Video

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Lecture

0:00 / 3:04 1.25x

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Let's talk about visualizations.

People are easily able to at a glance understand differences in

things like colors and shapes, links and orientation,

all of this due to our highly specialized visual cortices.

We perceive these differences so naturally it's almost reflexive.

Effective visualizations also

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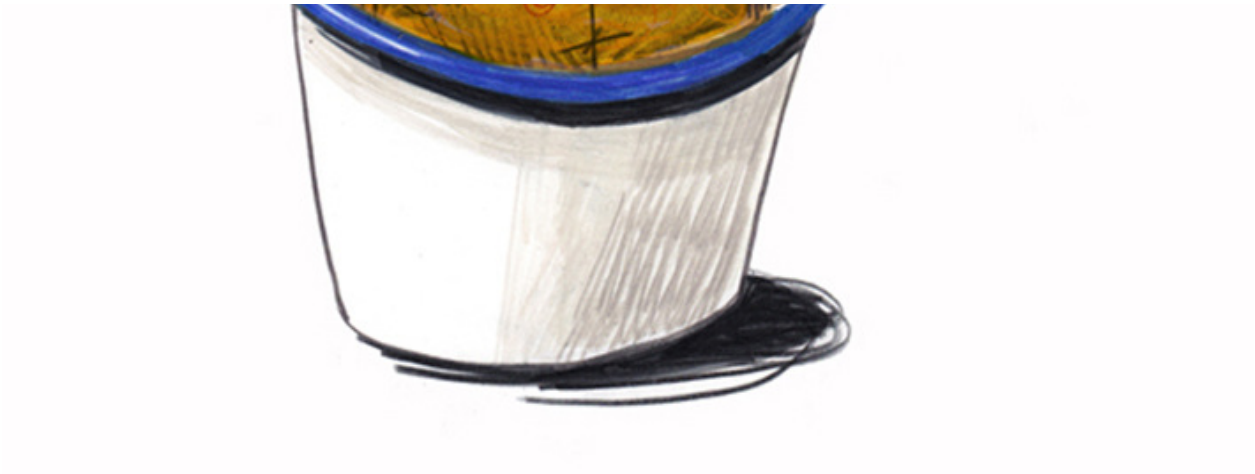
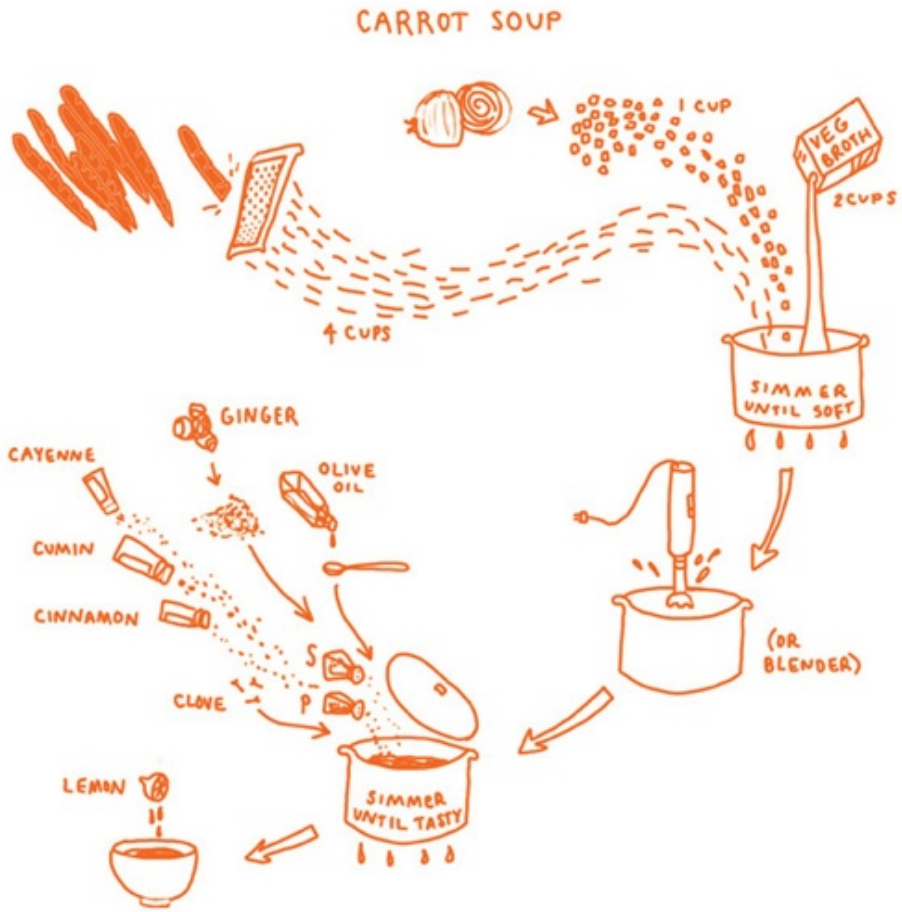
Visualizations

One of the most rewarding and useful things you can do to understand your data is to visualize it in a pictorial format. Visualizing your data allows you to interact with it, analyze it in a straightforward way, and identify new patterns, making your would-be complex data more accessible and understandable. The way our brains processes visuals like shapes, colors, and lengths makes looking at charts and graphs more intuitive for us than poring over spreadsheets. Author and illustrator Felicita Sala demonstrates this masterfully:



Similarly, *Picture Cook: See, Make, Eat by Katie Shelly* (Ulysses Press, 2013):



Besides making your mouth water, in a single image, these visualizations convey the ingredients needed, the amount, and the order they're to be introduced into the recipe. Effective visualization keys into your ability to understand graphical information using passive brain power. If you're going to spend hours, days, and weeks doing analysis of your data, you owe it to yourself not to fall flat on your face when it comes to its presentation.

MatPlotLib

If, like me, you aren't an award winning photographer or master graphics artist, MatPlotLib is here to help. MatPlotLib is a Python data visualization tool that supports 2D and 3D rendering, animation, UI design, event handling, and more. It only requires you pass in your data and some display parameters and then takes care of all of the rasterization implementation details. For the most part, you will be interacting with MatPlotLib's Pyplot functionality through a Pandas series or dataframe's `.plot` namespace. Pyplot is a collection of command-style methods that essentially make MatPlotLib's charting methods feel like MATLAB.

English