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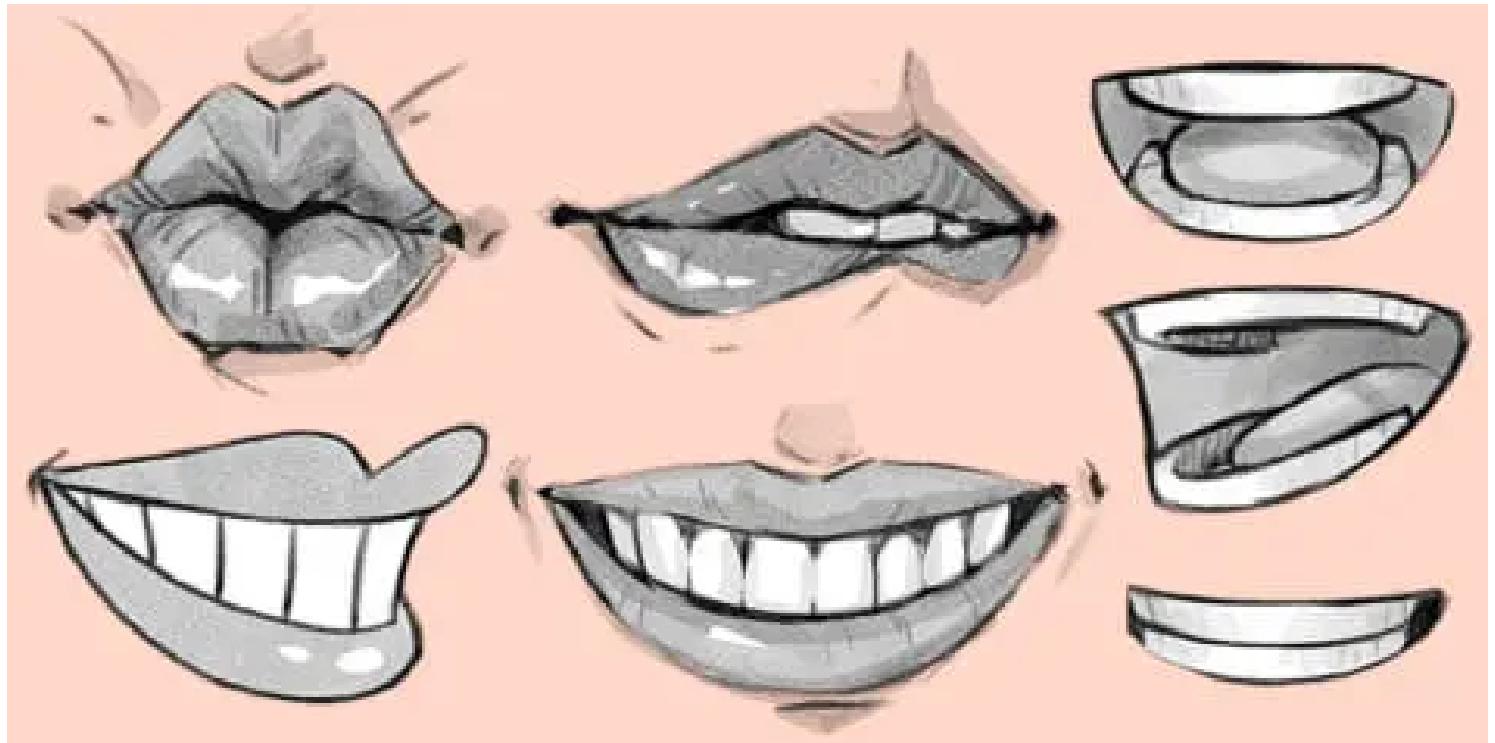
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How to draw a mouth and lips



In this step by step, Raquel Arellano explains how to draw a mouth & lips. Discover various lip shapes & how to draw in different styles!

Anatomy

Character Design

Illustration

How do you draw a mouth with lips?

Let me show you the technique that I use to draw a mouths and lips easily. I will explain the simple structures to understand how to draw different shapes and mouth expressions. And finally, I will integrate them into a colored character illustration.

Note that, in addition to this method, there are many other ways to learn how to draw mouths and lips, but I will explain the method that I have considered to be the easy way to draw mouths.

To make the following illustrations, I have used [Clip Studio Paint EX](#), but any other drawing software can be used.

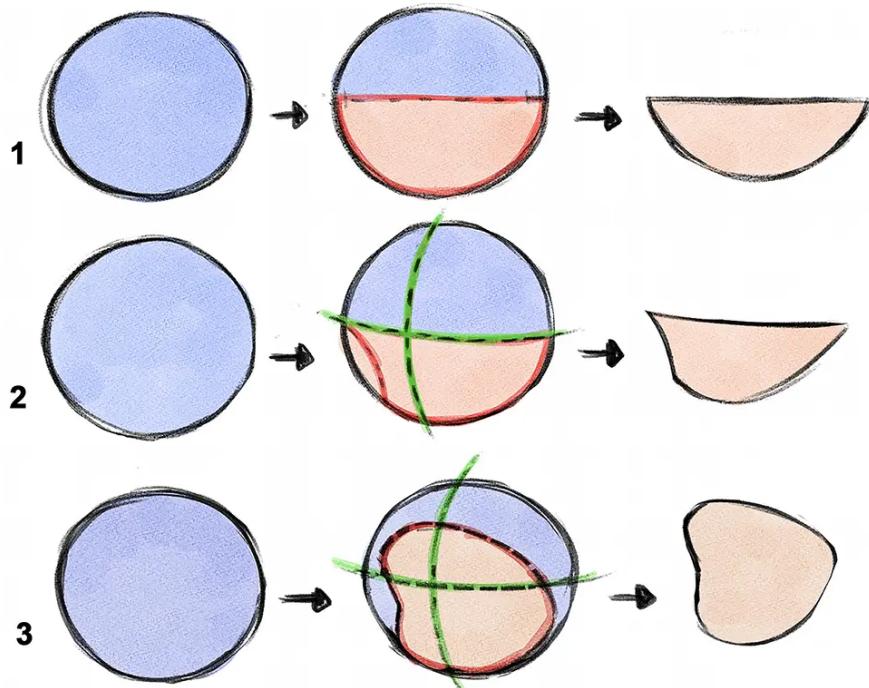
1. How to draw a mouth: Simplified structures

First, let us analyze the mouth without the lips, to better see its structure.

To understand the mouth, think about a **sphere**. The (open) mouth would be half of it. This is a simple exercise that shows that the mouth is not exclusively a straight line when it is closed and a crescent when it is open, and that it has its own **volume**.

In this example, you can see a mouth in its simplest form without perspective (image 1) and how it can be imagined with $\frac{3}{4}$ perspective (images 2 and 3).

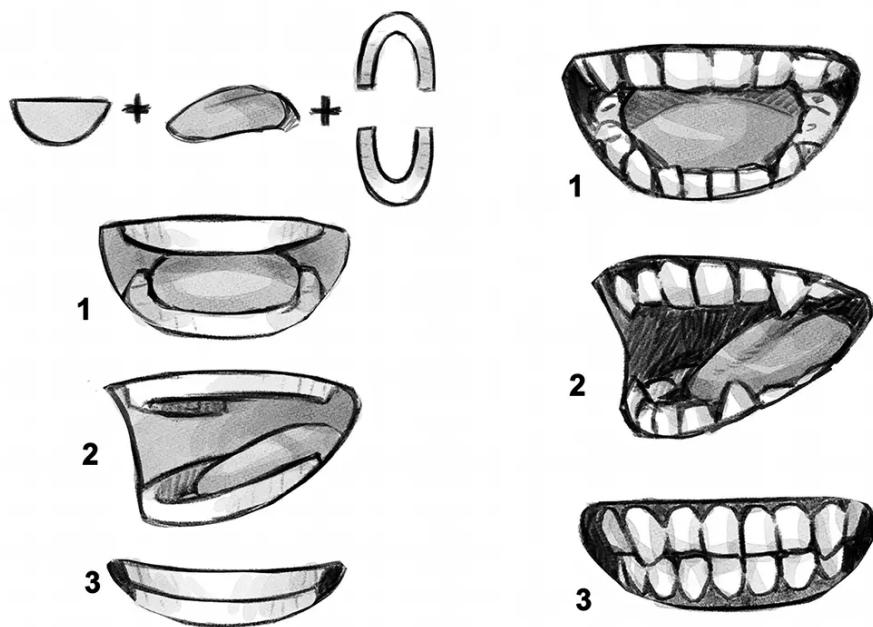
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2. How to draw the mouth: Key elements

Now that we recognize that the mouth has volume, we must also take into account that it also has depth. It is a cavity, and contains important elements you need to think about when you draw a mouth: the **teeth**, the **tongue**, and even the **gums**. You can even go further into other elements such as the uvula, the palate, all the different teeth, the tonsils, etc. But let us focus on those three basic features.

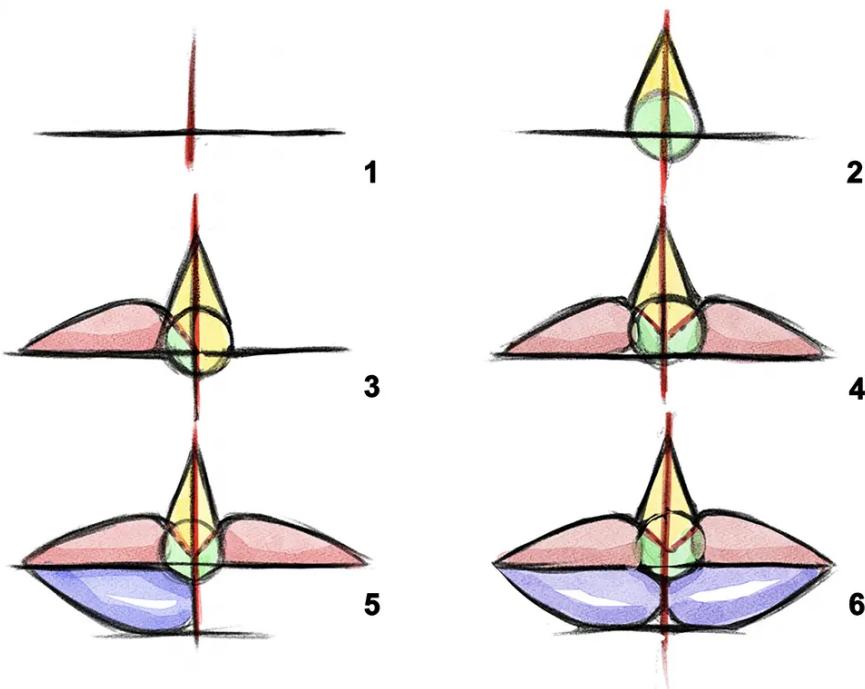
On the left is an example of how the outlined elements that make up the mouth can be represented and on the right, is a more detailed interpretation of them.



3. How to draw lips: Simplified structures

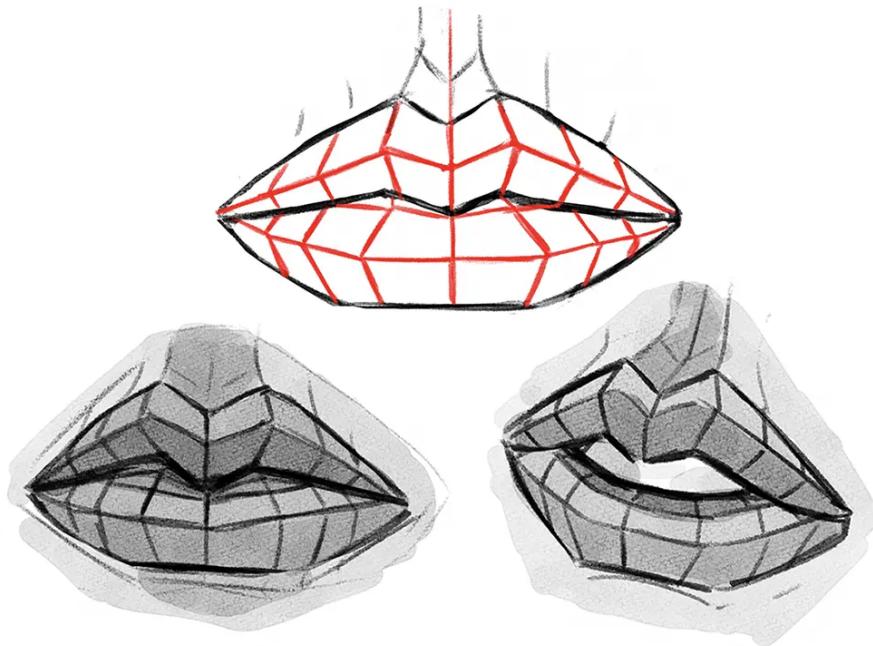
Lips are essential muscles that connect to the mouth. To understand them better let's try to represent them separately from the mouth and in their simplest forms.

Here we can see how to draw lips step by step using rounded, curved, and elongated structures, starting from a straight line and without perspective. Keep in mind that the thickness, width, and length of the lips will depend a lot on the type of character we want to design.



If it is difficult to imagine the mouth with rounded and curved structures, it is advisable to start by drawing flattened areas (as if it were *low poly!*).

In this way, we can better grasp which areas have the most volume.



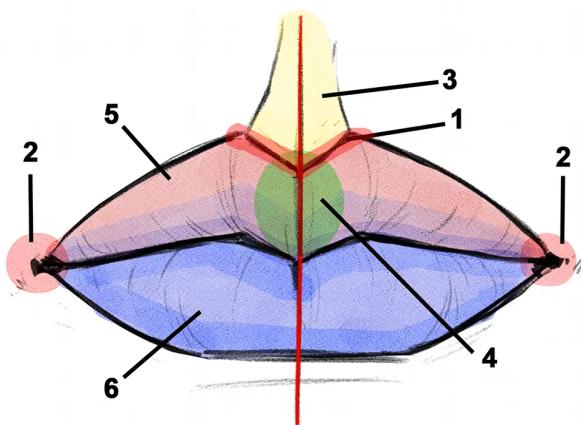
4. Creating your mouth drawing: sketch

Key structures

As you can see there are also key elements in the lips that will help us better understand and design them.

We must study the **Cupid's bow** (1), the **commissures** (or where the top and bottom lips connect) (2), the **philtrum** (the skin connecting the nose to the mouth) (3), the central **tuberles** (The bottom of the lip under the cupid's bow) (4), the **upper lip** (5), and the **lower lip** (6).

Varying these elements will then produce several lip designs.

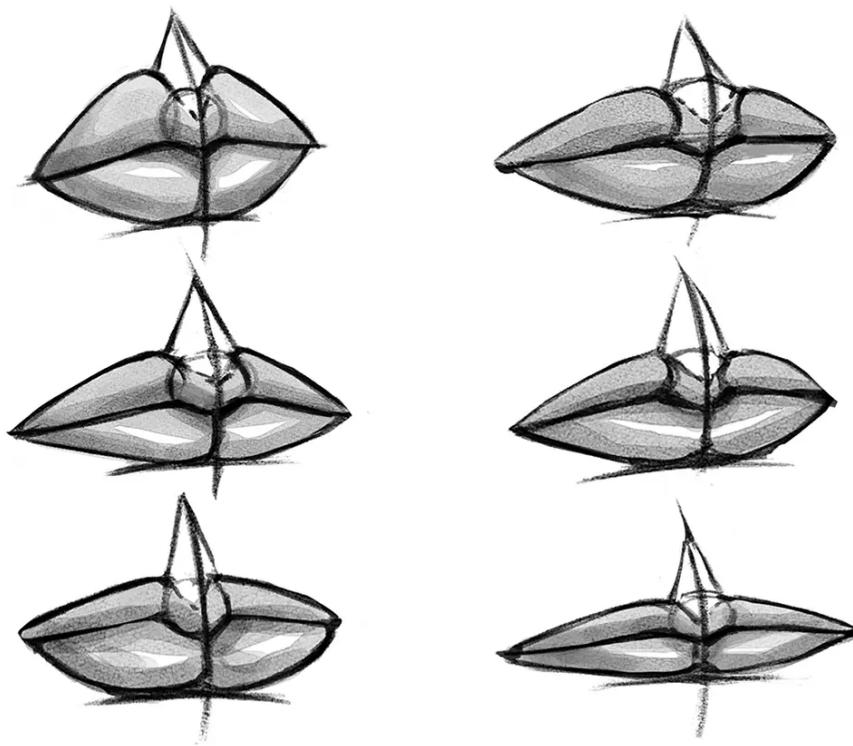


5. Different mouth and lip shapes

Making different lips and mouths is a matter of trying variations in the thickness of the lower or upper lips. We can mark the Cupid's bow, widen or narrow the mouth, etc. It is interesting to keep trying and see what works best for our character.

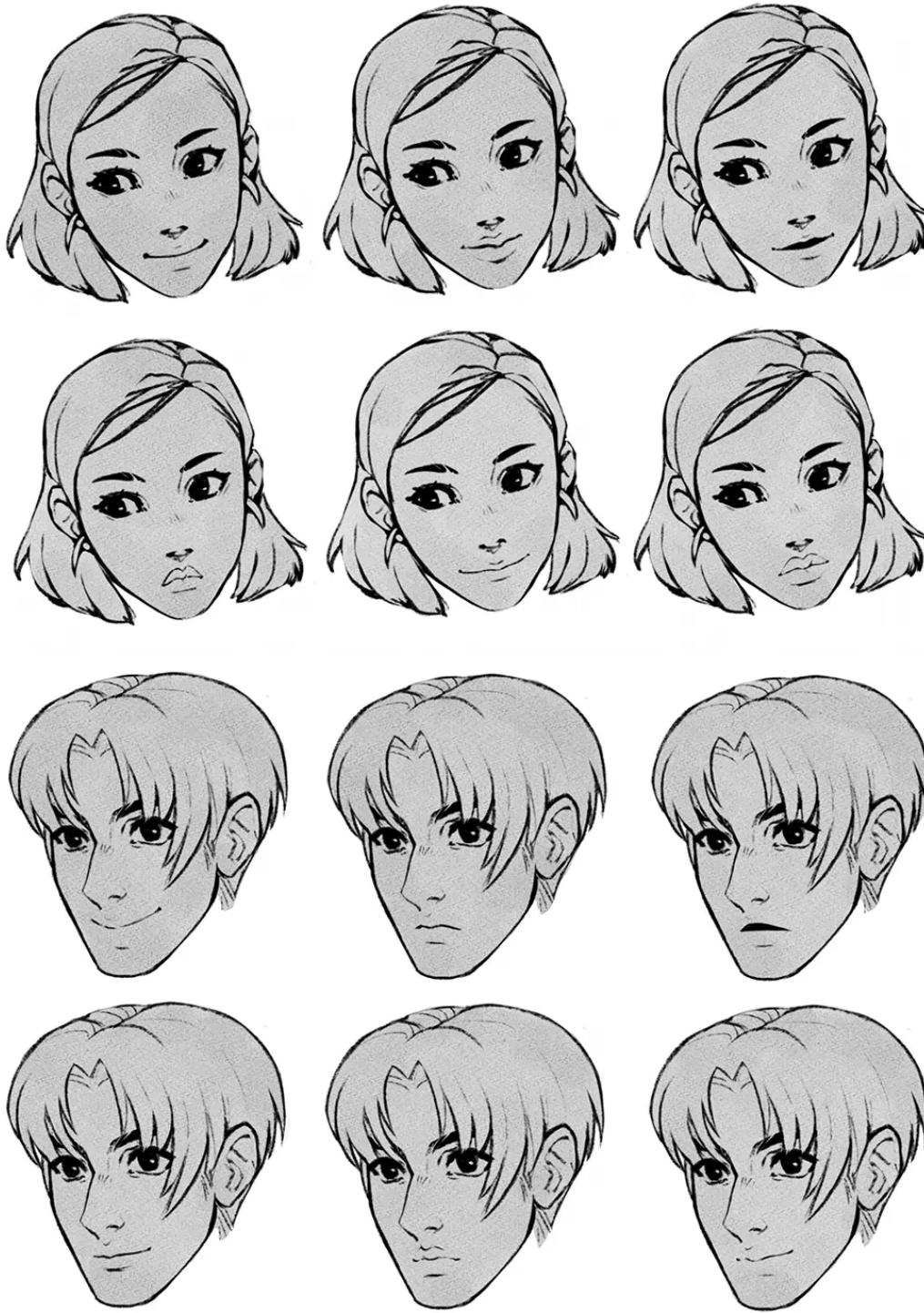
A small mouth is usually related to a small or shy character, and a large mouth is for more expressive characters. Thin lips may define a masculine character and thick lips a feminine one, although there can always be exceptions.

Check some examples of lips and mouth variations below.



6. Different shapes of lips and mouths on the same face

Knowing that we can vary the size of the mouth and lips, it is interesting to try different styles on the same character, to see which one fits better.

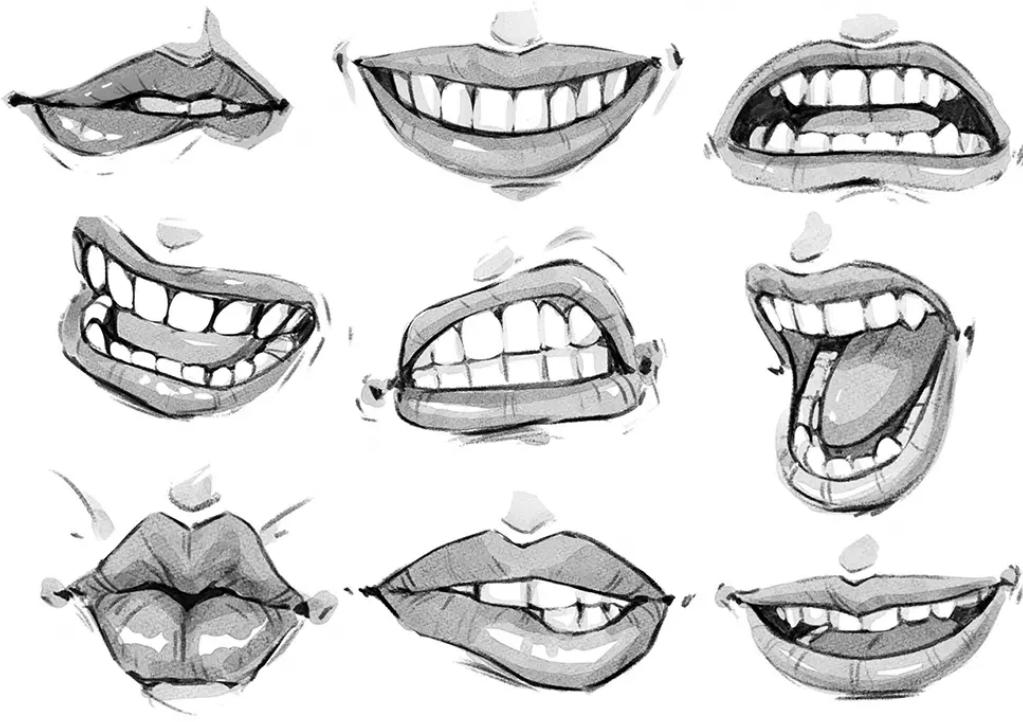


7. How to draw expressions and emotions

There are many important elements on a face that help define expressions. Together with other elements such as the eyes, eyebrows, **the mouth and lips are key elements that build different facial expressions**,

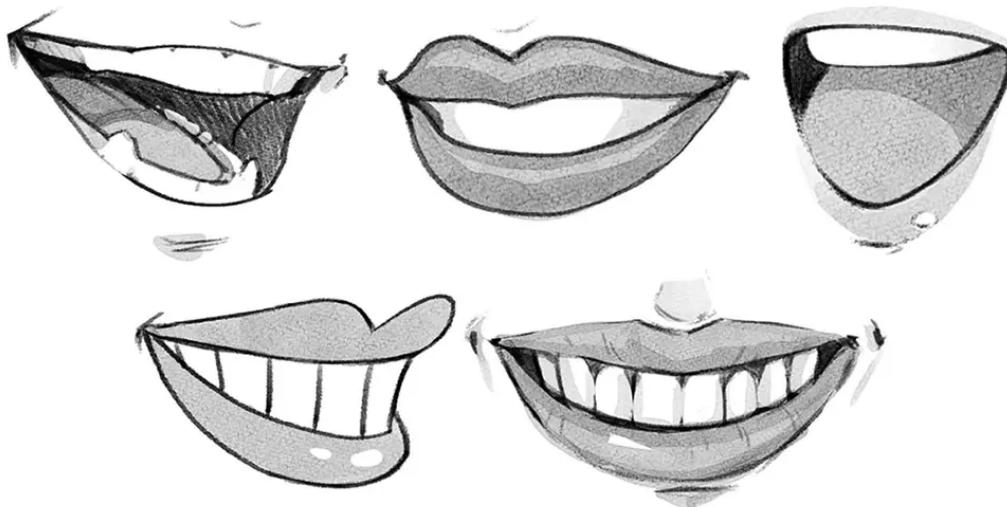
Take into account which areas of the mouth must be modified to represent one expression or another. To convey joy, the corners rise, to convey sadness, we draw them lower than usual. For this reason to convey anger, we show an open mouth (screaming) complete with teeth and gums.

The lips can help transmit different expressions and emotions: challenging, fearful, sensual, etc. The next image shows some examples of expressive mouths and lips:



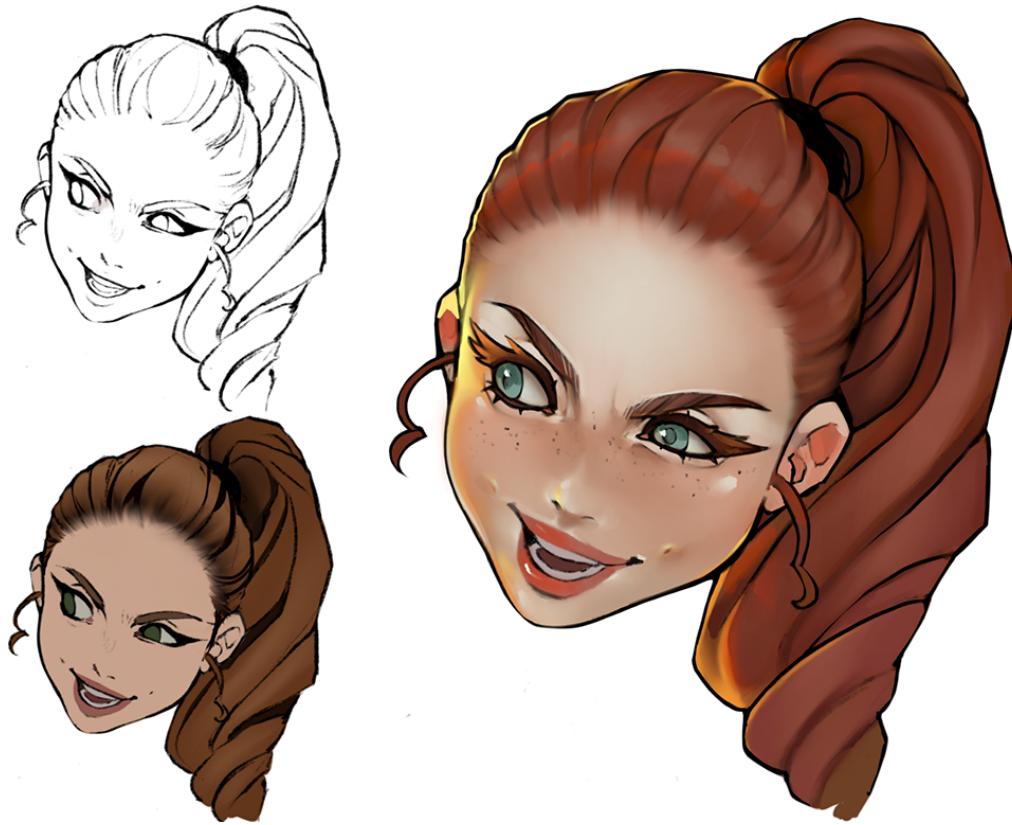
8. Draw mouths and lips in different styles

Once we know the basics, it is time to draw them in different styles to see which one we feel the most comfortable with. In the following image, I wanted to show anime, realistic, cartoon, Disney, and my own style.



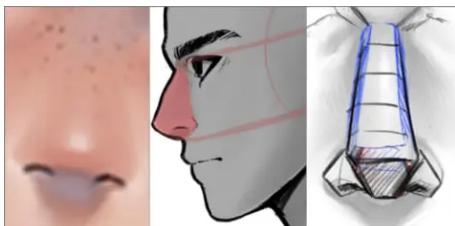
9. Mouth and lips in an illustration

Finally, I would like to show how to draw a mouth on a face from sketch to the final color. I wanted to create a slight expression and keep the image dynamic while trying to get out of my comfort zone. You can see it's fun and beneficial to design characters with exaggerated and/or marked expressions.



You can learn more about how to draw a nose here.

How to Draw a Nose



About the artist

Raquel Arellano is a digital and traditional illustrator and concept artist from Barcelona. She has a background in teaching videogames and currently works at a university as an art teacher for the subject. She works for indie role-playing companies, creates commissions for individuals, and also writes tutorials for various companies. She shows her art processes on Twitch, and you can see more of her illustrations on Instagram, Twitter, or ArtStation.

https://www.instagram.com/rarellano_art/

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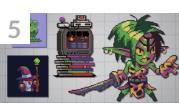
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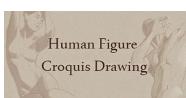
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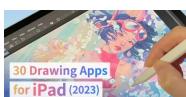
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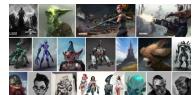
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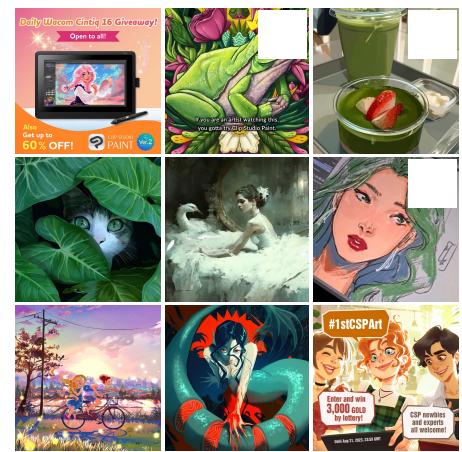
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