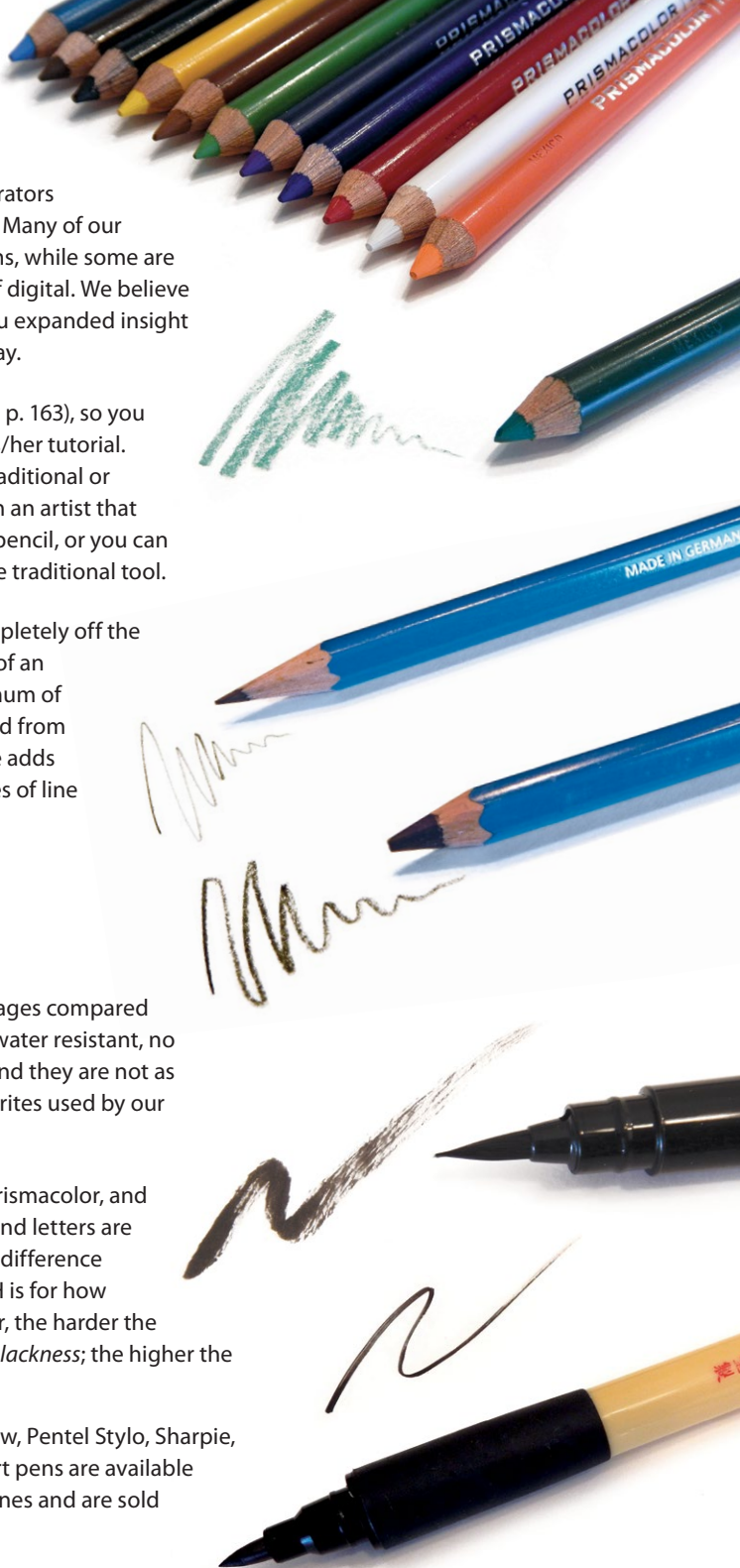
PAPER: Our artists were not as specific on paper preferences, but here are some basics on art paper options. Hot pressed is the paper of choice for pen and ink drawing, while cold pressed has more surface texture and is typically best for graphite and charcoal. Several artists — even those using digital — like to pack a sketchpad to practice anytime and anywhere they get the chance. Moleskine sketchbooks are a great choice and come in many different sizes.

DRAWING DIGITALLY

Nothing beats the power of *Command+Z* (the undo key on a Mac), or the ability to work in layers and save your artwork in stages. Digital is also one step ahead of traditional because there is no need for the high resolution scanning step. Embracing digital design can be an environmental choice in that it saves paper. A streamlined production process, speed, and convenience were reasons our artists gave for choosing digital.

HARDWARE: Wacom tablets are the top choice of illustrators in this book. Wacom's line of creative pen tablets includes a range of choices; www.Wacom.com.

SOFTWARE: Quite a few of the artists use Manga Studio Pro to draw and ink, then move their art into Photoshop for adding colour and texture. Another feature of digital is the ability to customize and save your brushes. Some of the artists share their brush settings in their tutorials and on their websites. Paintstorm Studio and Corel Painter were also recommended.

WHERE TO START

Even though you can pick this book up and start with any section, if you are new to illustration, the first tutorial on figure drawing by Tom Bancroft is an excellent place to start. Tom has more than 25 years of experience in the animation industry, much of which was for Walt Disney Feature animation. He includes some excellent personal advice on tools of the trade, then leads you through the use of basic shapes to create figures. *Now let's get drawing!*
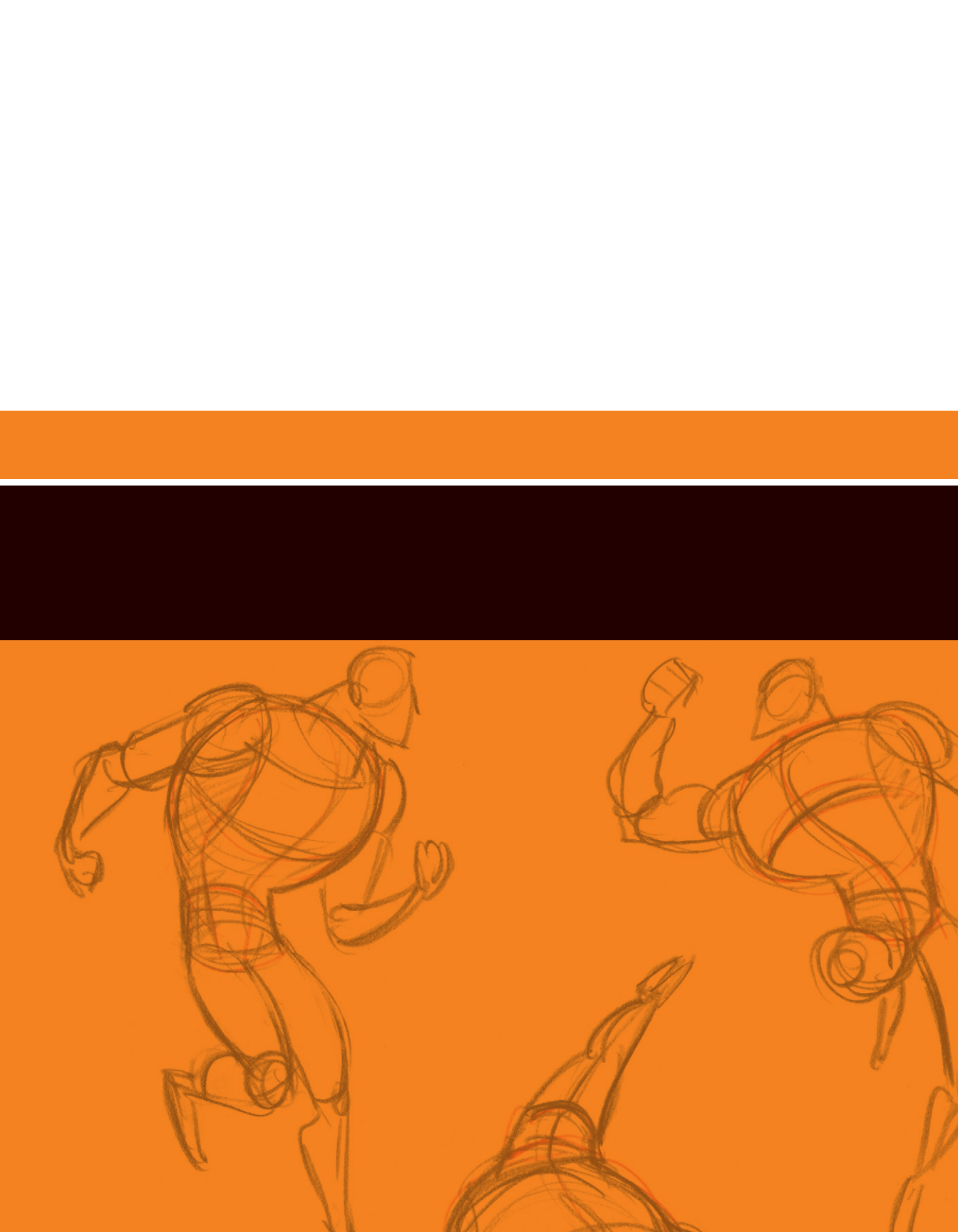
FIGURE DRAWING

TOM BANCROFT • BLEEDMAN
WARREN LOUW • REIQ • STEVE RUDE

DESIGN AN ANIMATION-STYLE MALE HERO

WITH TOM BANCROFT

Male Heroes (or *superheroes* for those of us that love American comic books) can be incredibly challenging to draw. No matter how simplified your design (or *cartoony*), you need to have a good understanding of human anatomy and how to caricature it. For this tutorial, I can't take the space to give an anatomy lesson (it's too large of a subject and there are many more qualified than I to explain it). But please know on the upfront that anatomy study and life-drawing experience will only make your Male Hero drawing more successful.

I can't answer every question in only a couple of pages, but I do want to make some key points and address a few important issues that I think will help you to take your character designs to the next level.
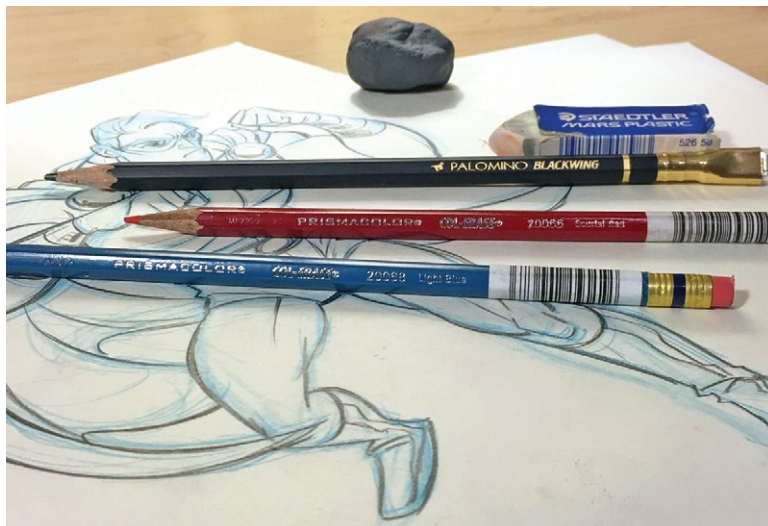
TOOL TALK

When I was at Disney, my mentor was Mark Henn, supervising animator, and whenever I would ask the "what pencil do you use" question, he would say: "It's not about the pencil, it's about the drawing that comes out of it." I've never forgotten that point. Most of us starting out in art think that the pencil, pen, and paper we use have a lot to do with the results. Honestly, it has very little to do with the results you get. Those that place too much v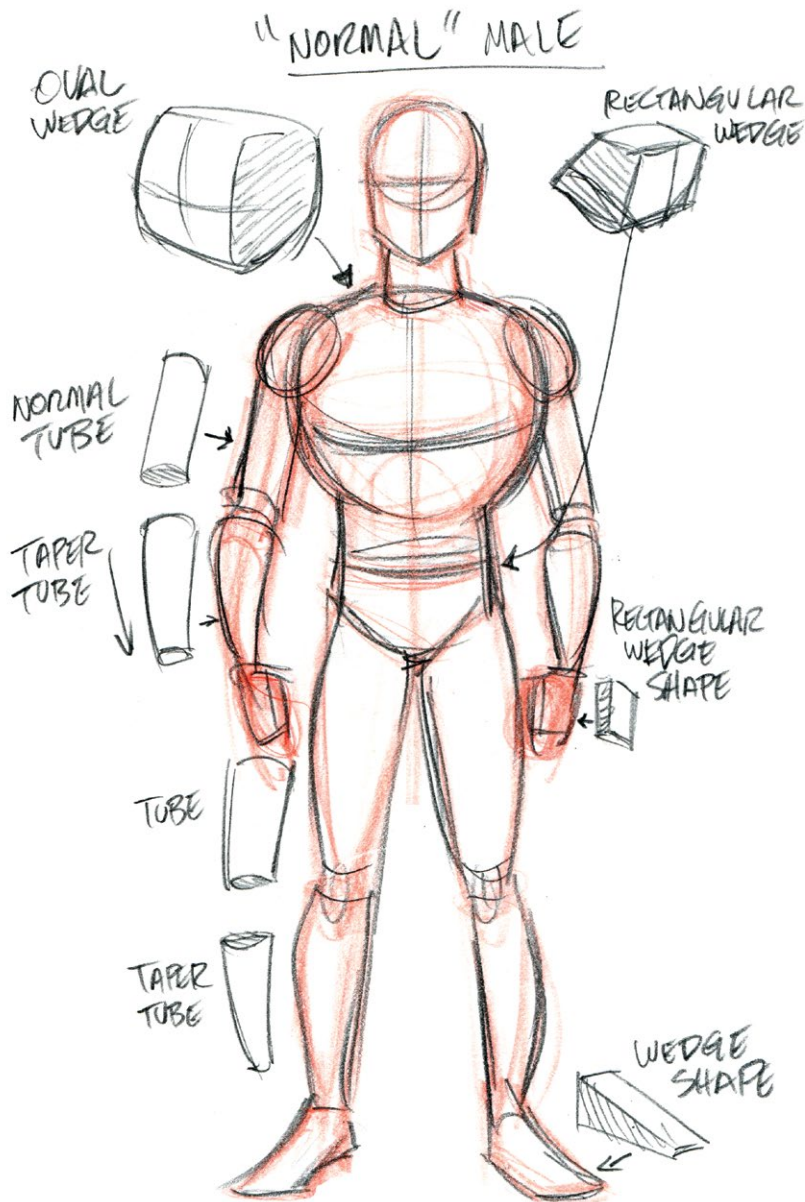alue or attention on the tools are usually giving themselves excuses for failure. "Oh, that didn't turn out very good because I was drawing on cheap paper." We've all been there and said something like that.

All that said, I do want to mention a couple of tools that just might make things a bit easier. The following tips are one-part tools and one-part process.

Also at Disney, I was first introduced to the erasable coloured pencils called *Col-Erase* pencils by Primsacolor. Many of the animators would animate their first pass, rough animation with the Col-Erase pencil (usually a blue or a red, but it really didn't matter) and then do the final, tie-down pass (drawing over the coloured pencil line) with a soft graphite pencil (usually a 2B to 6B). This is a tool set and process that I still use today for character design. The reason being, I don't have to continually redraw drawings (first rough pass, then a final pass), and I get the feel of "sculpting the drawing," because I refine and improve it as I go over the rough version.

"NORMAL" MALE

OVAL WEDGE

RECTANGULAR WEDGE

NORMAL TUBE

TAPER TUBE

TUBE

TAPER TUBE

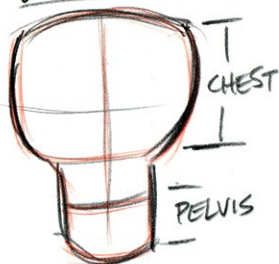RECTANGULAR WEDGE SHAPE

WEDGE SHAPE

SIMPLIFIED ANATOMY

Anatomy can be a challenge with Heroic Males. It can bog down your character design process and make your drawings stiff and bland. But the feeling of mass is important to make a Hero feel *super*, so it can't be left out. My suggestion is to streamline the anatomy by concentrating on the simple shapes that make up the body.

Most of these simplified shapes — circles, tubes, and blocks — are nothing new to most of us that have read a few art instruction books. A basic tenant of art instruction is to simplify the body into traditional tubes, blocks, and circles. What I want to do here is to take this same thought process a step further.

"LIGHT BULB" SHAPE

CHEST

PELVIS

SIDE

LESS
ROUND
IN
BACK

ROUNDER
IN
FRONT

3/4 VIEW

TOP IS
SLIGHTLY FLAT

FLIP IT

BACK

FRONT

THE LIGHT BULB CORE

The traditional simplified figure has a chest circle and a triangular pelvis shape that work as two separate pieces. I don't think this a great way to look at the shapes, since our bodies don't work that way. I like to look at the torso as one shape — one very flexible shape — that can be twisted and bent. Enter the *light bulb* torso shape. Draw an oval that is combined with a cube, then draw a tube shape that is rounded off at the bottom. That's your light bulb.
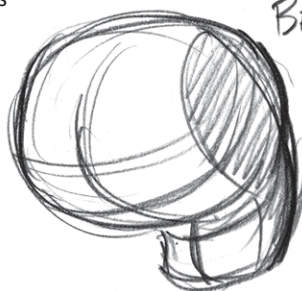
This shape can be used to create the main flow and twists that your Hero character will take. Adding the tubes for the legs, arms, and neck just creates more flow throughout the pose. Here's an example of how flexible the light bulb shape can be.
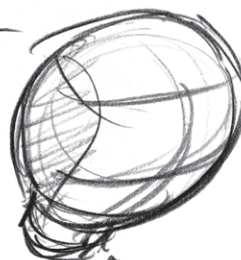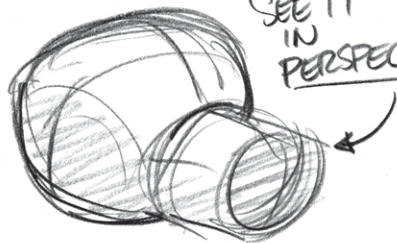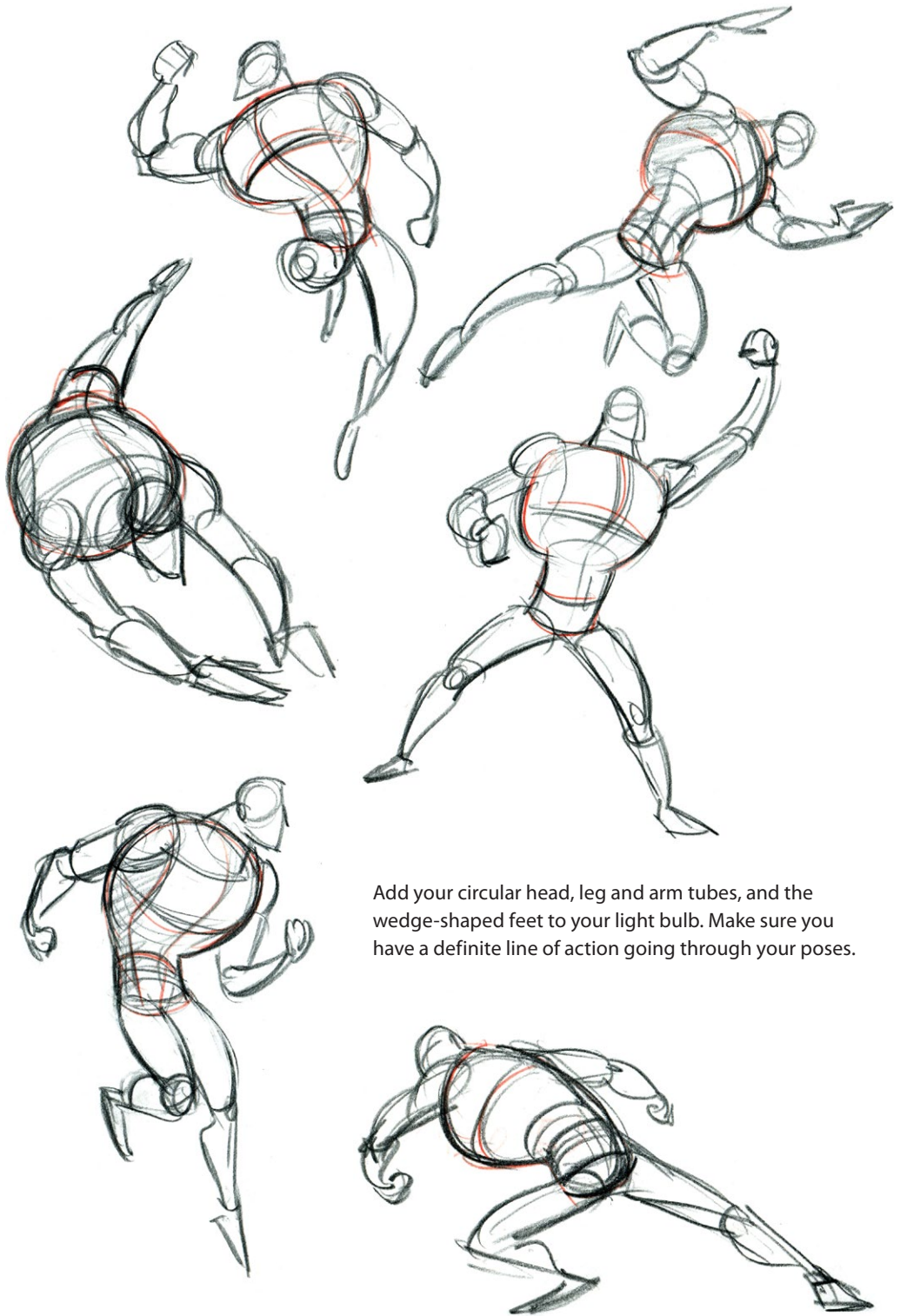
BEND
IT

SEE IT
IN
PERSPECTIVE

TWIST
IT

Add your circular head, leg and arm tubes, and the wedge-shaped feet to your light bulb. Make sure you have a definite line of action going through your poses.

ENTER VARIATIONS

Now that we have our simplified anatomy shapes, let's have some fun with them. Take that same light bulb shape core and make it wider, make the head smaller, the arms longer and thicker, and the legs thick but short. Just applying these shape variations gives you a completely different (and more heroic-looking)

character. Now try more variations: stretch shapes, shorten shapes, and thicken shapes throughout the body. The variations are endless, and you will quickly find that you can make many different body type versions for a Hero character. Some can look like runners, some may look super strong, and others may be swimmers. Match the superpower with the body type variation for best results.
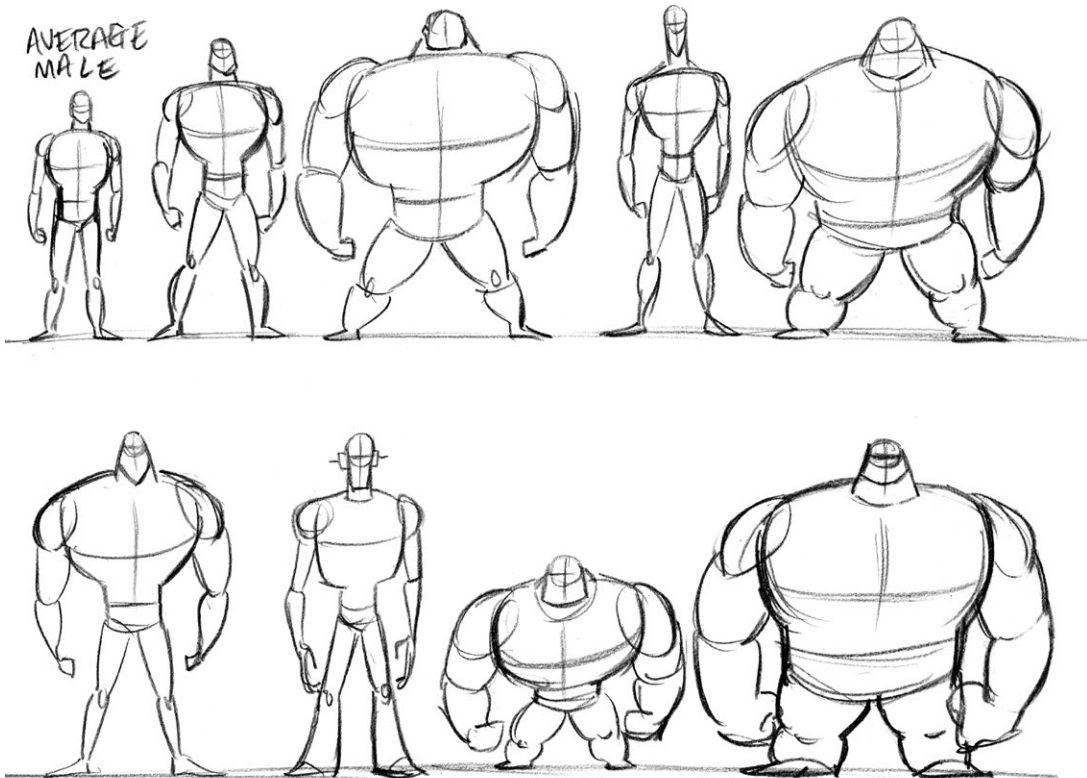

Next we do the same thing with the faces (see illustration A). Start with the circular cranium shape, but now add different jaw shapes: U-shaped, V-shaped, wide, and narrow — the variations are endless. Then try the same with the length of the nose, the size of the eyes, the placement of the mouth and ears. Start normal but keep pushing your facial shape element variations to see how unique you can make your Hero's face.

Once you know your simple head shapes — and how they relate to one another — you can more easily draw your character from any angle and expression (see illustration B).

Also don't forget about shape variation in the costume design. Once you have a body and face shape you are happy with, try some different costume designs. I'm not a great costume designer, but I can make variations

NORMAL HEAD
PROPORTION

VARIATION

VARIATION APPLIES TO SIDE VIEWS ALSO!

SIMPLE SHAPES

MY DESIGN
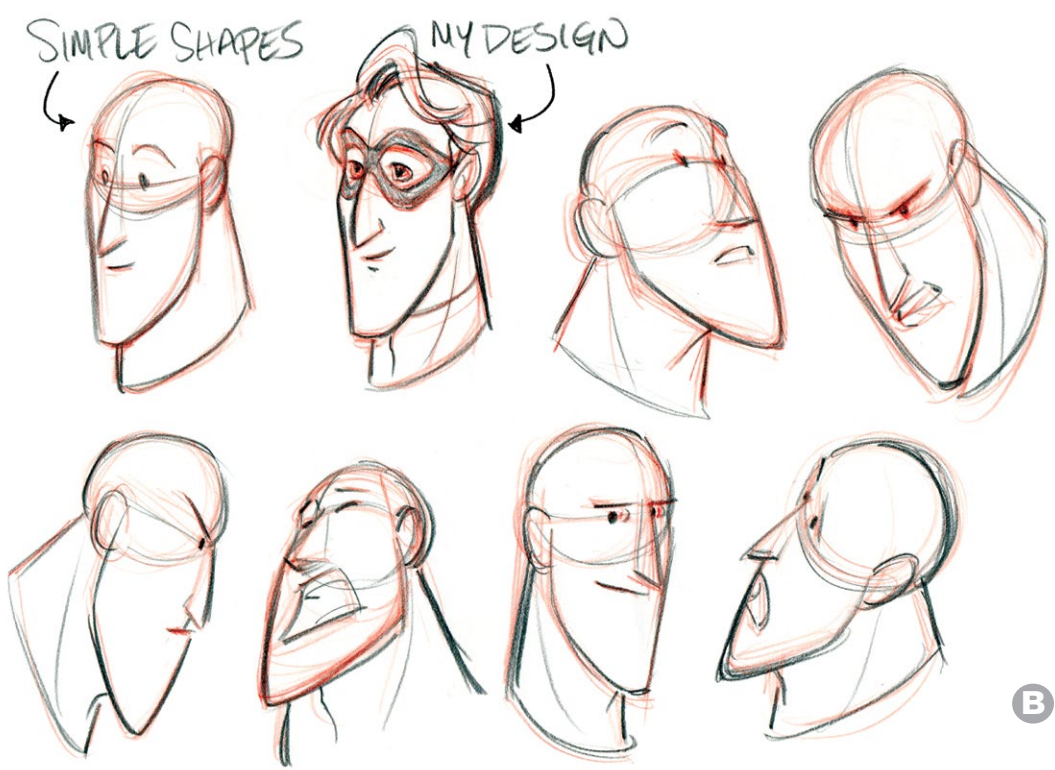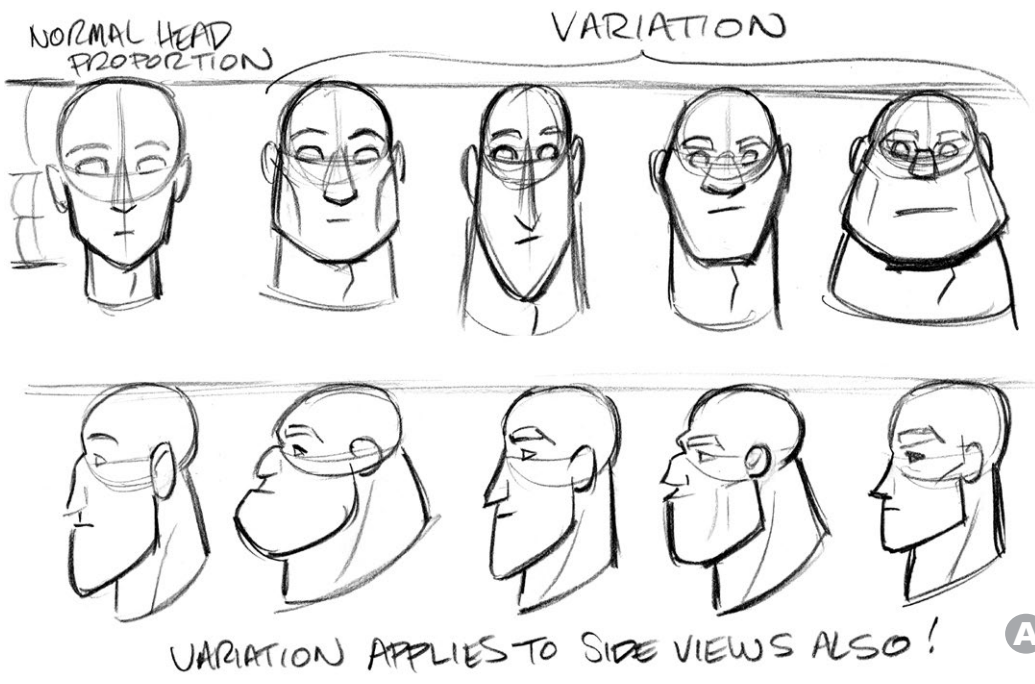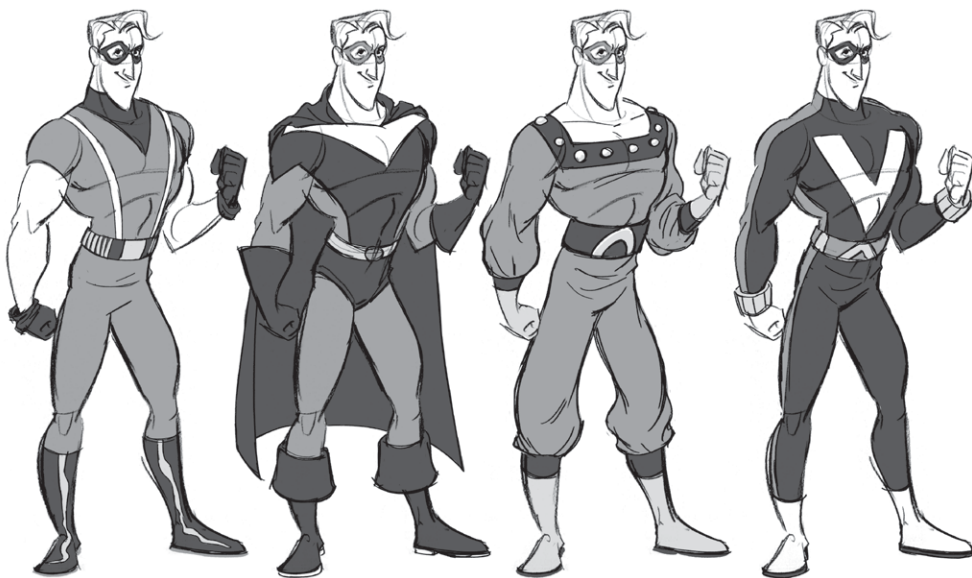
that will be unique by applying the same variation decisions. Wider shapes, thinner shapes, shapes that are wide but taper, circular shapes, lines, and angles. *Cape or no cape? Tight boots or loose? Gloves or no gloves?* Each decision will lead to a new variation.

APPLIED DYNAMICS

One last tip has less to do with character design than on posing your new character. *Dynamics* is a term I use to describe a process of strengthening poses for your character. The basic concept is this: *Straights* are solid, but can be stiff and boring — while *Angles* are dynamic and create a feeling of action. When posing your character, try and think of each element at an angle, rather than vertical or horizontal. Especially the torso — this is an element many of us fail to make the most of when creating a dynamic pose. The torso should (whenever possible for an action pose) be at an angle so you create a thrust
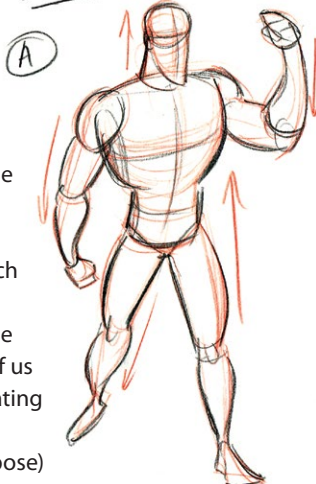
throughout the body leading the viewer to feel that something dynamic is about to happen! Same with the legs and arms and don't forget to give the head a tilt too. You'll begin to see that you also create a better feeling of *flow* throughout your pose. *It's a win-win!*

Now you can create your own fun Heroic Male characters that have strong poses, lots of flow, and a unique look. *Enjoy the journey!*


STRAIGHTS
A

DYNAMIC ANGLES
B

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER: MY PROCESS

When I discussed the tools I like to use, on page 8, I mentioned a process I like to use when sketching out character designs and creating poses. Below is my step-by-step example of taking a Heroic Male character drawing from beginning to end.

STEP 1: Using the side of my light blue Col-Erase coloured pencil, much like you would use a charcoal stick in life drawing, I like to sketch out the rough pose and shapes of the initial pose.
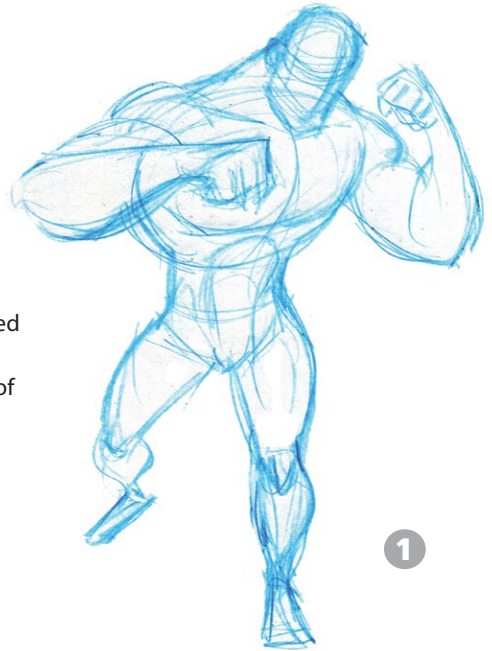
STEP 2: Next using the light blue pencil upright, I add in details to the figure. This is where I apply design principles to the face and costume to make shapes that are unique and interesting.

STEP 3: Using my 2B or 3B graphite pencil, I create a more final line drawing over the light blue sketch. Even if I'm working loosely (as I am here), this part of the process is similar to inking because I am making deliberate decisions with every line I put down. Make sure you don't lose the flow of the drawing by straightening too many lines; this can stiffen up the drawing.

STEP 4: Scan the more finished graphite drawing (with the light blue under drawing) and once in Photoshop, you can go to the *channels* window and select the blue or red (depending on the colour of pencil used) and drop out the coloured under drawing completely. What you are left with is just the tighter graphite line. Then by using *Image–Adjust–Levels*, I darken that line work and whiten the remaining grays to get a nice, crisp image. At this stage, the image is usually clean enough to show to a client.

STEP 5: It is important to stop and take a look at your line drawing at this point. Is there anything that can be adjusted in Photoshop that would make it stronger? In the case of this drawing, I decide to make the head smaller, lengthen and enlarge the foreground left leg, and move his left forearm over to get a better silhouette between the hand and shoulder.

STEP 6: Lastly, I add colour on another layer in Photoshop and have a pretty quick final concept piece. This is a very practical way of working that I find keeps me in the creative spirit longer.

6

CREATE A CARTOON-STYLE FEMALE

WITH BLEEDMAN

Getting started is always the hardest part, so pretend you're drawing a balloon — *because balloons are fun!* **STEP 1:** Like most tutorials I have learned from, I suggest drawing the head first then the spine.

STEP 2: From there I just let loose and begin scribbling the figure. While drawing loosely as if my hand has a mind of its own, I focus my mind on the fundamentals — *the anatomy*. Try not to think about details like her clothes, hair, face, etc. Just focus on getting the proportions right. Always start with the basic drawing fundamentals. *I know, it's kinda boring drawing the basics. "SIGH!" Let's get to the fun part already!*

STEP 3: *YES! YES! WOOHOO!* This is what you want, right? This is the best part of the whole figure drawing process. Designing the character. Here we can finally let our imagination go crazy. *OH! OH! Let's make her a goth! Let's give her earrings and skulls — things a goth wears! Oh, don't forget the boots!* When I design my characters, I always google for reference. *Oh Internet, what would I do without you? I'm pretty sure my life would lose all meaning.*
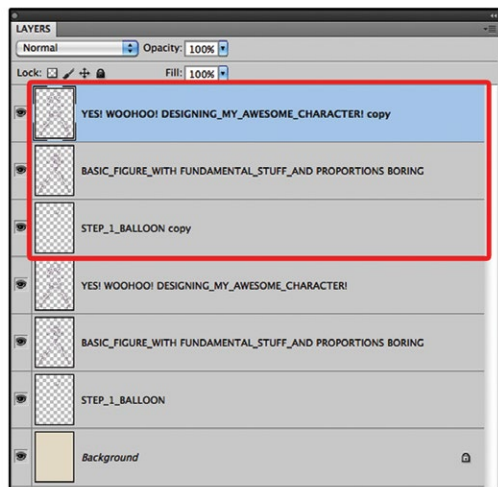

TIP: WORKING IN PHOTOSHOP LAYERS

I always create a new layer for each step of the sketch process. I also advise that you duplicate these layers as a back-up. Just in case you want to go back and start over.
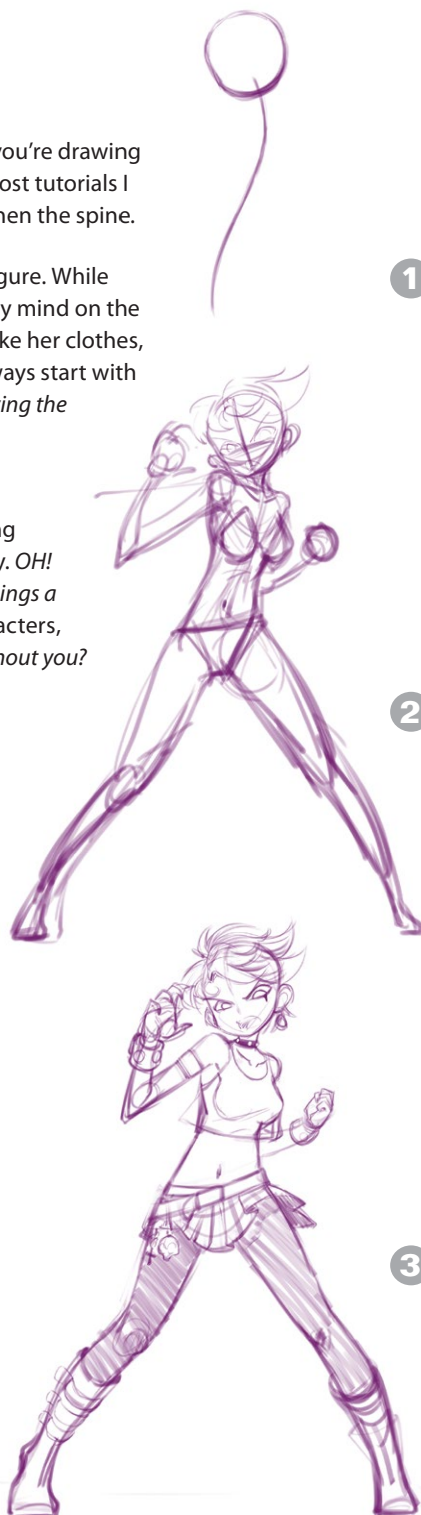
STEP 4: Now that we've completed the best part of the drawing process, here comes the tedious part — *line art*. I create a new layer, lower the opacity of the previous sketch layer, and trace over the sketch using my special inking brush.
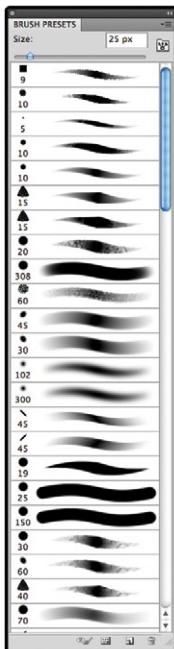
STEP 5: After the line art is complete, I create a new layer underneath and label it as my "render layer" — I use this layer for all the shades and shadows.

STEP 6: After the line art and rendering are complete, I "merge" the layers and proceed to make the final touches. I review my work and make any needed fixes and edits. Sometimes these adjustments are very subtle. Can you see the difference between the two illustrations below?

IMPORTANT: Before I merge layers, I make a duplicate set of the layers just in case I need to go back.

④

⑤

⑥

Can you spot the difference?
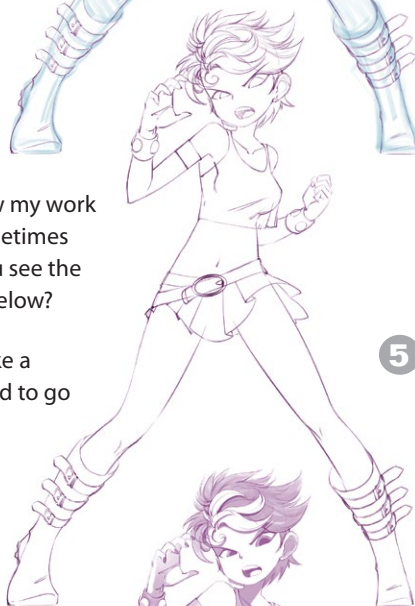
STEP 7: Finally I convert it to grayscale and make adjustments to the levels, brightness, and contrast. Now we are done — *yah! Wait! Where's the earring? The skull? The things goths usually wear? Oops.*

STEP 8: Take a break, go exercise: one, two, one, two . . .

HERE'S A LITTLE RECAP:

STEP 1: Balloon
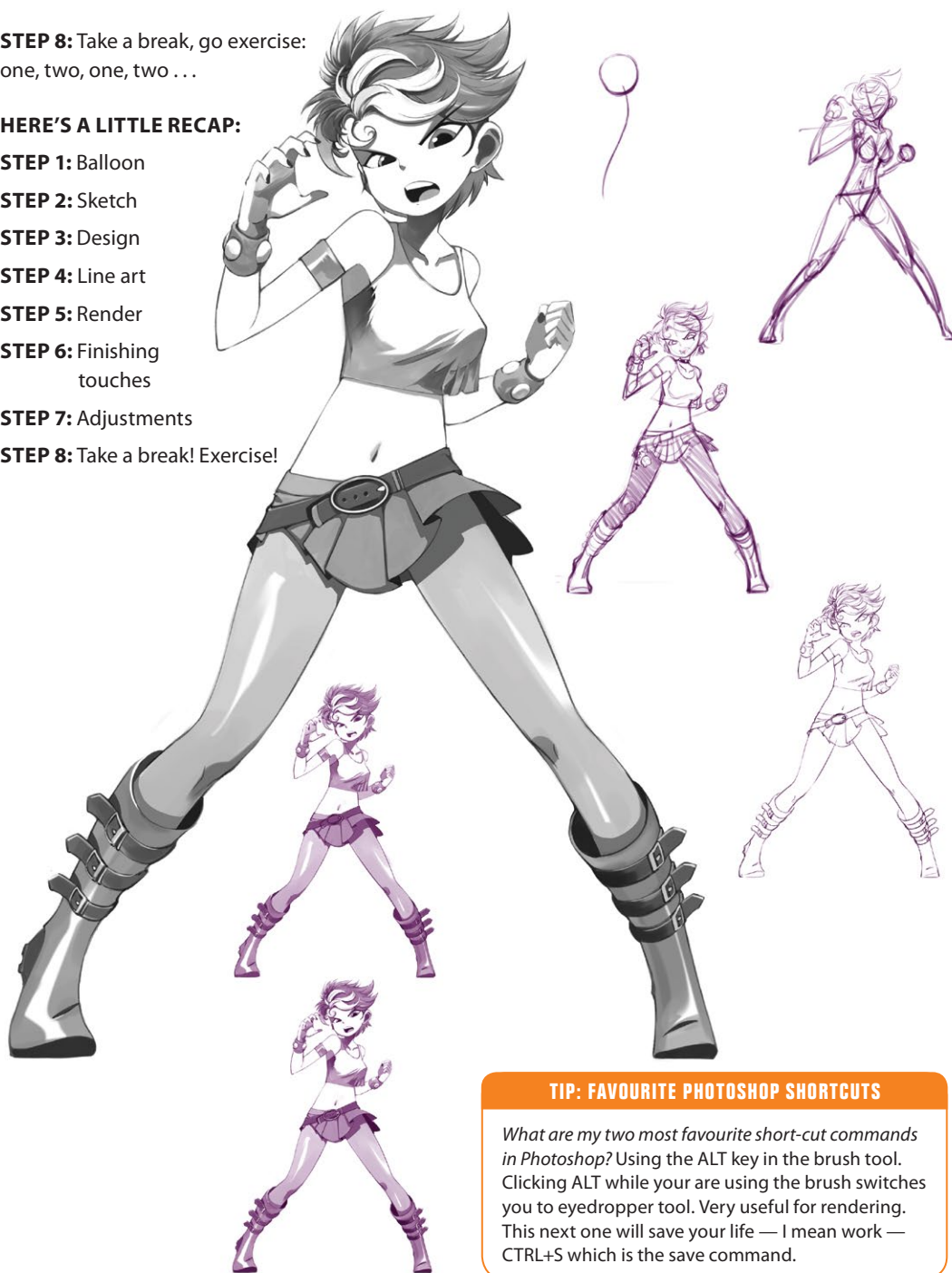
STEP 2: Sketch

STEP 3: Design

STEP 4: Line art

STEP 5: Render

STEP 6: Finishing touches

STEP 7: Adjustments

STEP 8: Take a break! Exercise!

TIP: FAVOURITE PHOTOSHOP SHORTCUTS

What are my two most favourite short-cut commands in Photoshop? Using the ALT key in the brush tool. Clicking ALT while your are using the brush switches you to eyedropper tool. Very useful for rendering. This next one will save your life — I mean work — CTRL+S which is the save command.

HEAD TUTORIAL

I start out with a sphere and add a lower jaw, then add the guidelines for the eye and nose.

Then I proceed to sketch out the design of the face.

Once I'm satisfied with the head, I leave the eyes out on a different layer.

NOTE: By creating a layer specifically for the eyes, I can make adjustments to spacing and size. The design of the eyes can suggest a character's personality traits, expression, and mood, as well as their style.
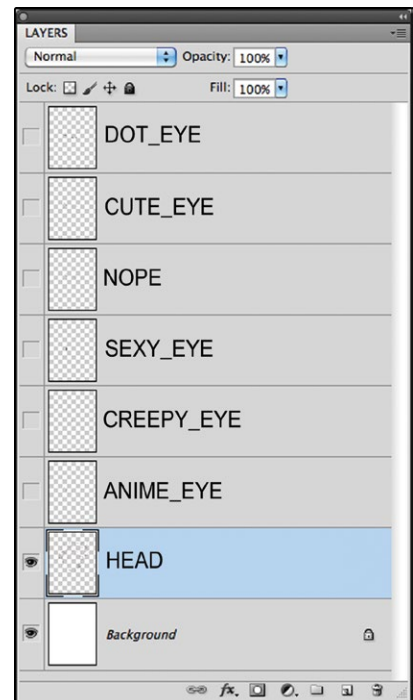
DRAWING THE IDEAL FEMALE

WITH WARREN LOUW

Learning to draw the figure takes *a lot* of practice, dedication, and can take many years to master. The best way to go about it is by breaking down the figure into simple shapes that are easy to understand. This is only one approach to understanding the human form. Once you become comfortable enough with creating shapes, you can move on to study the flow of gestures, balancing weight, action, and then the anatomy of the skeleton and muscles. Artists have various methods of approach so it's best to review these different approaches and then find what works best for you. When I do my own artwork, I no longer need to use all of these steps. After years of practice I know this structure in my mind, but to start, this is where you want to begin: *building on simple shapes*.

STEP 1: Starting with the upper torso area is a good midpoint to begin drawing a basic body shape, but for other poses, you might find it works better to start with other areas of the body first.

STEP 2: Next I add the head. You can see that the size of the circle I use for the side view is larger than the front view since the side of the head is wider. For the front of the head, you can start with an oval but keep in mind the jaw line. I then draw the shoulder joints and add the upper arms. *Note: The upper arms are more narrow when viewed from the front and back than from the sides.*
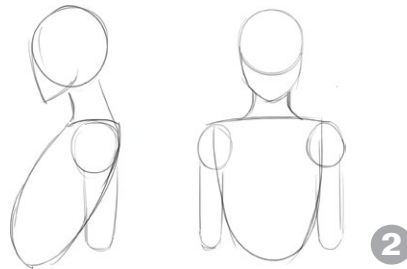

STEP 3: I draw the vertical center line for the body and then horizontal lines for the eyes. You can add these guide lines earlier in the process if you like. Then I start with the breasts. Make sure they are not just round circles, they are weighted slightly outward from each other and from the front. From the side, keep in mind that the breasts rest on the slope of the chest and point forward. I then add a circular axis to the bottom of the upper torso (to help with the upper and lower transitions) and then add the bottom torso. Make sure that from the side the slope of the back is not more angled than I have it here. Many artists make this transition far too angled, so be aware of this.
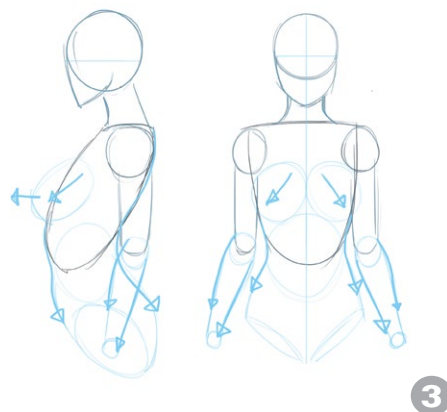
To show the lower torso division with the legs, I add ovals which form a V-shape from the front. For the forearms I add circles for the elbow and wrist joints. You'll start to notice the relationship between straight and curve lines throughout the figure. The inner forearm line is straight and there will be some of the elbow definition coming through. The outer elbow curves in and then straightens toward the wrist.

STEP 4: Pay attention to the straight and curved lines of the legs. The outside leg curves in and the inner thigh curves very slightly inward. The knee area definitely needs to be studied a bit further since it does appear to look as though the outside of the knee runs flush with the upper leg, yet it has its own subtle curves. The hand, too, needs to be studied carefully, but here I've added just the base of the hand. Please keep in mind where the thumb muscle will be drawn (see the front view), and where the thumb muscle will not be seen (see the side view) as the thumb will be tucked just behind the top of the hand and behind the index finger.

STEP 5: For the lower leg, once again these curves move inward. Point **A** shows where the outer curve begins and is higher than the inner curve at **B**. **B** starts after the inner leg runs down and slightly inward to the knee at **C**. Then I simply add a circular ankle joint before adding the feet. For the fingers of the hand, you can see the lines and shapes added lightly at this stage, then I divide the fingers into the knuckles and joints.
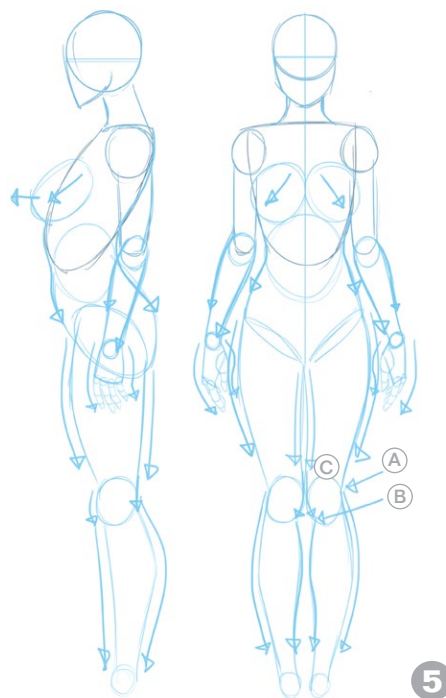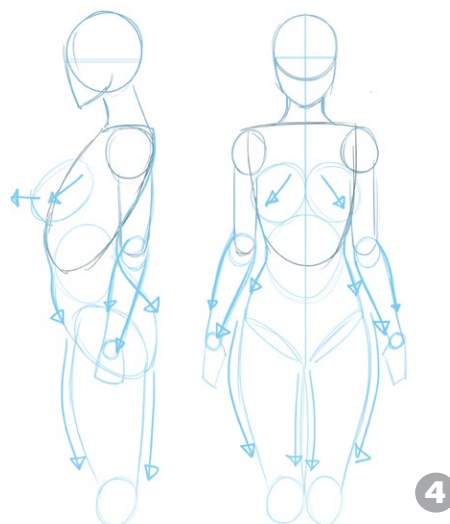
STEP 6: These are the shapes I work with for the structure of the feet. They will not be as prominent in final line work, but the ankle joint circles define the ankle shapes on either side of the feet.
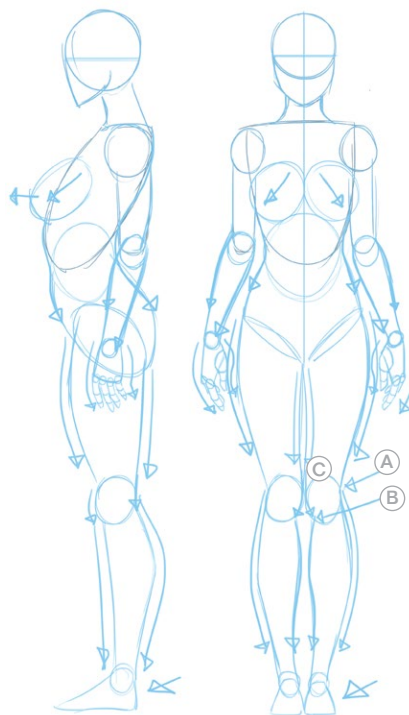
STEP 7: Finally I add the toes. At the front, I start by adding ovals for the ends of the big toes and circles for the smaller ones. I then work in the rest of the toe shapes, making sure that at their base, the toes are slightly parted in a rounded V-shape. This is more pronounced in the big toe and the smallest toe at the end. Once again, the foot is going to take a whole study in itself for how the toes are angled themselves. And there we have it — we have completed the figure!
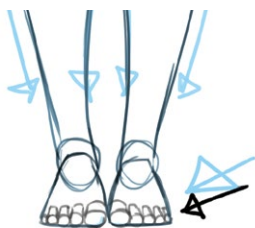
STEP 8: Eventually after you are comfortable with practicing this a thousand times, I urge you to learn about the muscle anatomy. There is a little example of the muscle structure in this final step. Understanding the way the muscles look will help the quality of your figure drawings, especially when it comes to shading the forms and defining the skin on the body. If you can afford it, I *highly* recommend buying a muscle anatomy statue of the female form. The statue is not cheap but it will be a useful and valuable tool to show you how the muscles wrap around the body and connect.
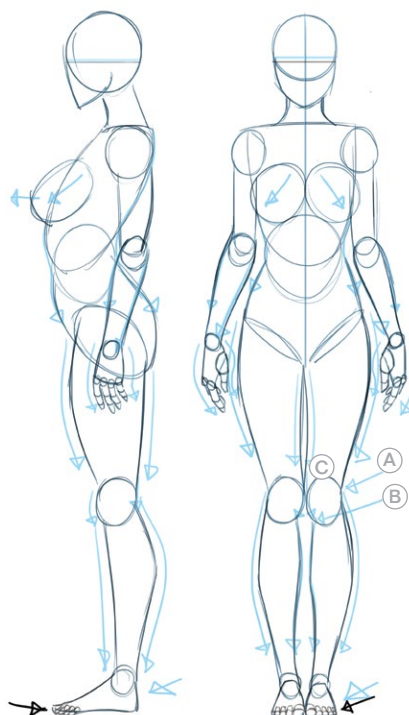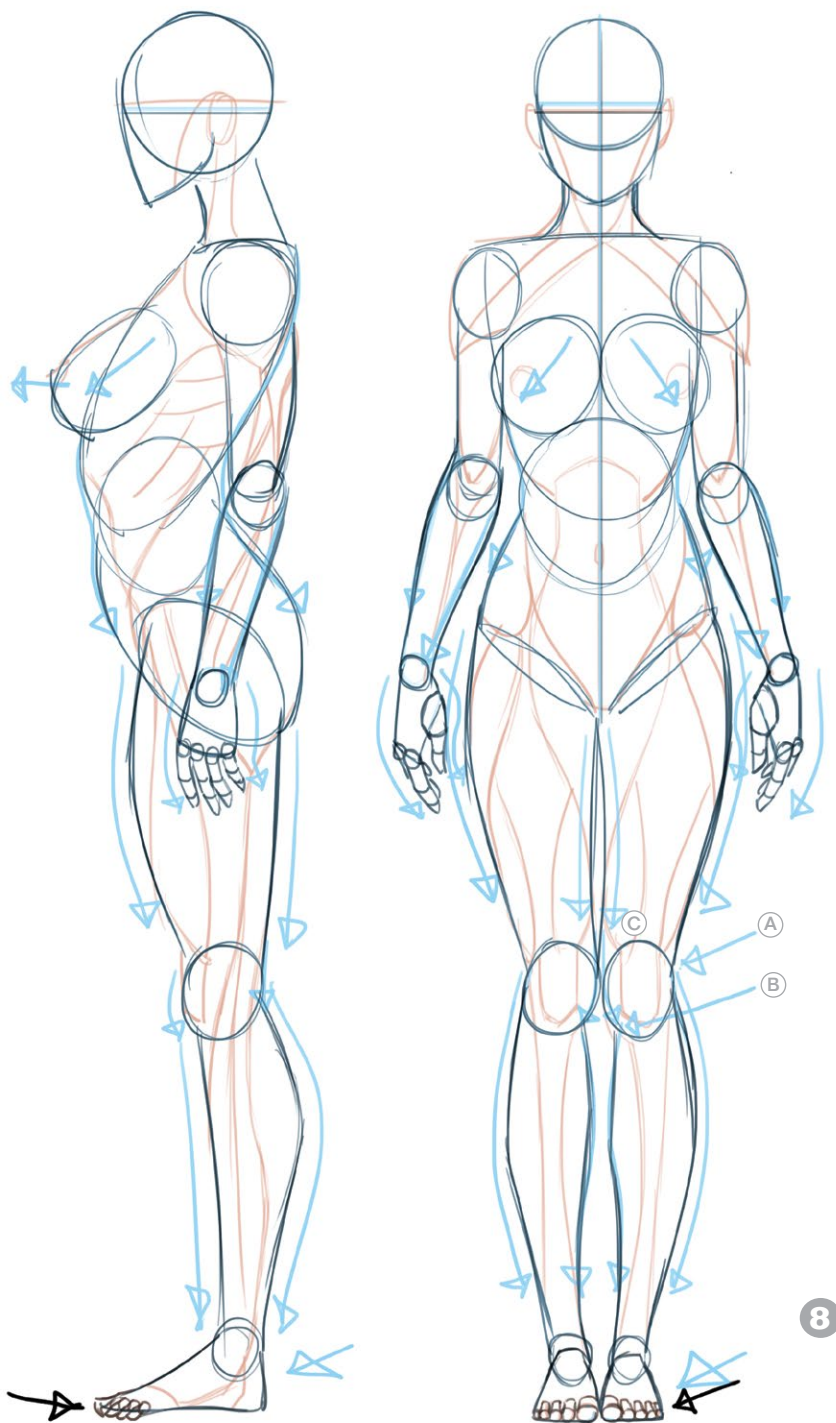
THE IDEAL FEMALE FORM

According to the Internet, the ideal female height is 5'6" (170cm) up to as tall as 6' (183cm). In my chart to the right, I also measured the proportions in terms of how many lengt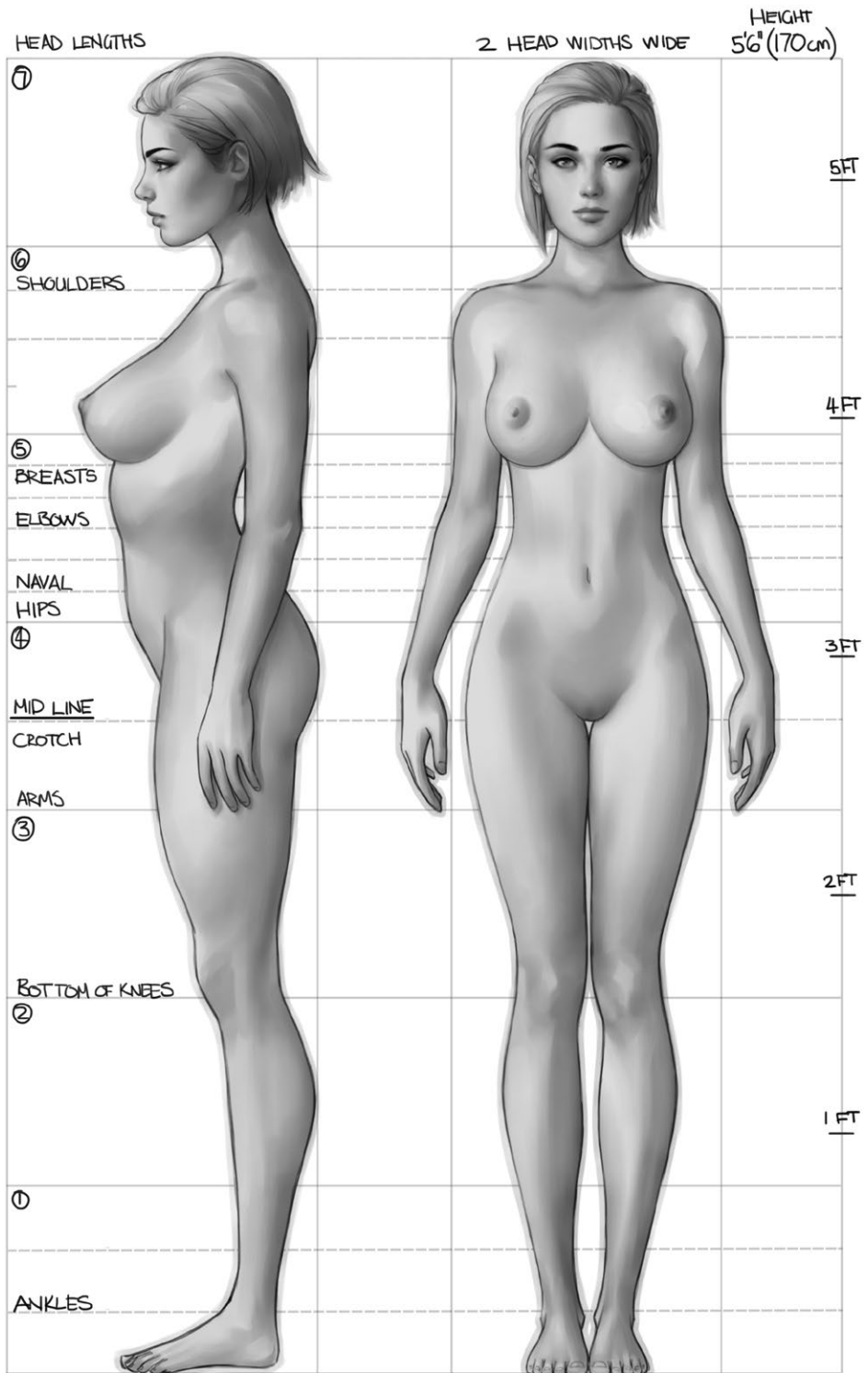hs of the head make up the figure. I'm using seven head lengths here, but you can use eight if you want a taller look. But be careful not to make the head too small in relation to the body. Using head lengths proportionally will help you measure the other parts of the body, keeping the correct ratios between the parts so that they are not too long or too short. It's about the relative composition of the figure.

These proportions are not set in stone and once you learn the basic fundamentals, you can start to adjust to your personal needs or a specific character description. When you keep your body proportions based on these concepts, your figure drawings will be believable.

After you practice drawing using these proportions, it will become more natural. You'll also feel more confident in this process instead of needing to think it through in this much detail. Remember that you are likely to forget some of the steps along the way, but you can go back and brush up on the process. In certain areas of figure drawing, I even have to remind myself.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND ABOUT COMPOSITION:

- The neck is one forth of a head length.

- Breasts start one and a half heads down and cover three quarters of a head in length. Each breast is as wide as the face.

- Elbows are next to the rib cage and fit in the area between the upper and lower torso. From the side, the elbow is next to the most inner point of the curve of the back.

- Hips start three head lengths down. Take time to study this area so you understand how the hips fit in relation to the stomach muscles.

- The middle of the figure is at the crotch.

- The length of the arms ends at the tips of the fingers, which reach about halfway down the length of the upper leg (starting from the hips, not the crotch).

- The bottom of the knee is one head length from the end of the fingers.

- The height of the feet from the bottom are one third of a head length.

HEAD LENGTHS

2 HEAD WIDTHS WIDE

HEIGHT
5'6" (170cm)

⑦

⑥
SHOULDERS

⑤
BREASTS

ELBOWS

NAVAL
HIPS
④

MID LINE
CROTCH

ARMS
③

BOTTOM OF KNEES
②

①

ANKLES

5FT

4FT

3FT

2FT

1FT

HEAD STUDY: SIDE PROFILE

Drawing the side profile of a head may seem like the easiest of the views to draw, but it does have a few challenges — we already have ideas of what the profile looks like and these can interfere with our understanding the reality of this view. If you do not learn how all the parts of the head fit together, you can easily make mistakes in the proportions. This can leave you with a head that is not wide enough, or with features too close together, and you'll wonder why your drawing looks off. Before I did proper studies, I thought the distance between the eye and the ear and the ear and the back of the head was much less than it actually is.

STEP 1: Start out with a basic circle.

STEP 2: Divide the circle horizontally and vertically for easy composition and then start adding the front of the face guide lines to the bottom left quarter. Show the bottom jaw line moving slightly into the quarter itself. Then add another circle half the size of the main circle in the center. This is the flatter side of the head and represents the temporalis muscle.

STEP 3: Add an oval in the bottom right of the small temporal circle against the midline at a slightly diagonal angle for the ear. The ear is *not* vertically placed. The top of the ear is horizontally in line with the start of the eyebrow. The bottom of the ear is in line horizontally with the bottom of the nose. Add the cheekbone line starting from the middle of the ear and curve it into the chin just before the chin starts to curve upward. Then I begin the side profile of the nose. I suggest doing a few real-life studies of different variations.

STEP 4: With these varying curves, it's best to become aware of which are further outward or inward in relation to one another (refer to step 5). **A:** how curved or straight you place this line is up to you. **B:** it's important to be aware of the ball of the nose, since that can influence the

shape of the tip. But in this case, I'm not making it a feature of the upper slope of the nose. The angle of the nostril line before it curves into the Alar groove is generally parallel to the angle of the mouth. **C:** the Philtrum can have a slight curve outward or it can be a vertical line. It can also be shorter or longer in length depending on what you're after. **D:** the upper lip is rounded depending on how full it is. I normally add the mouth line only after I've completed the profile, but you can add it at this point if you want. **E:** the bottom lip line starts with the actual lip and can be more rounded if you wish before it becomes the underside of the bottom lip. **F:** as soon as you start drawing the chin, it's a very rounded circular shape before it runs into the jaw line.

STEP 5: I always begin the eye with the upper eyelash line, then the bottom lashes, the iris, and then the upper lid. Learning the curve of the eyebrow will take real-life studies because there are variations. Notice how **A:** the bottom lip aligns with the forehead. **B:** the chin is lined up with the start of the eyebrow. **C:** how the corner of the mouth is inline with the front of the eye. Then the nose is the most extended and the top lip the second most extended. **D:** the eyebrow ends at the temporal circle.

STEP 6: There seem to be two general hairlines; the dotted line is a variation or a blend of both options. Because the skull is not actually round, I slightly push out the right and left top of the forehead. Then I push in the lower back of the head.

STEP 7: For the hair, I make sure to keep in mind the rounded angles of the head. I also add the details on the ear. It's not difficult to make the ears look good if you study how they are formed. Many artists neglect the ear, resulting in great faces with terrible ears.

STEP 8: I take the sketch layer, then change the layer opacity to 10% and create the clean line art on a separate layer.
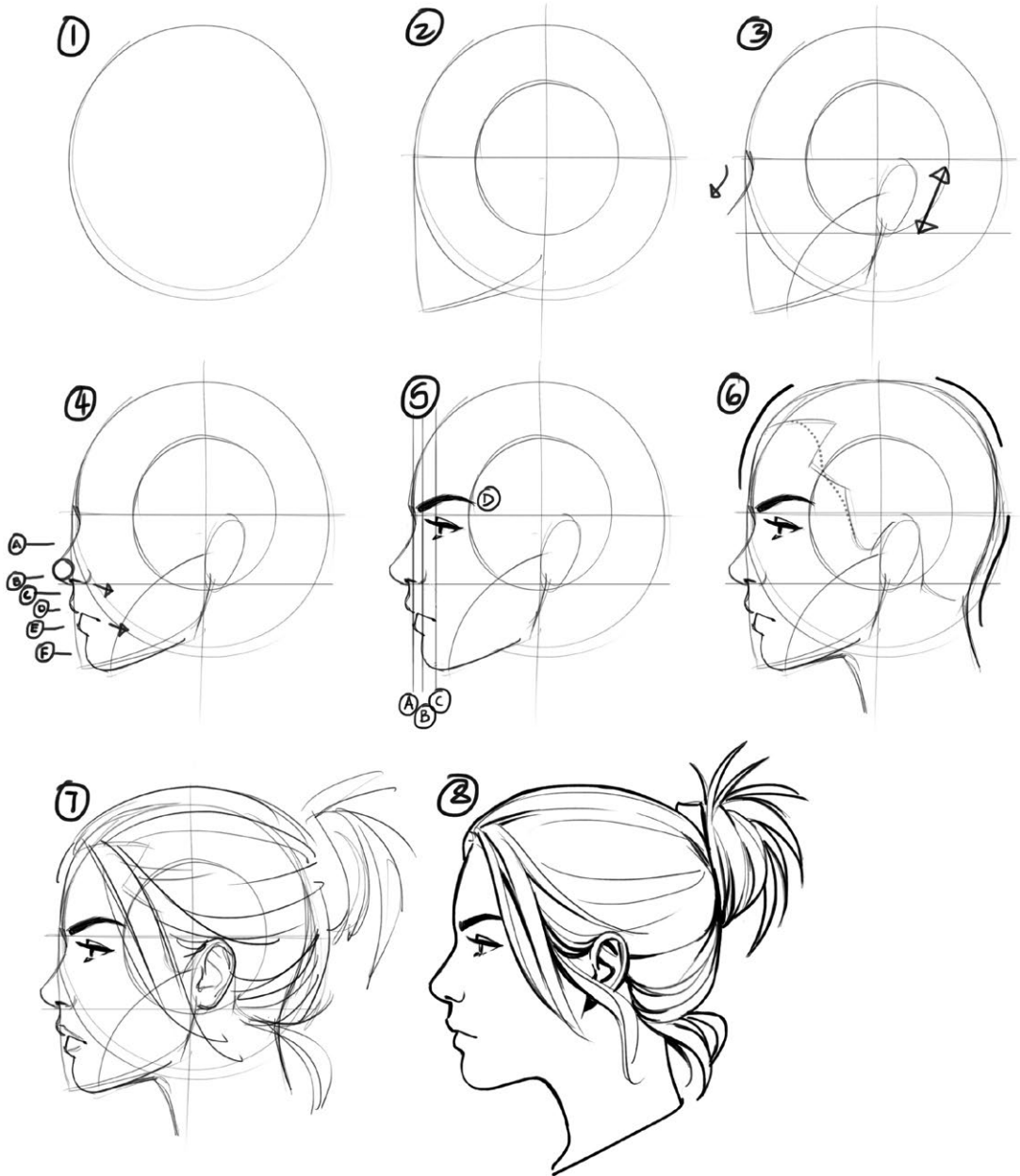
HEAD STUDY: FRONT VIEW

I have experienced a lot of trouble over the years making the front view of the face look good with ease. I have often made the face too large for the head, eyes too big or too wide, forehead too small, eyebrows too high and arched . . . and so on. There are many proportional fundamentals that can help, so make sure to learn them to set your foundation.

STEP 1: Since the head from the front is more narrow, let's start with a smaller circle to represent the top of the head.

STEP 2: Now divide the head down the center. The circle is smaller from the front, but the features still need to line up horizontally in relation to the side angle which is wider, so just drop the horizontal dividing line below the center. **A:** this horizontal dividing line is the brow line. From there add another line running across the bottom of the circle. **B:** this line is the bottom of the nose. Then take that bottom length of the divided circle (A to B) and add that below the circle. **C:** this becomes the line for the bottom of the chin.

STEP 3: Take the height from the horizontal line for the nose and the brow line, and repeat this distance above the brow line placing a horizontal line to make **A:** the top of the hairline. The hairline intersects with the line of the circle. From these two intersecting points, run a line down that curves slightly inward to connect with the horizontal line at the bottom of the nose creating **B:** the jaw line. The slight inner curve between the hairline and the brow line forms the temporal section.

STEP 4: Now you can add the ears between the brow and nose line. From the middle of the ear, run the cheekbone line by curving it about half way into the bottom of the side of the jaw. This line is just to indicate the sides of the bottom of the face. Even though the top of the head is

more rounded from the front compared to the side, it's still not totally round and is pushed slightly outward from the corners as shown by the arrows. You can then add the neck which flares out and starts from just inside the width of the jaw.

STEP 5: Start adding the facial features by starting with the eyebrows (I encourage separate eyebrow studies!). Then add the nostrils below. Next add the mouth in line with the curves of the sides of the jaw.

STEP 6: The V-shape starting at **A:** is the line that will help you line up the ends of the eyebrows with the corners of the eyes, the sides of the nostrils, and the top of the upper lip. **B:** is the space between the eyes and the ears. Be sure to add this space; I used to compress this area too much and couldn't figure out why things looked wrong. **C:** is the inner corner of the eye toward the iris that is in line with the corner of the mouth, and **D:** the sides of the nose that are in line with the start of the eyebrow. **E:** intersects the hairline and when you add the hairline, make sure to curve your line slightly to match the roundness of the head. **F:** notice how the bottom of the eye is in line with the start of that inner circular fold of the ear.

STEP 7: Hair is an entirely separate study in itself, but in this case I've simply tied her hair up into a loose bun. I'm just keeping in mind the shape of the head and how the hair will be weighted and how it falls to the sides. I keep the hair loose and sketchy looking because I already have a certain understanding about how to clean it all up. If you want to tighten up the lines of the hair so you understand it better, then do so before taking it further.

STEP 8: I just lighten the sketch layer to 10% opacity and then create another layer to draw in the clean lines. If I need to make any further adjustments, I'll do so at this step too.
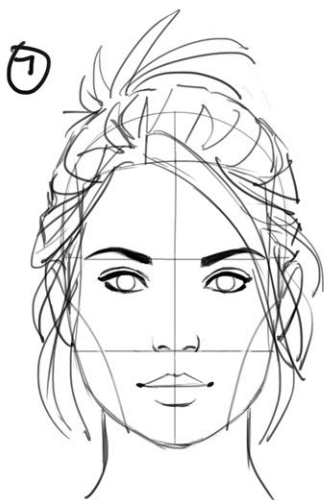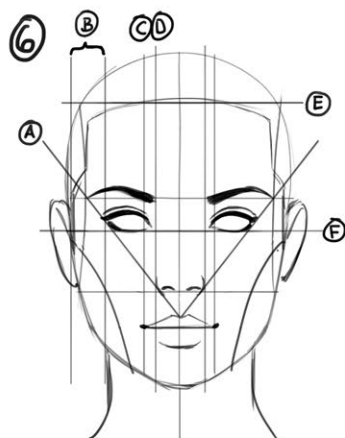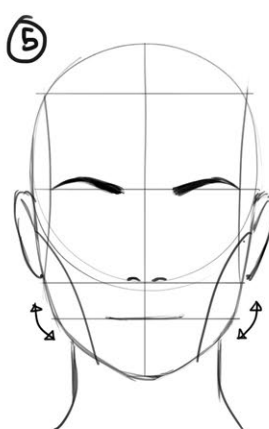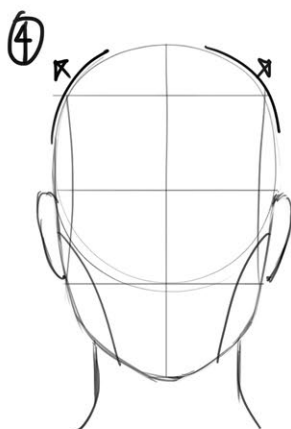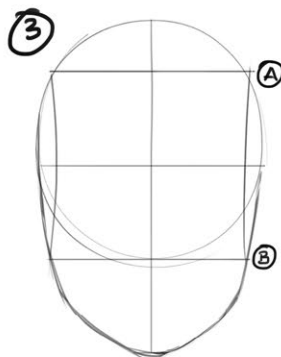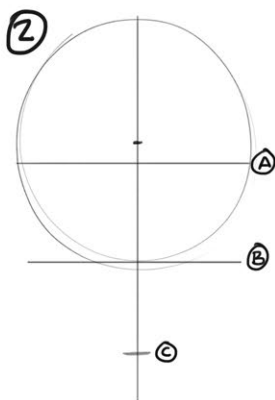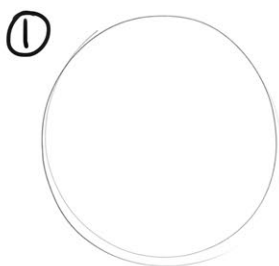
FLOW

If you want the poses of your figures to look natural and believable, I suggest studying the dominant line of action or flow of the poses. This can be done in various ways. You want to work simply at this because it is not about the details or accuracy of anatomy.

The example at right is basically a more advanced stick figure that focuses just on the flow of the lines for the torso and limbs. Doing a bunch of these based off of photo reference will help you start to develop a natural eye for when you get to doing your own poses.

The example below shows the natural flow curves of the poses that mostly have an S-shape curve to them. Becoming aware of this curve will help your poses from looking too stiff and upright. Then you start to realize that every part of the anatomy is being affected by the way the body naturally counterbalances itself in a pose. This will take *a lot* of practice. I suggest filling hundreds of pages just learning the way bodies flow. Then you can start to figure out the pattern.
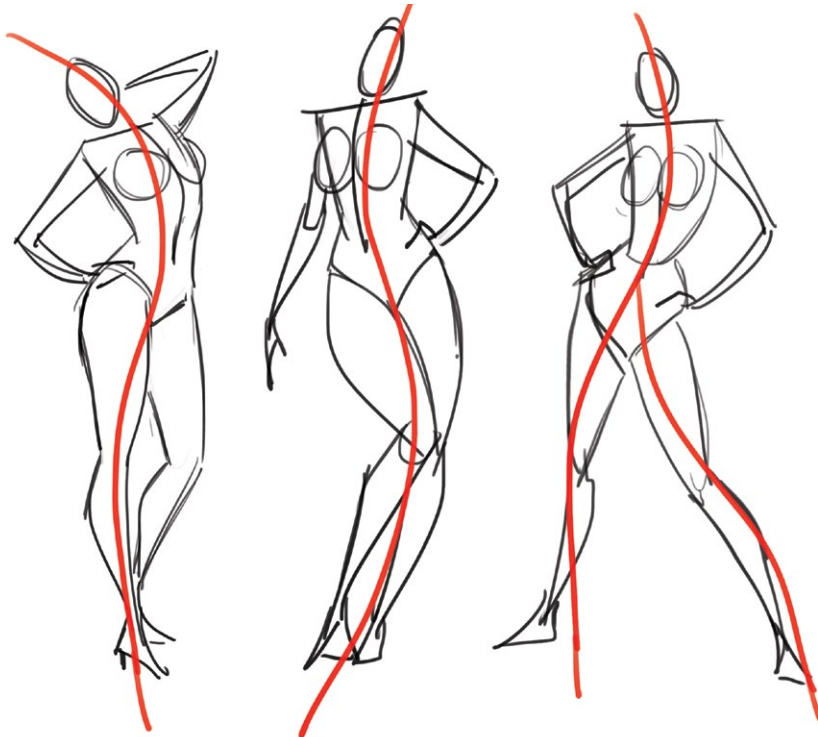
CONTRAPPOSTO

This is the Italian word that means *counterpose*. This term describes a pose where most of the weight is on one leg. The body naturally compensates for the shift in weight and balances itself in a way that the shoulders and hips tilt in opposition to each other. Because of the way the body tilts, these poses always have a slight S-shape curve to them (see the blue dotted line in the drawing here). Using this pose was known to bring more life to sculptures and artwork back in ancient times and prevented the artwork from looking stiff and rigid like symmetrical poses do. A well-known example is the statue of David by Michelangelo.

A: The shoulder line tilts so that the torso is stretched out more on the one side and squashes inward on the other side into the hips. Remember that adjusting this will affect the positioning of the arms.

B: The tilt of the hips is in opposition to the shoulders, leaving the left leg bent slightly. The hips on that side drop, giving it less space to be upright like the other leg is. The leg in the most vertical position always takes the most weight in any pose.

C: The leg positions are determined by the tilt of the hips. Note that the knee of the leg connected to the lower side of the hips will be lower than the other knee.

D: Depending on the pose, the feet generally face outward, but there are poses where the feet face inward. With observation and practice, you'll become familiar with how the feet manage the weight of the body. Notice that the red dotted line is centered from the top of her head and then again at the foot bearing most of the weight of the pose; this is to balance the body.
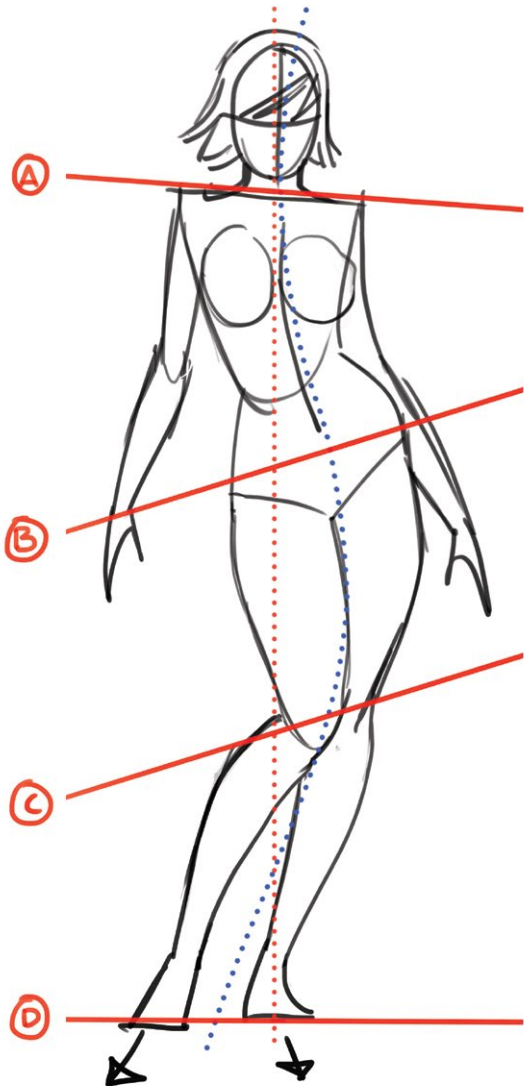
HOW TO STUDY THE FIGURE FROM A PHOTOGRAPHIC REFERENCE

I used to draw pages of a wide range of poses. These figure studies looked great, and I felt really confident. Sadly, when I tried drawing from memory the results were poor. I felt frustrated and disappointed in myself. I couldn't figure out why my studies weren't showing the results I wanted. I thought there must be something wrong with me. Later I realized the issue: I was drawing plenty of studies of different poses, *but I wasn't properly learning any of them*. Instead I made a brief study of each pose then moved on to the next. *The key is repetition!* Training for anything requires *a lot* of repetition and art is no different.

The following is how I draw studies on flow, shape, and form using repetition. This involves how you feel during the process because there is a back and forth between drawing the studies, then a review of your progress. In my six examples at right, the drawings with dark bikinis are drawn using the photo reference below; the unshaded bikinis are drawn from memory. I chose this model because she has curvy proportions, which I enjoy drawing.
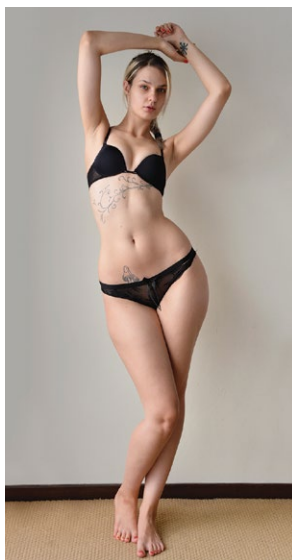
Start with two to three studies where you try to copy the model as closely as you can. Don't rush this step. Then test yourself by redrawing once from memory. You want to bring through as much as possible about the body's flow, shape, and form. Don't worry if your results are not great for now; that's to be expected. After you have drawn from memory, bring out your photo reference and copy it again, but this time at a slightly quicker pace. You may notice that you are more aware of details you missed before. Your mind is asking questions that you are starting to have the answers to.

As you progress, try to reduce the number of strokes you make. Draw your lines loose but make every stroke count. By quickening the pace, your details will not be as accurate but that's not the point. You want to develop a feel for the flow of the figure. Depending on skill level, you will be able to draw the same pose from photo reference and memory after 10–30 repetitions. Try to increase your pace and reduce your strokes even further. Look closely at my first attempt from memory — the line work looks a bit *hairy* because I used a lot of strokes. On my third attempt there are fewer strokes and I build the form more efficiently. Repeat this process at least 10 times. I've repeated this process 20–30 times, and it can be draining so be sure to take breaks. At right are four examples of drawing styles to try during these studies:

A: Include a little body construction line work to help understand the figure and pose.

B: Draw as fast as you can while maintaining control of your strokes. This prevents you from over thinking (which is often an issue) and instead pushes you to draw what you *feel* instead of what you *think*.

C: Focus on the straight and curved lines of the body. I refer to the photo and decide which is a straight or a curved line to simplify the structure. Notice (with limbs especially) when there is a curved line, parallel to it is a straight line. This pattern
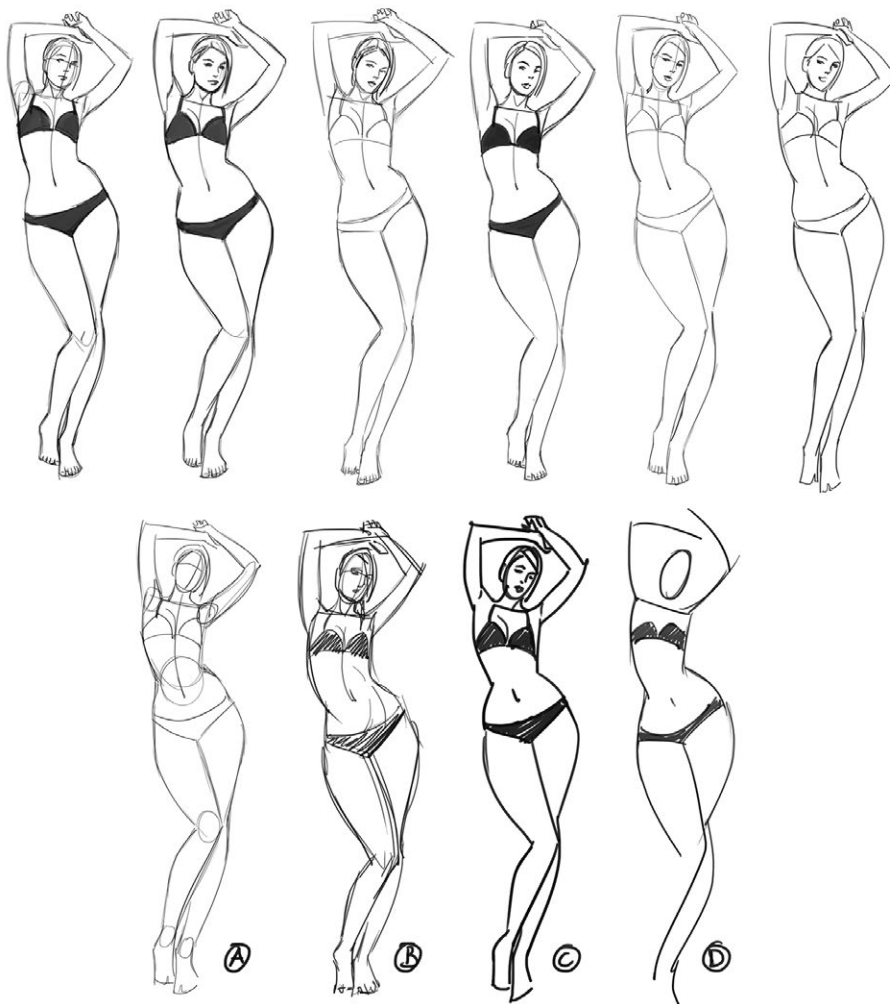
can be found all over the body and requires study to recognize how it works. Disney artists are great examples of illustrators who use this in their work.

D: Simplify the lines — here I'm focused on the flow of each part of the figure, keeping in mind the form. This style is easy to do and will help your drawings look more natural.

FINAL WORDS

In closing, I want to say something on a personal level: *Go easy on yourself!* There is no need to beat yourself up learning this process. You are where you are, and you must accept that and move forward. Art should be enjoyed no matter the skill level and made for fun and the love of it — not for the status or success it can bring you. When creating artwork is only about becoming better, you can easily lose yourself in a cycle of never feeling good enough. Then no matter how talented and successful you become, you realize you could *always* be better.

Comparing yourself to other artists is *very* common and can cause frustration and depression. The only person you should compare yourself to is yourself, and then only to judge how far you've come. I recommend you accept and embrace who you are today.

END OF SAMPLE

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