

# DESIGN YOUR OWN **ANIME AND MANGA CHARACTERS**



LEARN ANATOMY,  
POSES,  
EXPRESSIONS,  
COSTUMES, AND  
MORE

STEP-BY-STEP LESSONS FOR CREATING  
AND DRAWING UNIQUE CHARACTERS

TB CHOI

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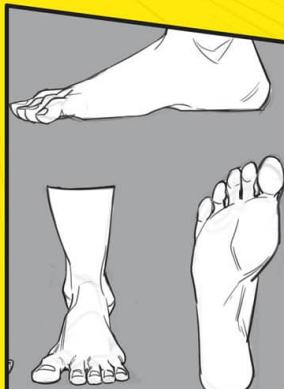
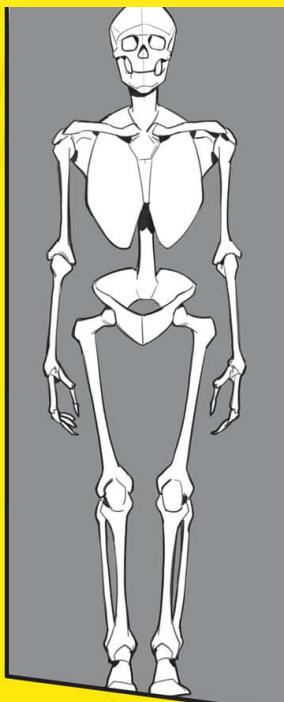
# INTRODUCTION

I work in the concept art industry as a character designer and art educator. *Design Your Own Anime and Manga Characters* is written not only for those who approach art as a hobby, but also for those who are pursuing art professionally.

This book lays out the basic fundamentals and foundations while also offering tips for those who want to take it to the next level. At its core, *Design Your Own Anime and Manga Characters* is about creating characters step by step, with suggestions throughout for readers to try many things. Ultimately, I want readers to create characters in their own way, and not just copy the examples in this book.

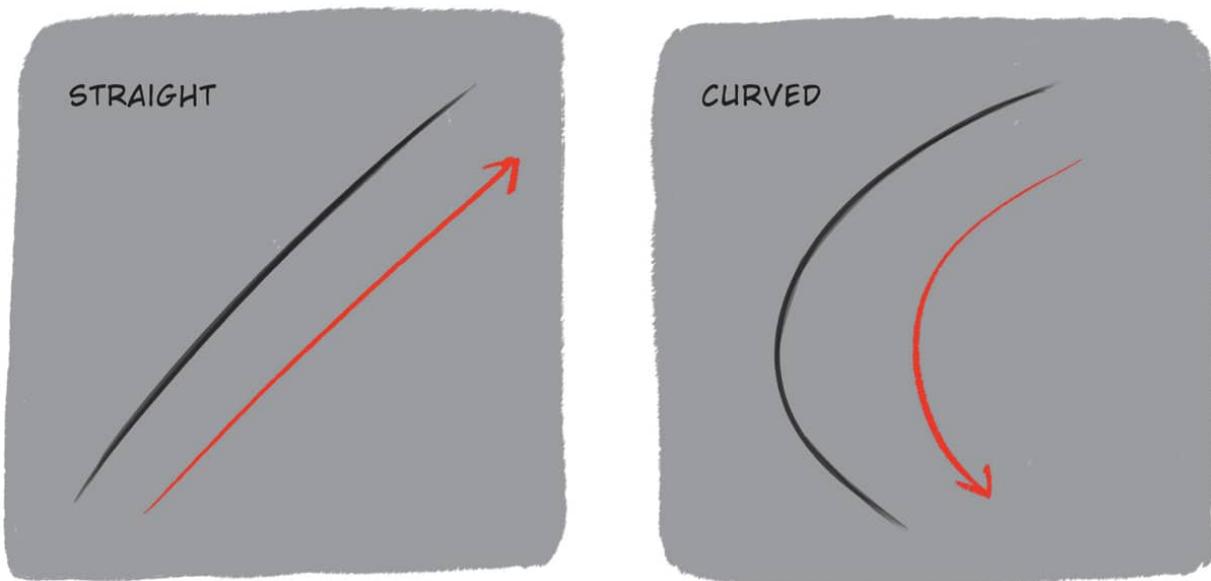
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## CONSTRUCTING A CHARACTER



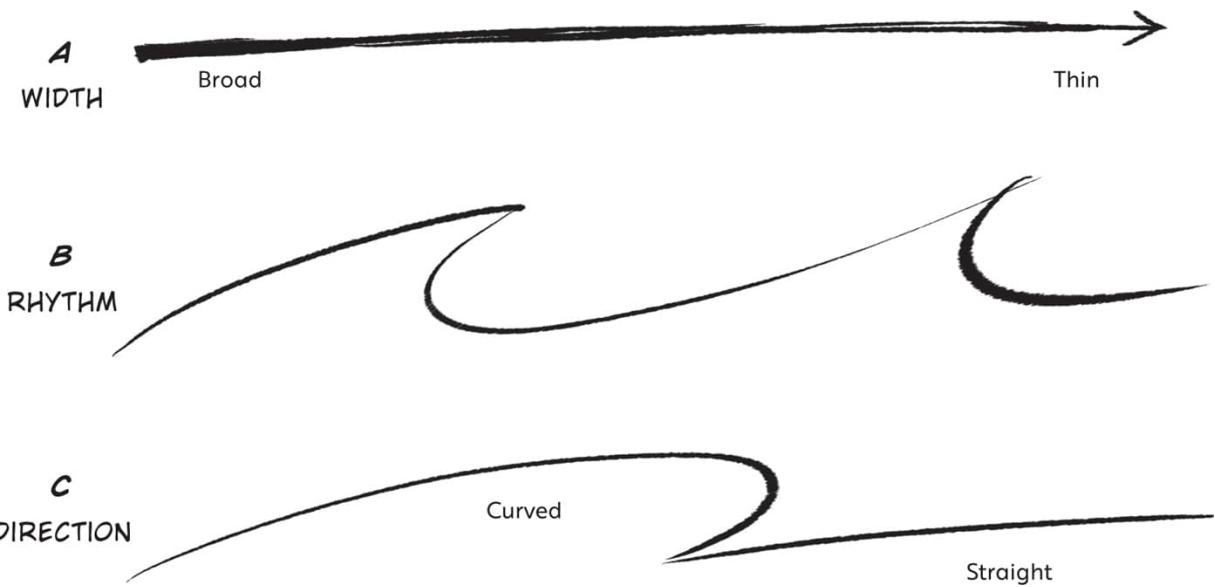
## THE BASICS OF LINE

Here's an overview of the basic use and characteristics of drawing lines for anime and manga.



The two types of line can vary in width, rhythm, and direction.

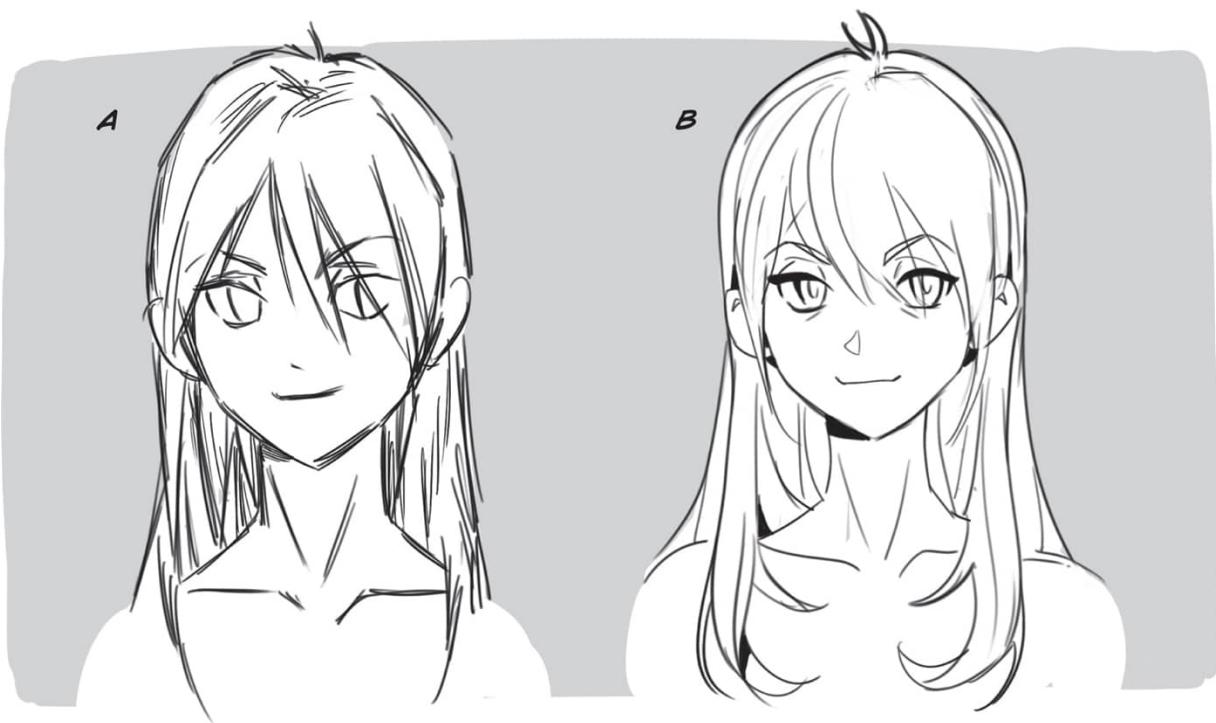
Follow along and practice these examples.



Compared with nondynamic lines (A), varied lines (B) are more three-dimensional and better at conveying information.

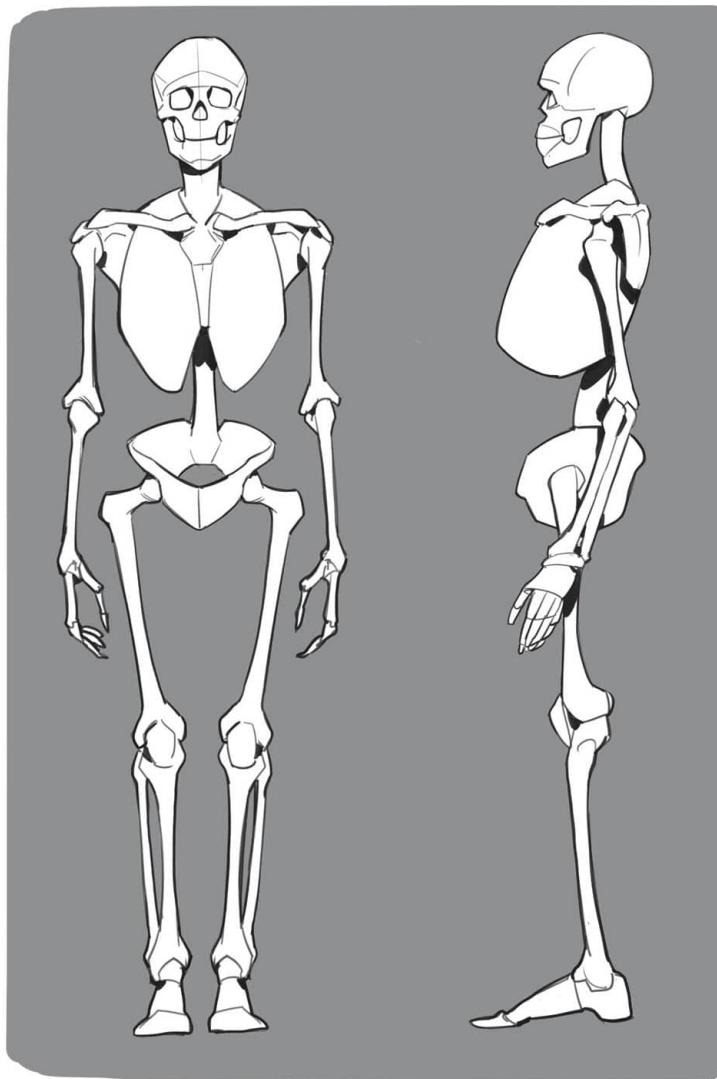


Imprecise, jagged lines (A) aren't recommended for beginners. Instead, clean up the lines as you work (B). The longer and fewer lines there are, the easier they are to modify and complete.



## HUMAN SKELETON

When drawing human figures, the skeleton is important because, besides flesh and muscles, bones are also noticeable in some parts of the body.

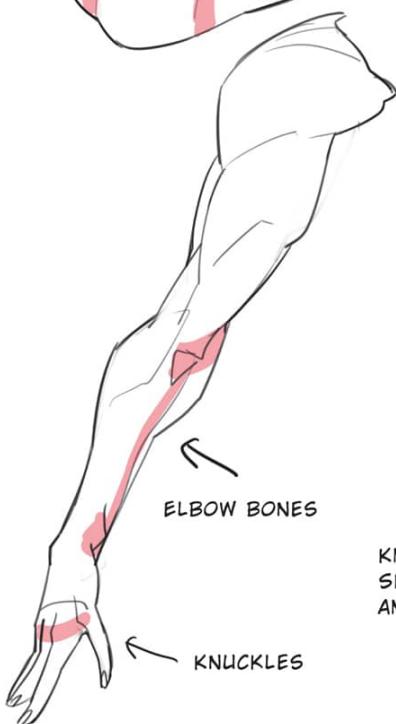
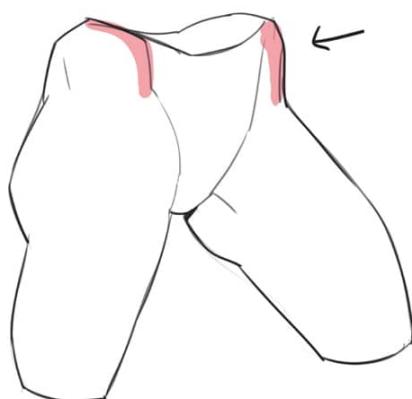


## Remember these key parts!

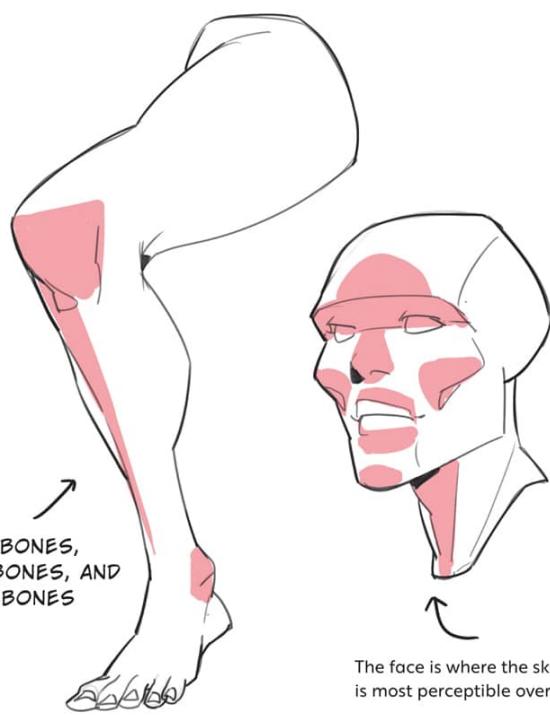
Clavicle and neck bones  
are noticeable.



The anterior parts of the  
pelvis bones are noticeable.



KNEE BONES,  
SHINBONES, AND  
ANKLEBONES

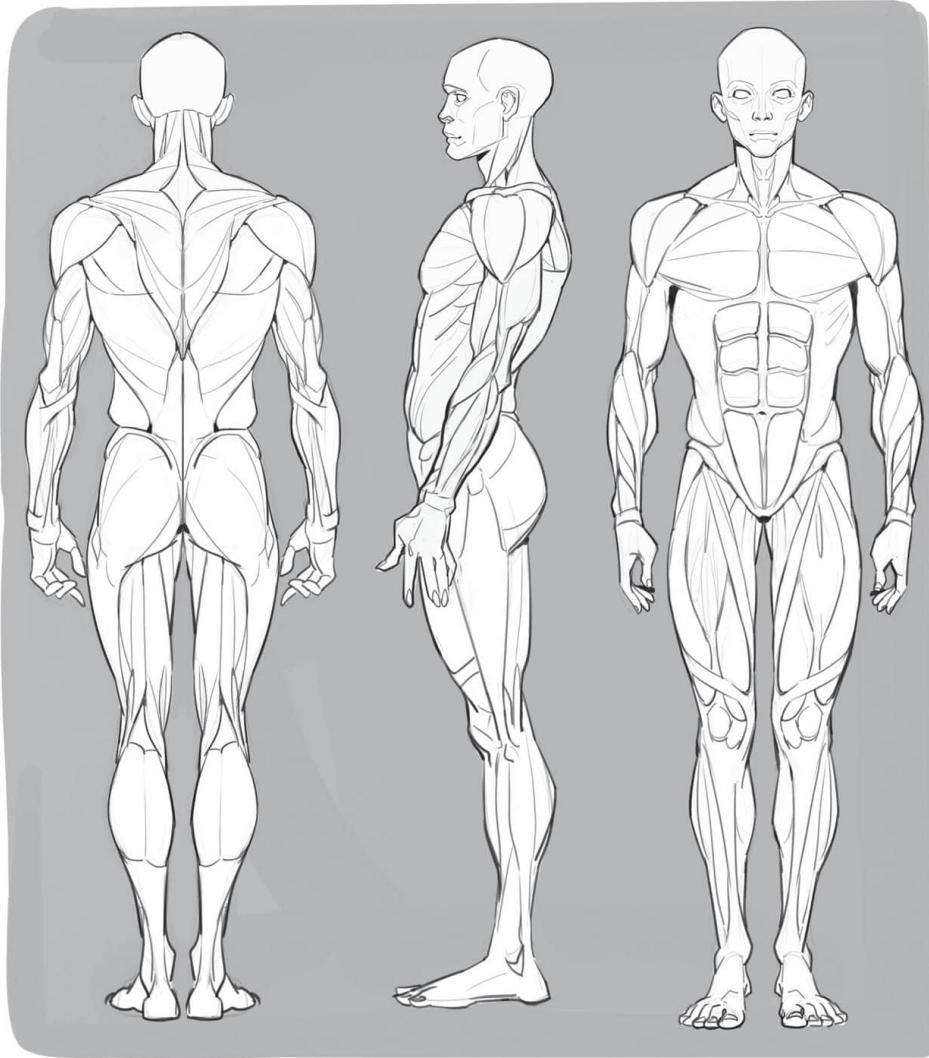


The face is where the skeleton  
is most perceptible overall.

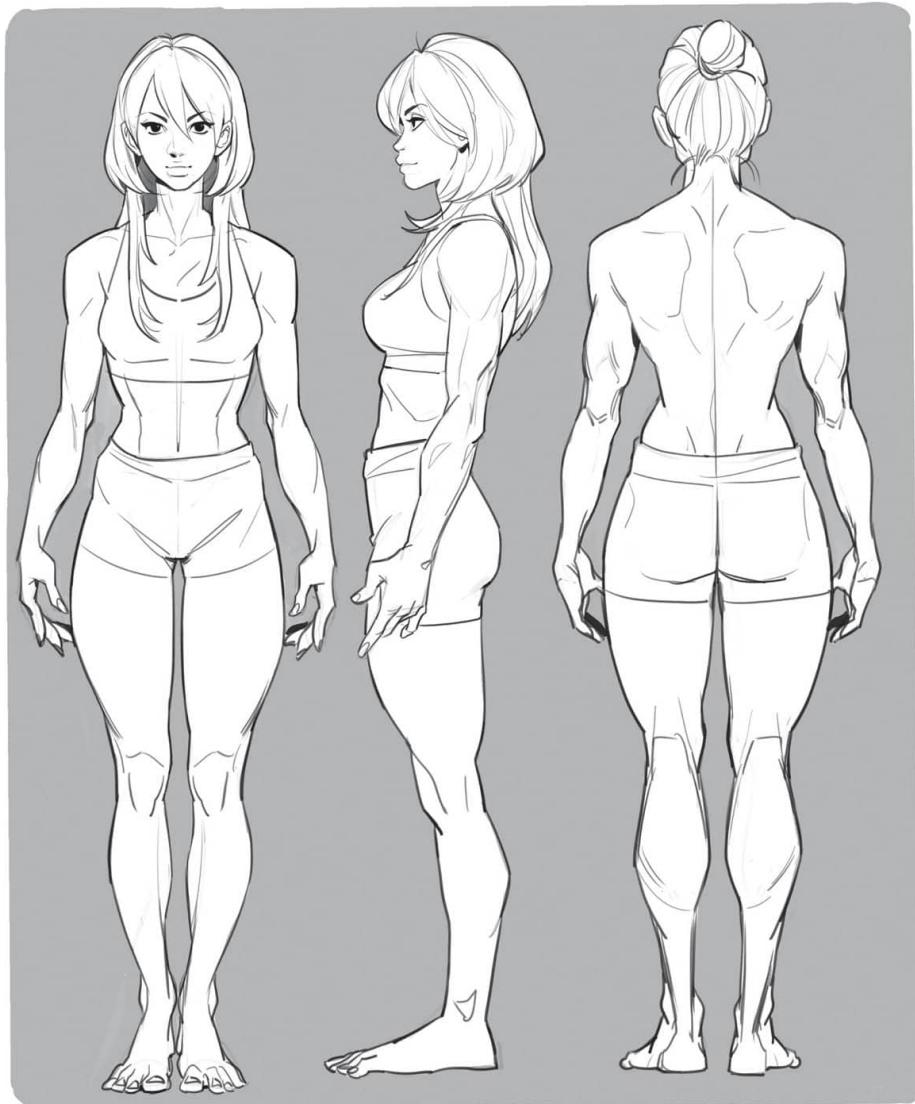


## MUSCLES

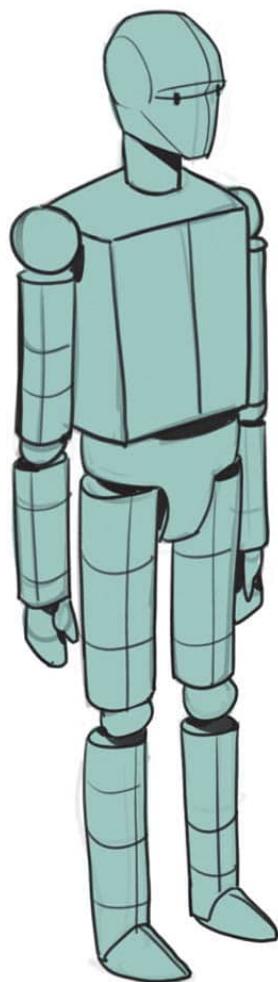
Human muscles are complex. If you're just learning to draw, focus on the shape of the body and the larger muscles.



These drawings show a layer of human skin over the muscles. The muscles you can see on the opposite page aren't all visible under the skin because our bodies can be divided into visible and invisible muscles.

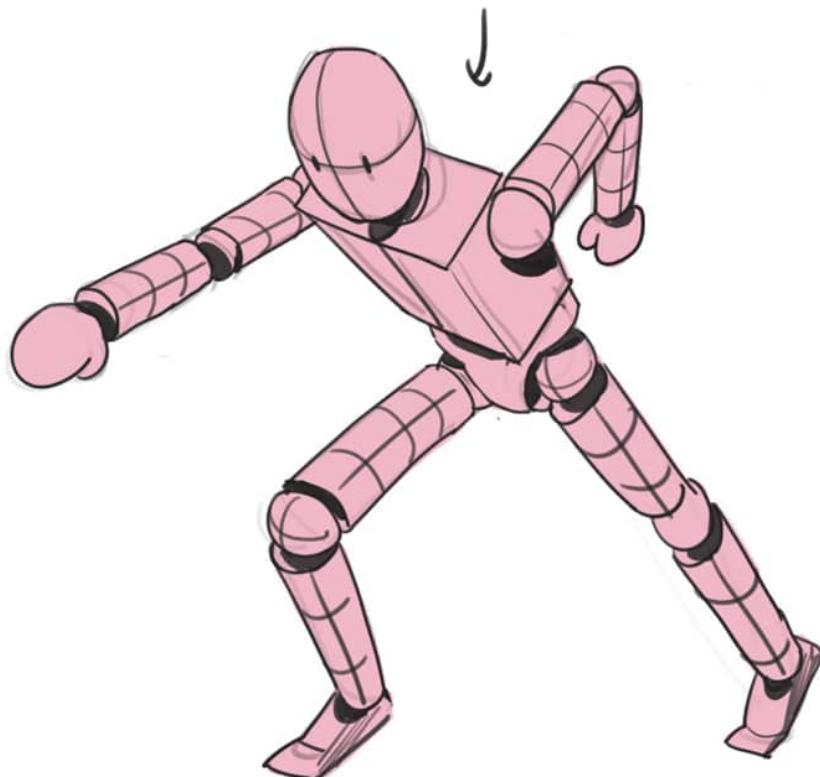


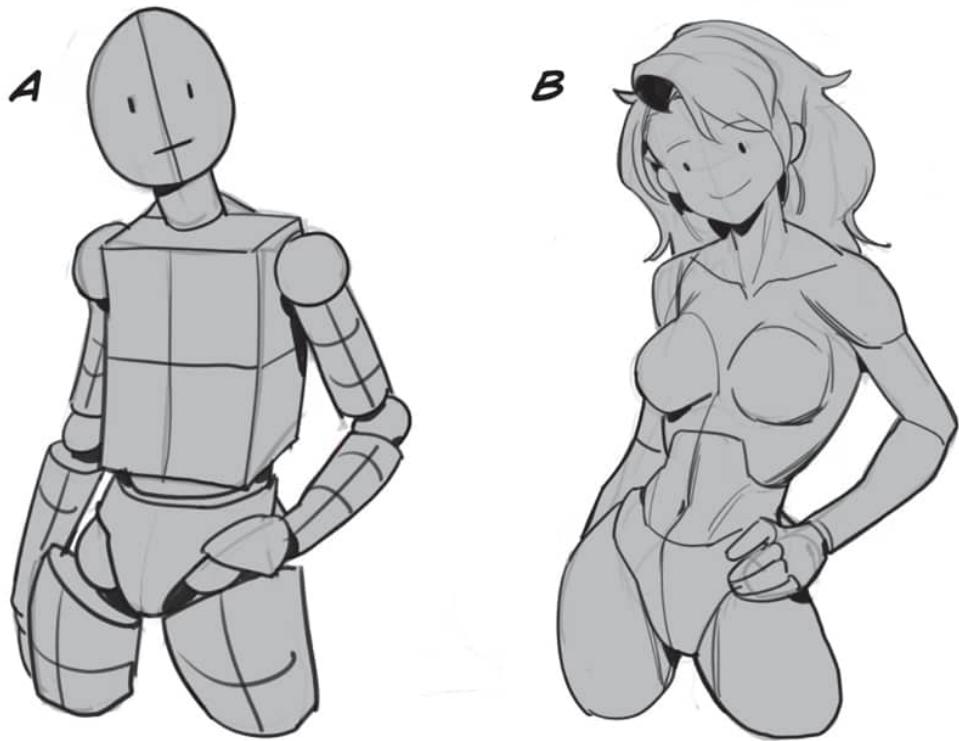
## SIMPLIFICATION AND GEOMETRIZATION



Since the form shown on [this page](#) may be too complex, here's a simpler form.

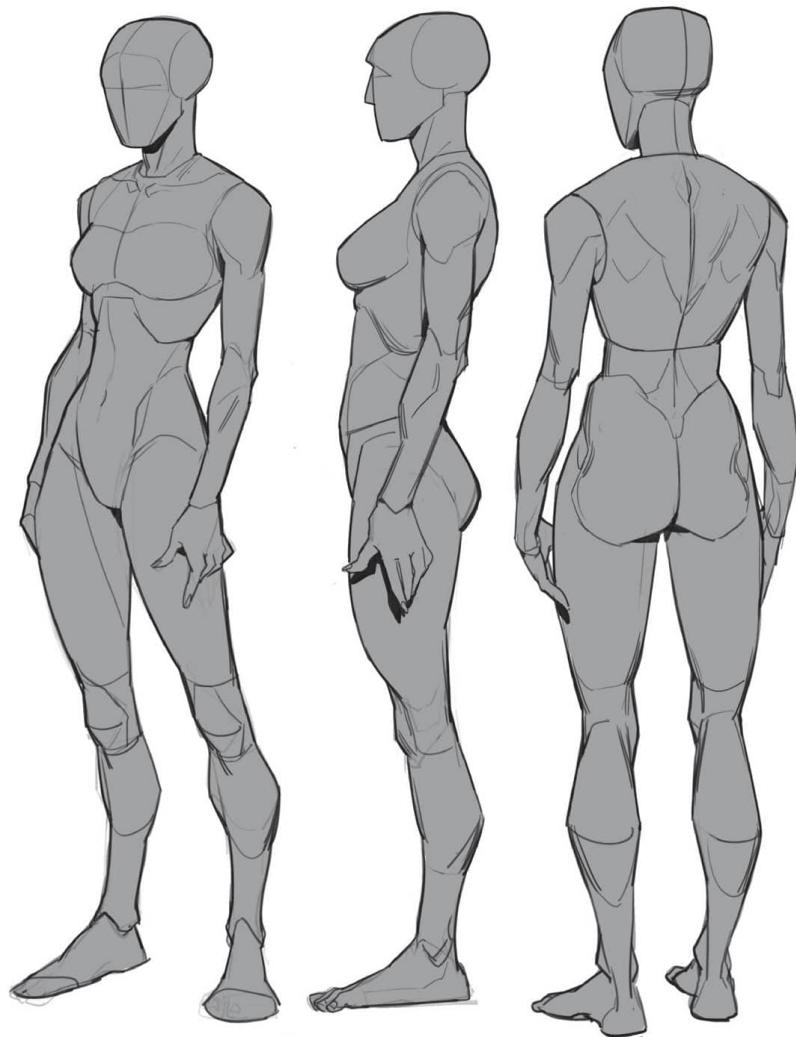
Its pose can easily be  
changed, like this.





Except for the gestures and joints, it might be hard to connect the process of going from A to B.

If you've just begun your drawing journey, know that one day you'll be drawing the complex muscles seen on the previous spread. Starting with figures that are more efficient for drawing characters will make it easier for the future.

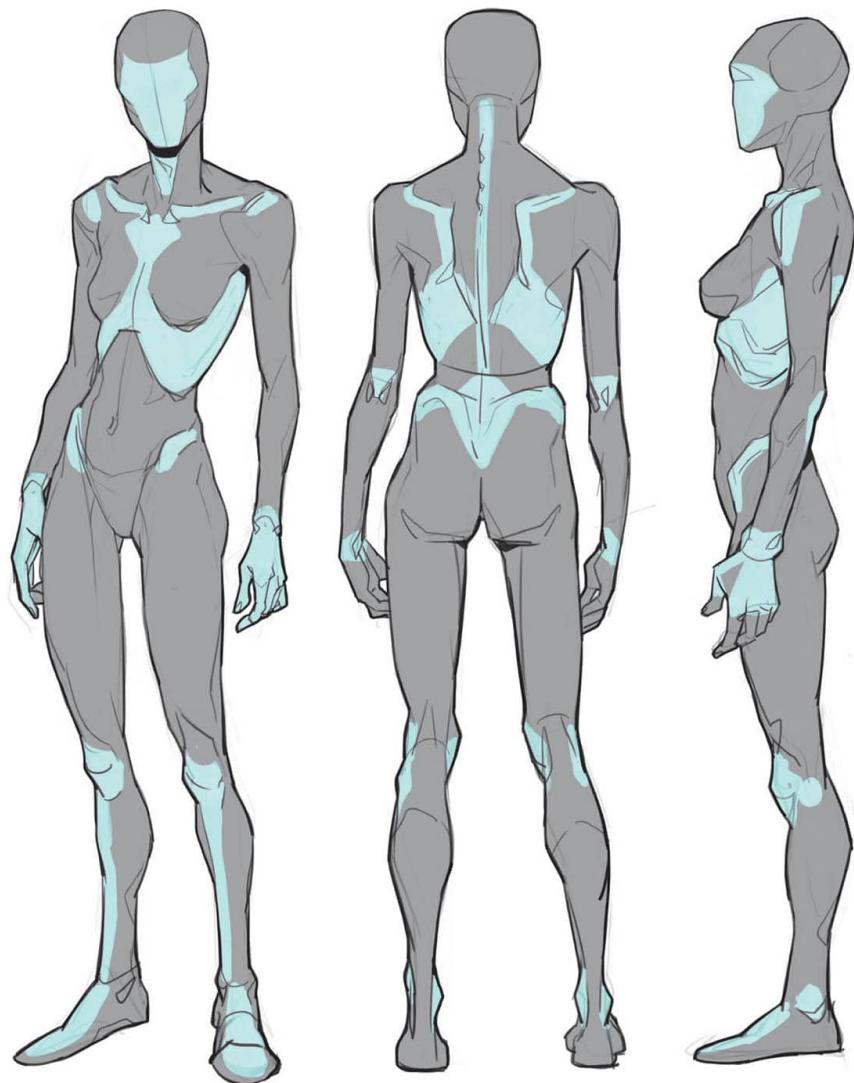


This is a model with a simplified skeleton and muscles. It's a model that I also use for my work. Even when adding more details and anatomical elements, you can easily add or subtract from this form.

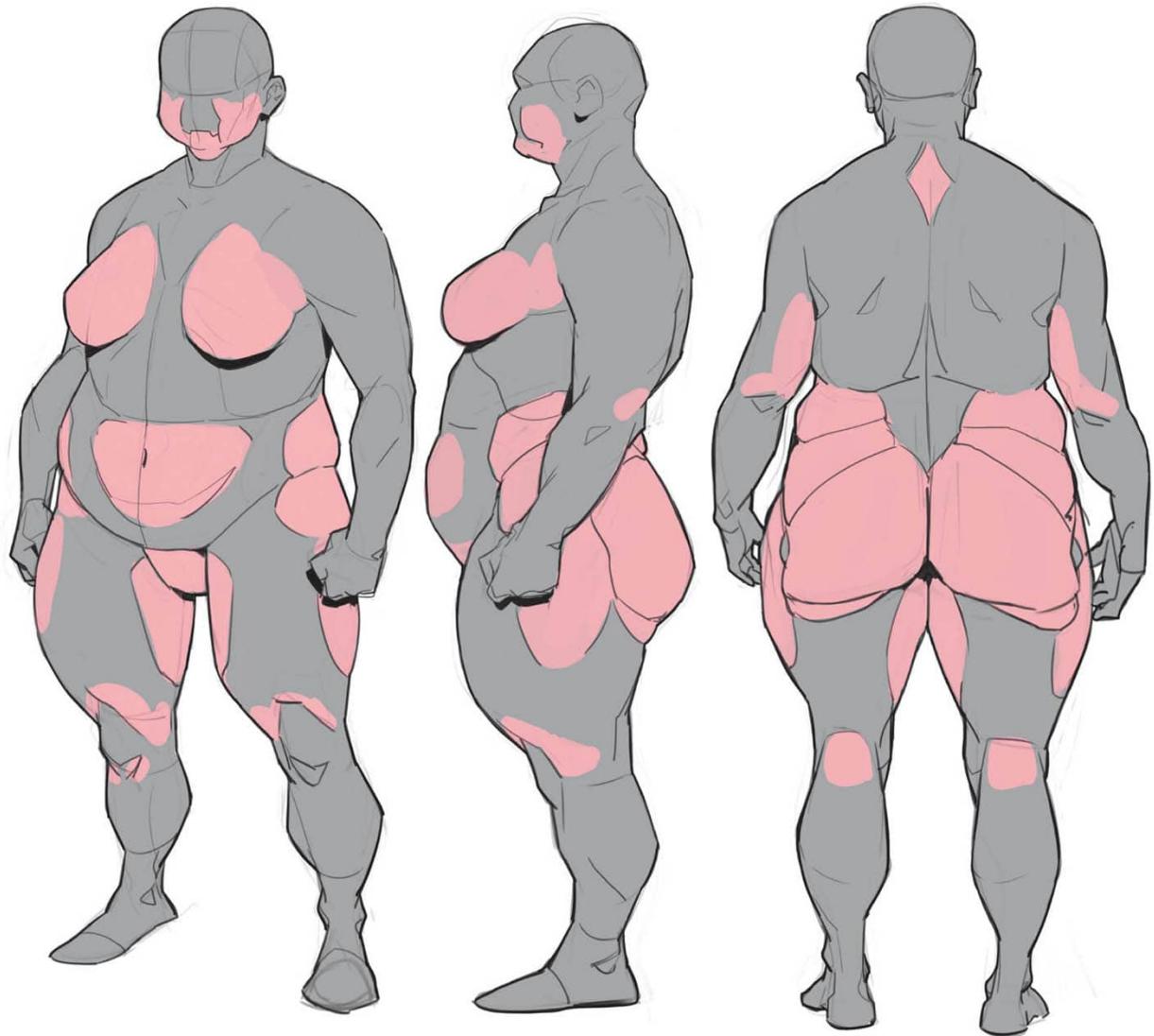
This form will be used frequently throughout this book. Please draw along.

## BONE AND FAT

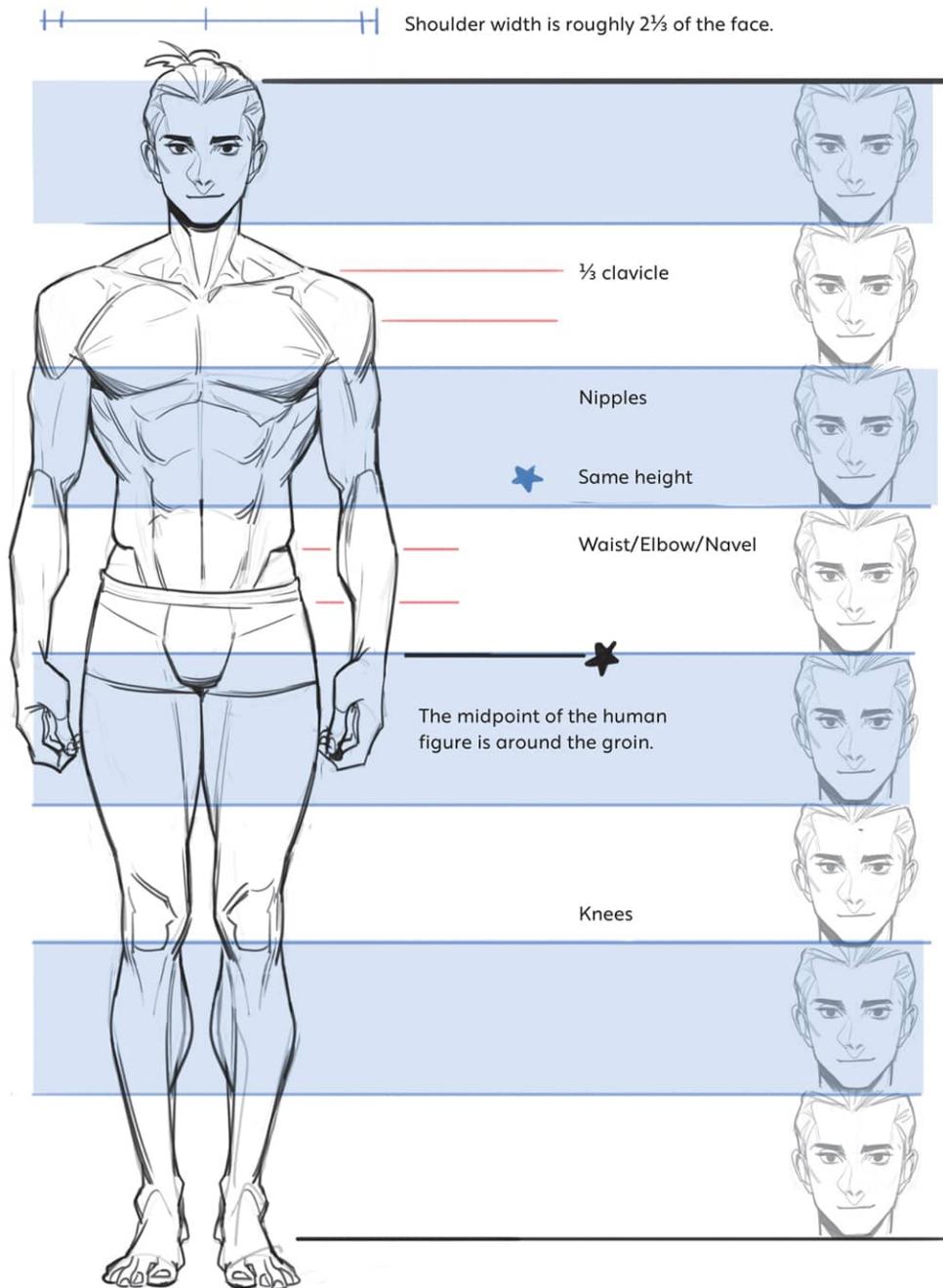
In people with less fat and muscle, bone shapes are more pronounced. The areas marked in light blue have pronounced bones.



In people with excess fat and fewer muscles, bone shapes may not be as pronounced. The parts where bones aren't pronounced are marked in pink.



# BASIC HUMAN PROPORTIONS

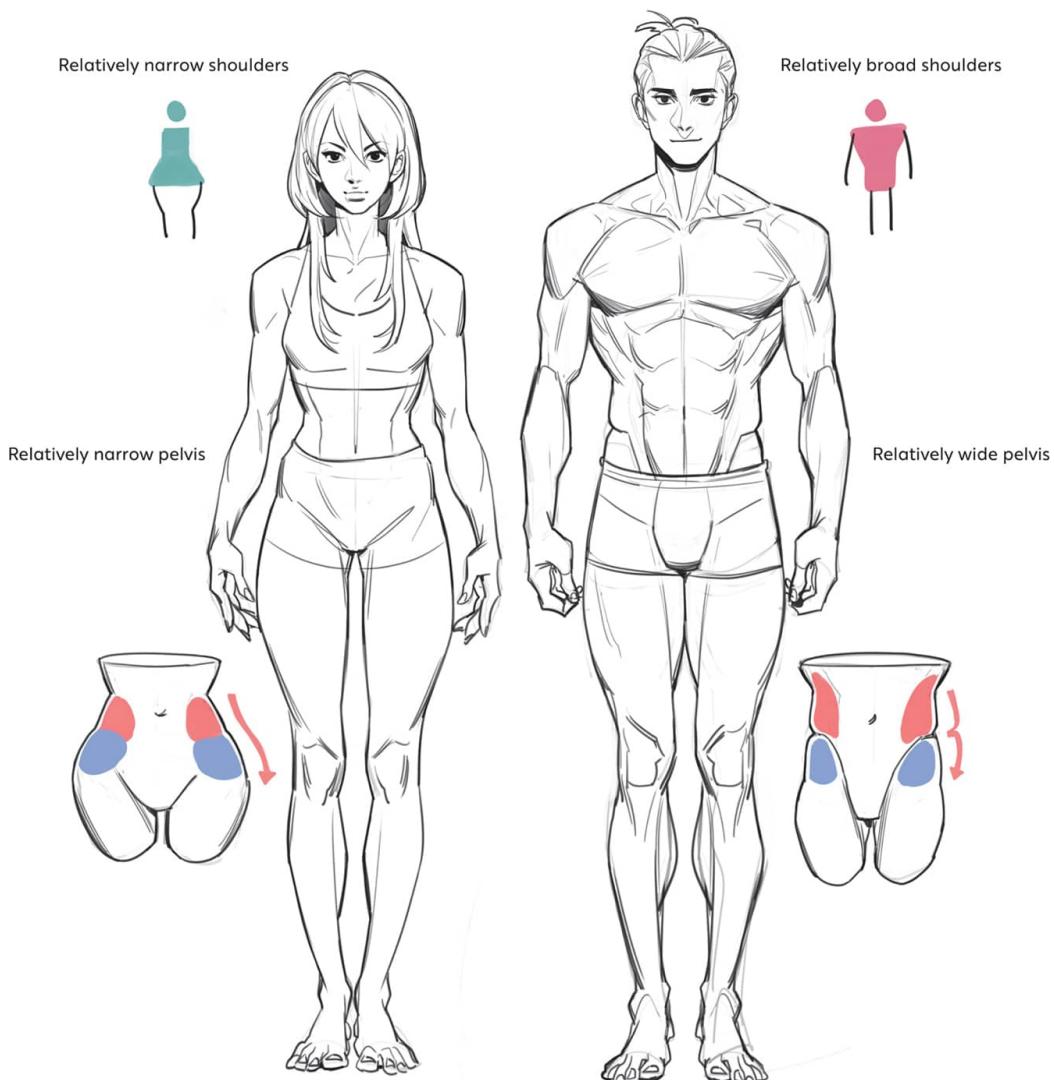


If you have difficulty with human proportion, you can use the reference above. But only use it as a general guide, since not

**everyone has the same proportions.**

## FEMALE AND MALE

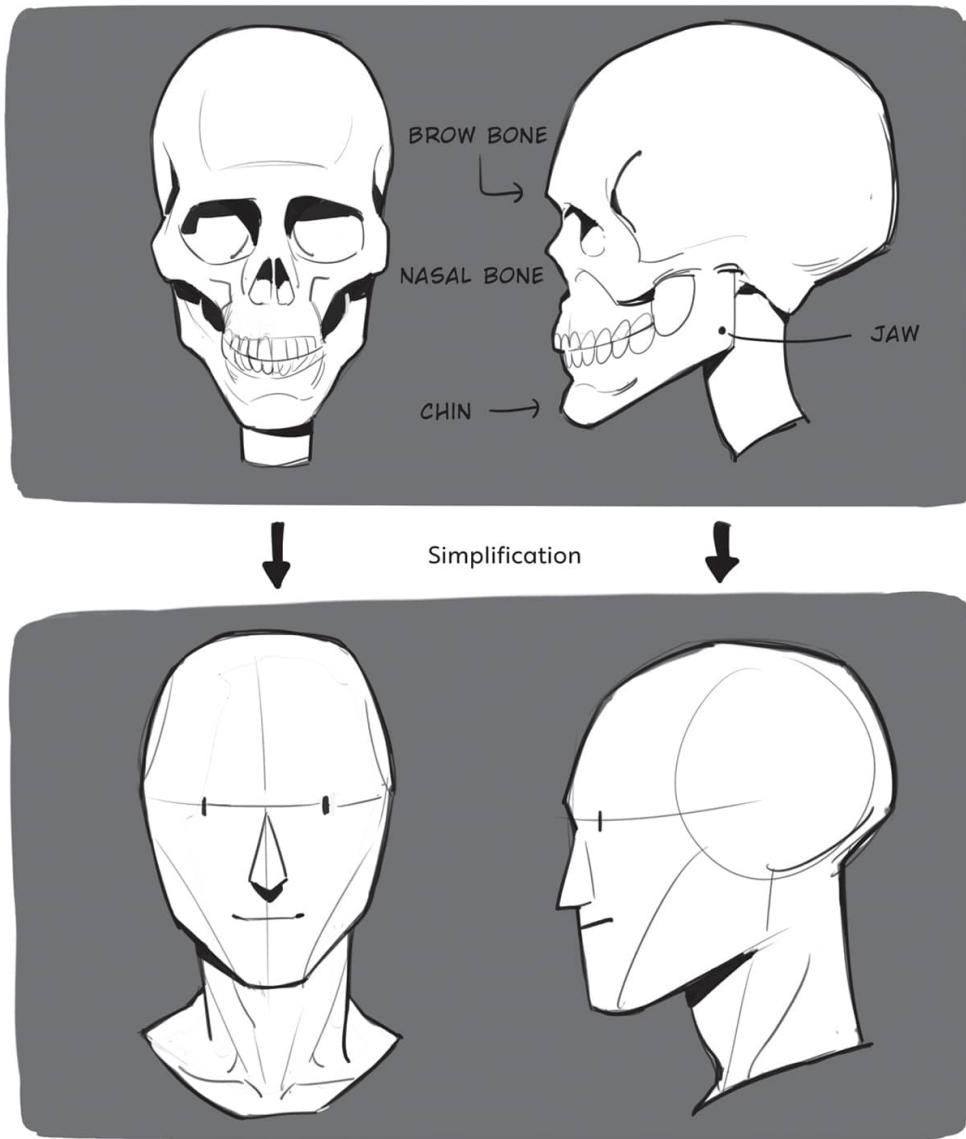
The biggest difference between females and males is the proportions of the pelvis.



The proportions may vary, depending on the individual. Always draw from observation, regardless of gender, in order to build more diverse character shapes.

# SKULL

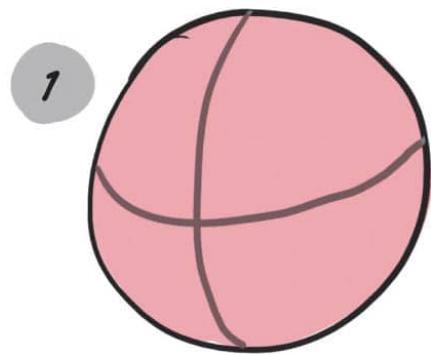
The face is one of the parts of the body that's most affected by the skeleton.



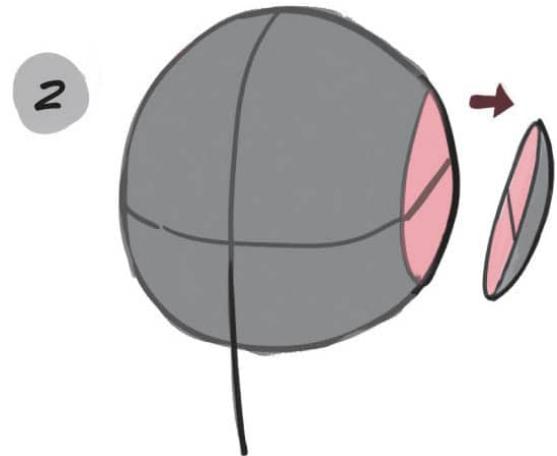
Starting with a simplified form makes it easier to draw multiple angles.



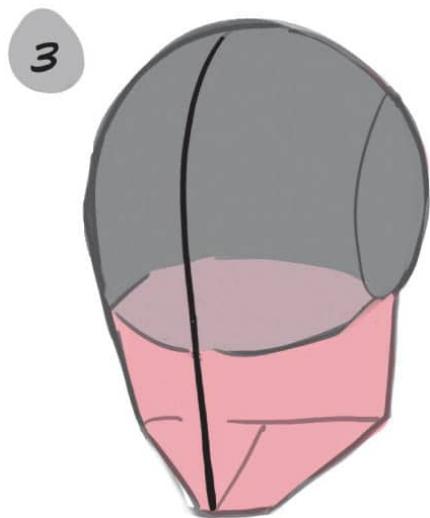
**1.** Draw a sphere.



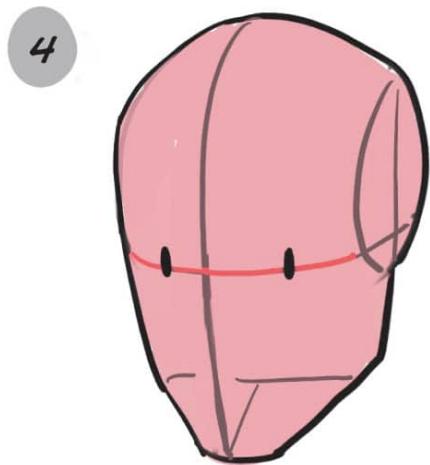
**2.** Divide along the crown.



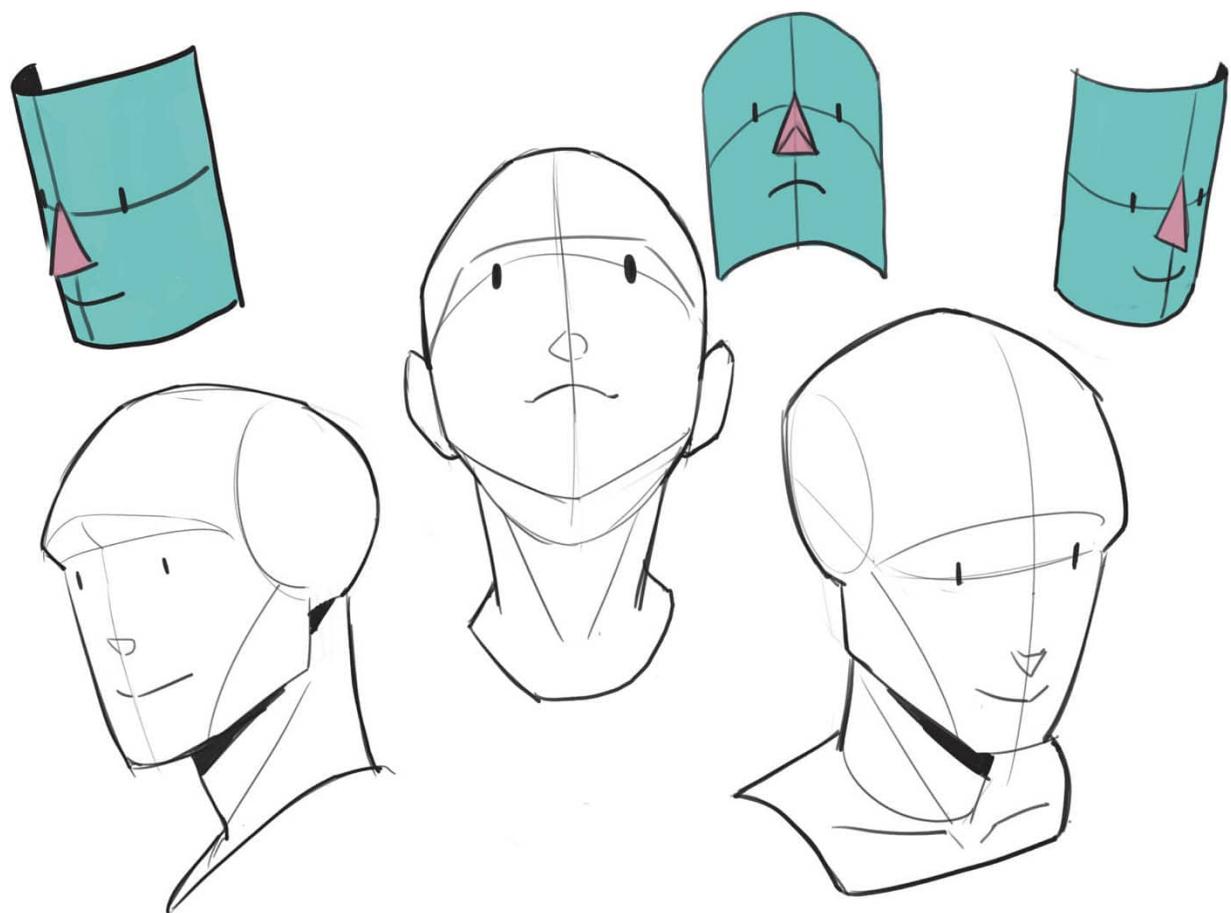
3. Draw the chin.



4. Finish the overall skull and facial skeleton.

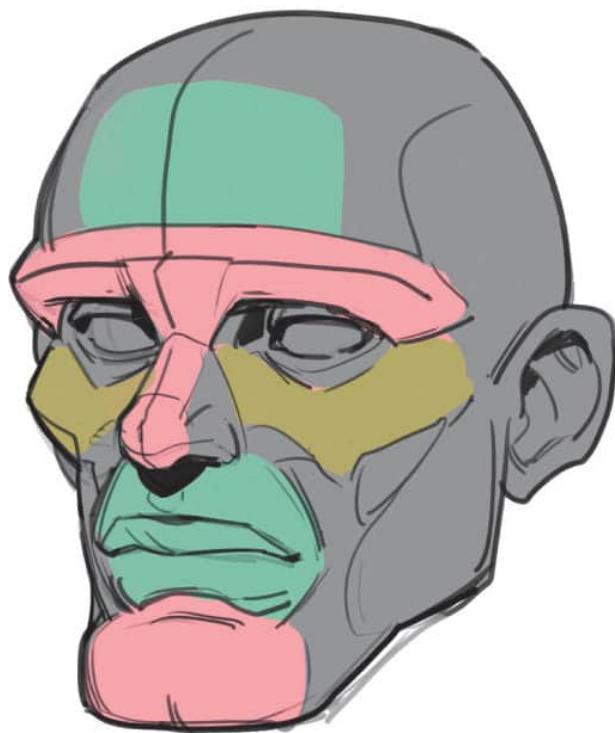


When drawing the head from different angles, think of the shape of the front of the face as a curved sheet of paper.

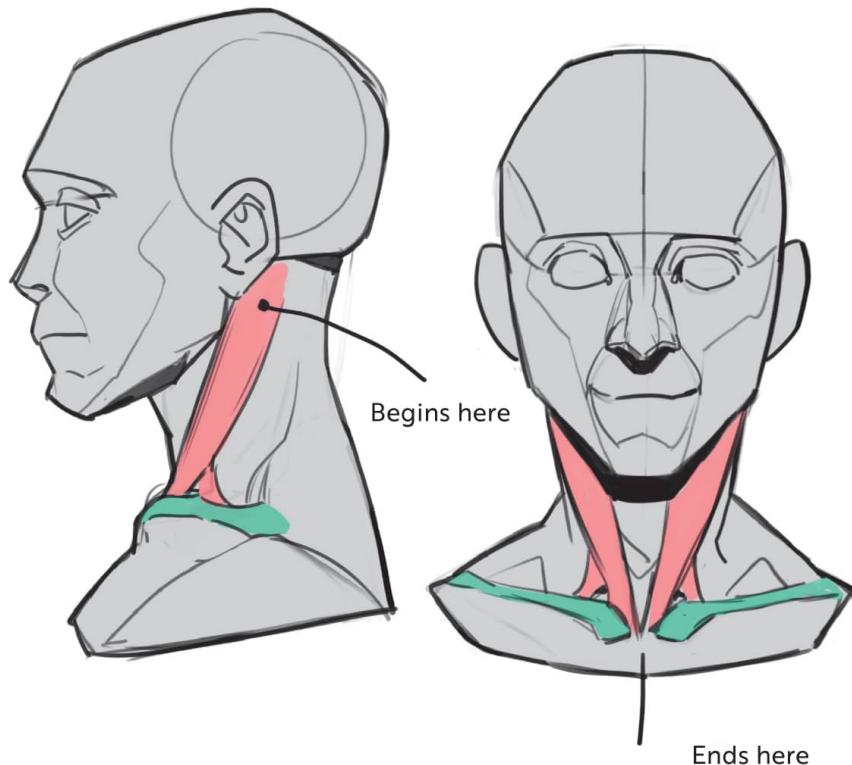


## LANDMARKS OF THE SKULL

This form emphasizes the protruding bones and muscles of the skull and neck.

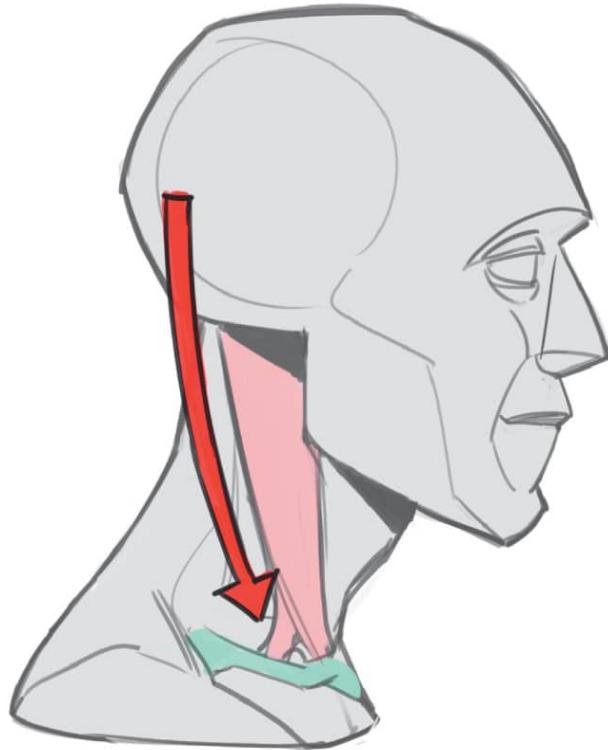


## NECK MUSCLES: STERNOCLÉIDOMASTOIDS

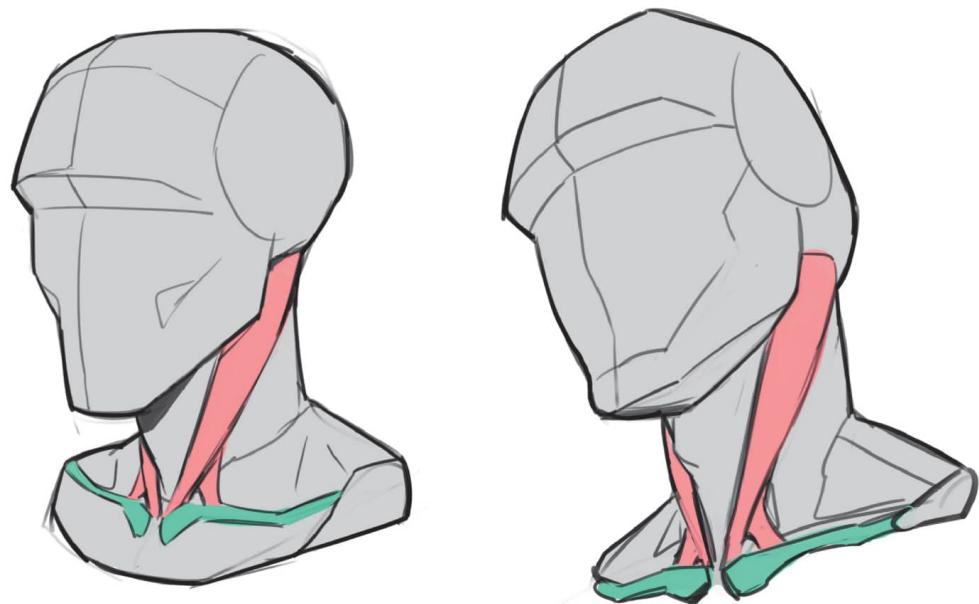


CLAVICLE

STERNOCLÉIDOMASTOID MUSCLE

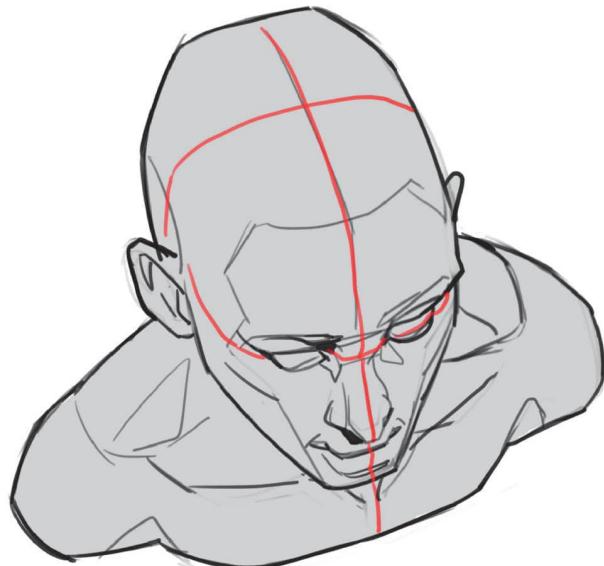


Each sternocleidomastoid muscle stretches from behind the ear to the middle of the clavicle.

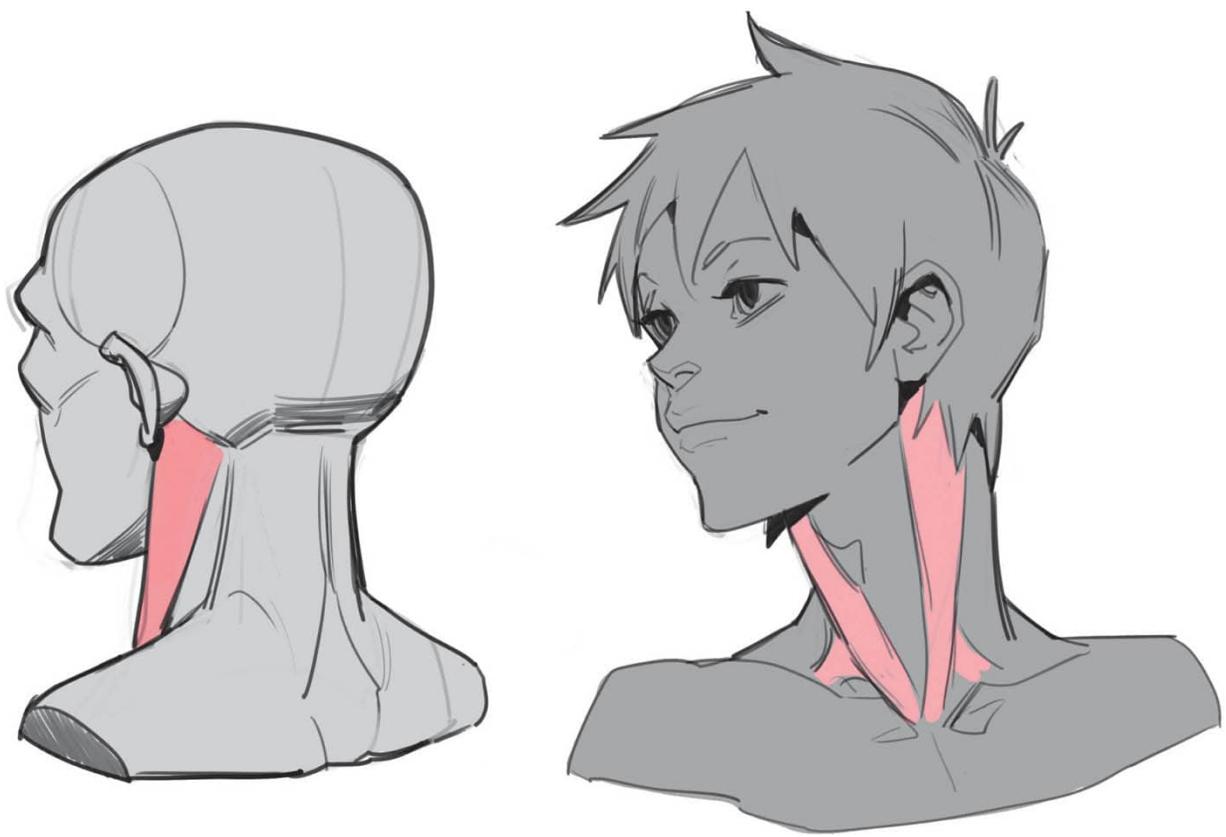




Facial skeleton and sternocleidomastoid muscle

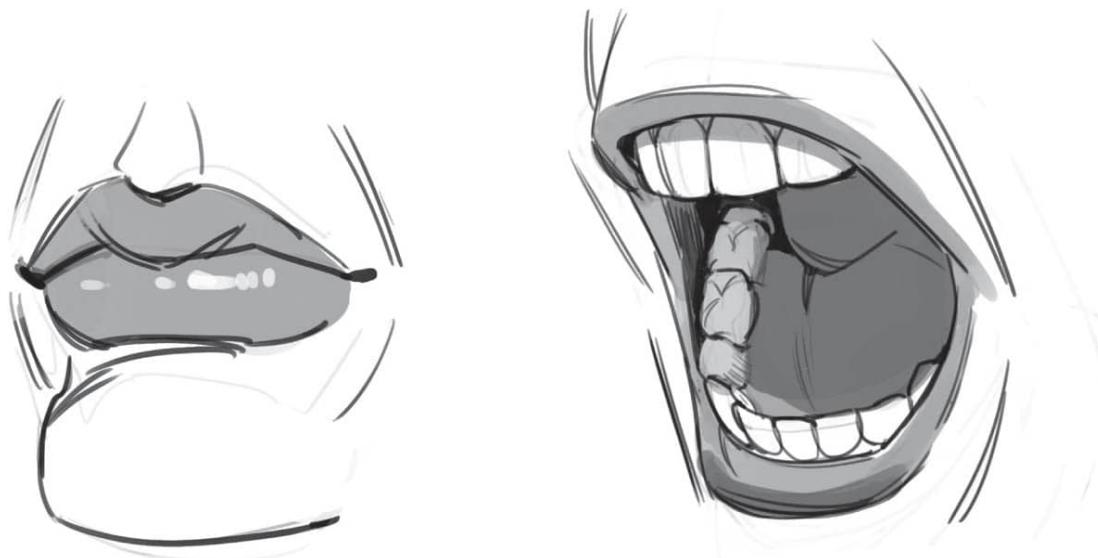
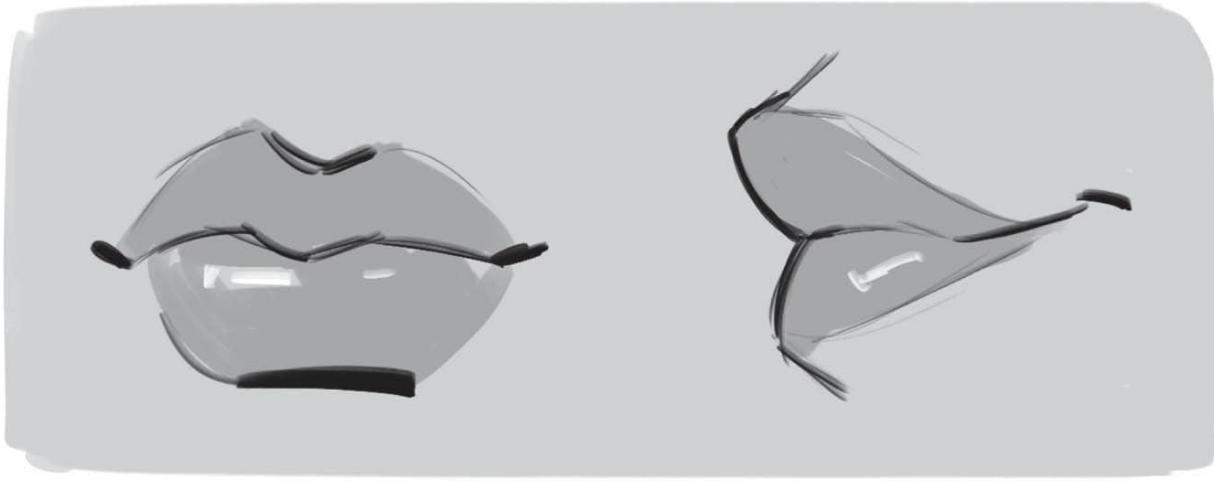


Blocked from view by the face in this angle

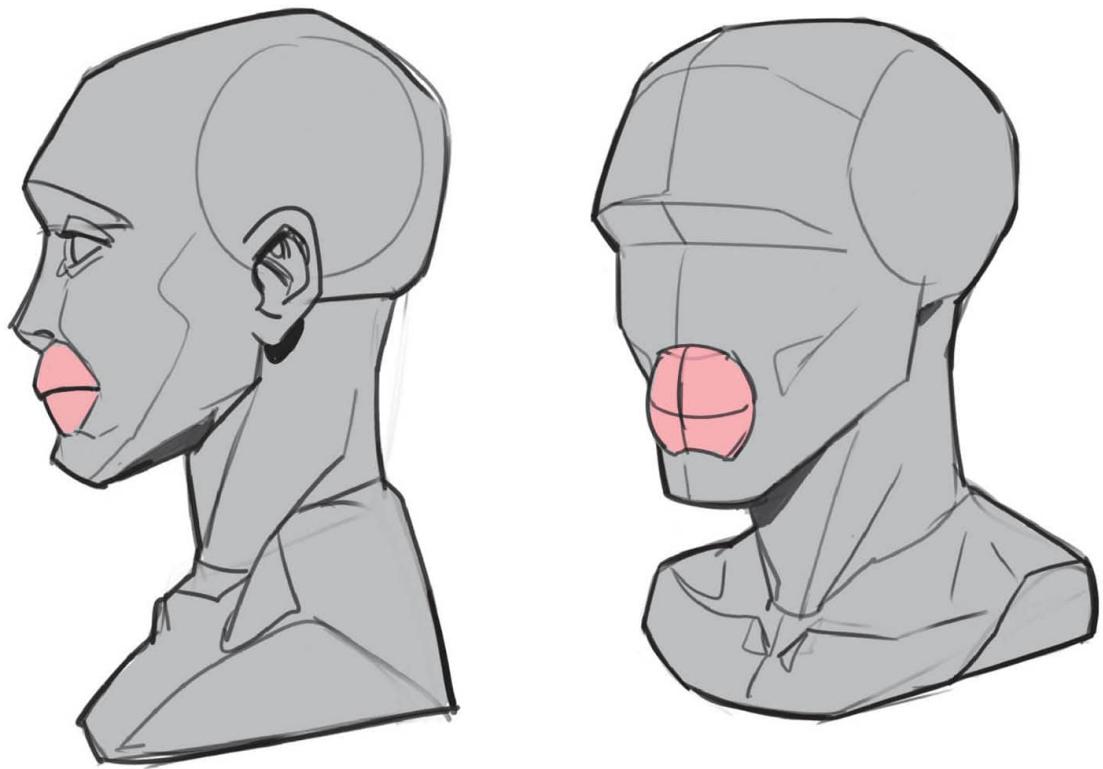


Knowing where the sternocleidomastoid muscle begins and ends allows you to draw the shape of the neck when it's turned.

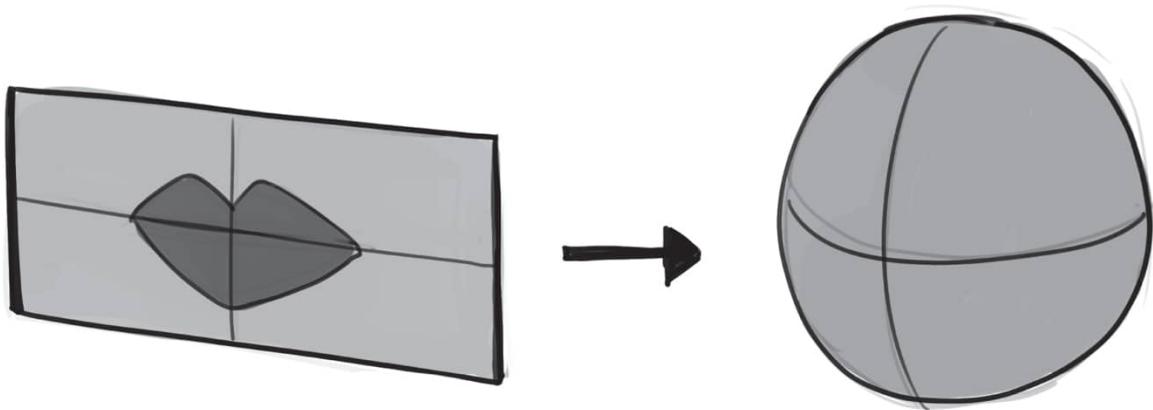
# MOUTH



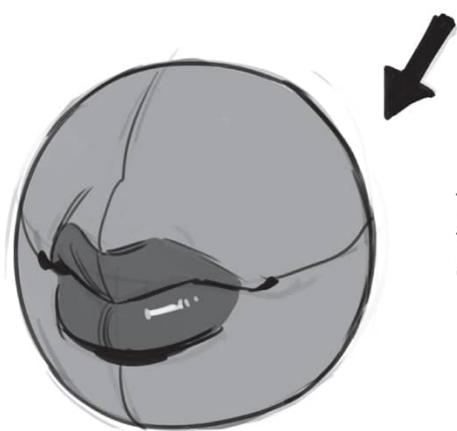
The structure of the mouth should be well-defined whether clenched or open.



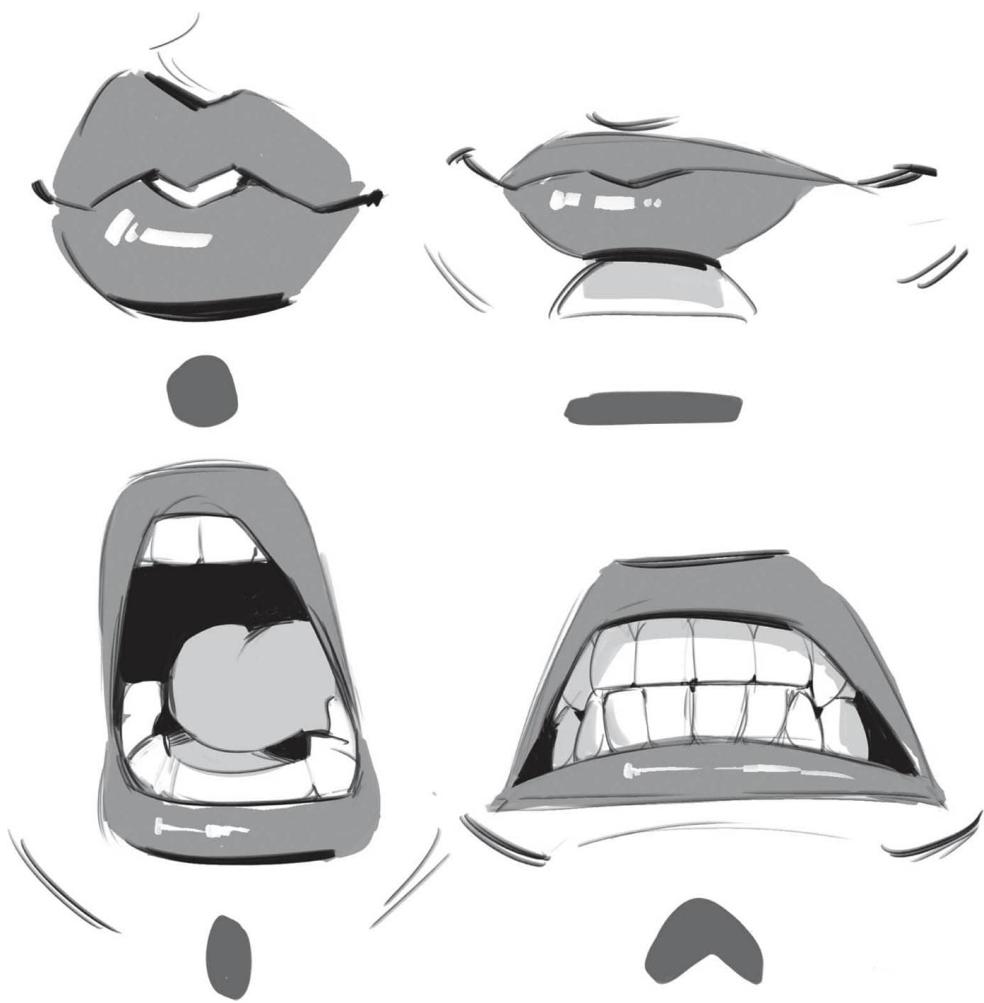
When you alter the angle of a character's face, always consider the shape of the mouth.



Don't draw the mouth like  
a sticker on a flat surface.



The lips are placed on the  
three-dimensional structure  
of the mouth.

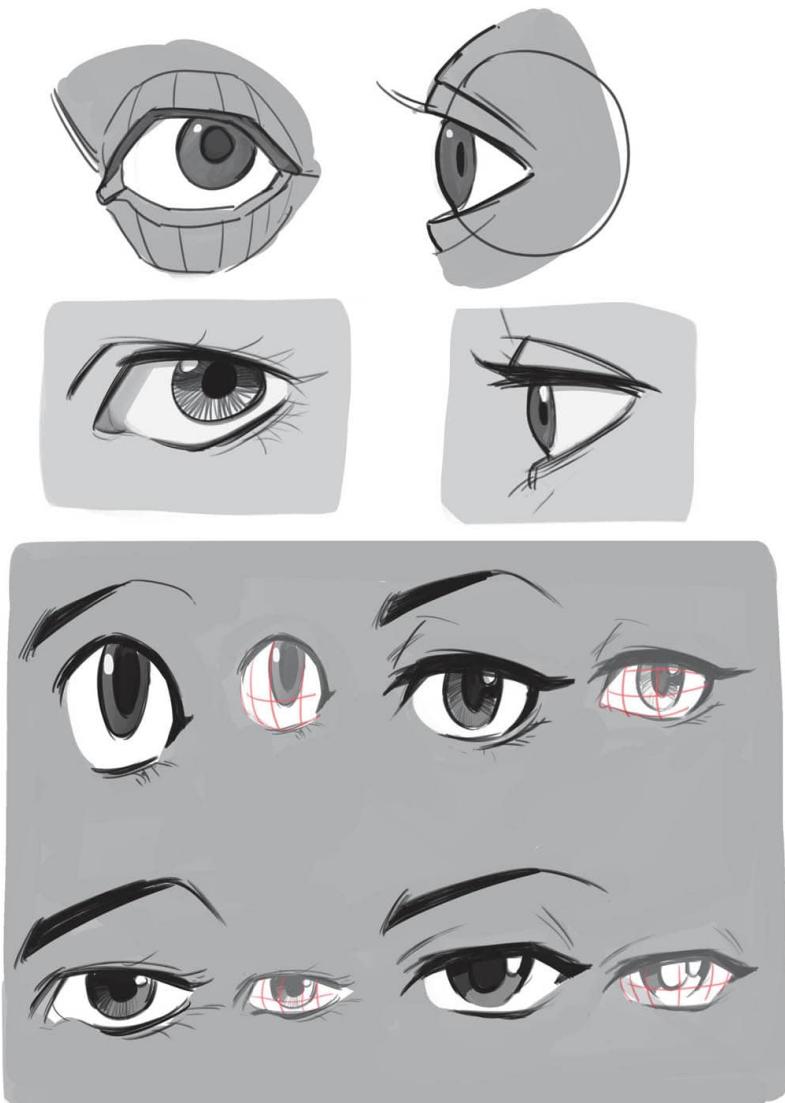


It is easier if you start by sketching the mouth as a silhouette of a simple figure.

# EYES

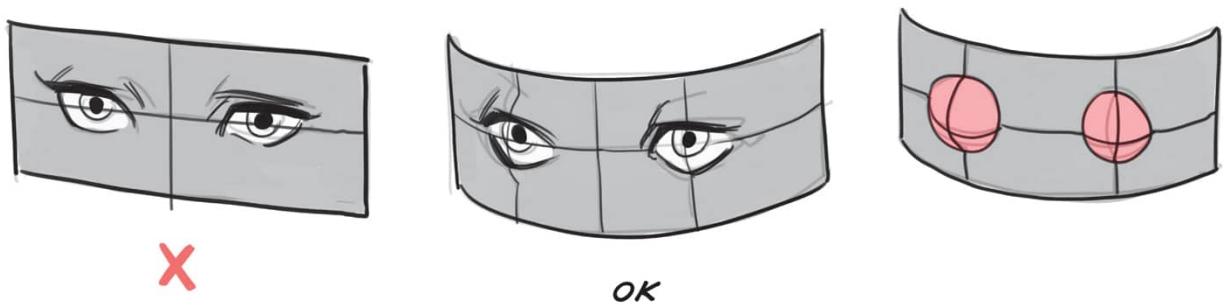
Even with stylized eyes, it's advisable to accentuate their dimensionality.

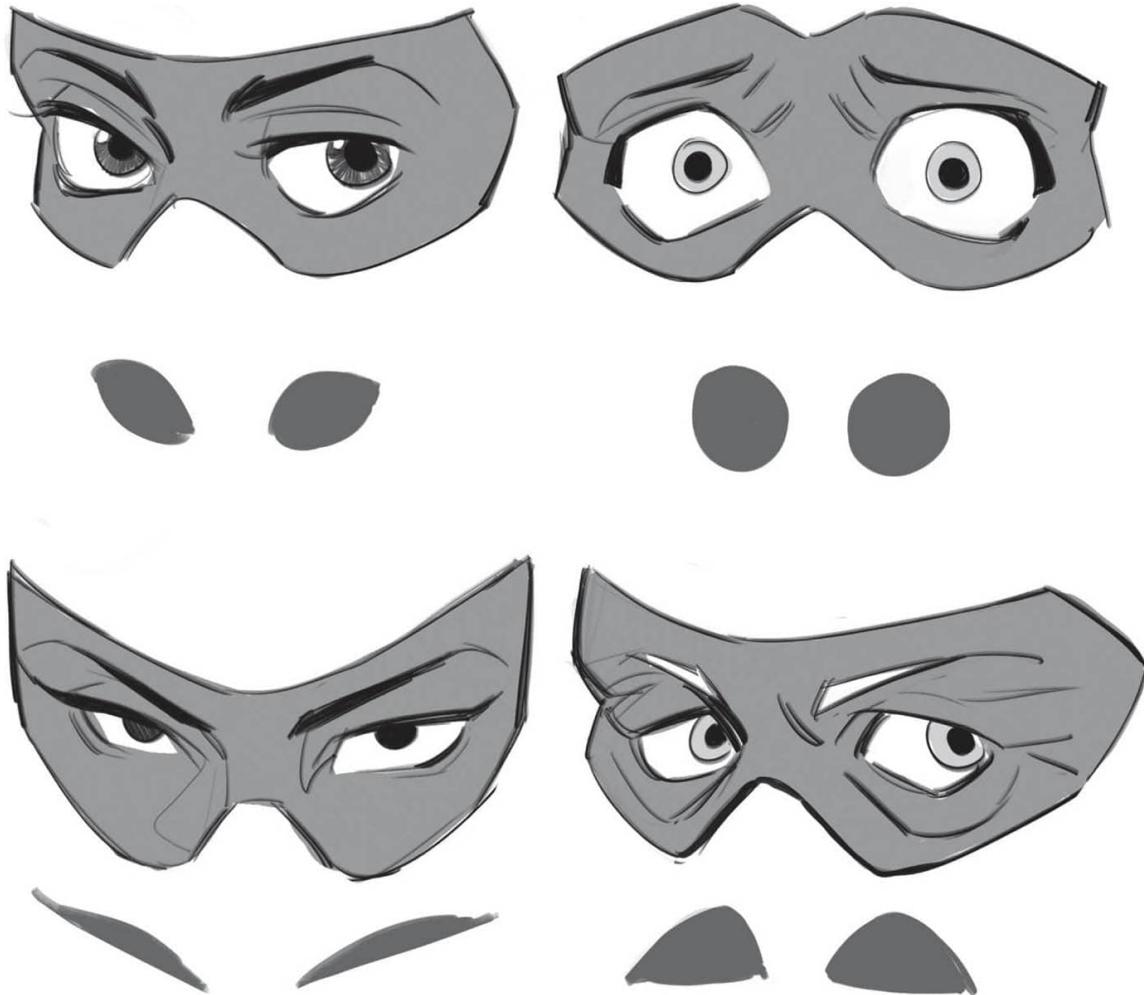
Draw the structure of the eye so it has dimension.





At some angles, you can't see one of the corners of the eyes or the surface of the eyeball.

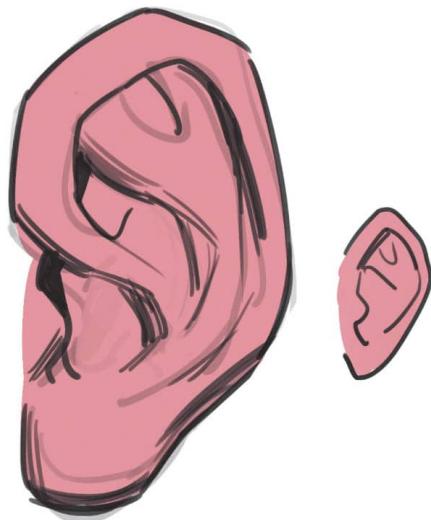




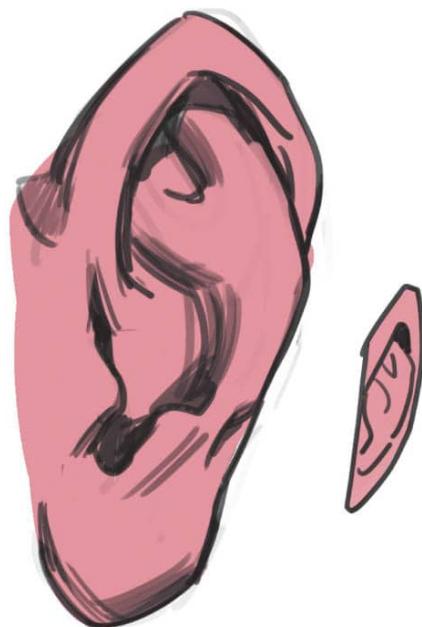
When drawing the eyes, consider that not only the eyes themselves but also the areas of the face around them should move naturally.

# EARS

The shape of the ears doesn't vary much, so it's convenient to simply memorize it from different angles.



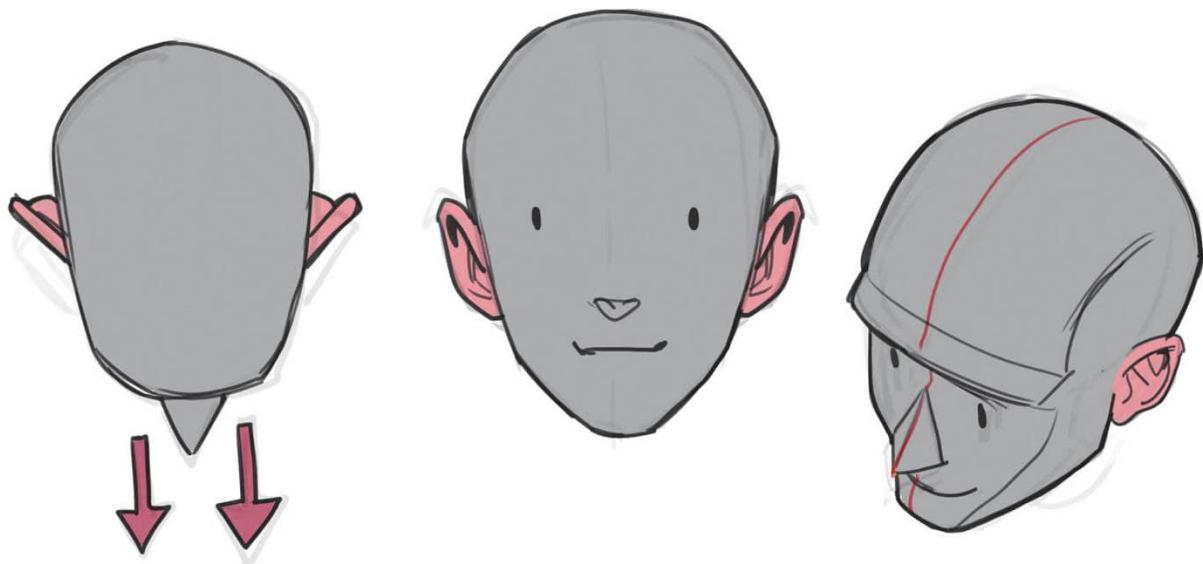
SIDE



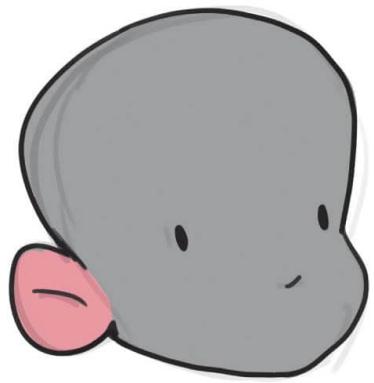
FRONT



BACK



Note the position of the ears varies with the angle of view.



# NOSE



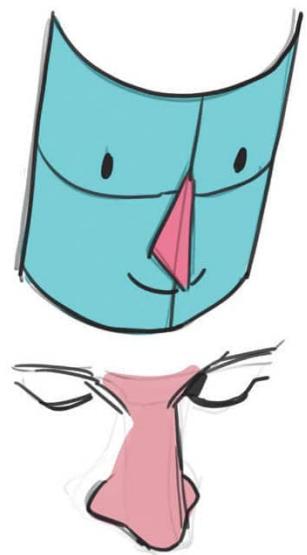
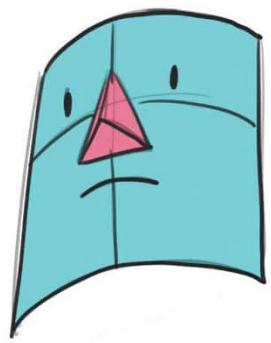
FRONT



SIDE



BOTTOM

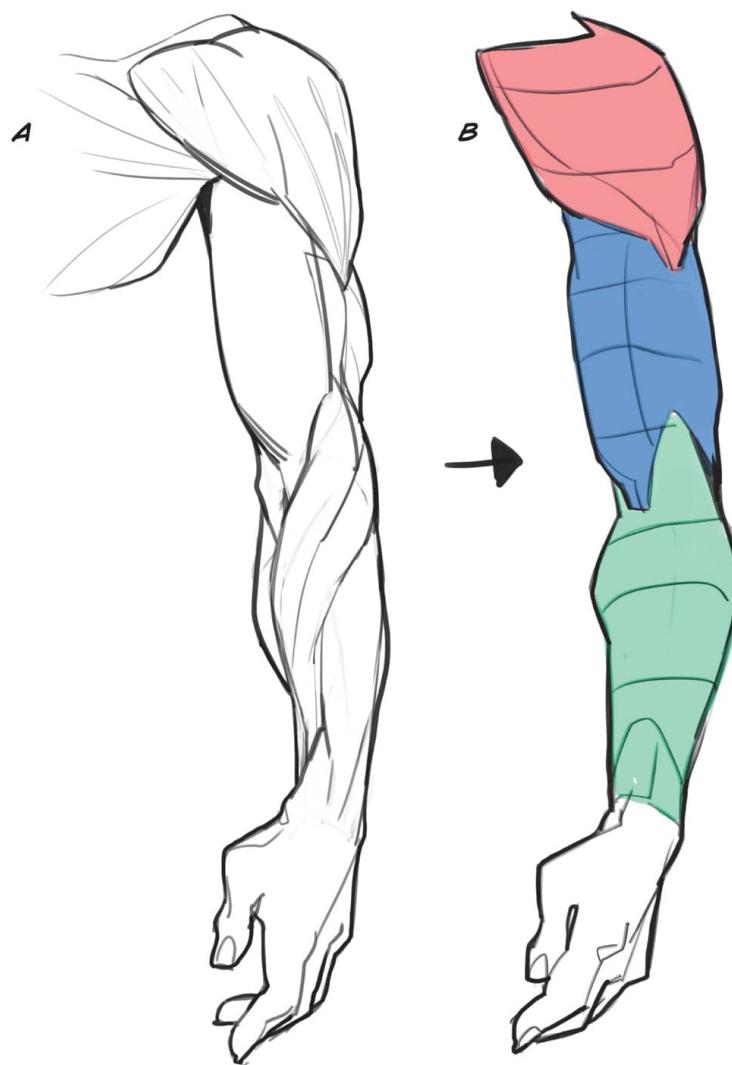


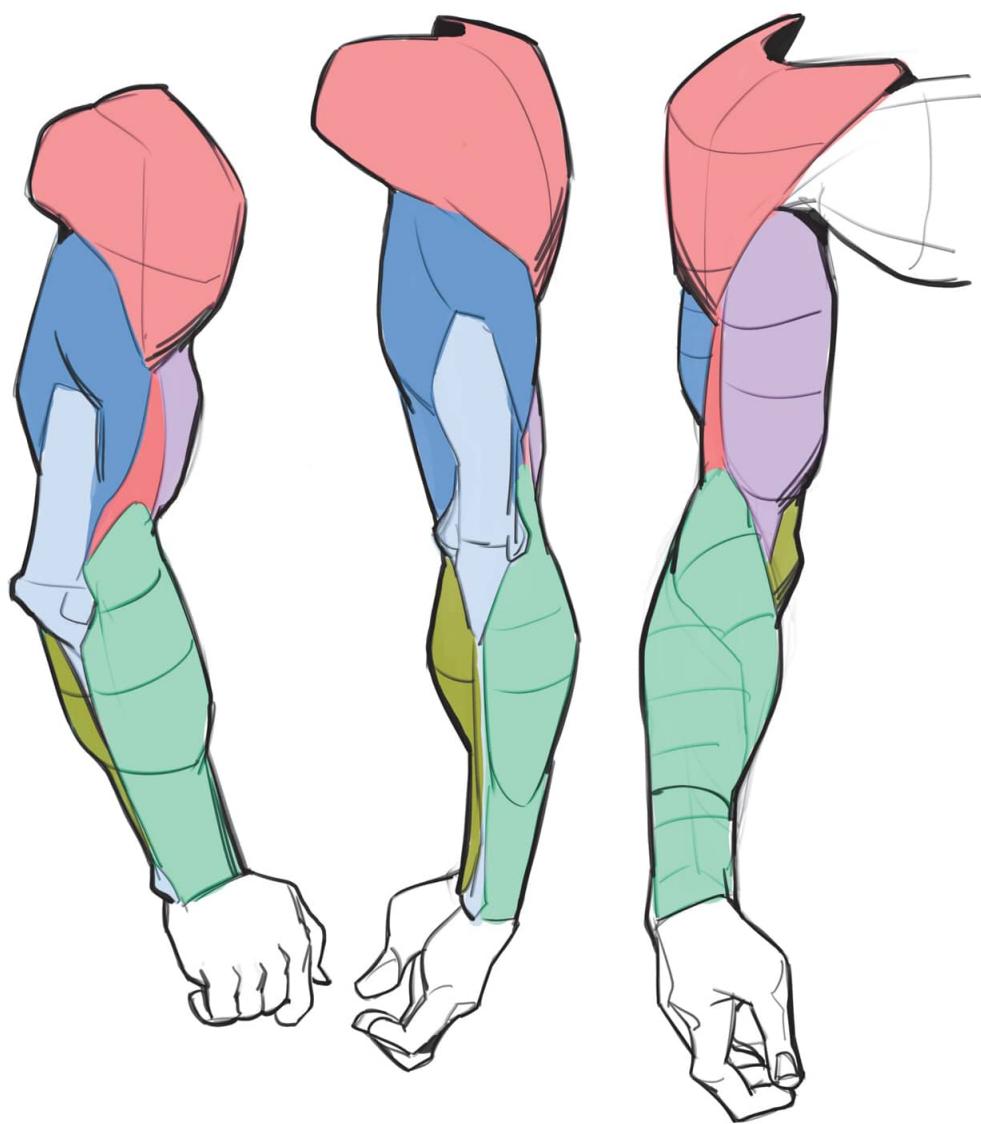
With the nose, start with the overall shape and angle and go into the details later.



# ARMS

Though the actual structure of the muscles is complex (A), it's important to learn their simple three-dimensional shapes (B).

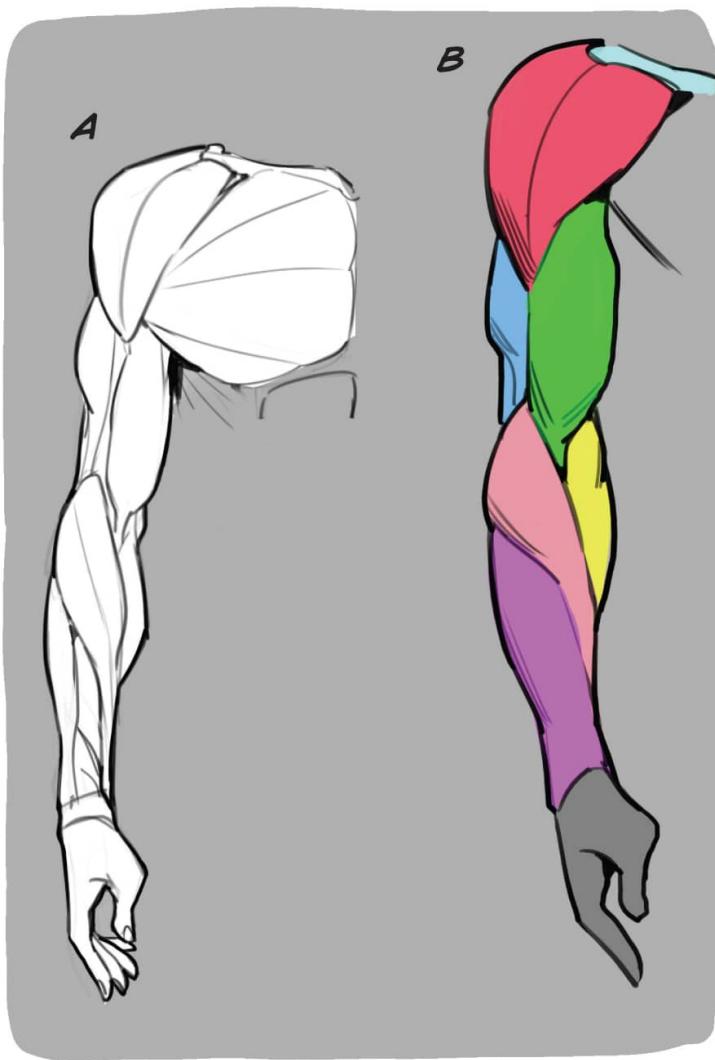


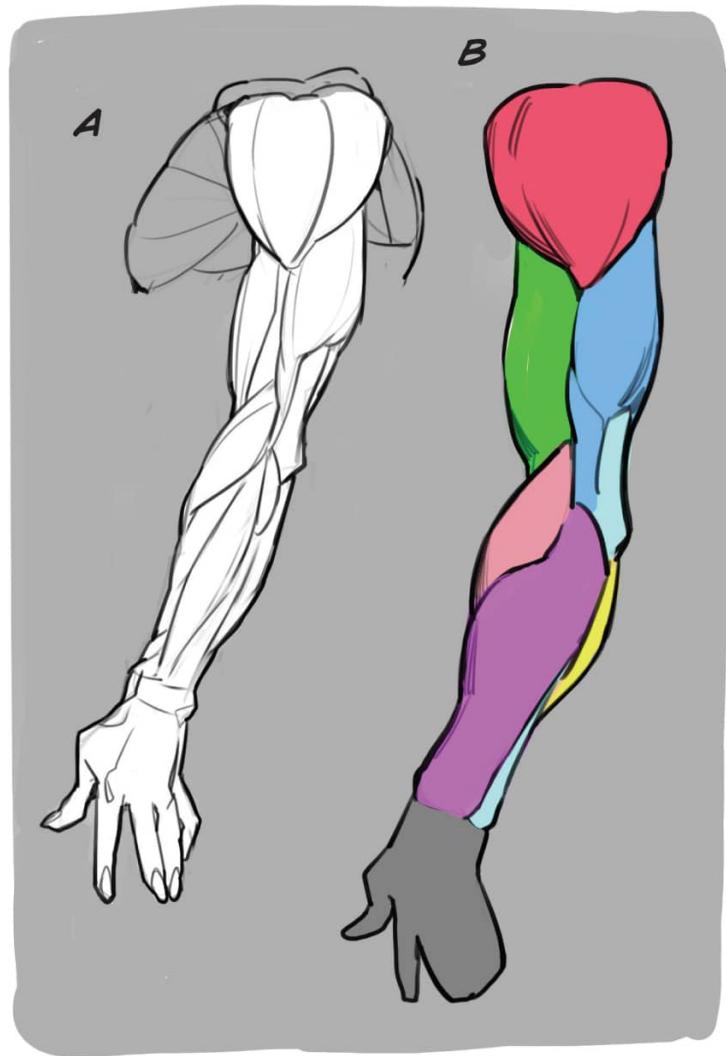


The arm is not only one of the most complex structures of the human body, it also has a lot of flexibility.

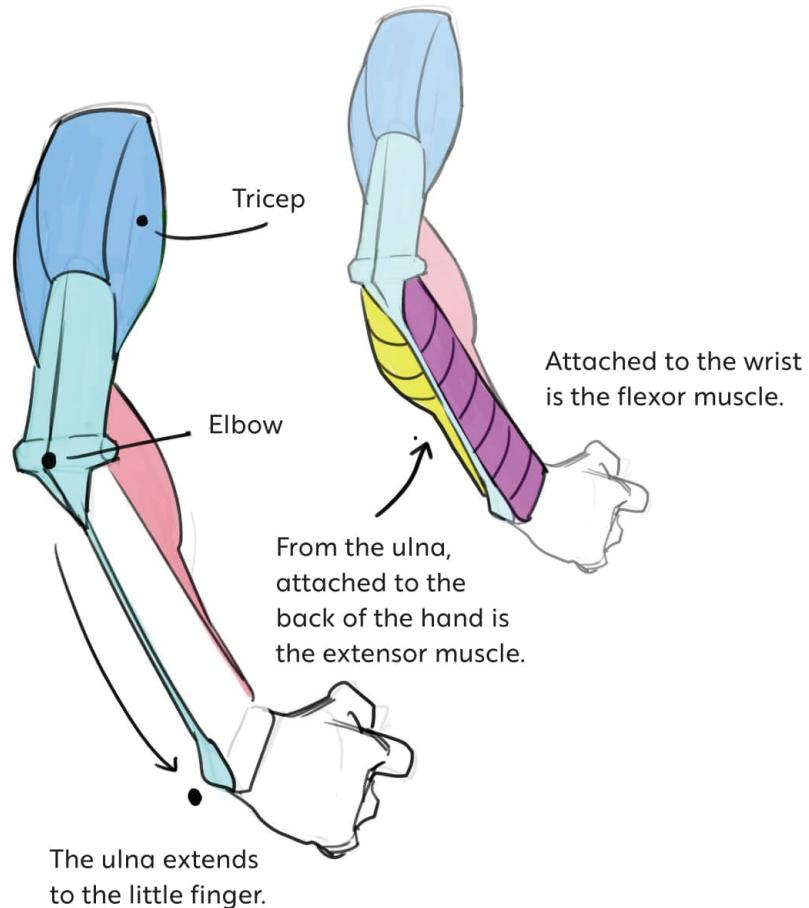
Rather than memorizing all the muscles, I'll show you useful forms that can be applied later.

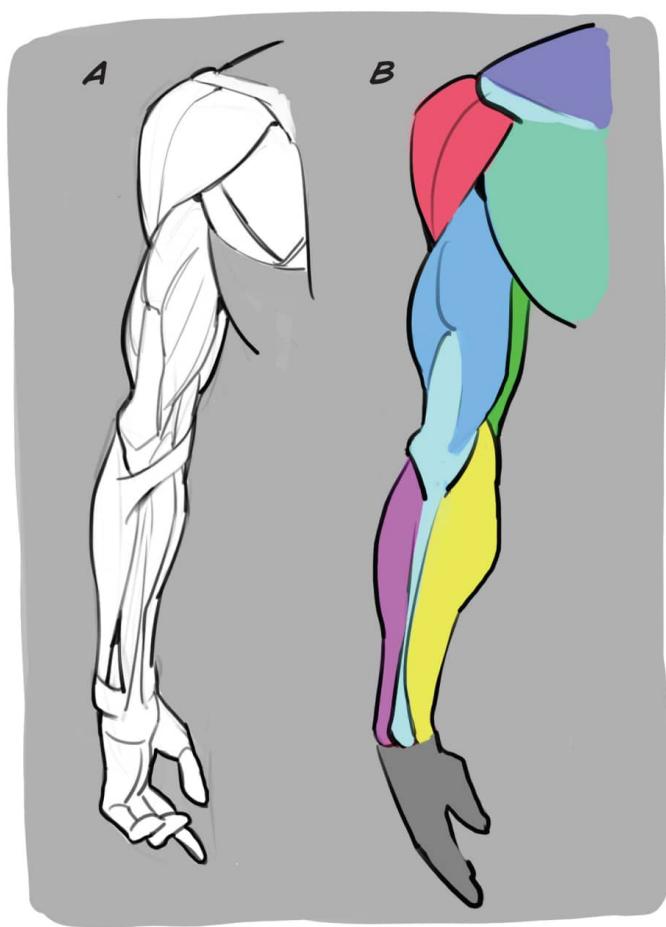
## BASIC MUSCLE GROUPS OF THE ARM AND SHOULDER





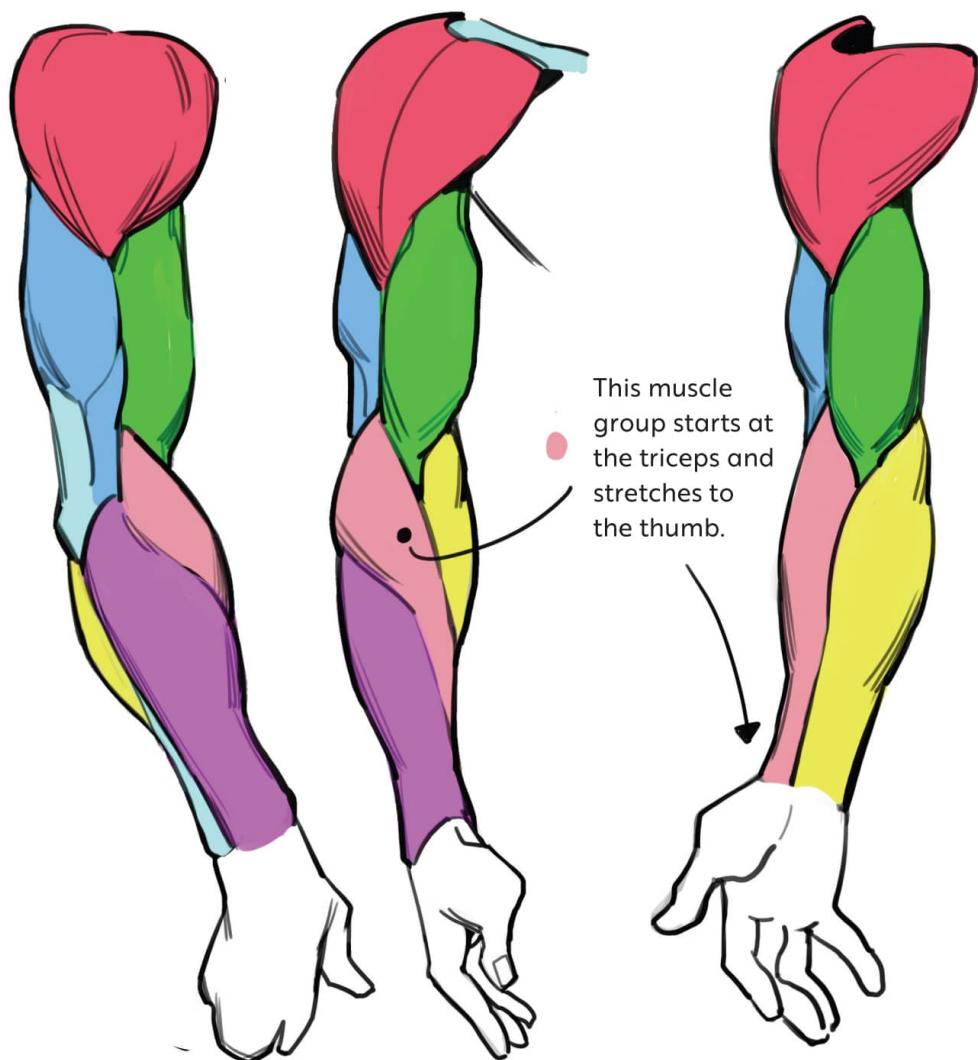
- SHOULDER MUSCLES
- UPPER FOREARM MUSCLE (PIT OF THE ELBOW)
- UPPER BACK ARM MUSCLE (ELBOW)
- OUTER ARM MUSCLE (BACK OF THE HAND)
- LOWER ARM THUMB MUSCLE (THUMB)
- INNER ARM MUSCLE (PALM)







The ulna is clearly visible in a crossed-arm pose.



## UPPER ARM

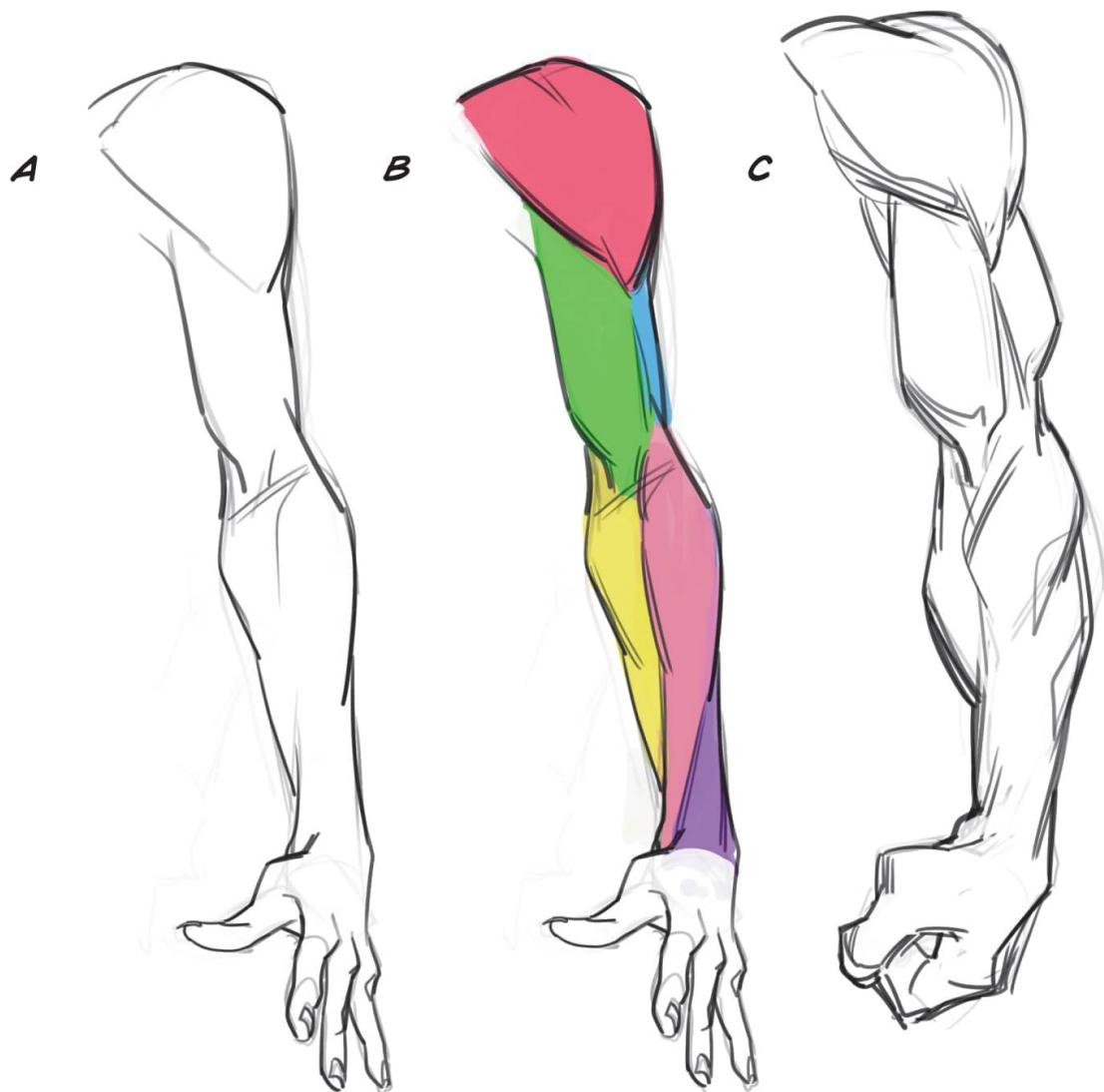
- RED
  - BLUE
  - GREEN
- 

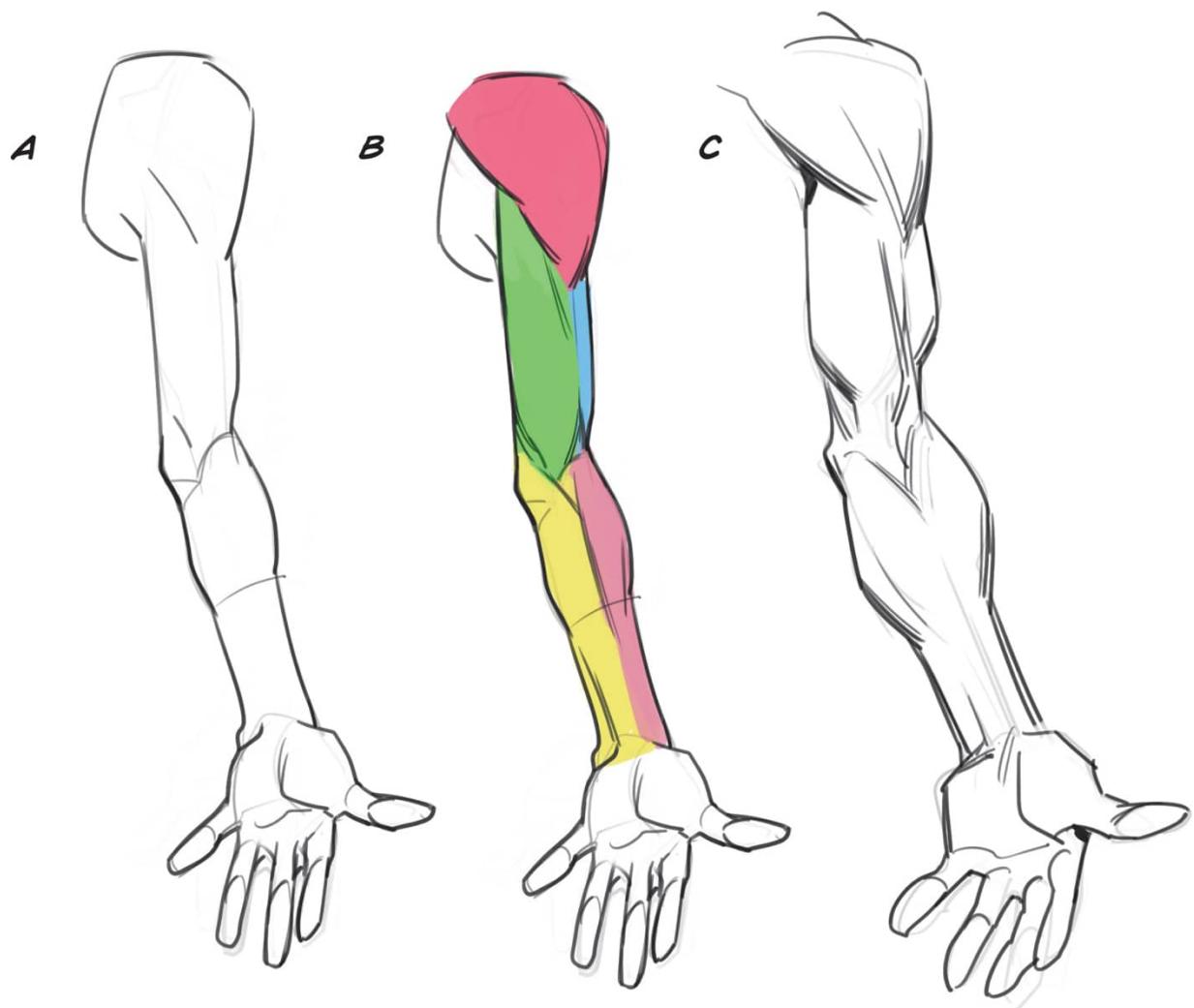
## LOWER ARM

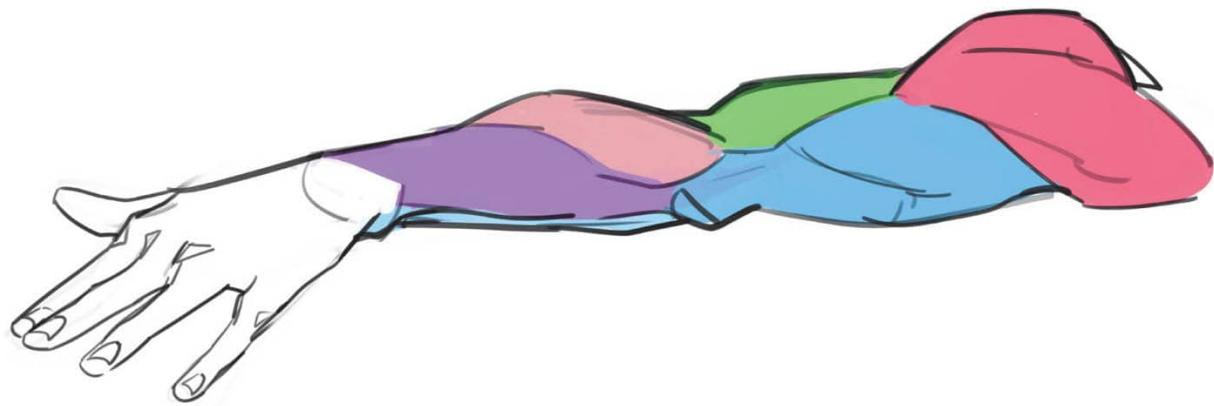
- PINK
- YELLOW
- PURPLE

There are more subparts to the muscles of the arm, but these basic shapes and their volumes are the most important.

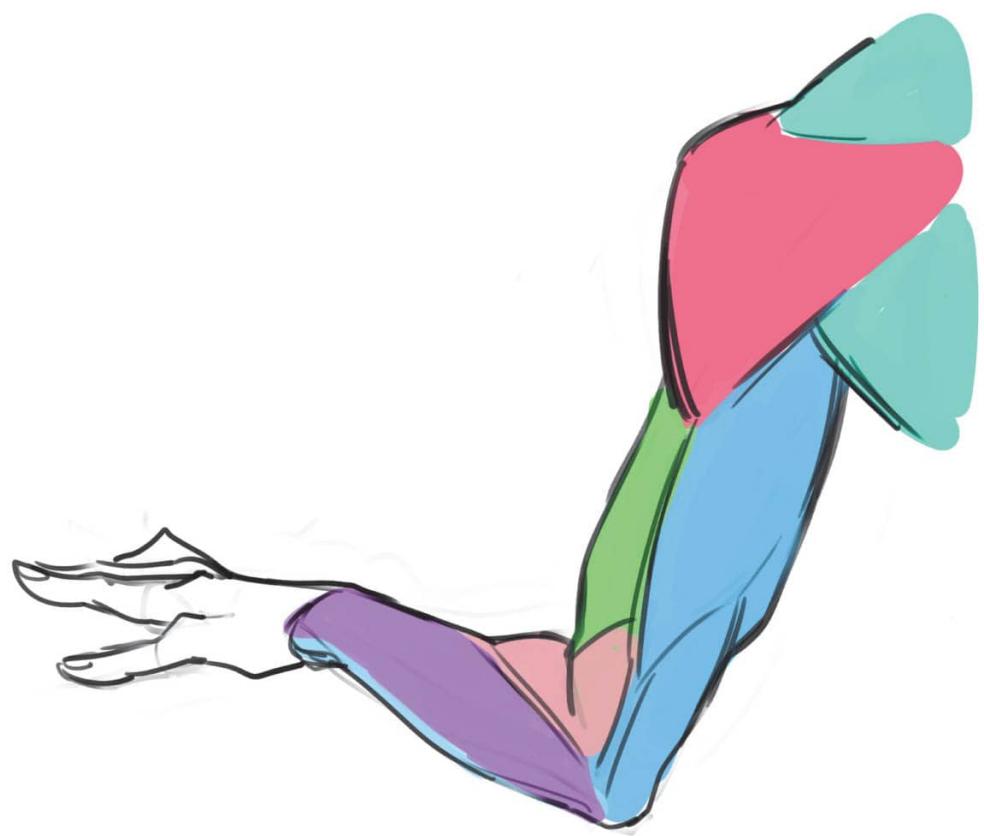
This is the part of the arm drawn with the muscles as shown on the previous page. When the muscles are developed, they become larger and more defined, as shown in C.





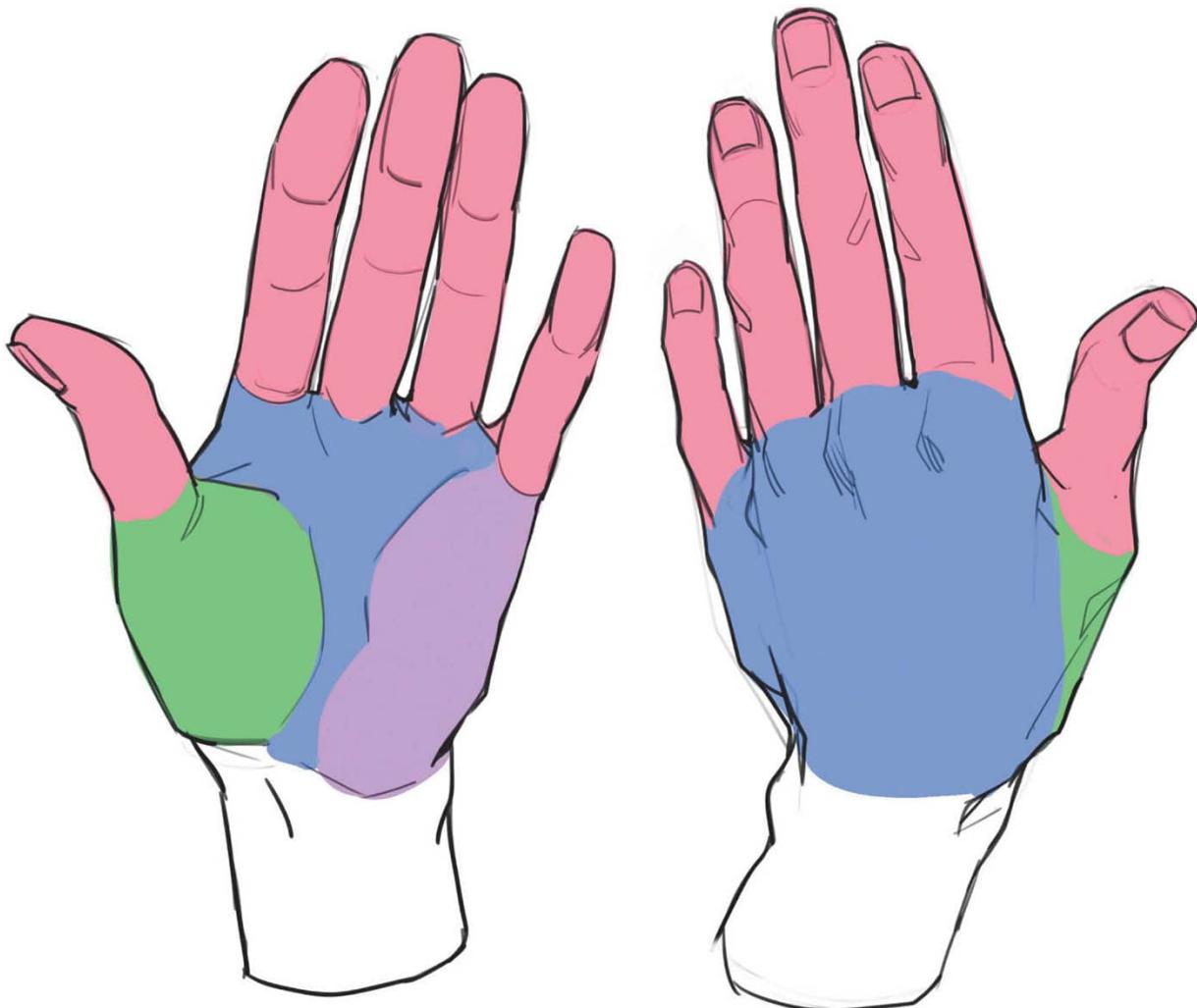


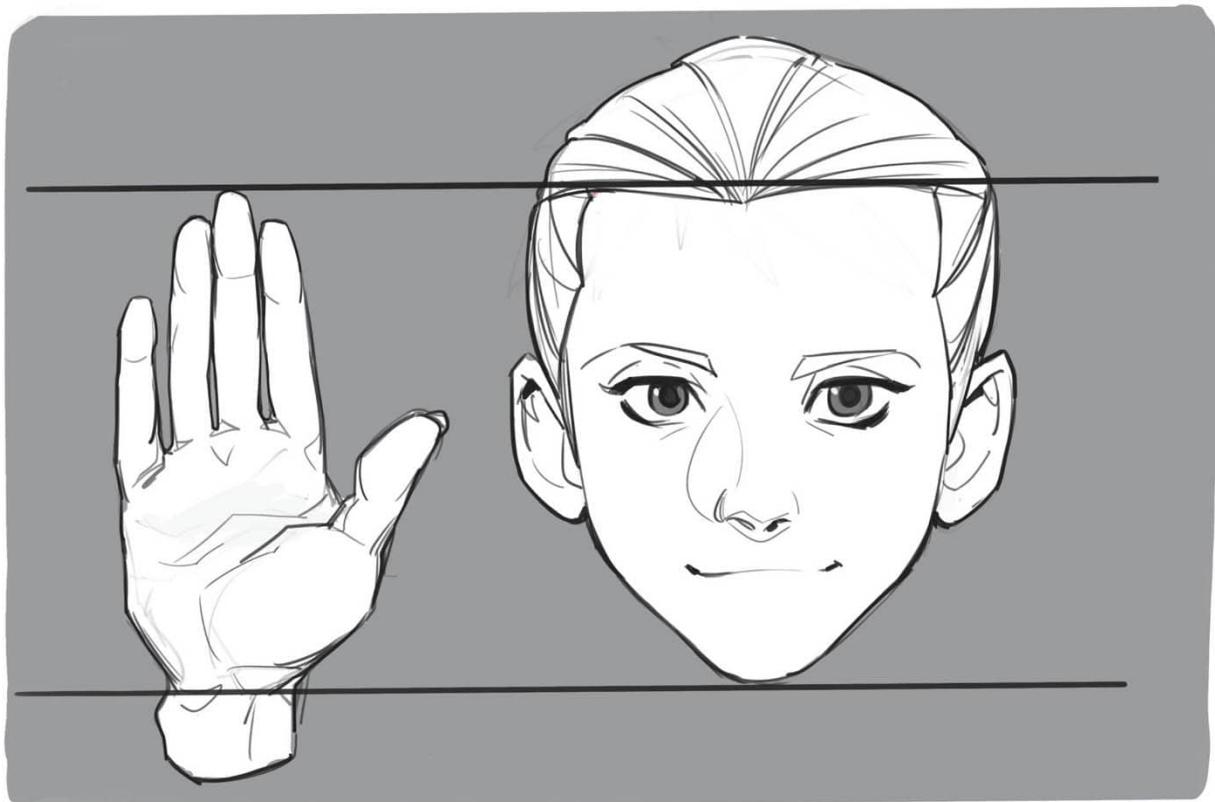
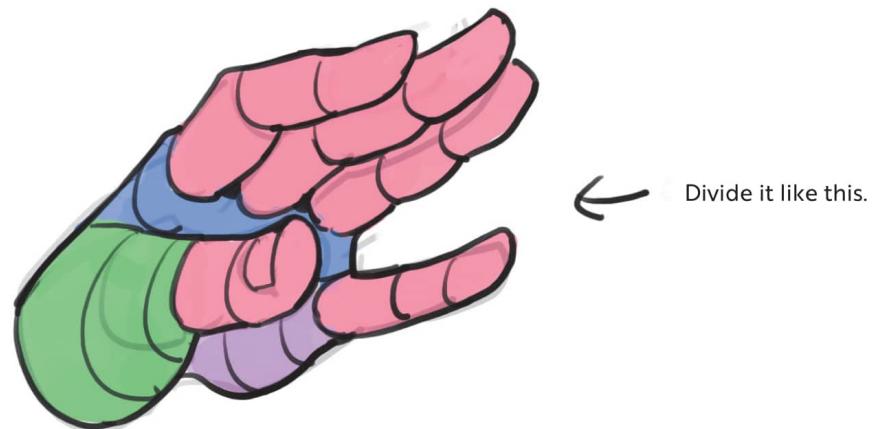
It's easy to draw the arm from various angles, as long as you draw each of its muscle shapes to reflect the position of the elbow, wrist, and shoulder.

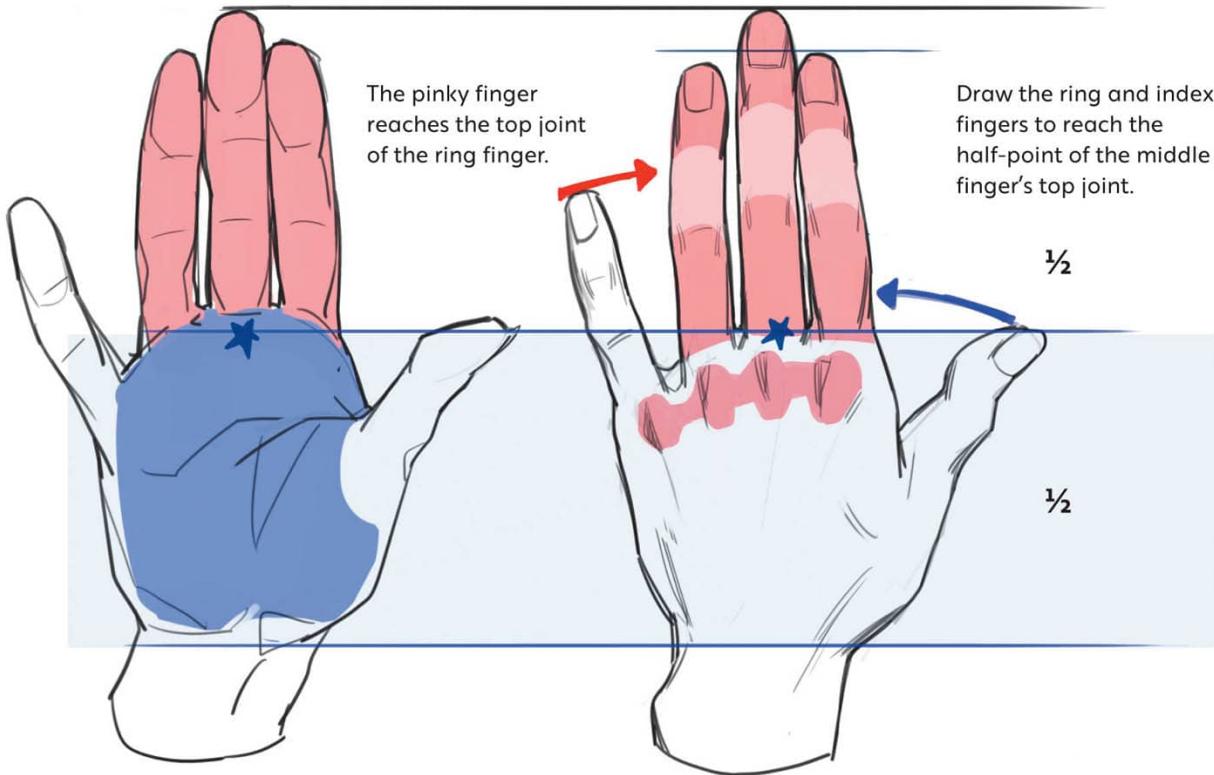


## HANDS

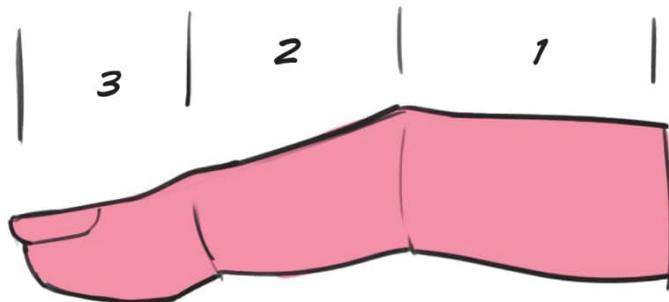
The hand is easier to draw if the form is understood by dividing it into fingers, palm, thumb palm, and pinky palm.





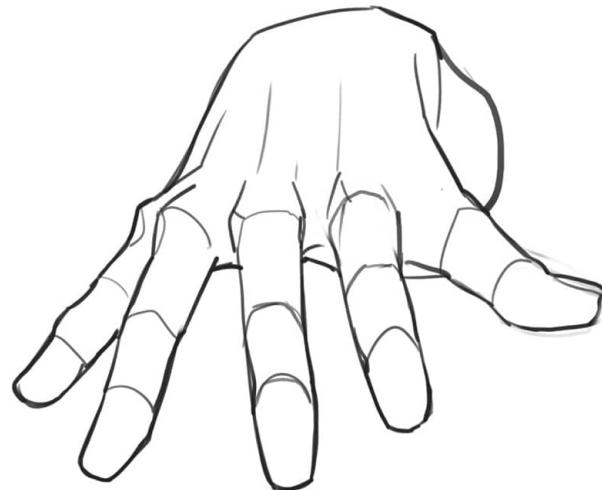
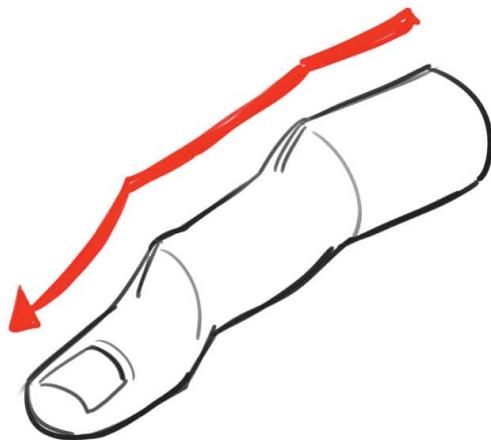


The relative length of each finger joint is shown, from shortest (3) to longest (1).

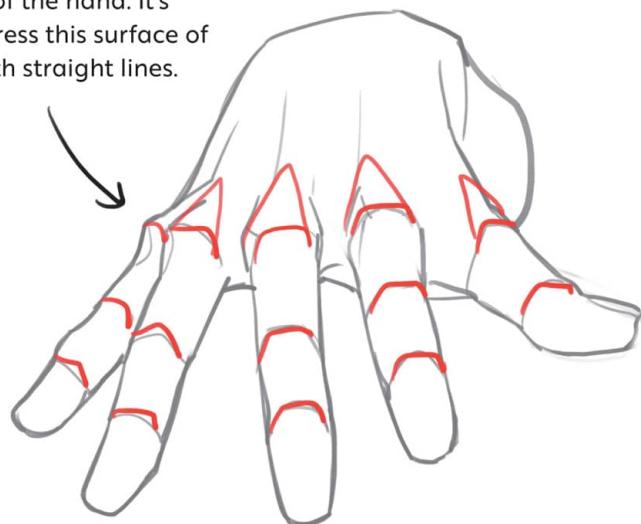


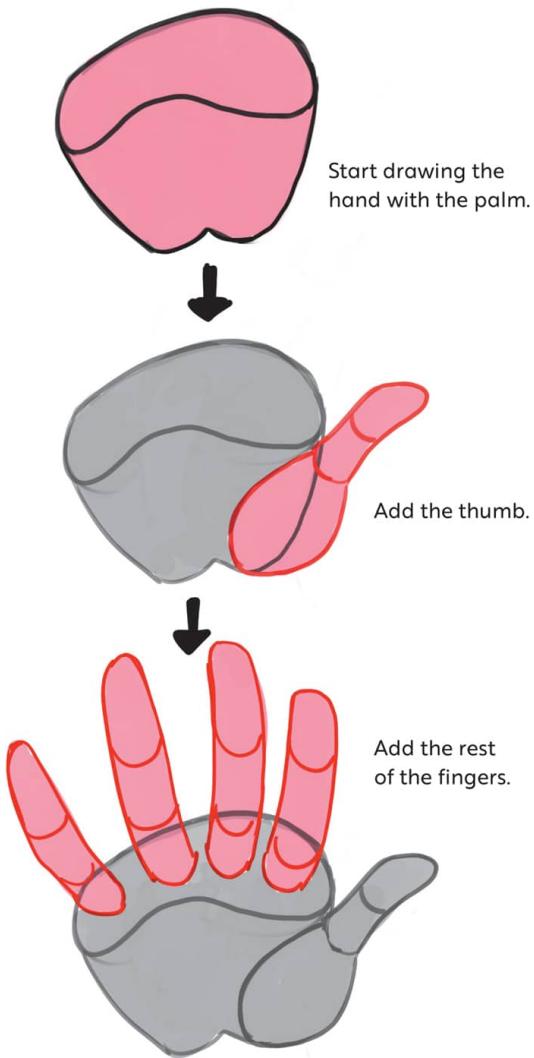
The bones of the fingers are very pronounced.

Since the finger's underside is made of fat, draw it to look soft.

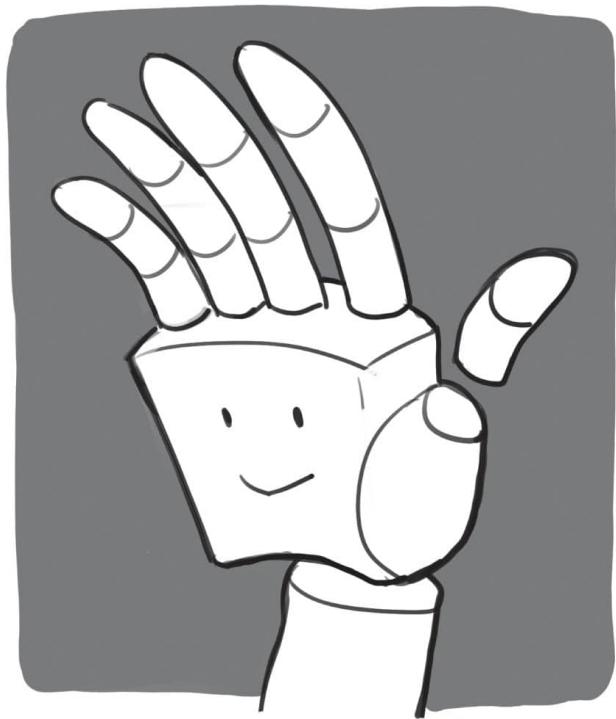


This view shows the bony part of the back of the hand. It's good to express this surface of the hand with straight lines.

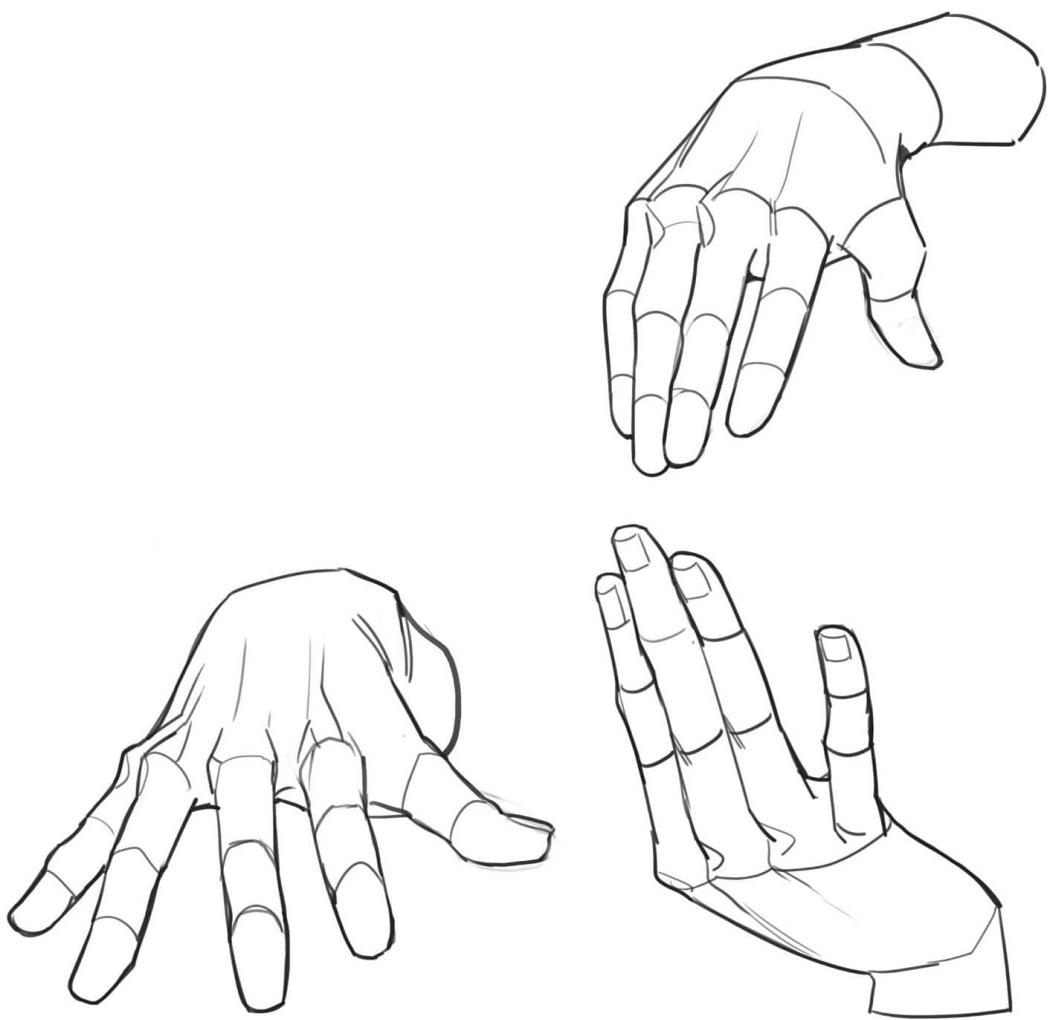




Let's simplify our hands.

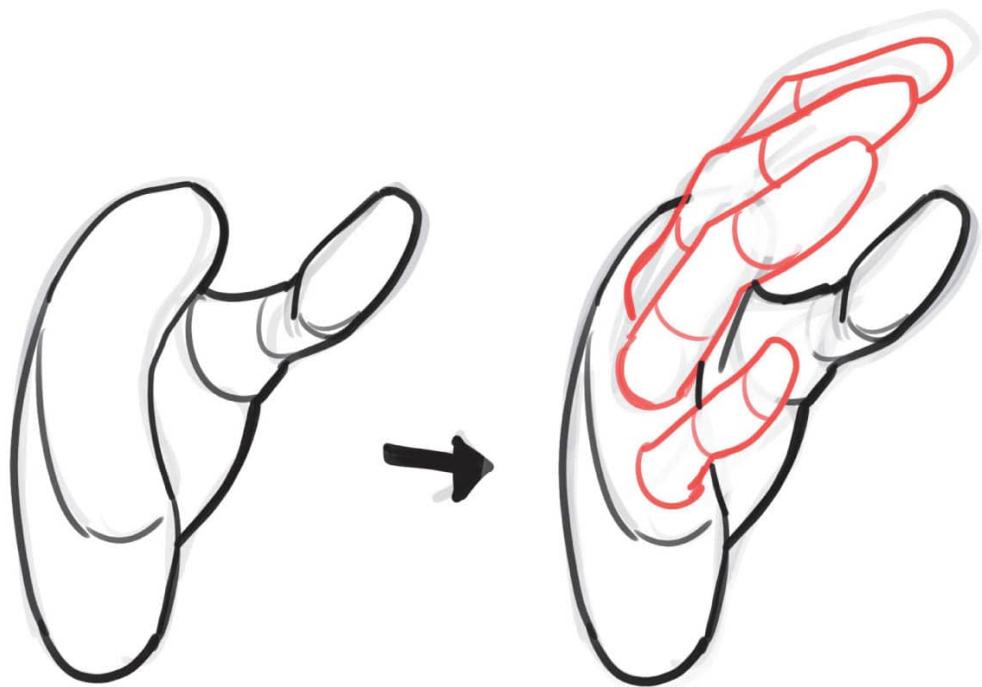


Even if you memorize drawing a hand from a particular point of view, you'll still need to draw a lot of different angles and poses because the hands have so much fluidity.

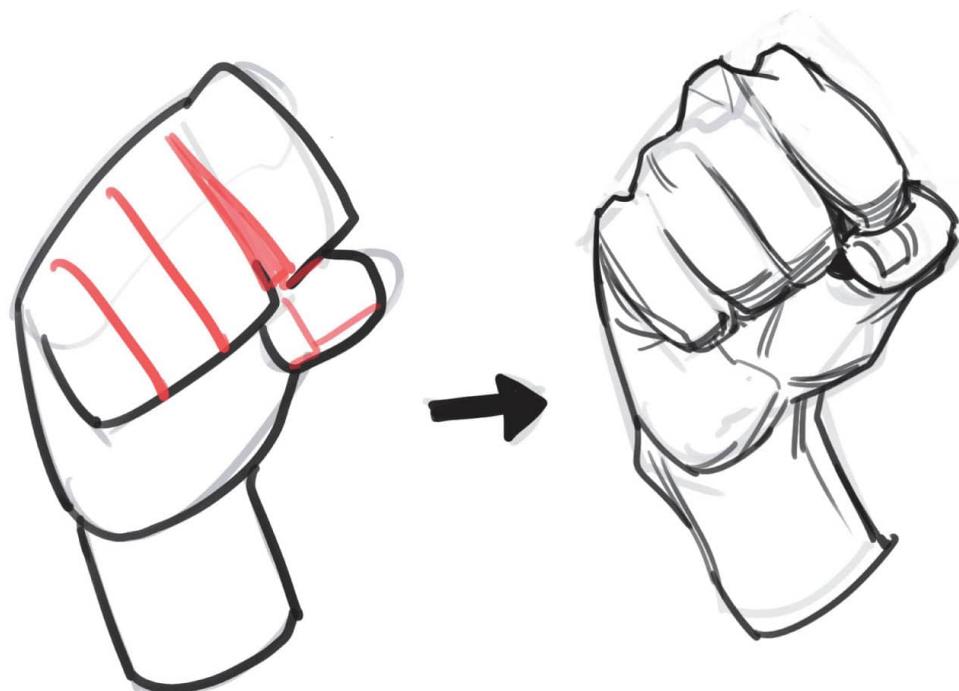


Let's practice drawing hands in three dimensions using the same easy technique.

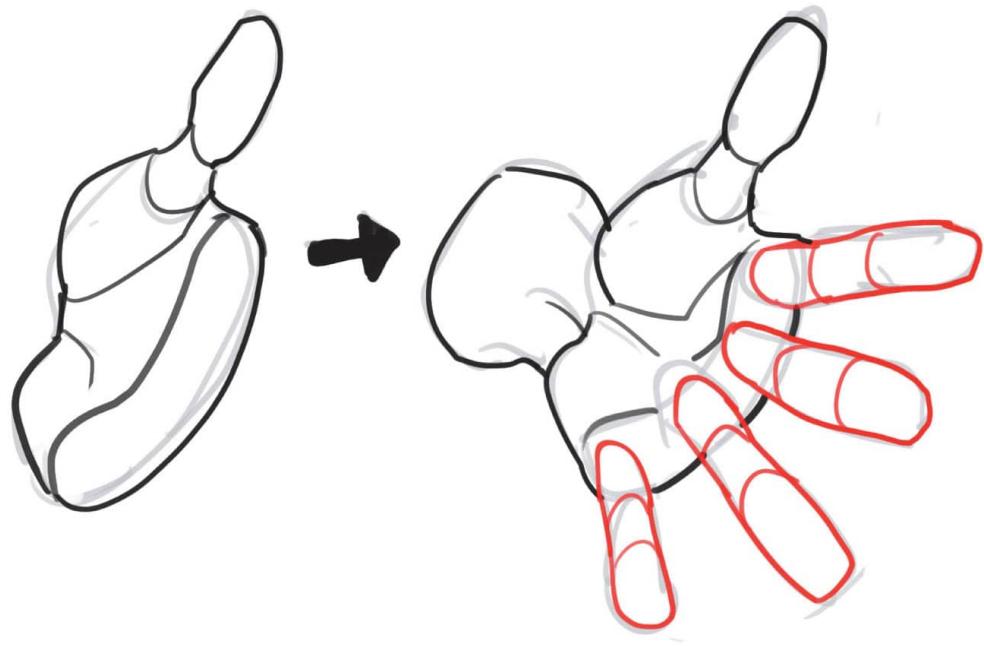
1. Decide what gesture to draw.



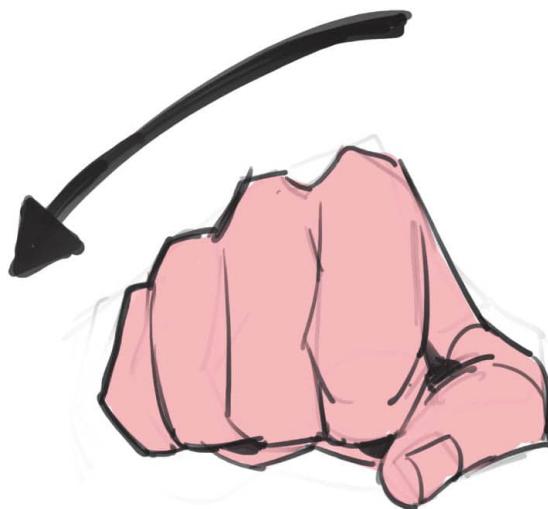
**2.** Draw the palm, thumb, and fingers.

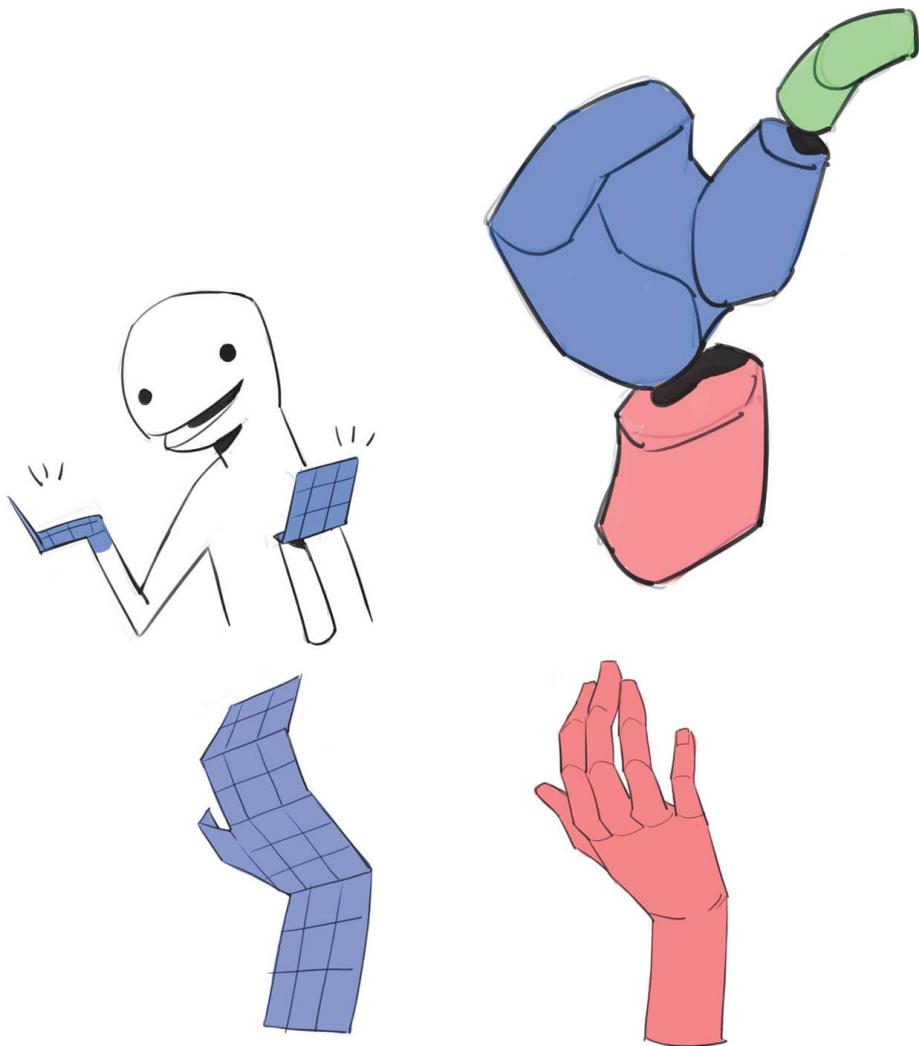


**3.** Draw the wrist.



The back of the hand when clenched in a fist is arc-shaped, with the arc descending toward the little finger.



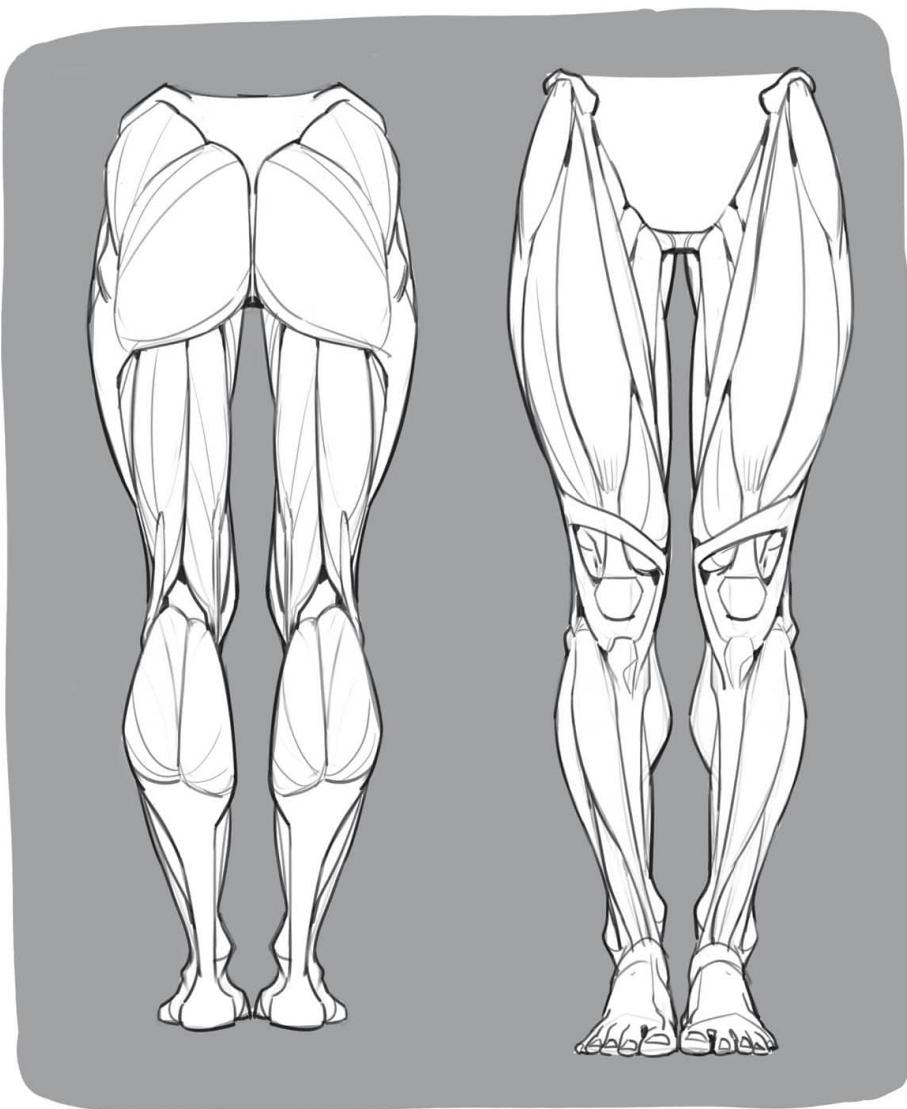


If capturing the three-dimensional shape of the hand is difficult, approach it by drawing a folded flat form first, similar to a piece of paper.

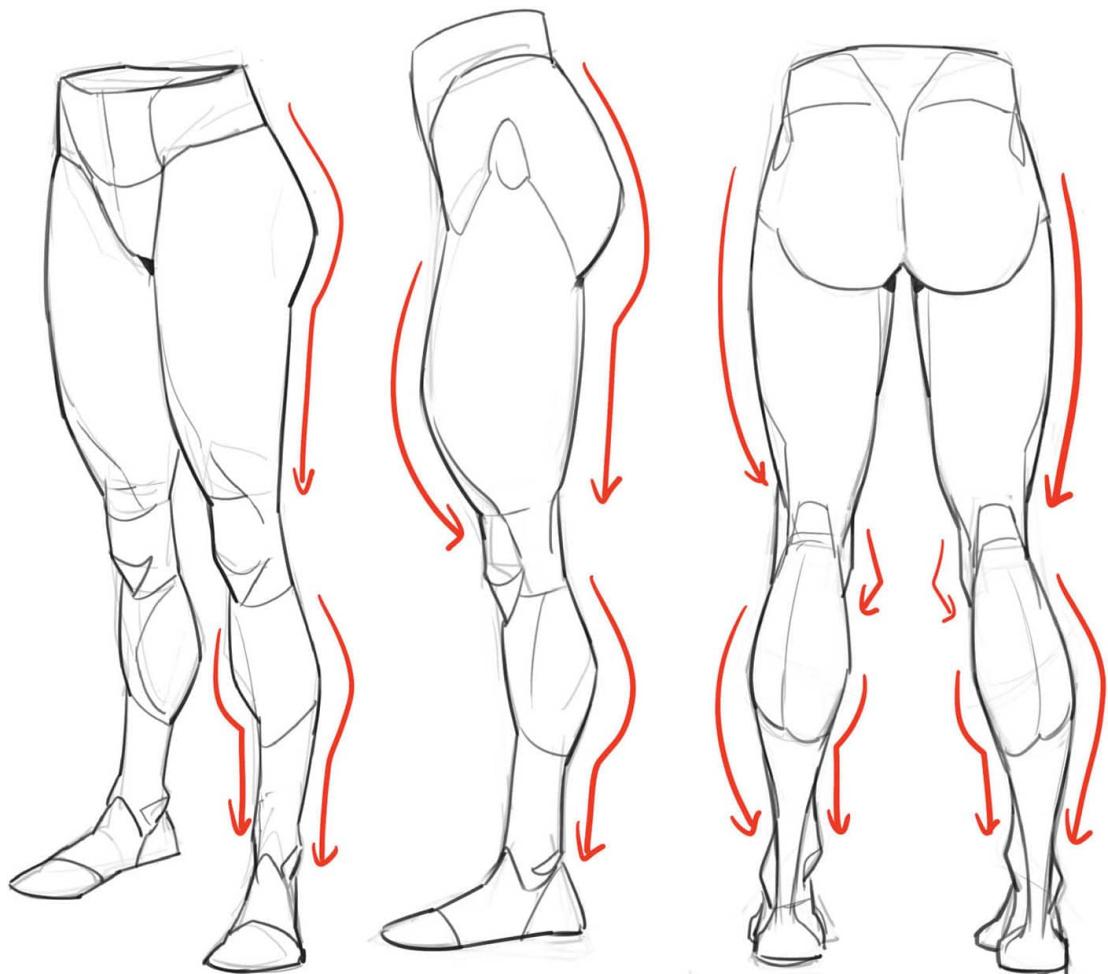
Then change the flattened paper form into a three-dimensional tube.

## LEGS

This muscular system diagram has been included to illustrate the shape of the leg. Let's practice moving from simplified form to complexity.

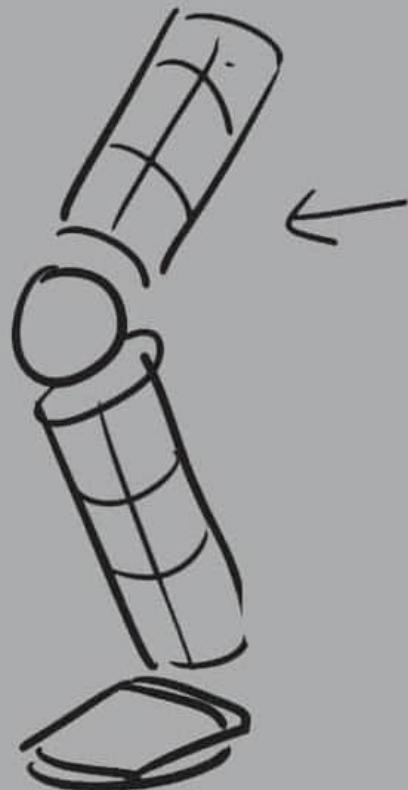


## SIMPLIFIED FORM OF THE LEG

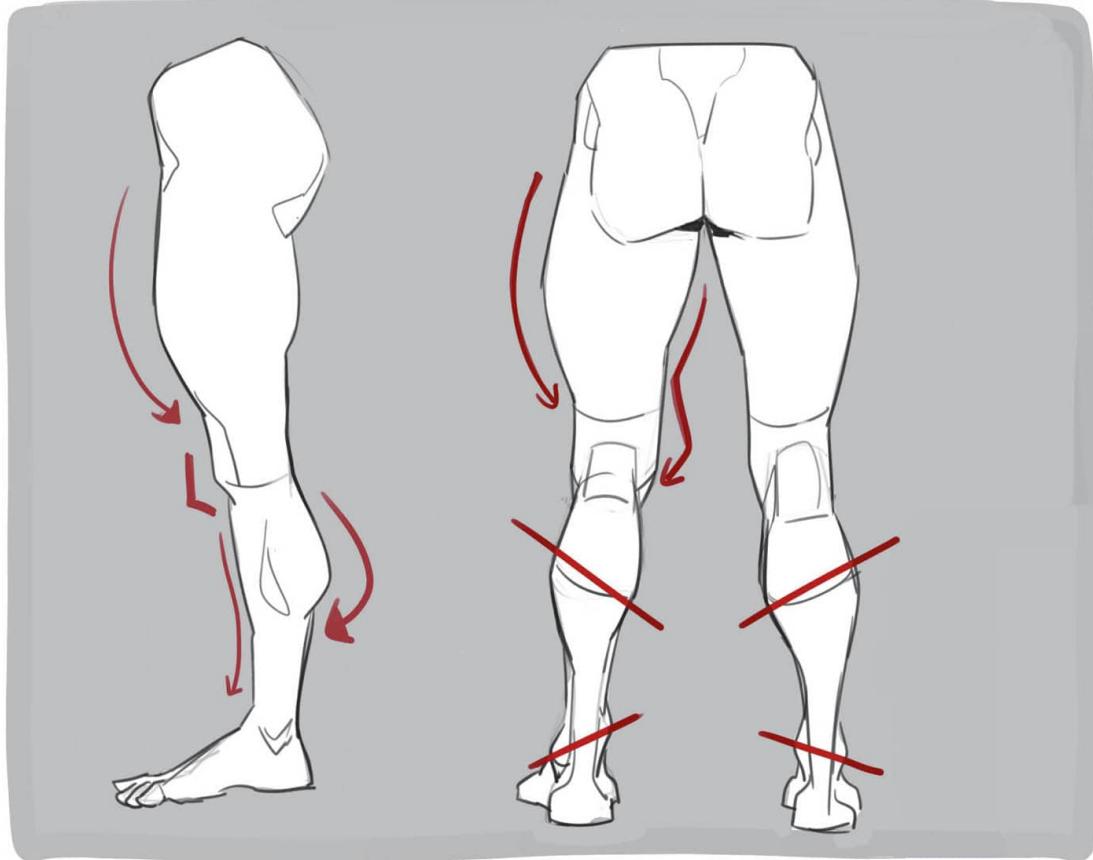


Draw along the above form, memorizing the flow of shapes marked in red.

Since the above form can be difficult to draw, many people start with this geometricized figure. But as you develop your drawing skills, you should familiarize yourself with the realistic form.



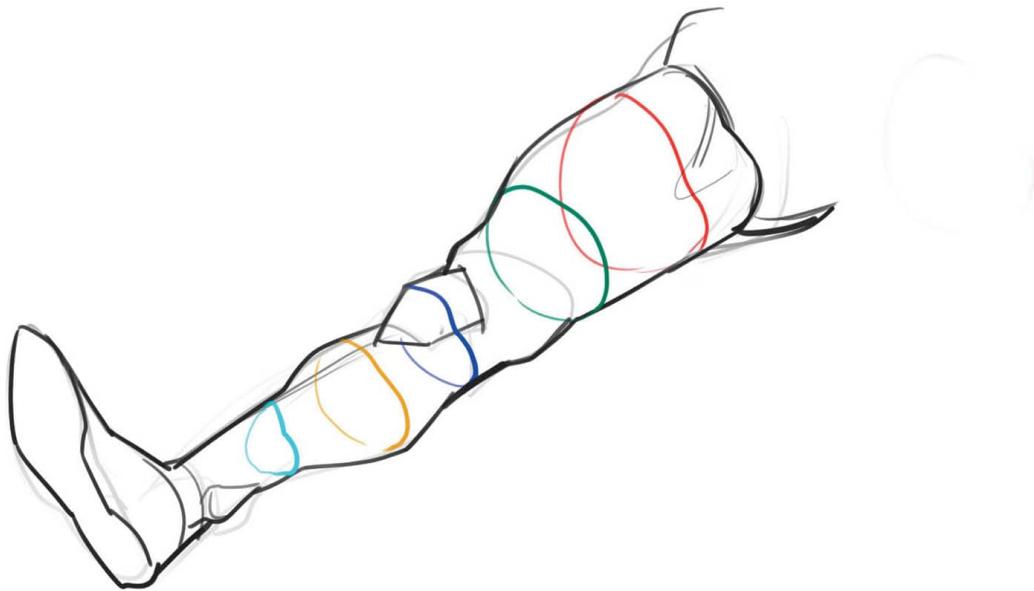
Observe the flow of the red lines along the leg to help improve your leg drawings.



### Angle of the Calf



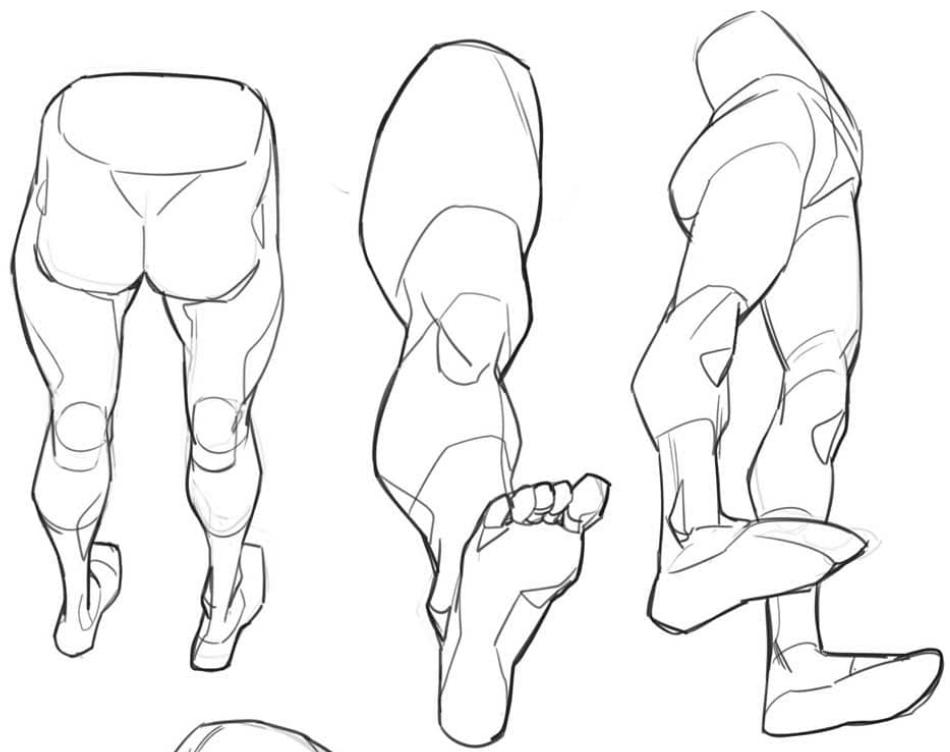
You can easily remember the angles of the calves and bones of the lower leg by thinking of an angry face.



One of the characteristics of a successful three-dimensional drawing is that it nicely captures the cross section.

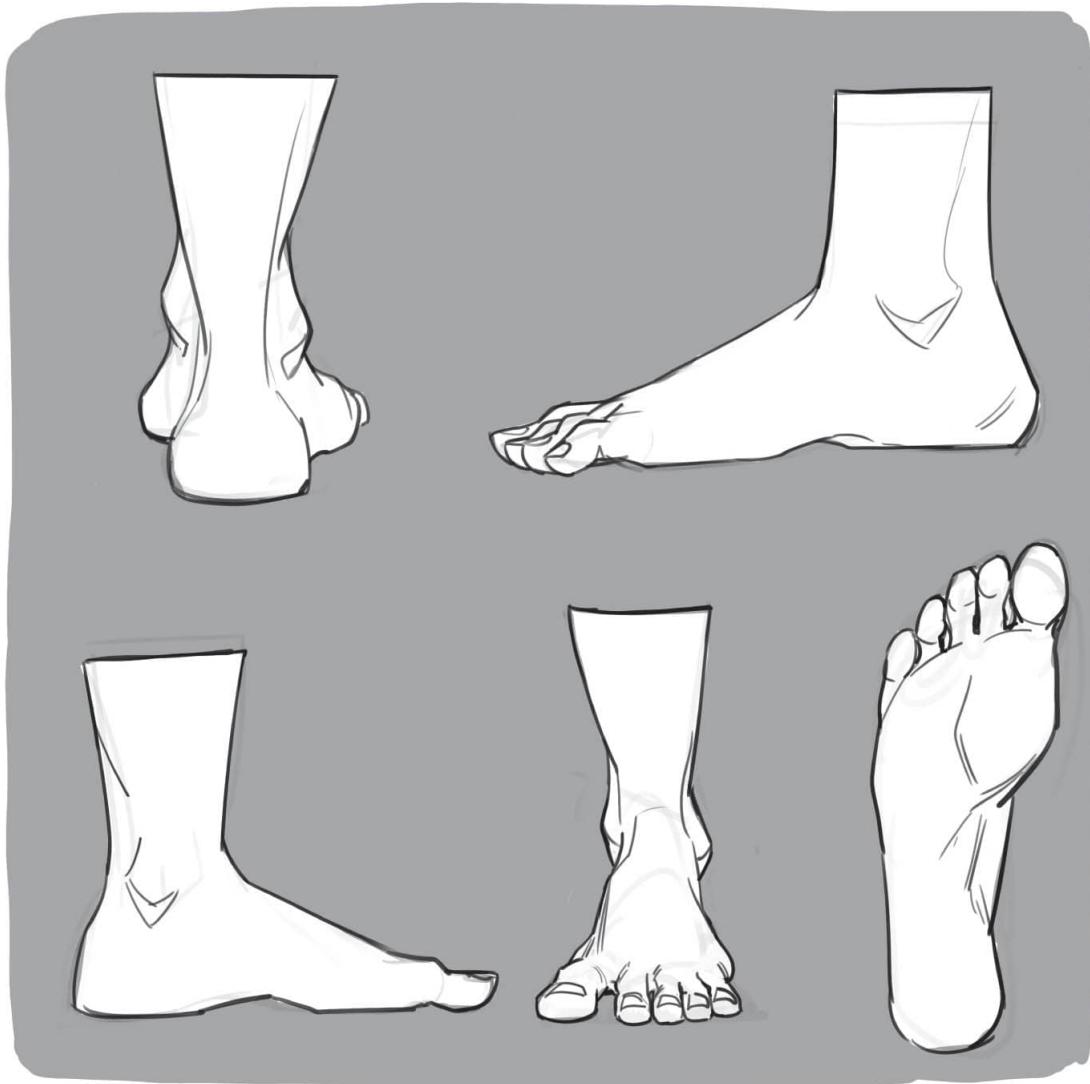
When making a drawing, consider whether the shape would work if you sliced into it visually.

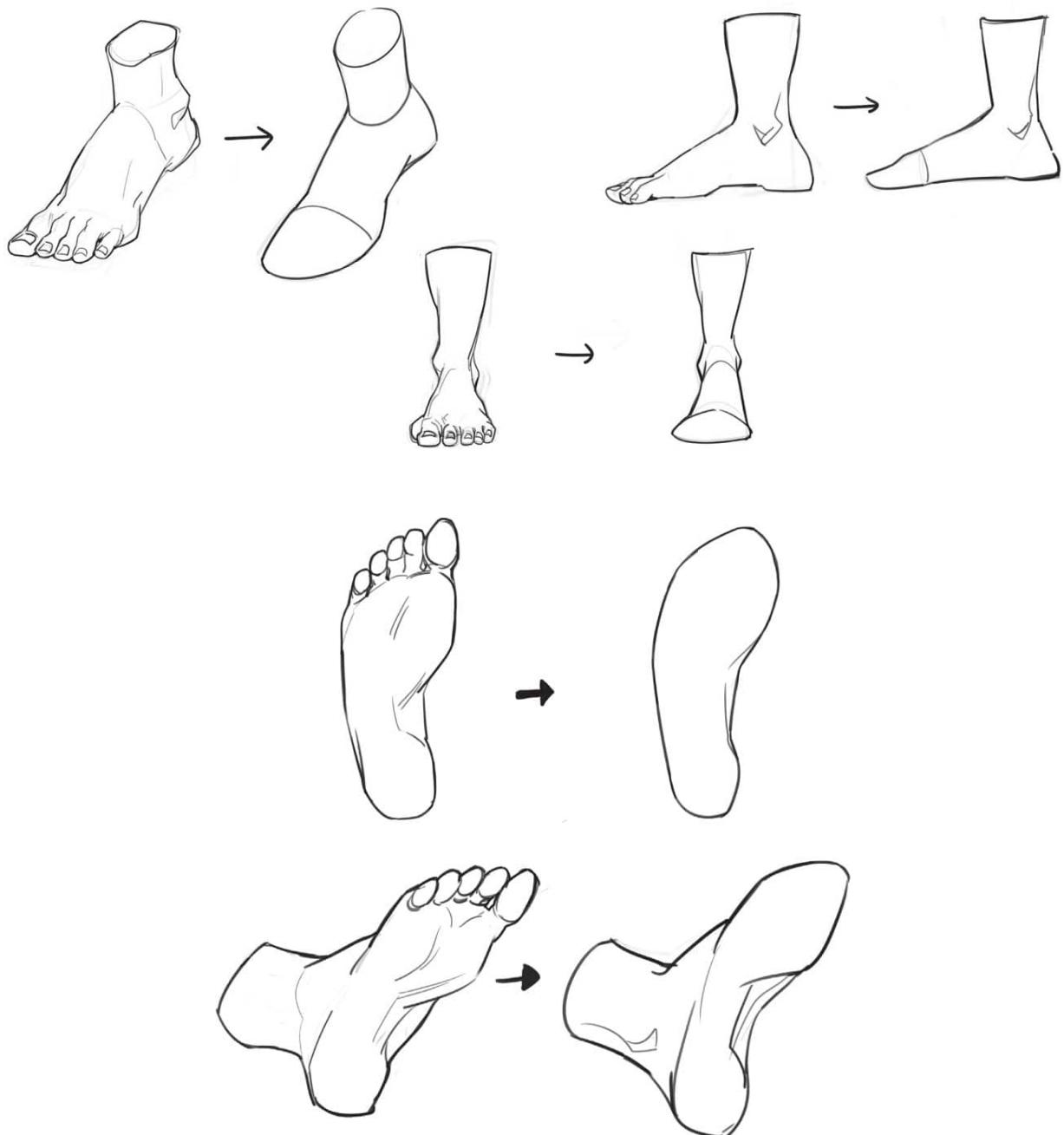
Draw the legs dimensionally from various angles.

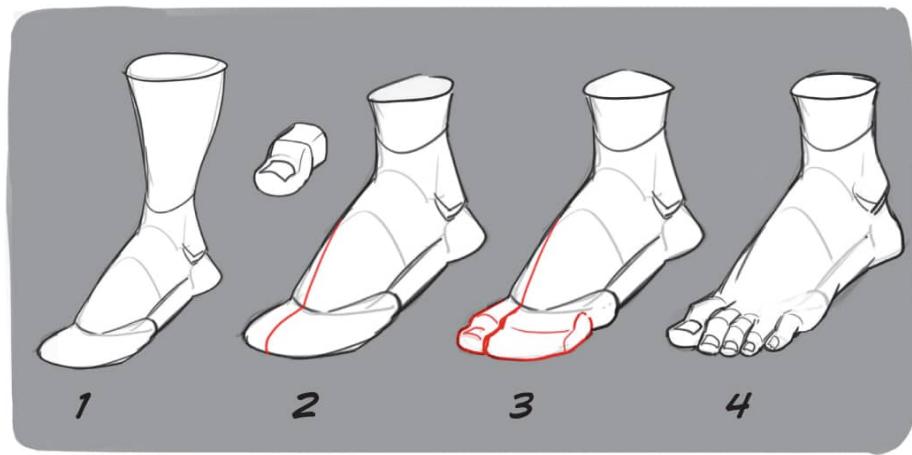


## FEET

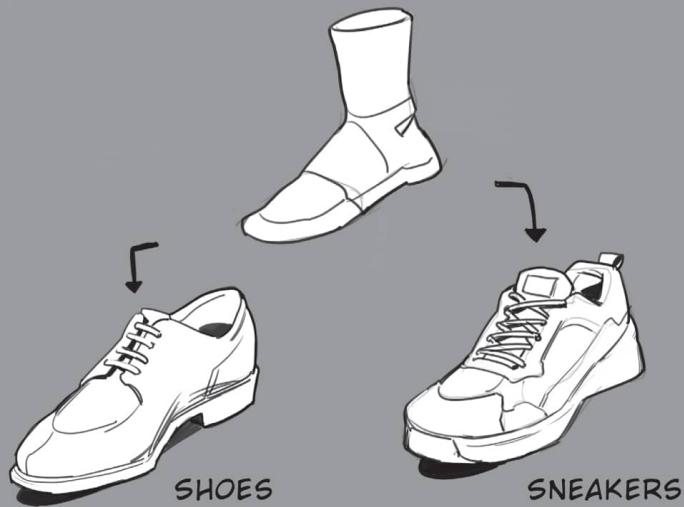
Drawings of a foot from multiple views. Unlike hands, feet aren't very fluid, so you can memorize the three-dimensional form as it is.







Once you have the basic form of the feet, you can draw shoes over it.



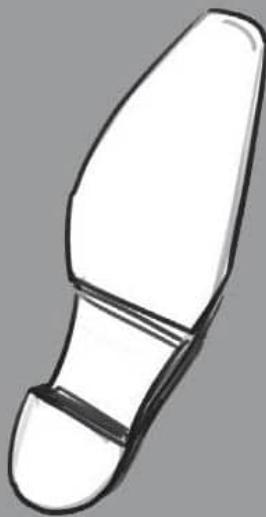
It's useful to analyze the form from various angles, then apply the appropriate one.



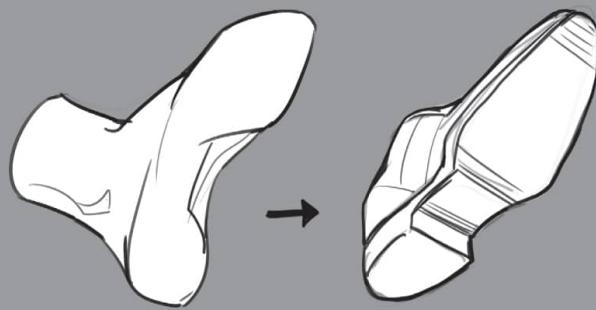
SIDE



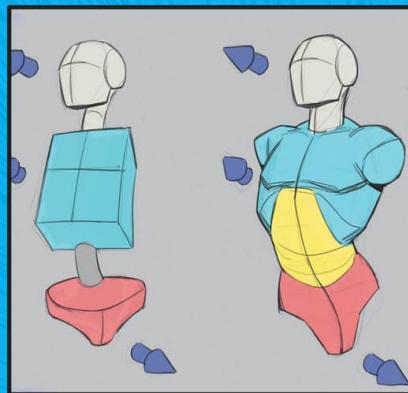
FRONT



BOTTOM

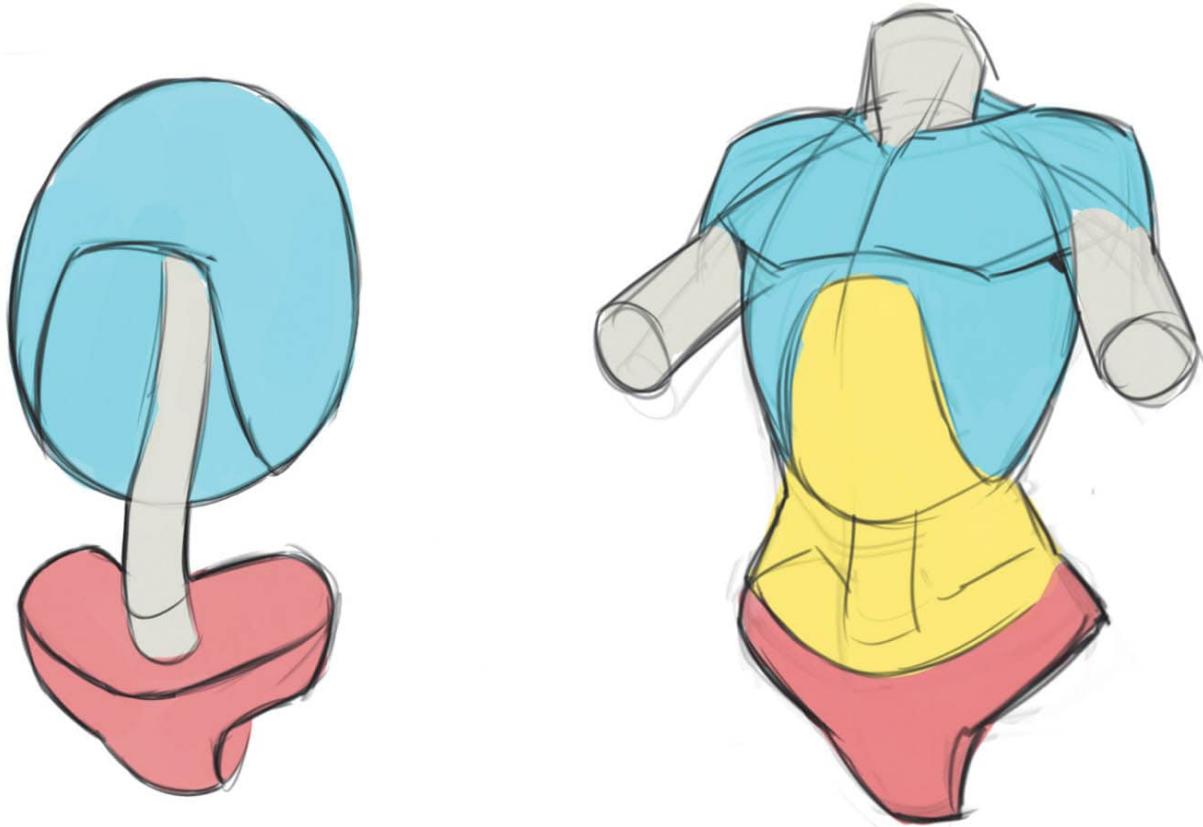


## SIMPLIFYING FORMS FOR GESTURES & POSES

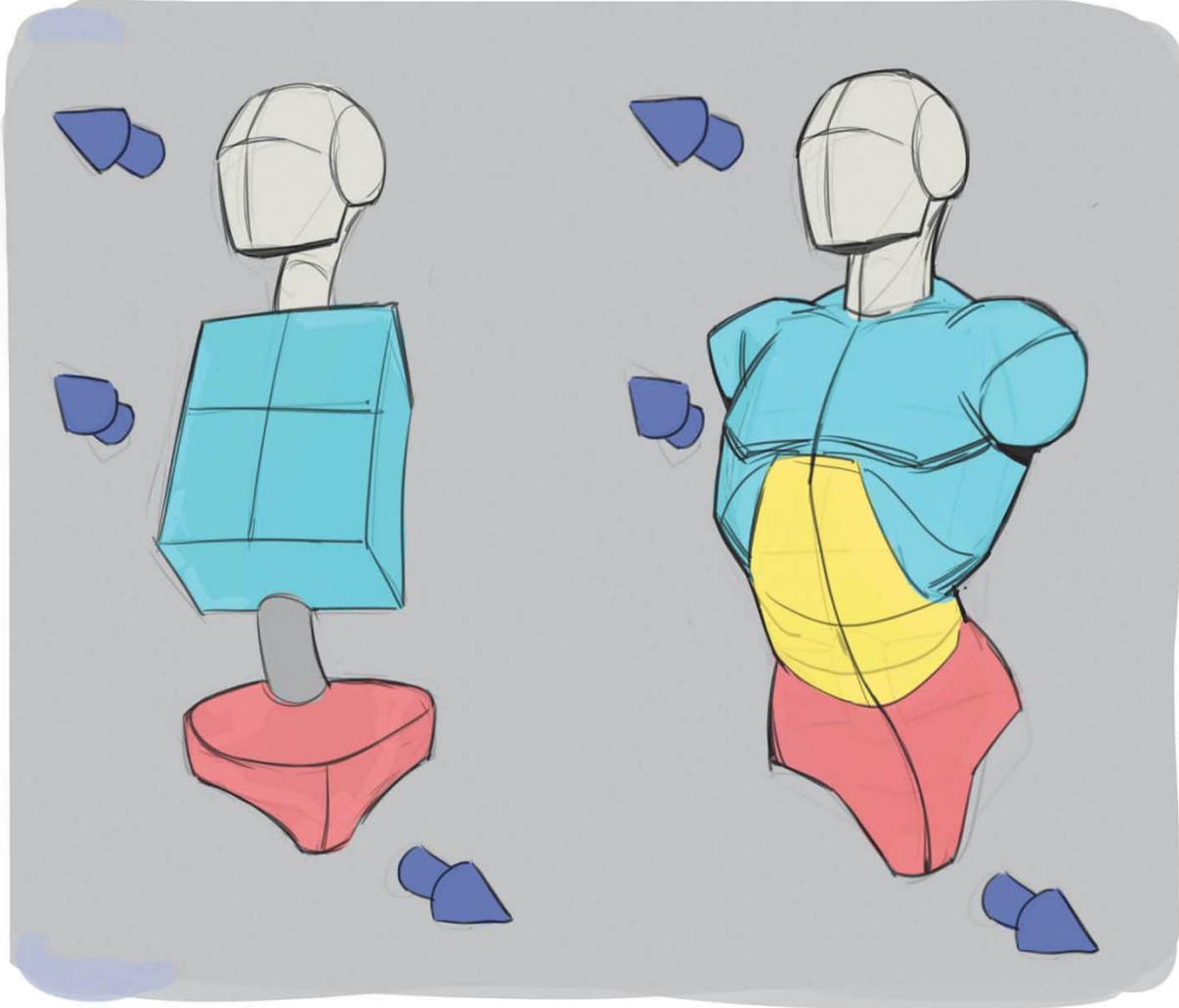


## THE BASICS OF POSES AND GESTURES

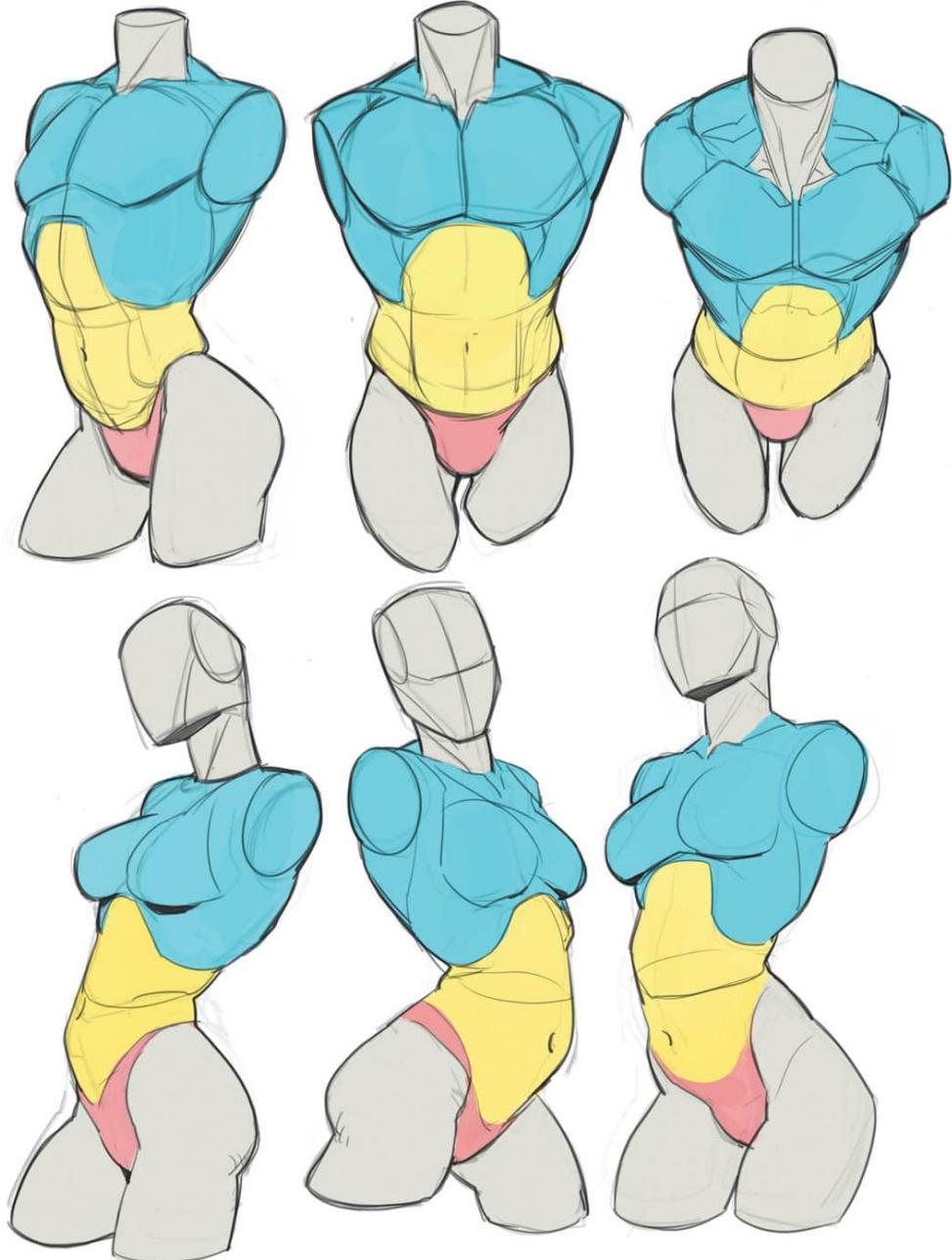
When drawing a pose or gesture, first establish the position of the chest and pelvis, then connect them through the abdomen.



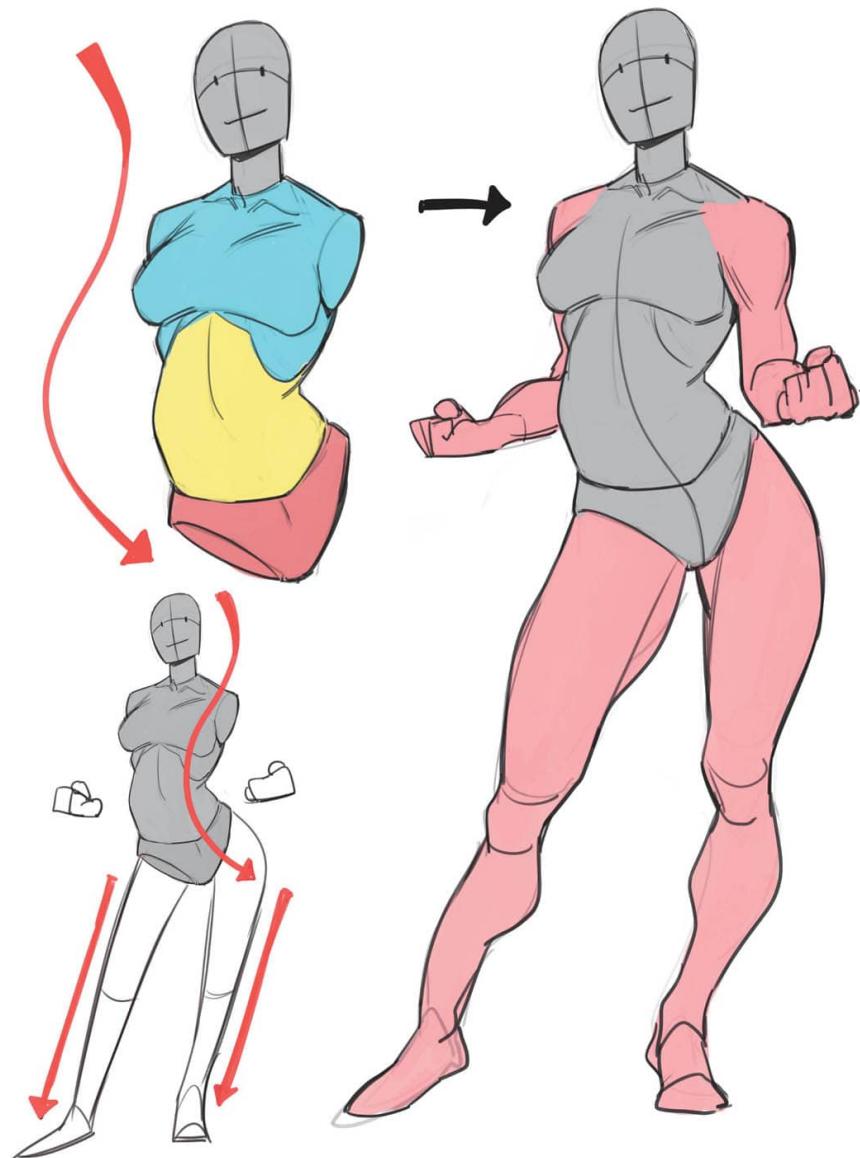
If the pose or gesture requires that the positions of the head, chest, and pelvis are all different, make sure there's a flow between and among them.



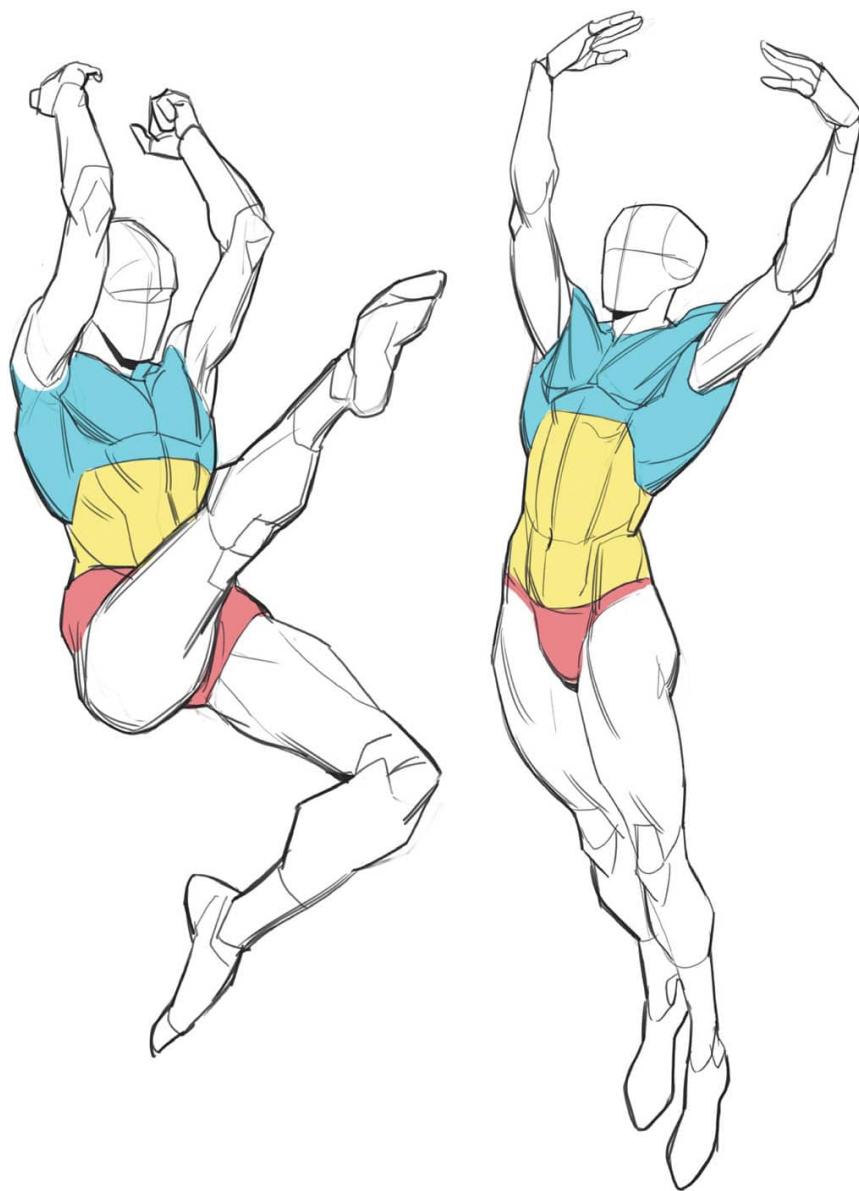
Rotate the chest and pelvis in various angles and add muscles to make the drawing more natural.



## EXPLORING GESTURES

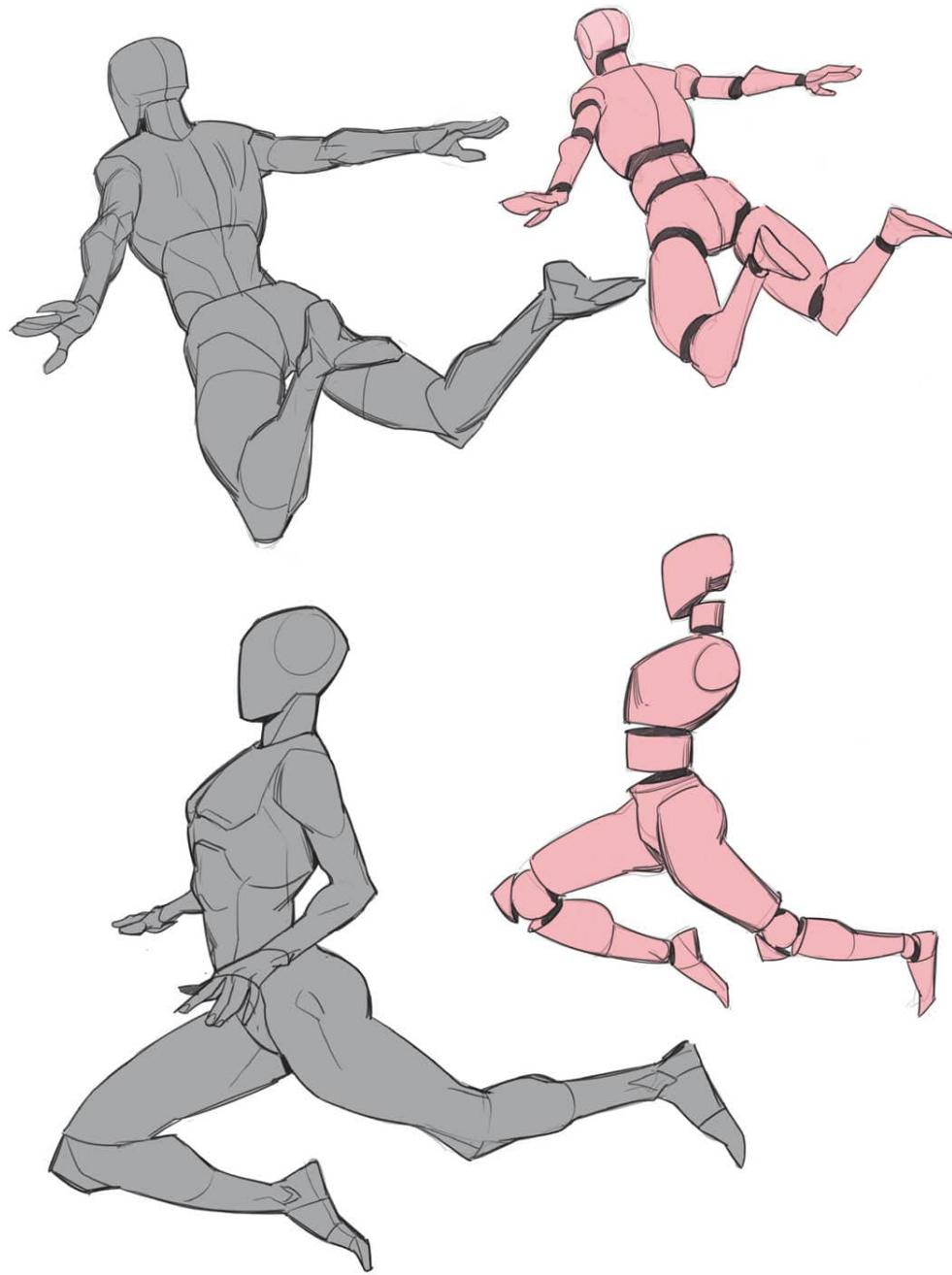


Draw the legs and hands once you have the overall gesture.

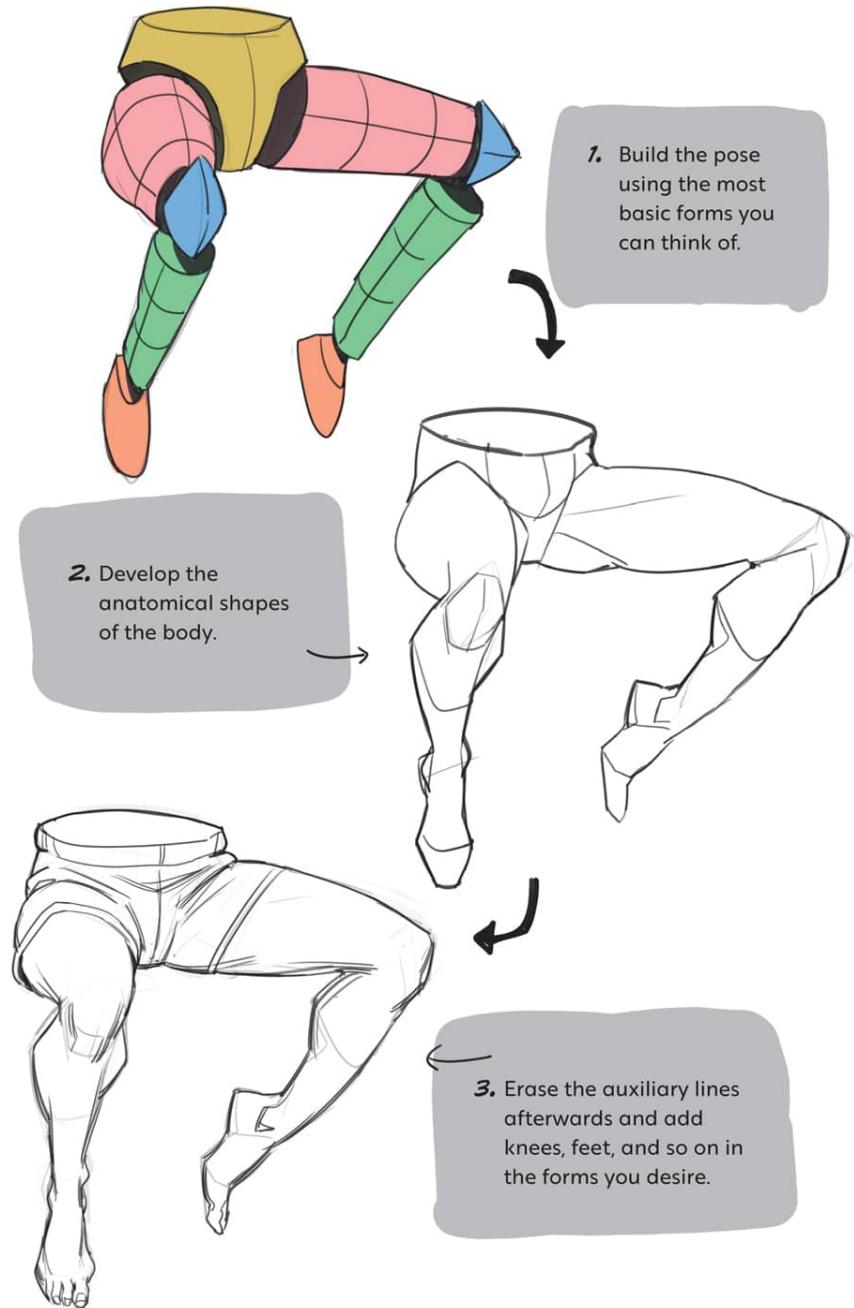


With any pose, it's easier to draw in this order: gesture, body, legs, and arms.

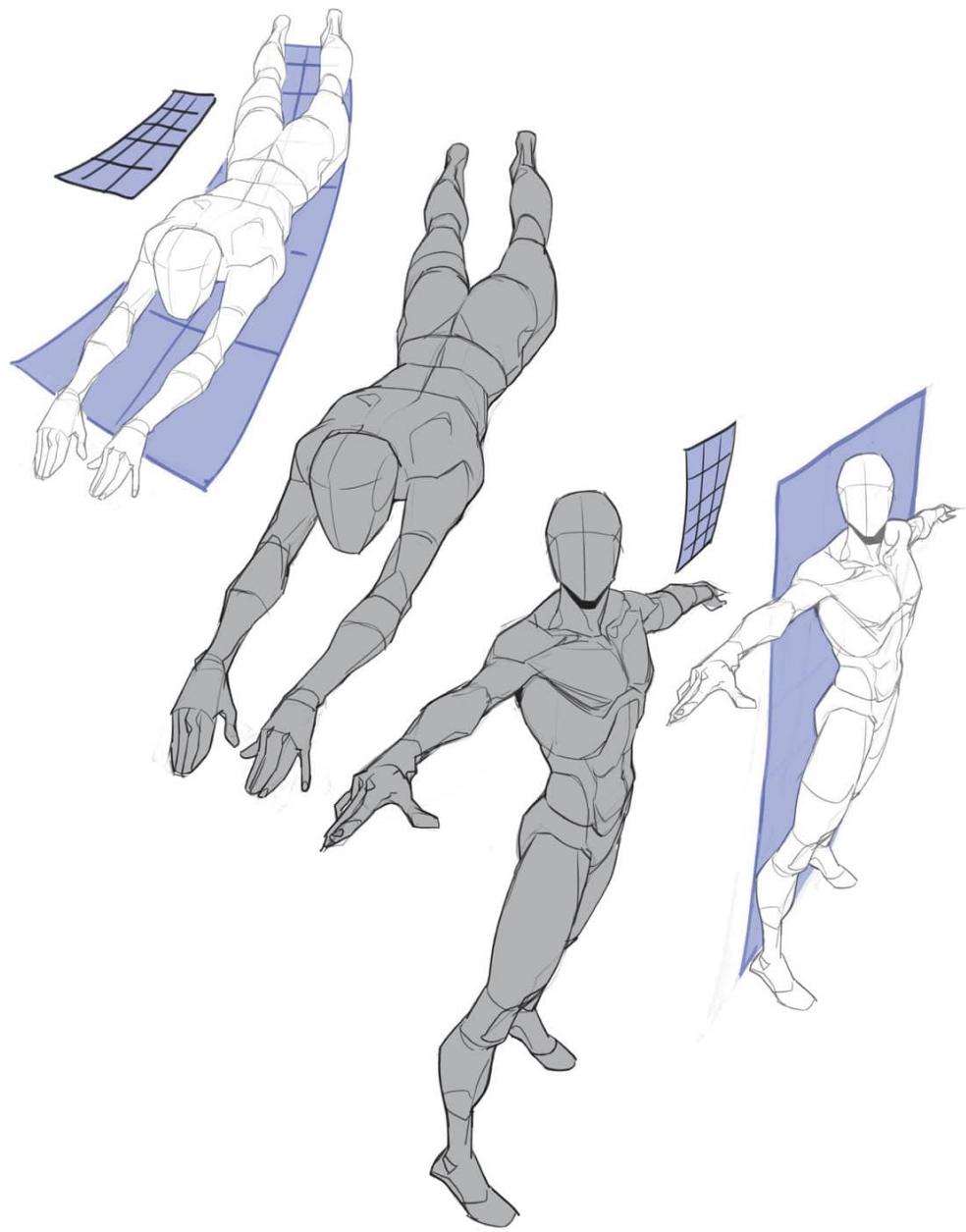
## *DEVELOPING GESTURES*



It's much easier to build poses three-dimensionally if you begin with simple shapes.

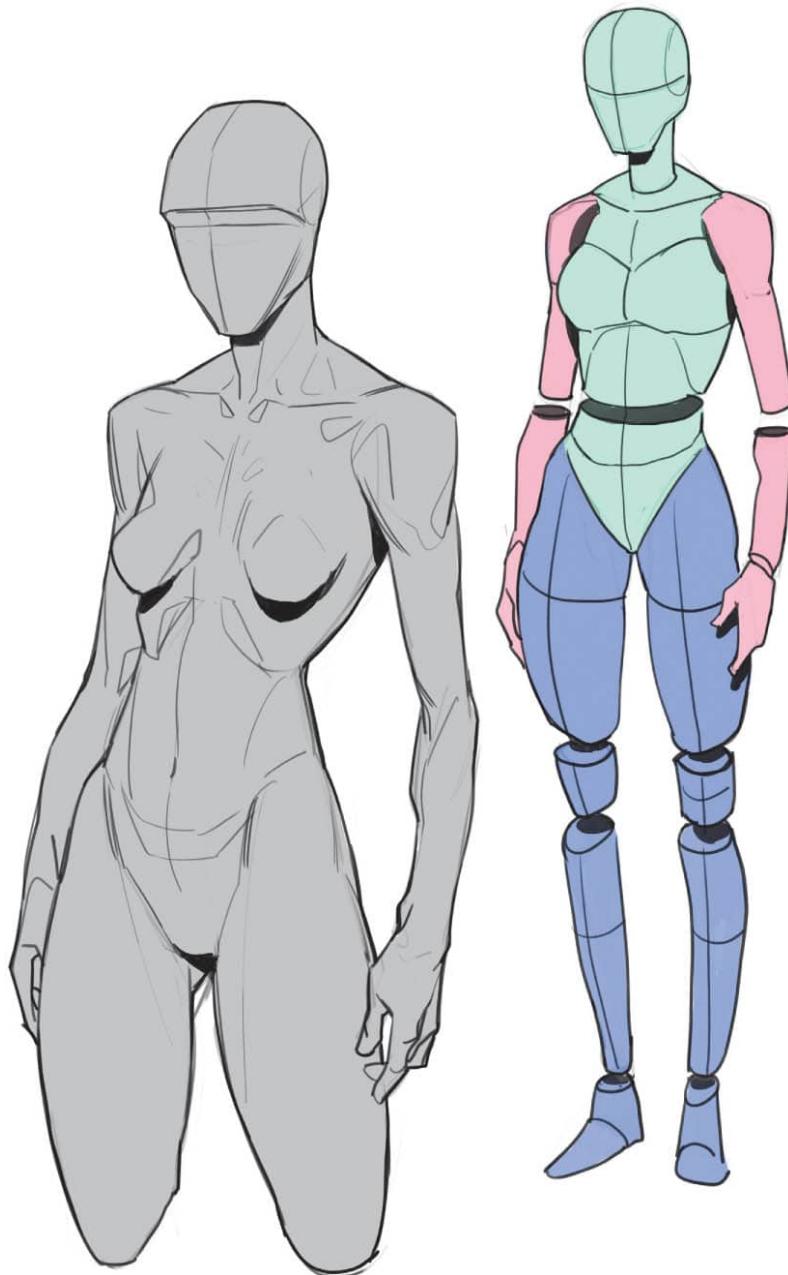


You can also draw a three-dimensional human shape based on a simple dimensional drawing plan.



## EXPLORING DIFFERENT ANGLES

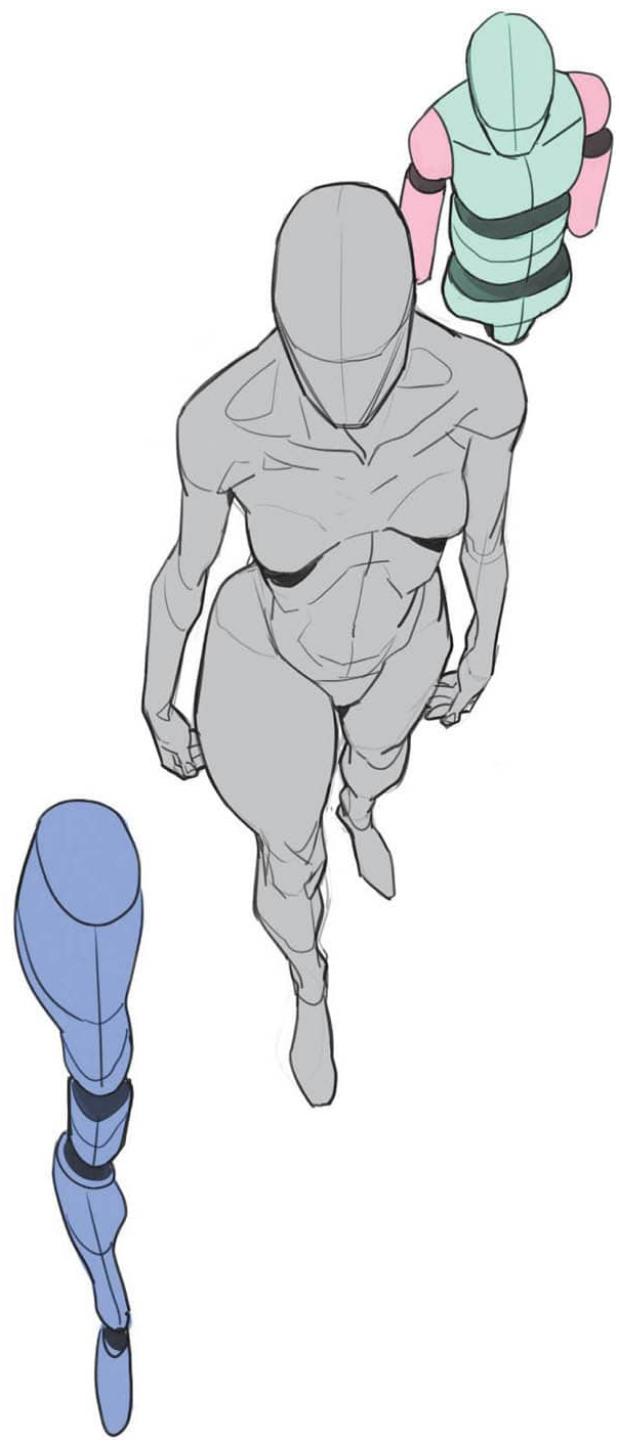
An anterior three-quarter view of the female figure



When drawing figures from a low angle, build the form pointing upright.



For figures drawn from a high angle, build the form pointing downward.



## HOW A POSE CAN SUPPORT A STORY

In this example, a character is sleeping while sitting up. First, try various sleeping poses using a basic figure to determine which one best serves the story and the character.

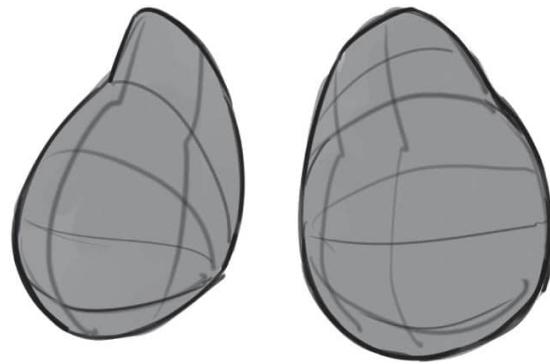


Once you've developed a pose, practice adding a scene to the drawing, bit by bit.

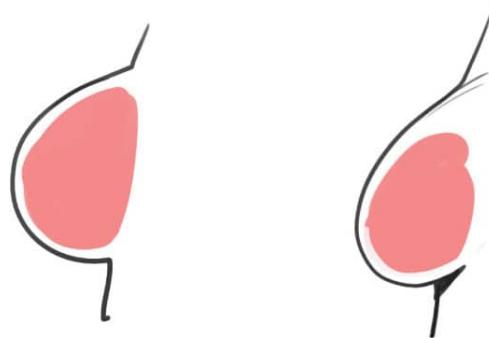


# HOW TO DRAW BREASTS (ON FEMALE AND MALE CHARACTERS)





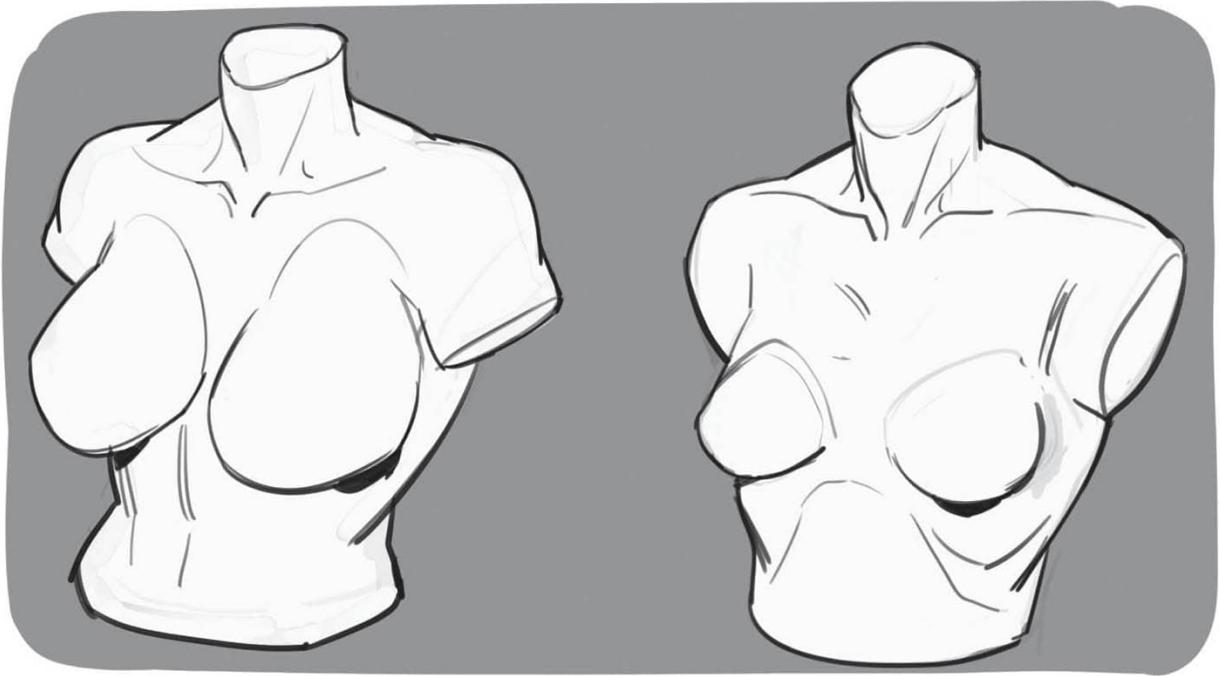
Female breasts look like teardrops or water balloons.



Draw them in a slightly sagging form instead of like a half-circle or a rice bowl.

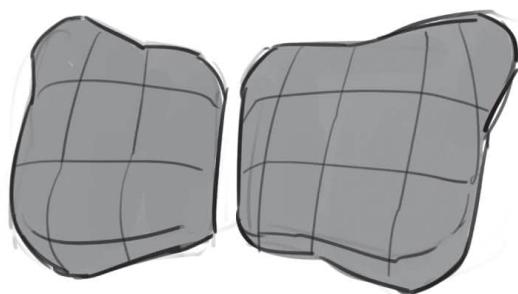
The heavier the breasts, the deeper their curves.

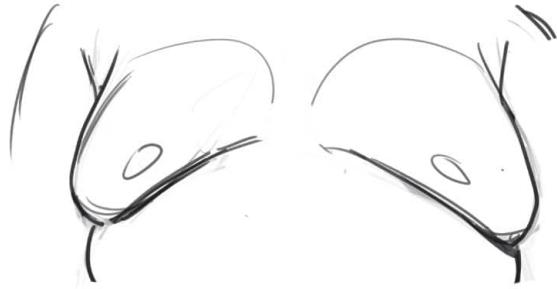
Draw smaller breasts to point more upwards





Male breasts are shaped like pads, as shown below.

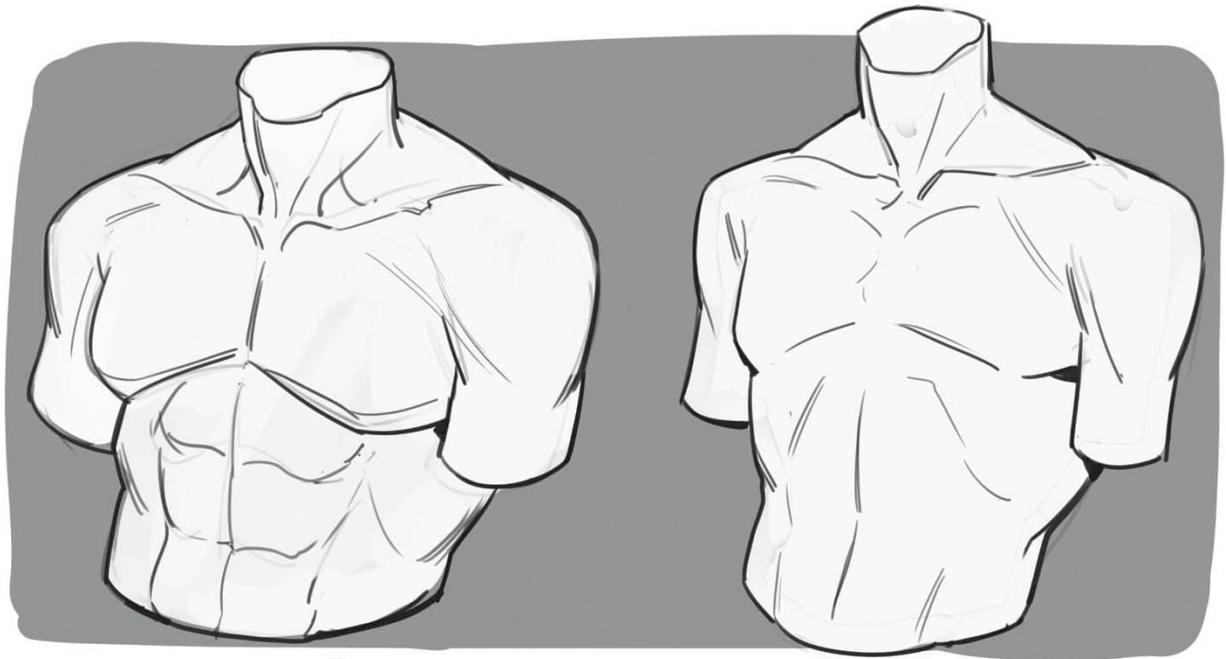




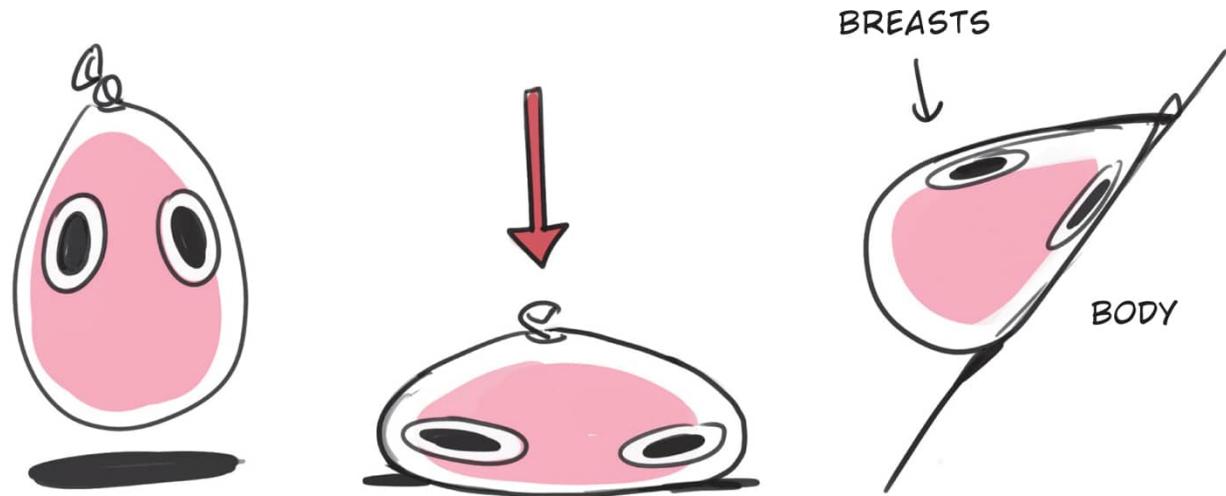
The breasts of a man with excess weight tend to have a heavier sag.

The shapes of heavier chests, which have more muscle and fat, are more pronounced.

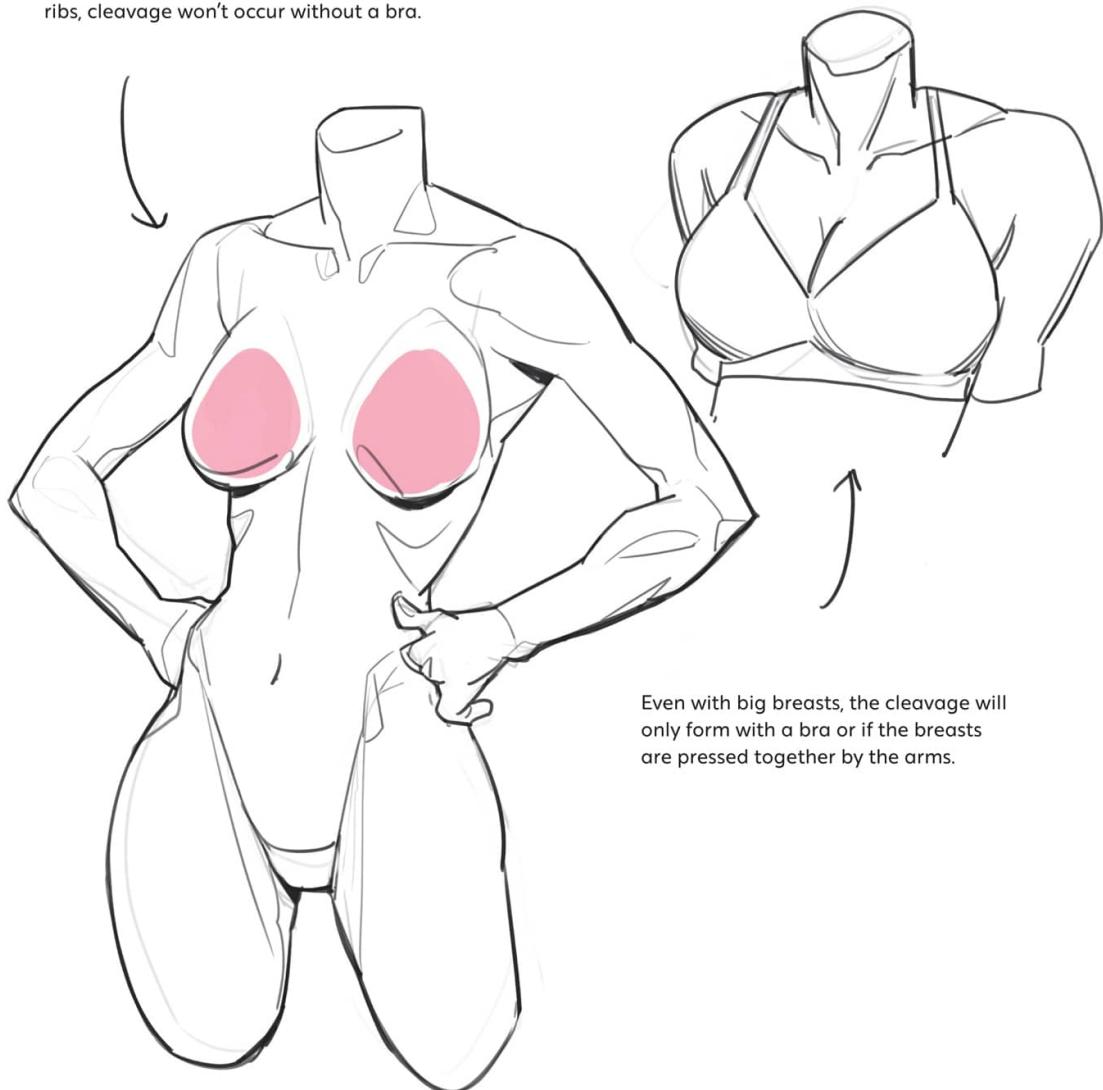
In small chests, the thin muscles and sternum become prominent.



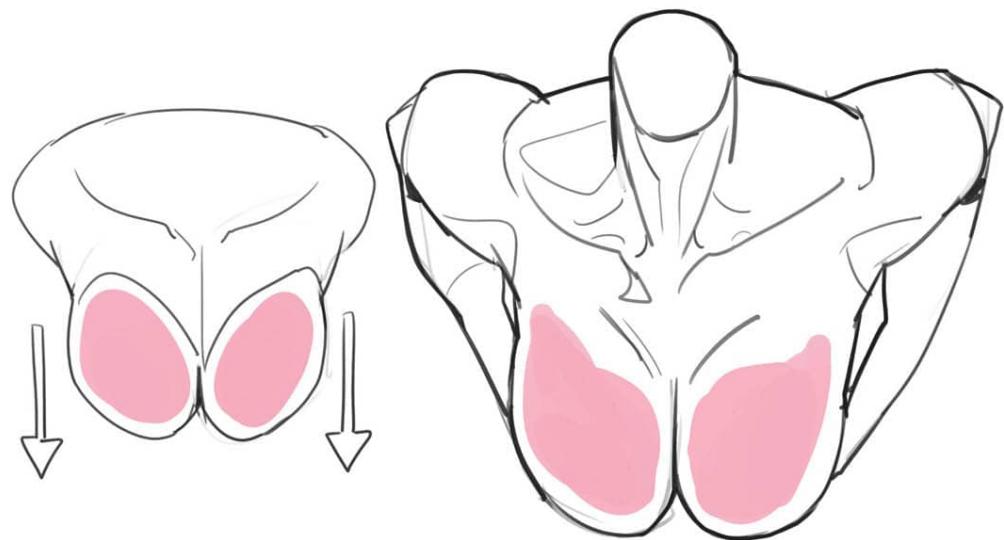
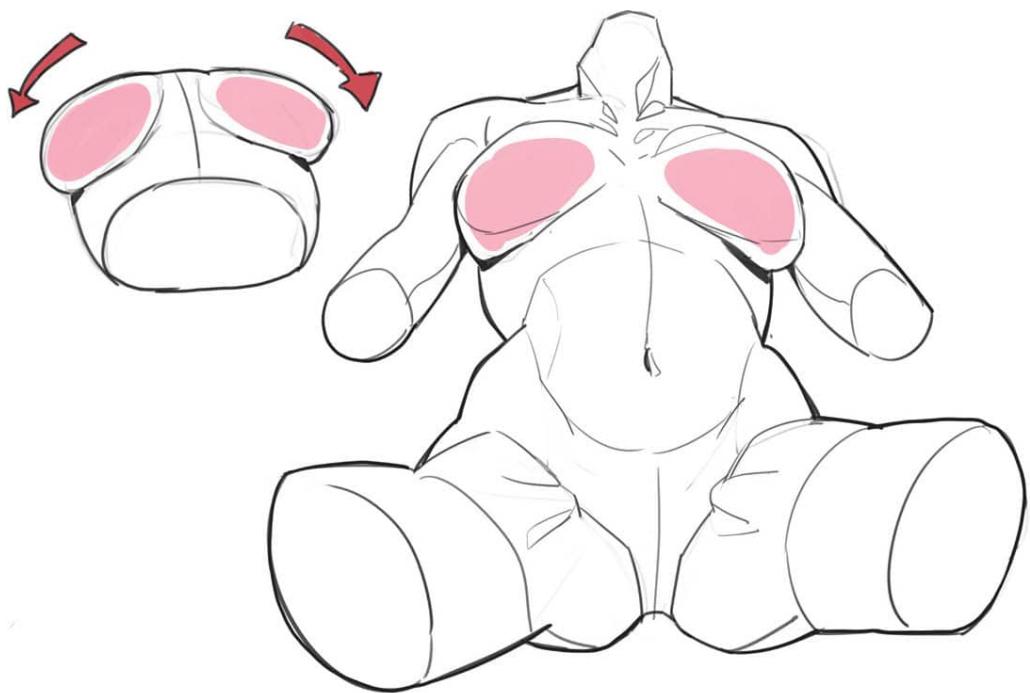
## FEMALE CLEAVAGE



Since the breasts sit on the exterior of the ribs, cleavage won't occur without a bra.



Even with big breasts, the cleavage will only form with a bra or if the breasts are pressed together by the arms.

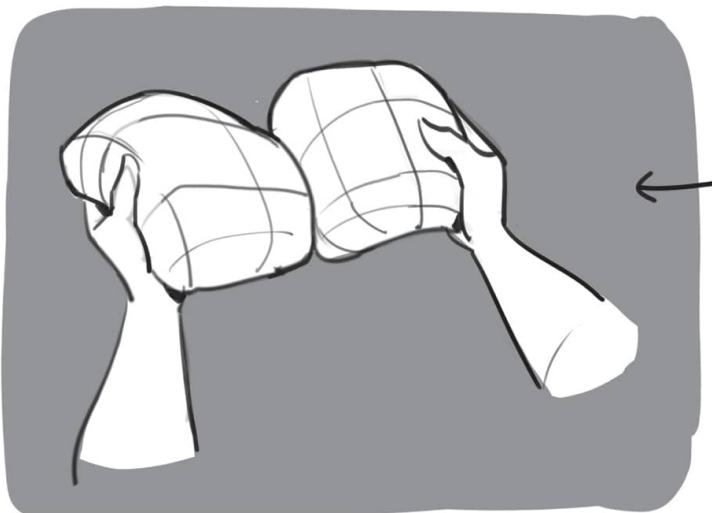
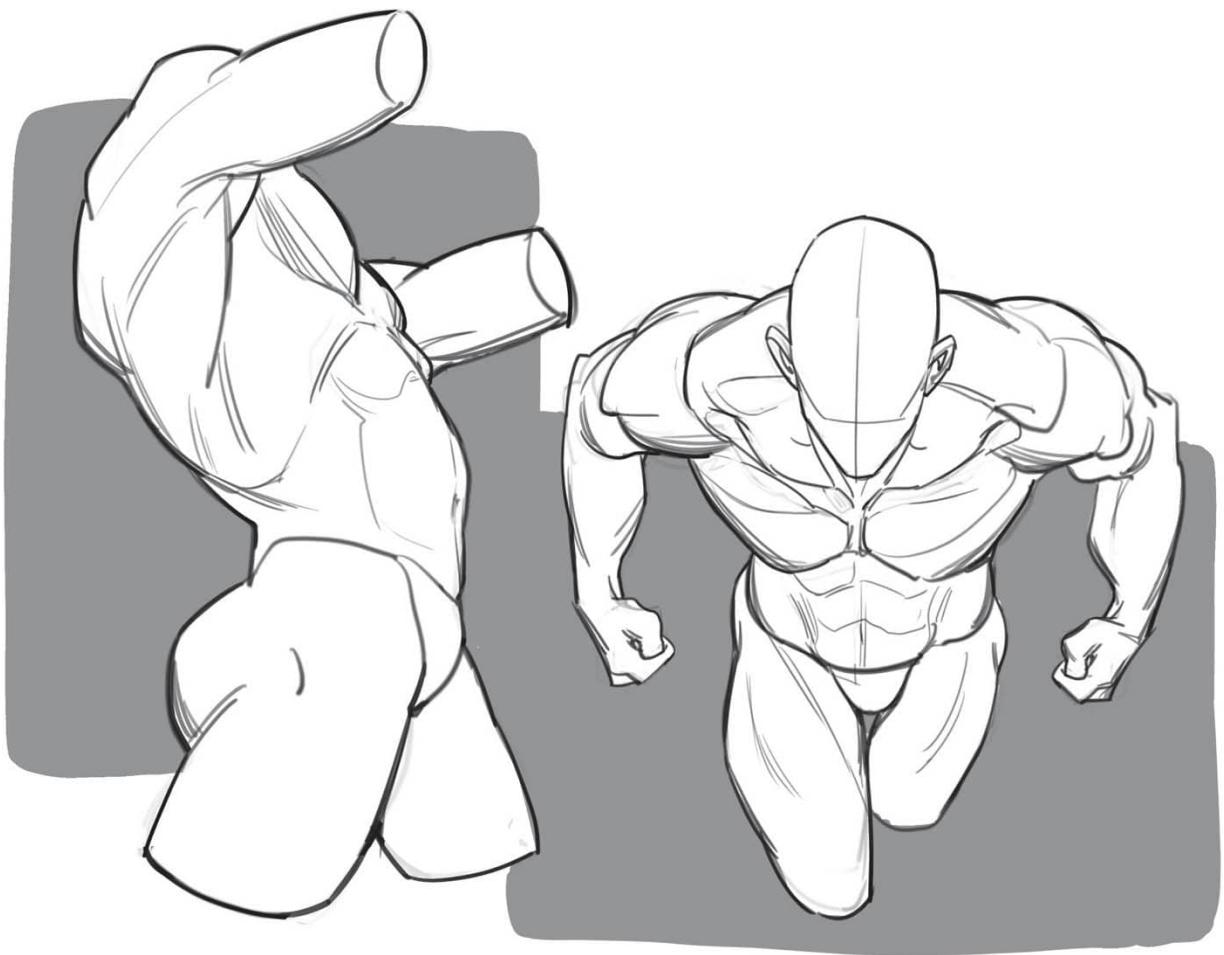


Try adding or attaching breasts to the body in various positions.

## MALE CLEAVAGE



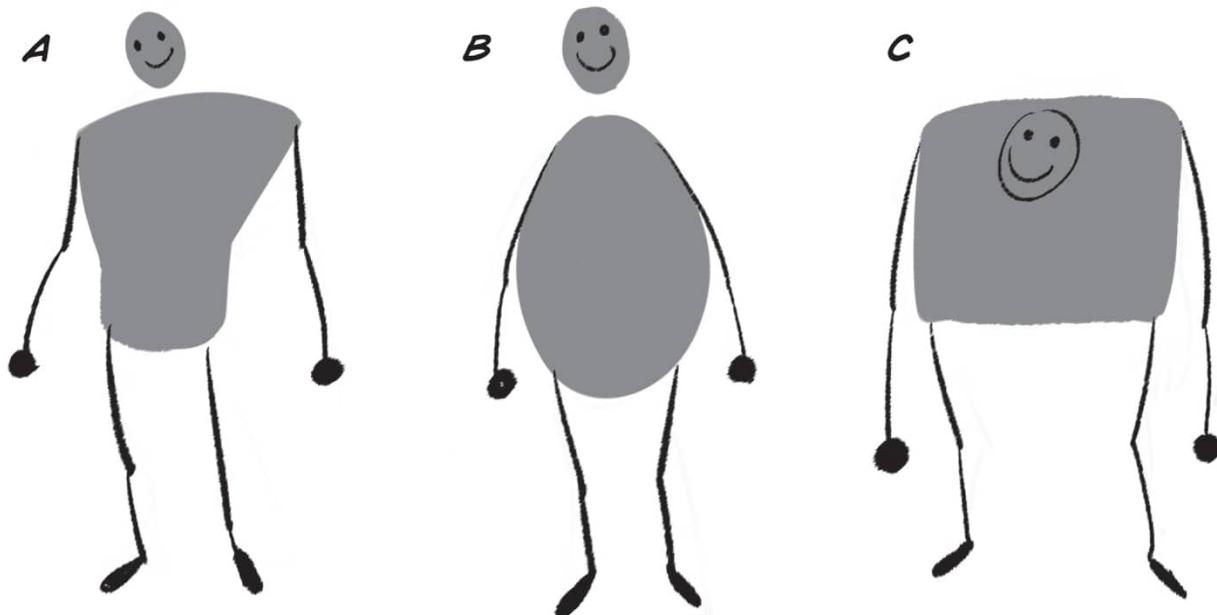
Since the breasts are connected to the clavicle, humerus, and rib cage, their shapes vary greatly, depending on the gestures.



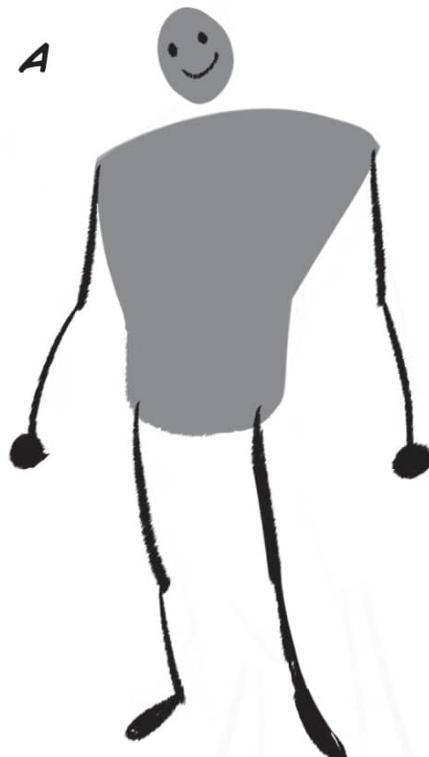
It's useful to think of lean and muscular chests as two pads rubbing together.

## ADJUSTING BODY SHAPE TO FIT A CHARACTER

By using basic shapes as the basis for a drawing, you can build character shapes of various forms (A, B, and C).



A



=





Long legs and a broad chest can be an idea for characterization. Try drawing a character based on these proportions.



When drawing a plump person, try concentrating on the volume of fat rather than the underlying structure of the skeleton.



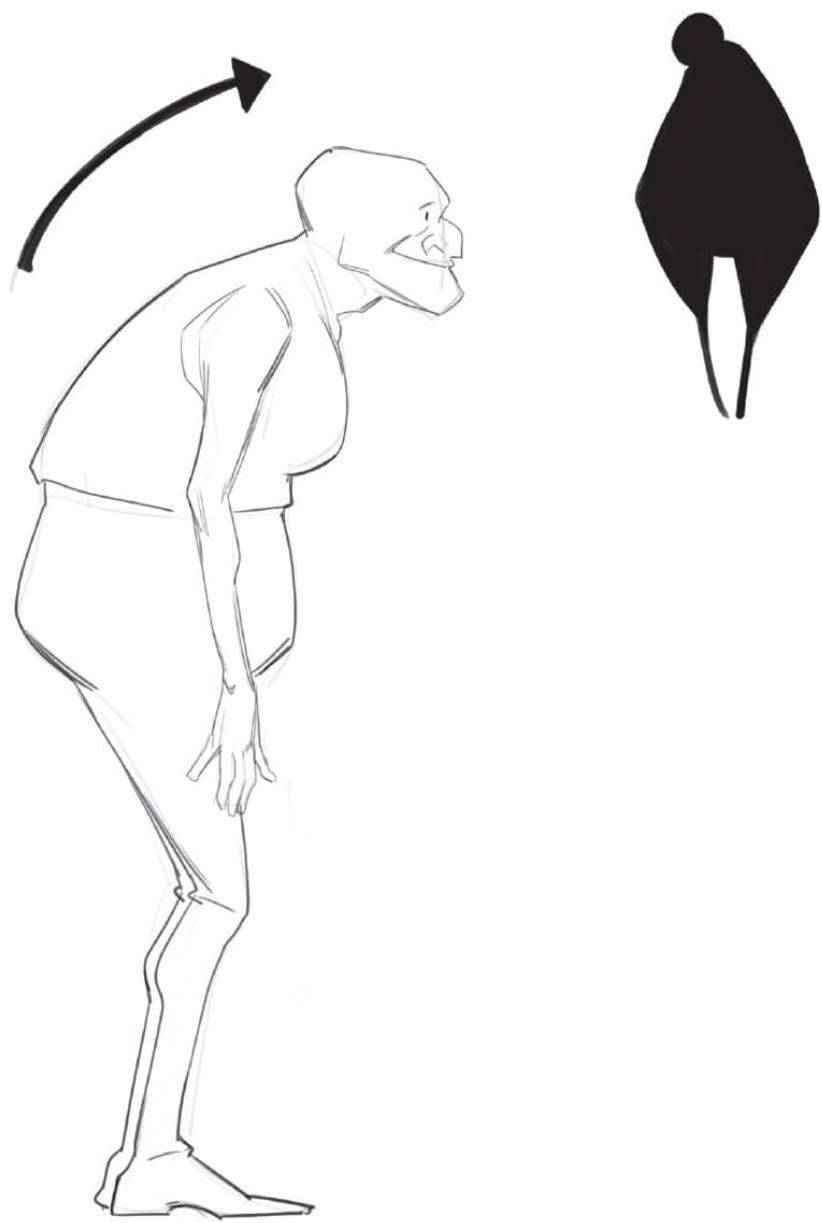
A chunk of submental fat is formed under the chin.



Even if a character's shape is exaggerated, it can be blended with the anatomy, as shown here.



SIMPLIFYING FORMS FOR GESTURES & POSES



With age, the spaces between the vertebrae shrink, resulting in a relatively shorter upper-body length.





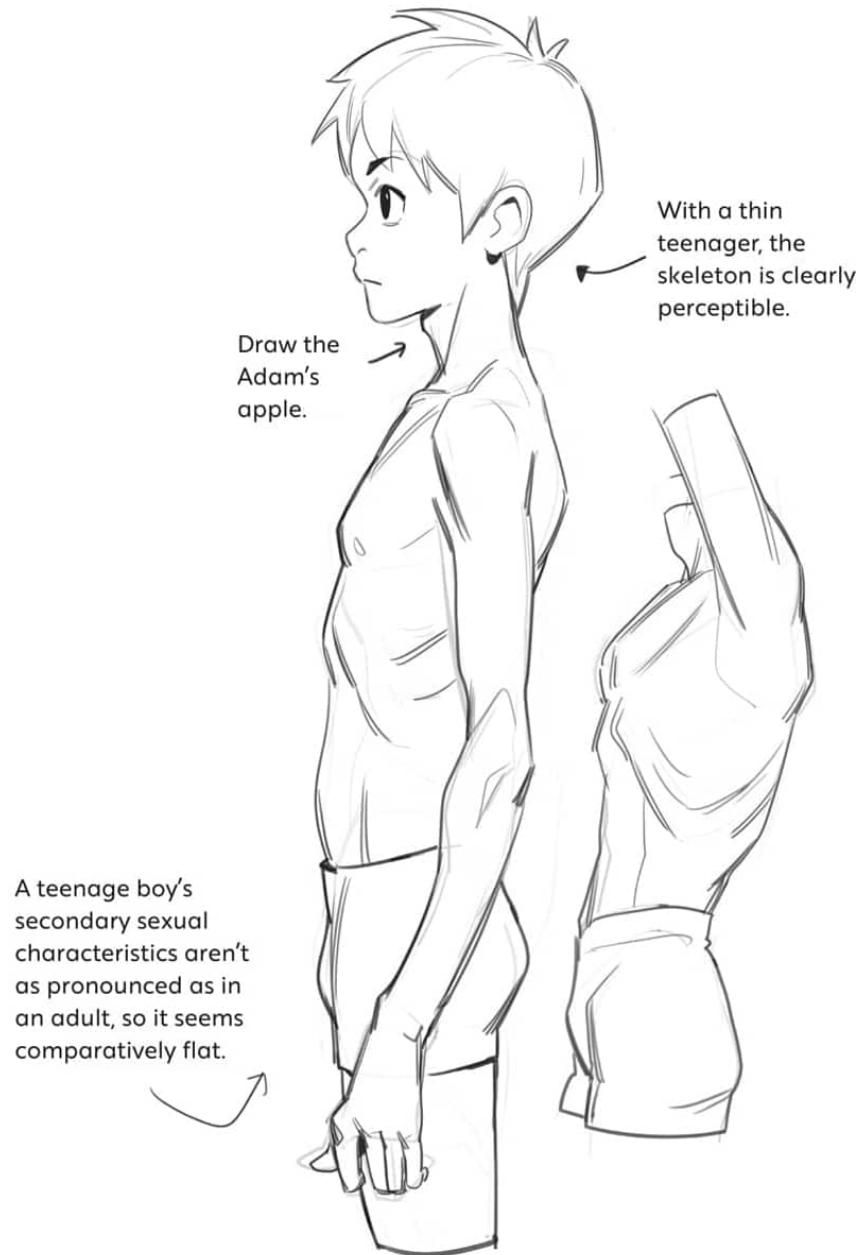
The proportion of the jaw is often enlarged due to worn-out jaw cartilage or a loss of teeth.

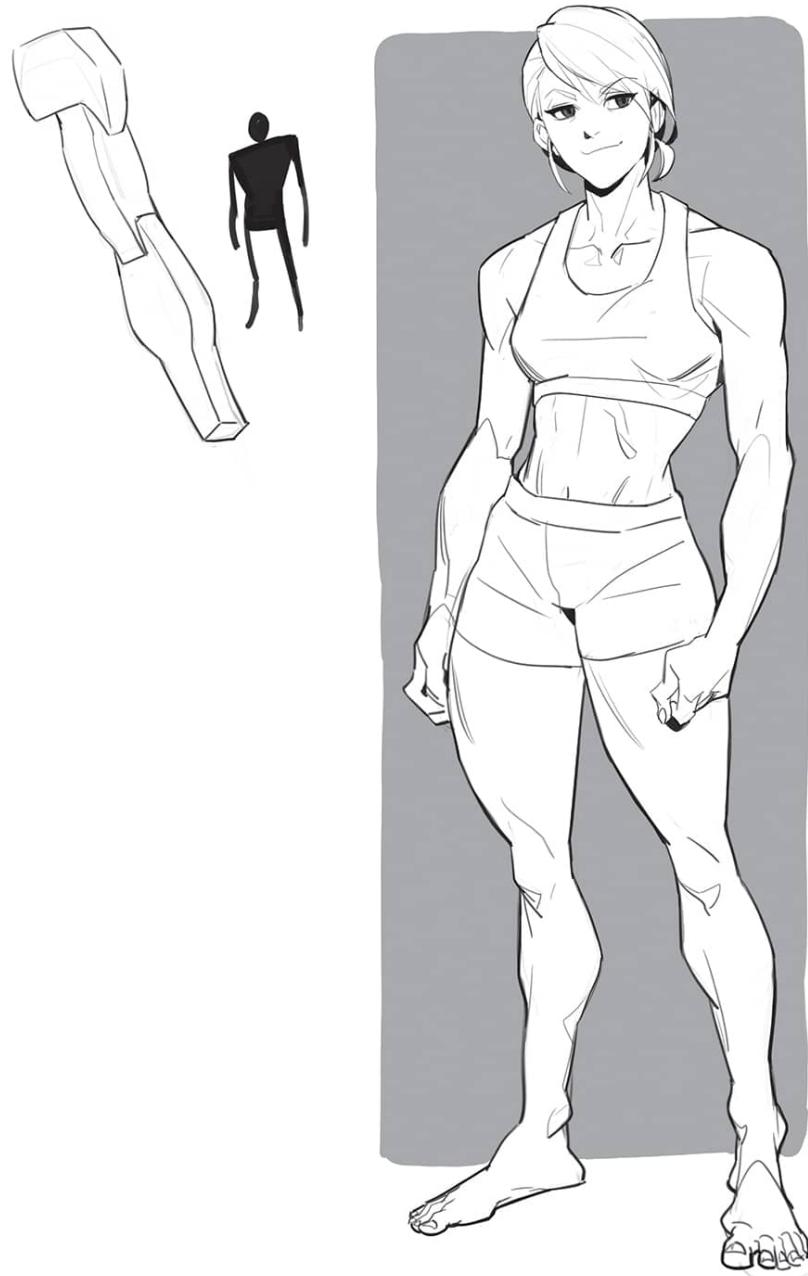


When the head is raised like this, the outer muscles of the neck become more prominent.



For younger characters, the head is relatively large in proportion to the body overall.

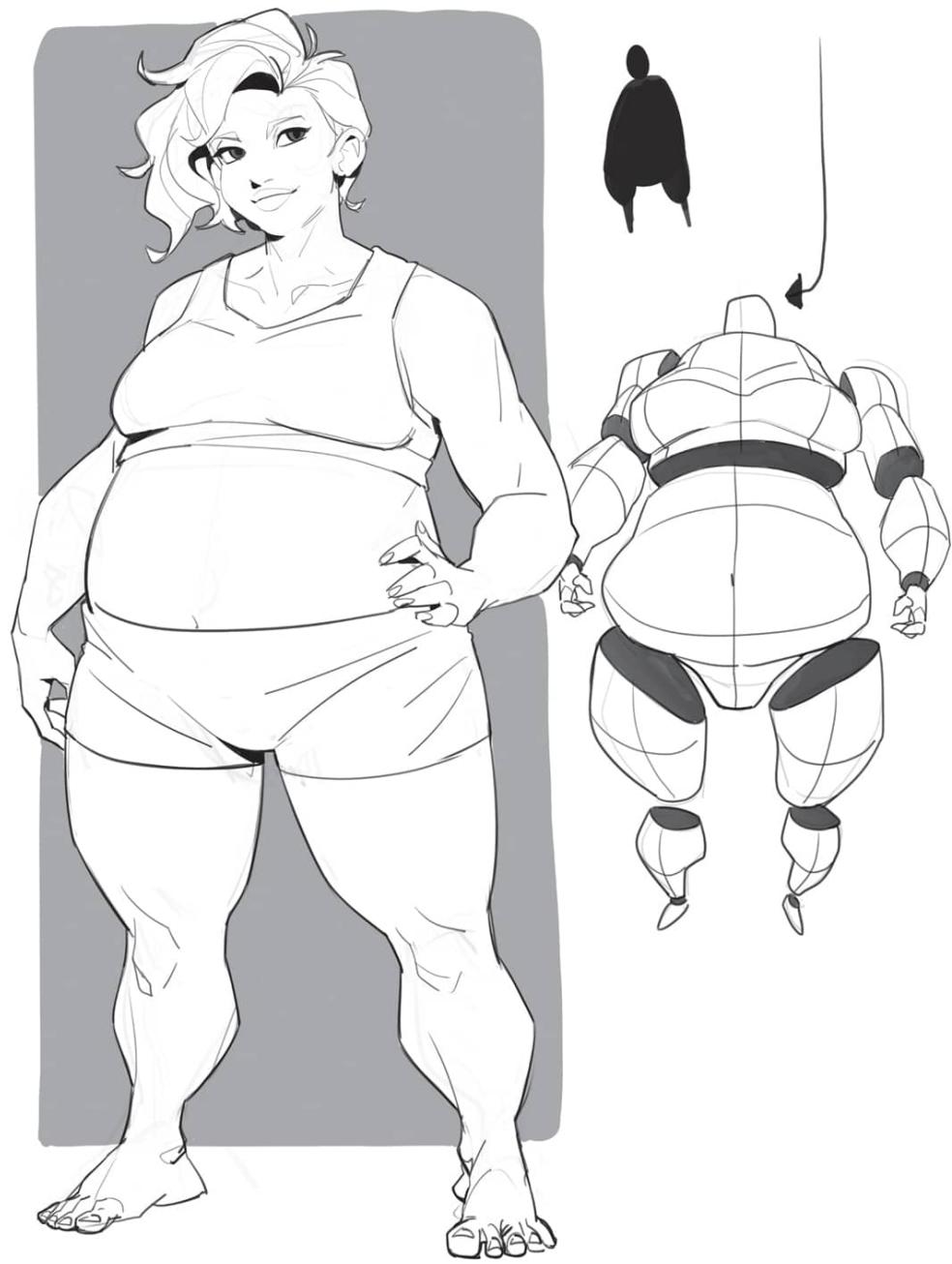




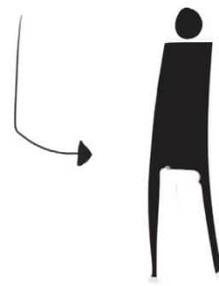
An inverted triangle is quite suitable for emphasizing classic feminine shape.

You just need to highlight  
the pelvic shape a little.

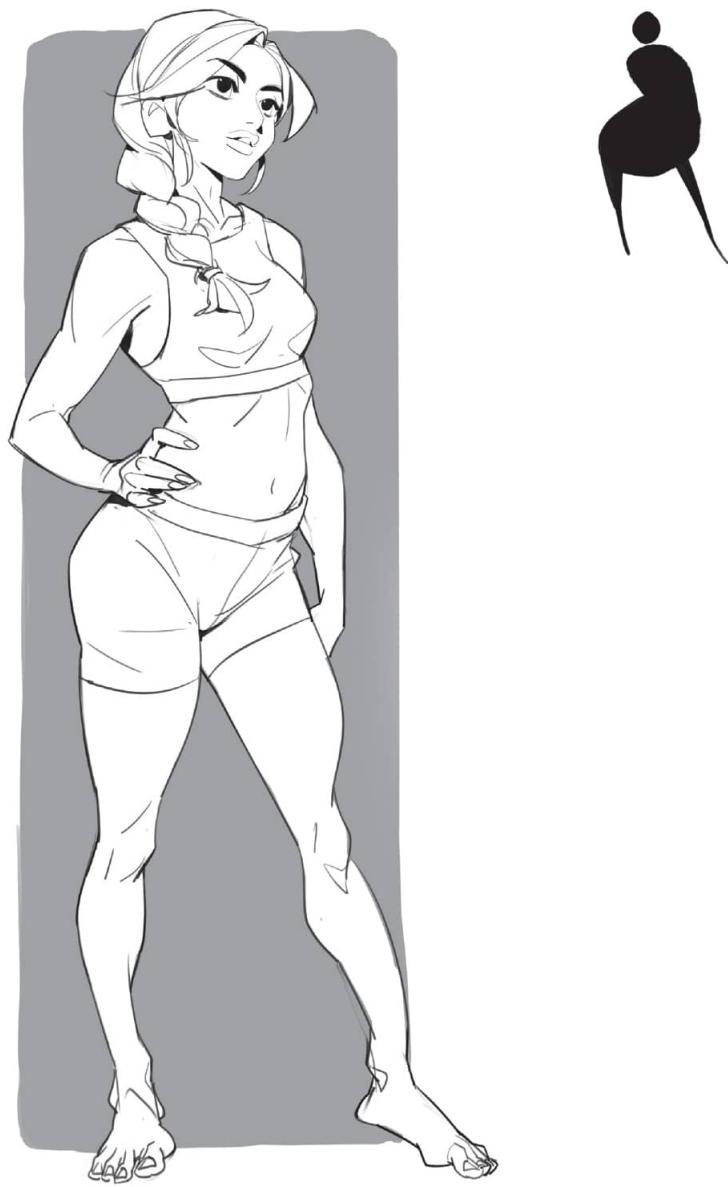




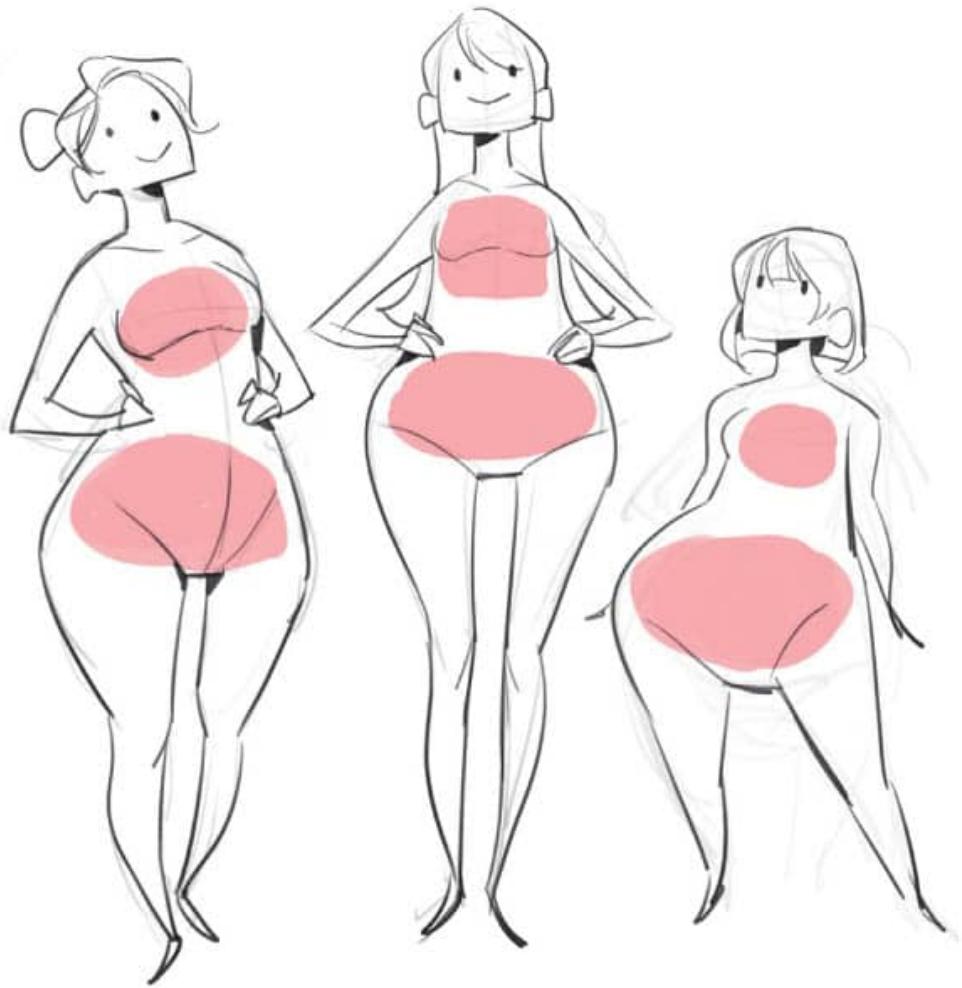
For a curvier character, build the foundation based on the shape rather than the underlying muscles or skeletal structure.



As with a teenage boy, the secondary sexual characteristics of the teenage girl aren't as pronounced as in an adult, but the proportion of the pelvis is relatively large.



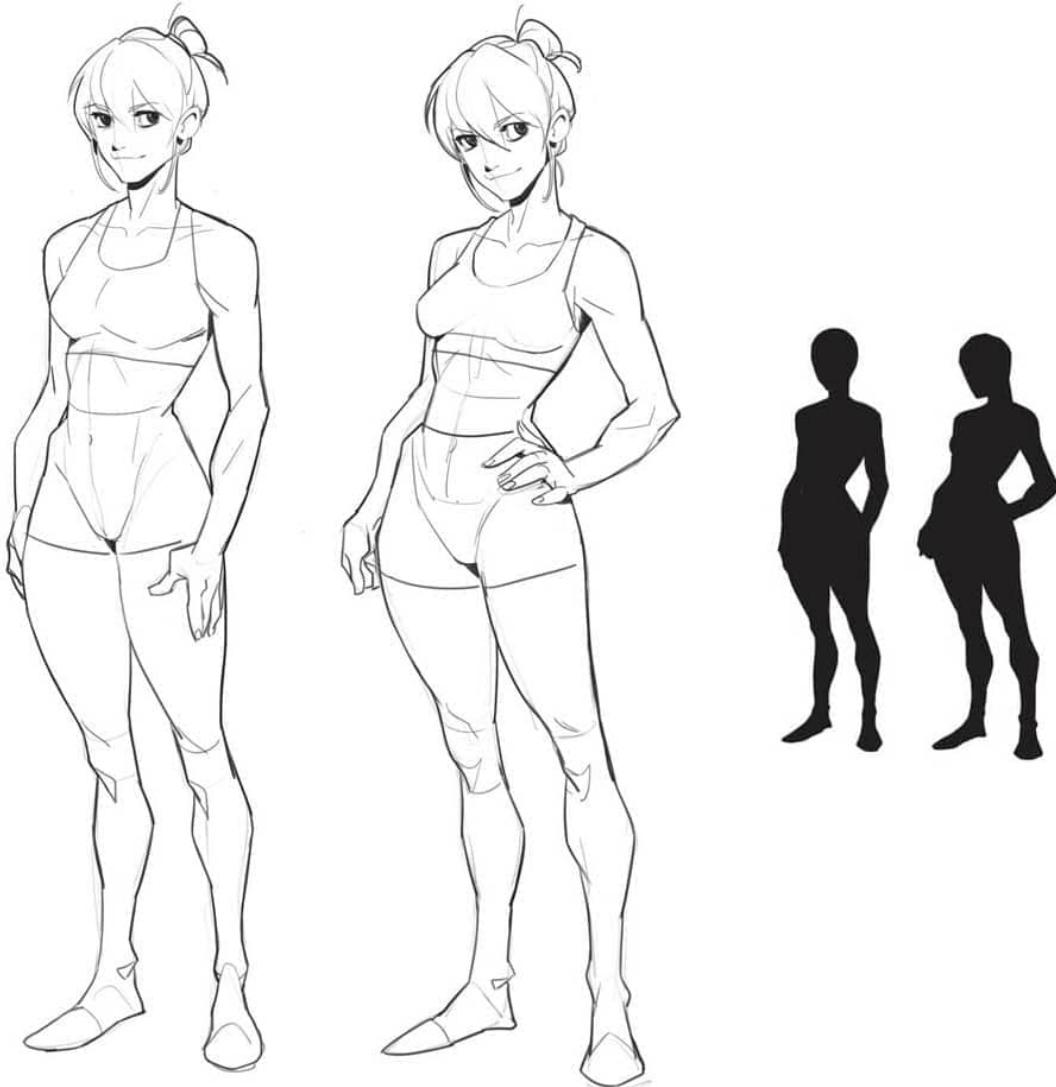
Try emphasizing the lower body in a silhouette. Increasing the size of the pelvis in relation to the shoulders can give a more mature look.



If you change the character's leg length, pelvis size, and chest size, you can play with various character ratios.

## SILHOUETTES

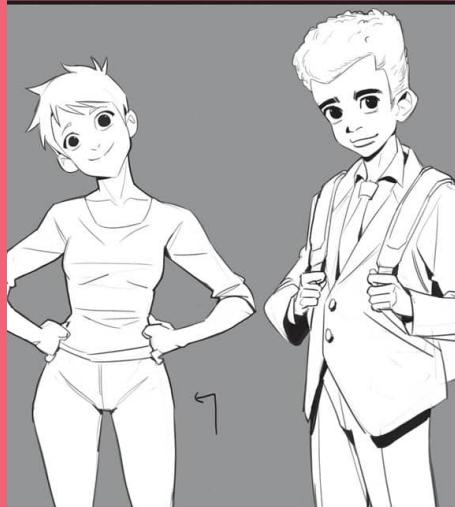
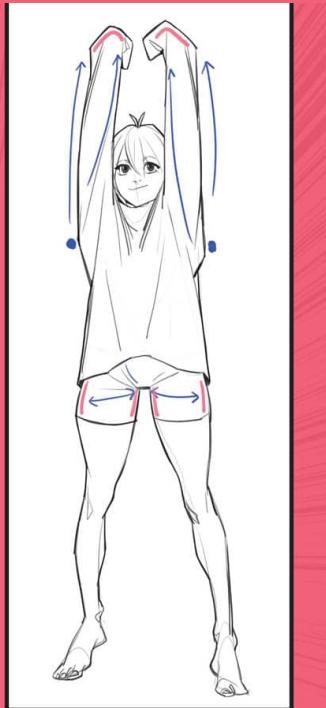
Silhouettes allow the viewer to see poses clearly and make them easier to read.



It's a good practice to express a character's form with only silhouettes.



## DRAWING HAIR, CLOTHING & ACCESSORIES



## DRAPING AND FOLDS



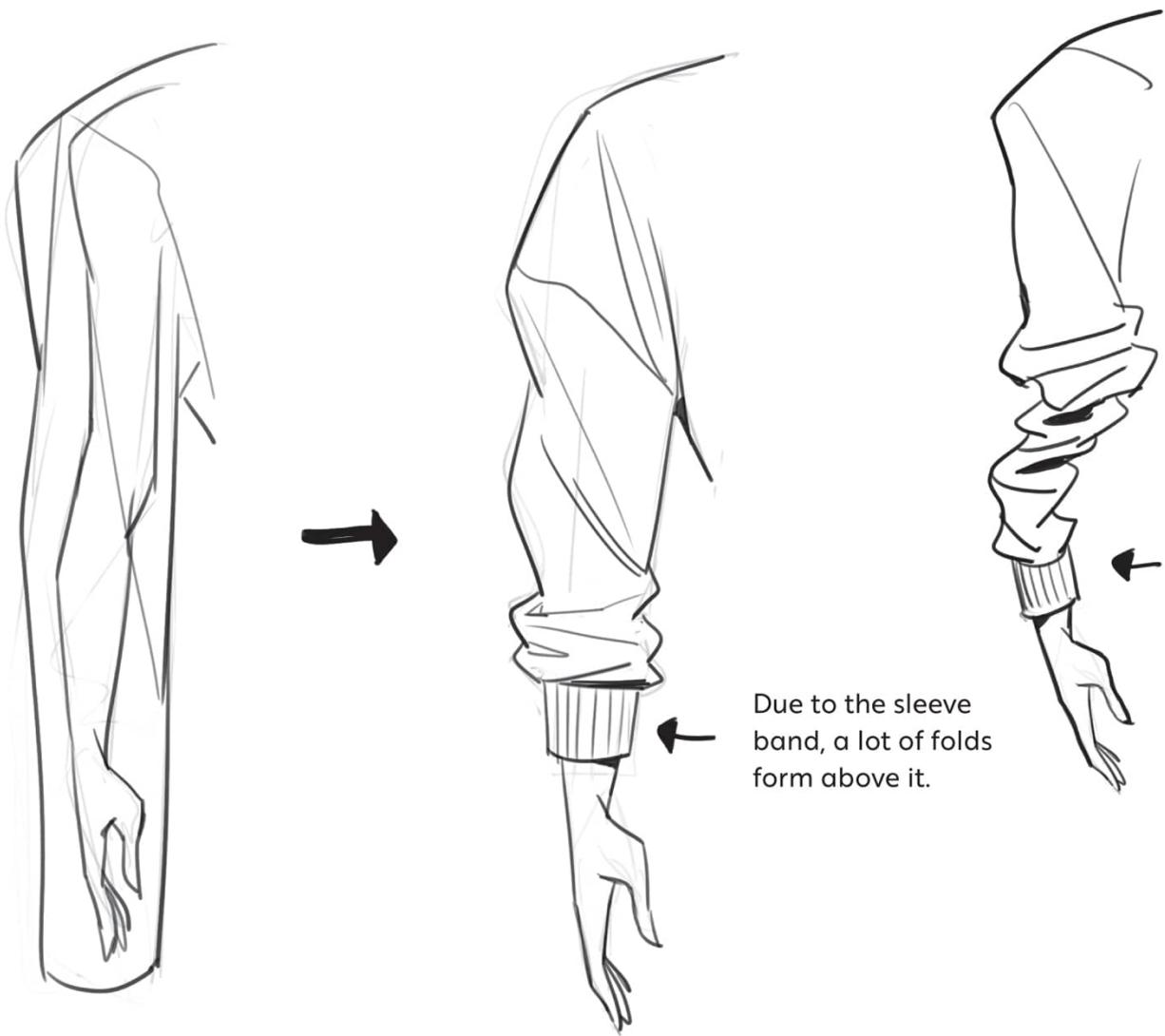
When a figure is stationary, their clothes sag downward because of gravity.



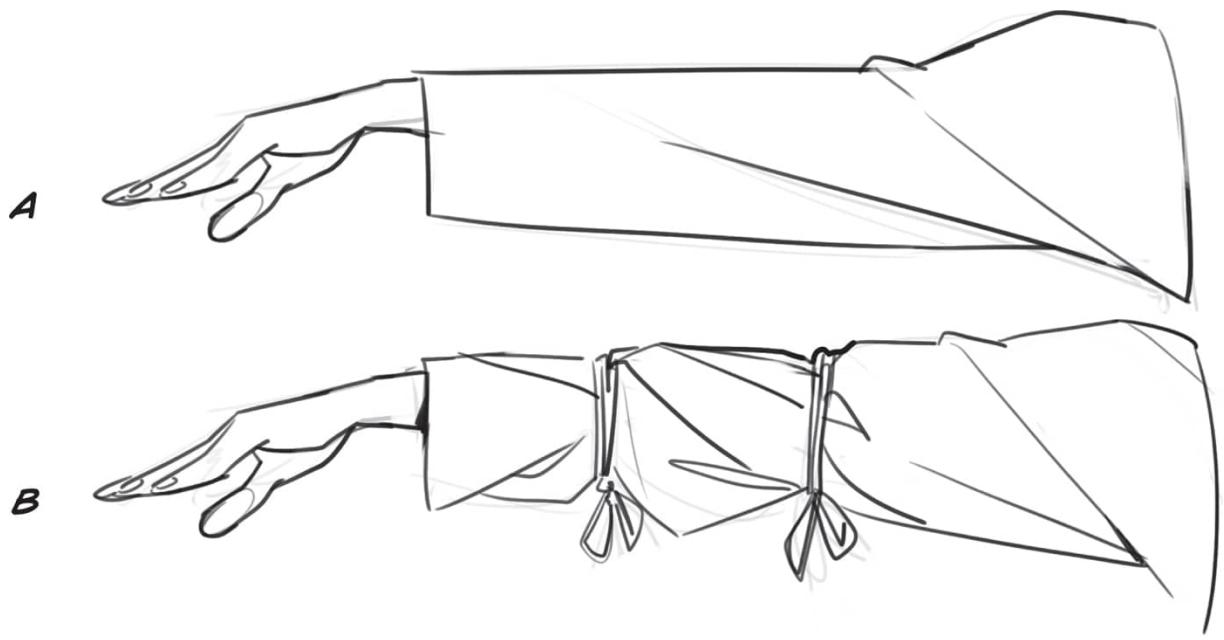
As shown in pink, the areas of clothes that touch the body are flattened against it.



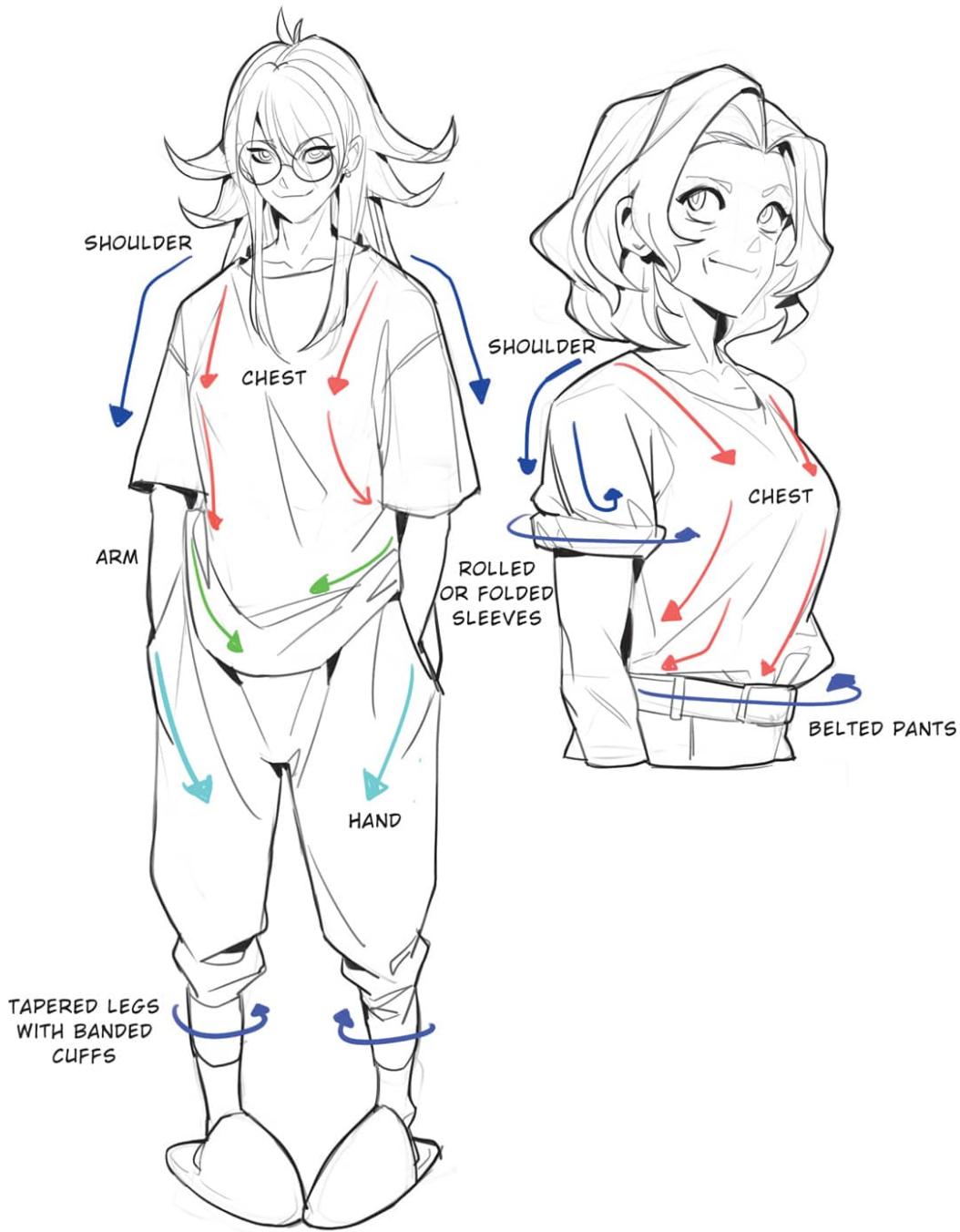
The baggier the clothes and the thinner their fabric, the more folds they display.



When drawing the folds in clothes, be mindful of the human shape inside the clothes.



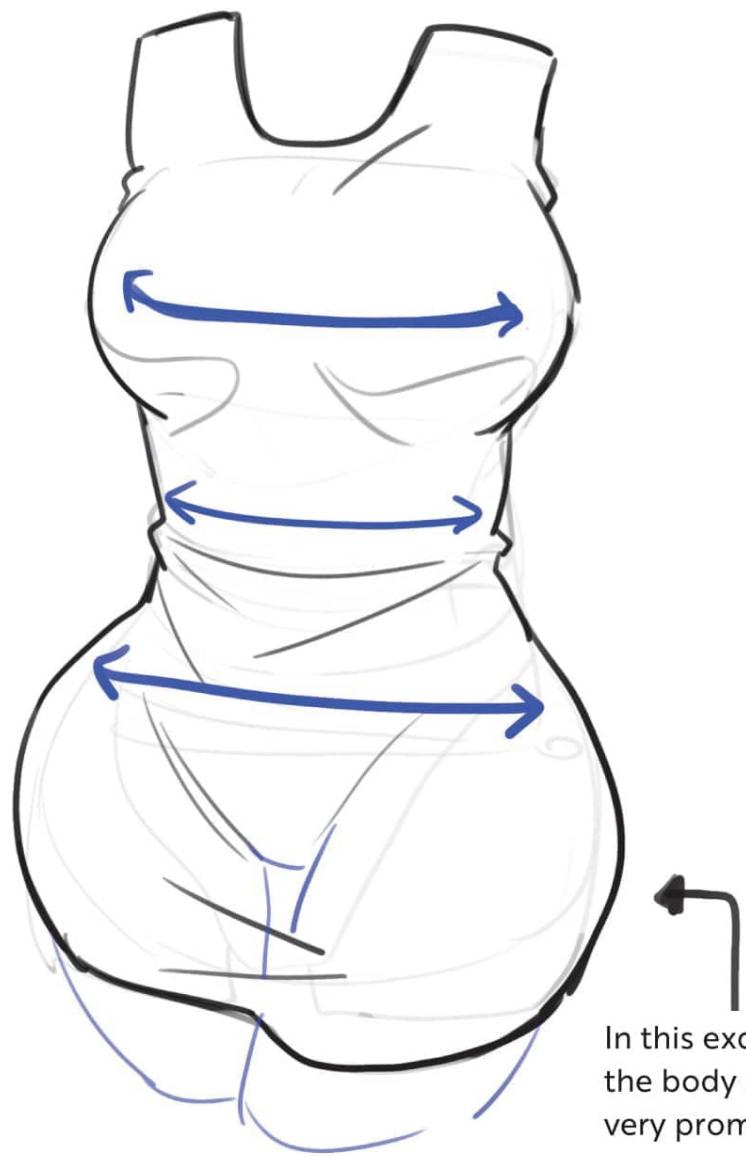
Make sure you don't deform the shape of a garment by focusing too much on the folds. The shapes of the folds will vary, depending on the banding of the clothes (B).



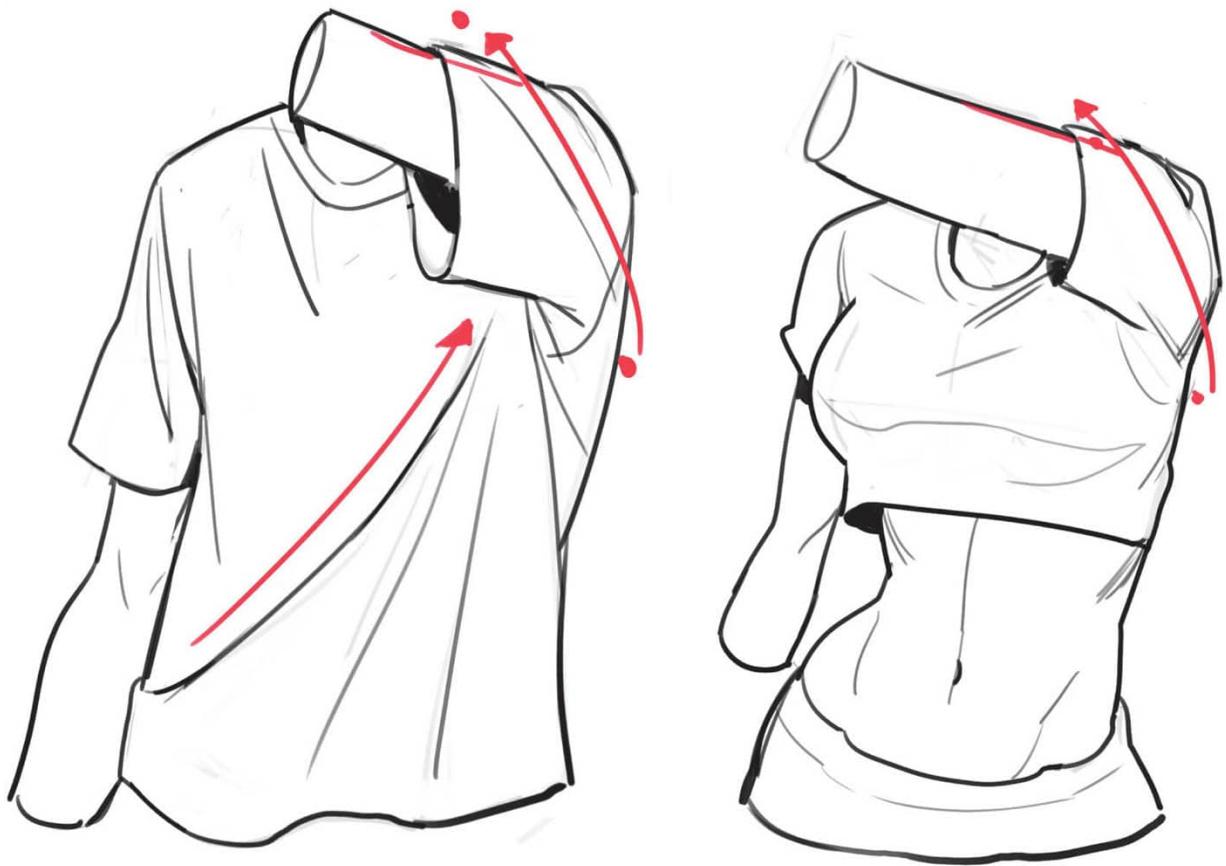
Folds tend to flow toward points of pressure. Hands, belts, and bands can all change the flow of the folds.



In tight-fitting clothes, pressure is applied to the outer parts of the body, causing the folds to flow along its shape.



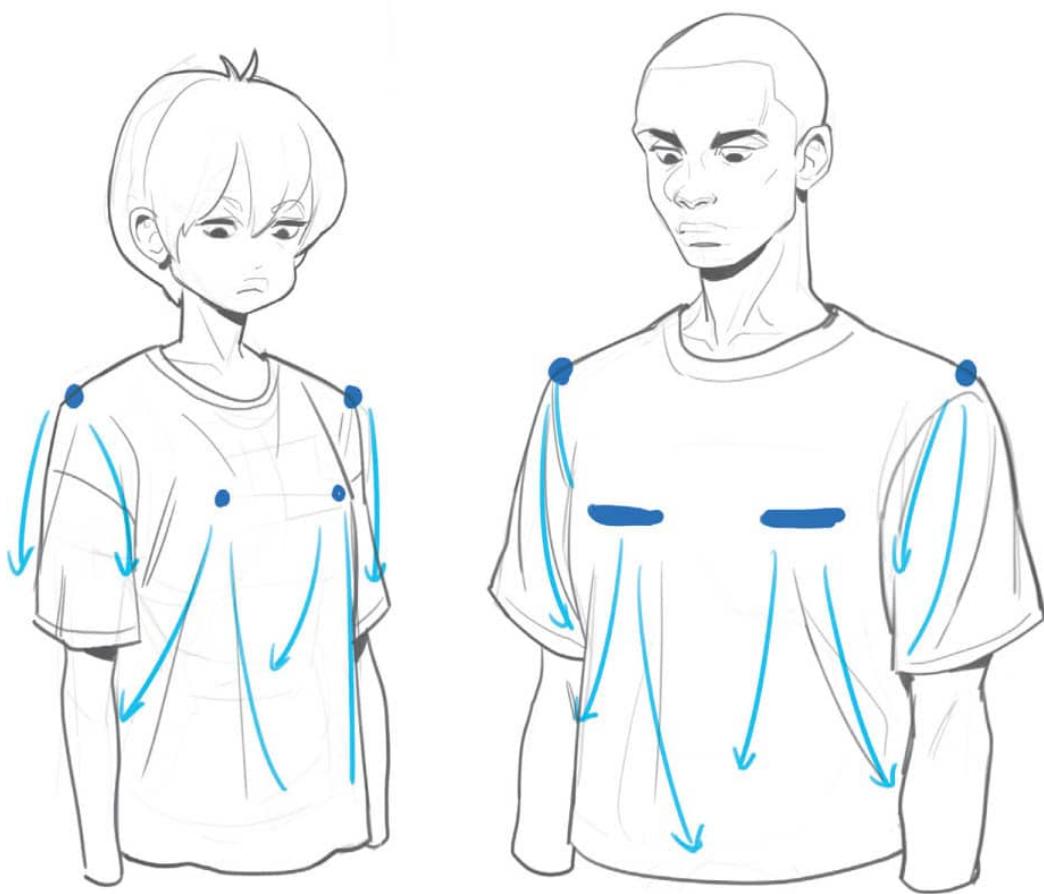
In this example,  
the body shape is  
very prominent.



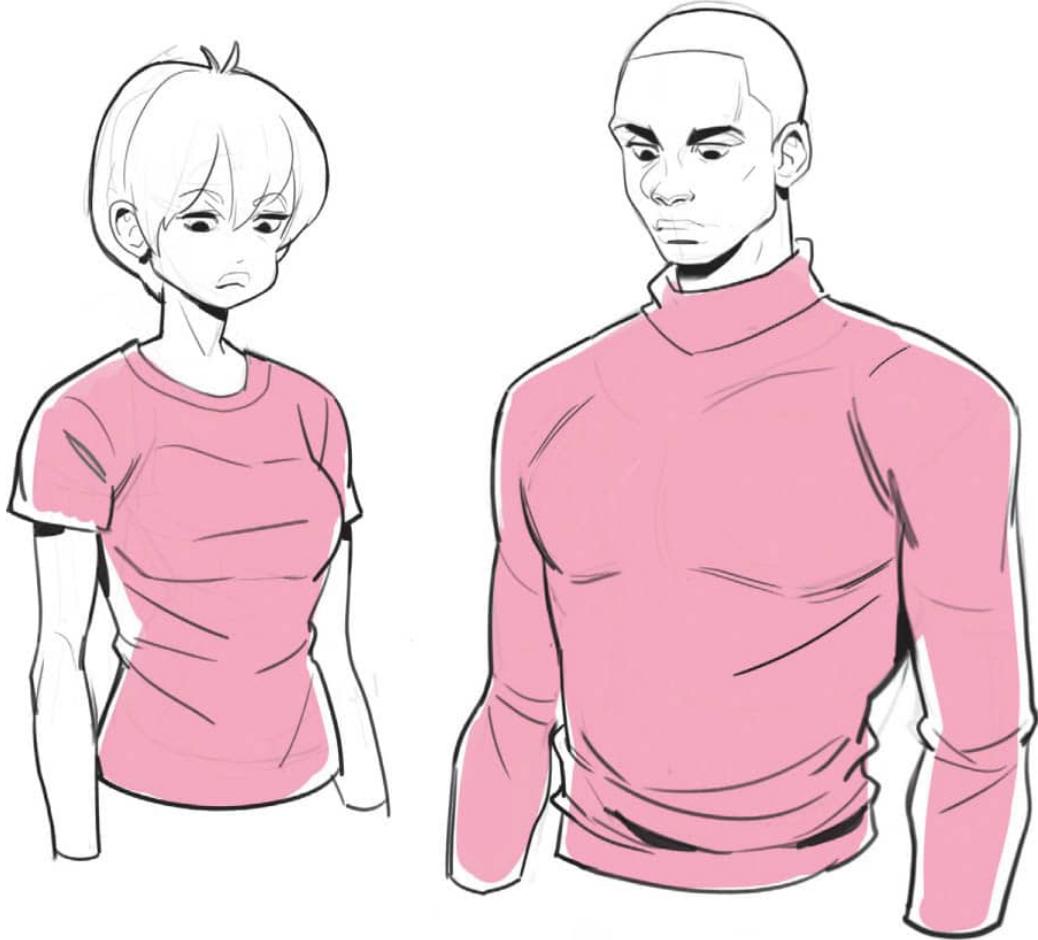
When an arm is lifted, folds form along the surface of the fabric.



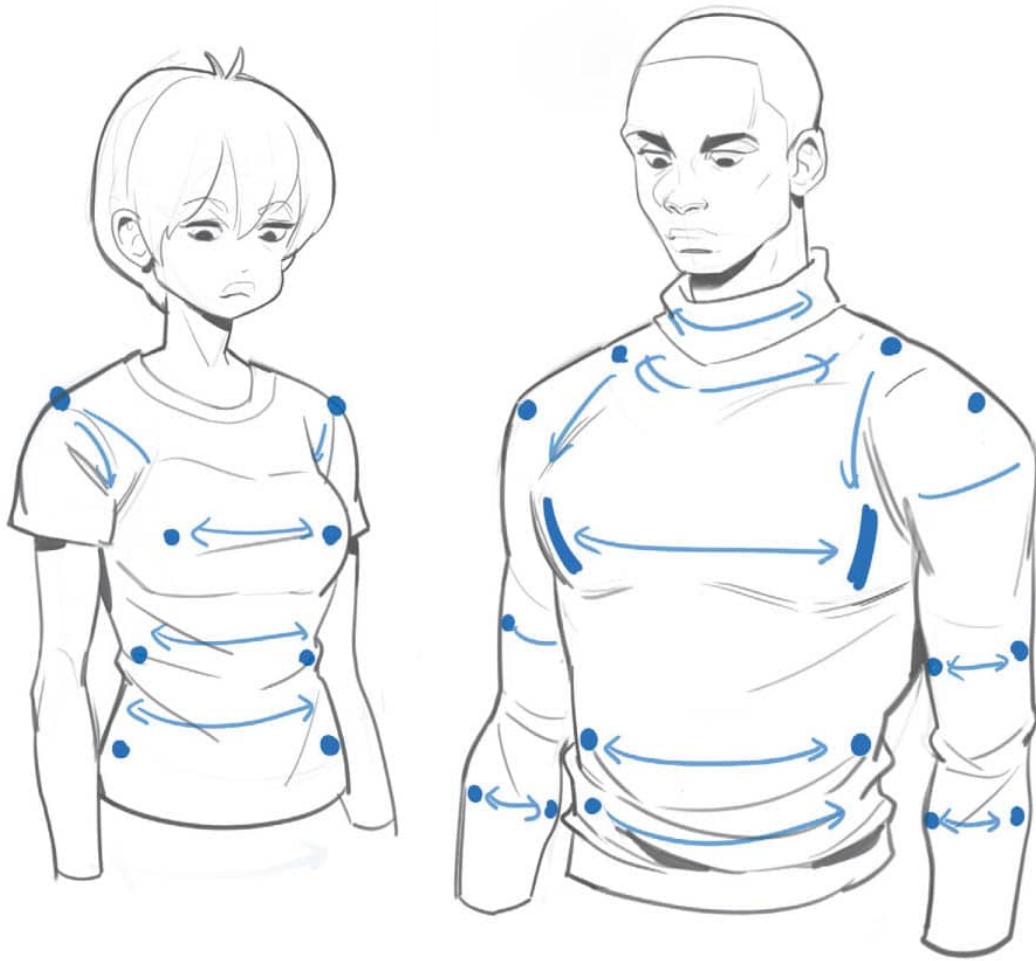
Regions that affect the shape of folds, supposing only the downward force of gravity is present



The folds drop down from the points marked in blue.



Folds in tight-fitting clothing are much more influenced by the shape of the body.



Since the clothing is pulled along all points of the body, the direction of the folds is different than for baggier clothes.



In tight clothes, folds form in the directions as stretched by the body.



In a tight skirt, the shape of the legs and body is revealed.

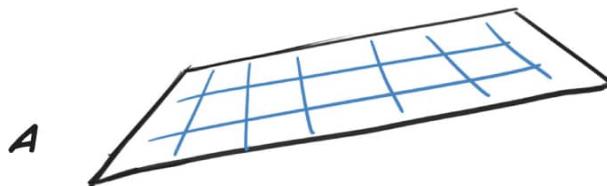


Because a skirt has its own intrinsic form, its design is maintained even if the overall shape changes.



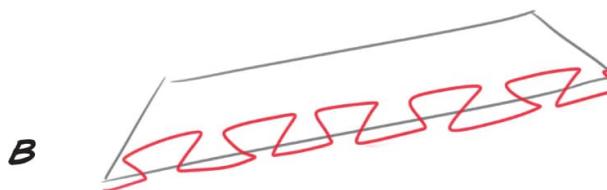
Because suits have a fixed structure and their fabrics are often heavy or thick, large folds tend to form around the shoulders.

## RUFFLES



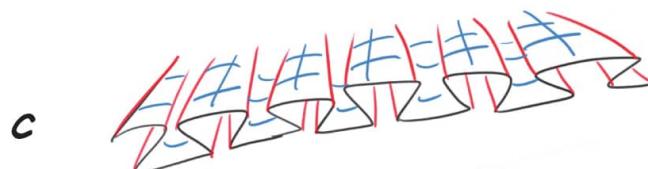
A

BASIC FORM



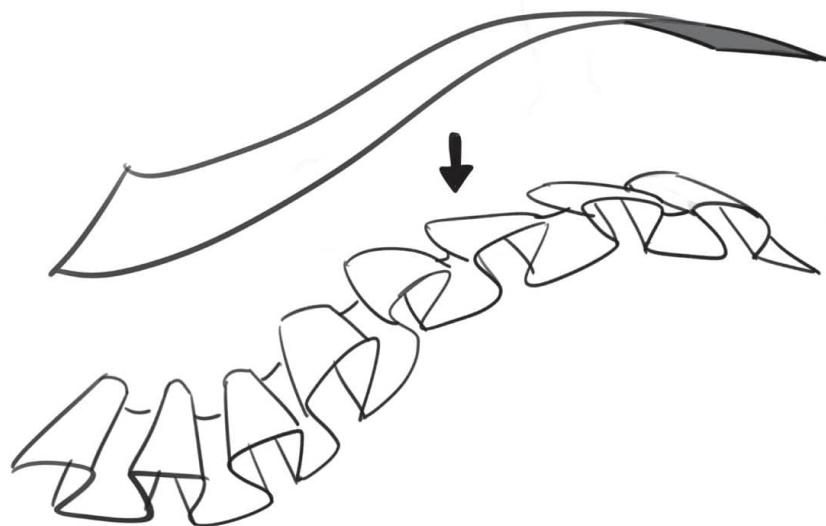
B

SILHOUETTE OF THE FOLDS

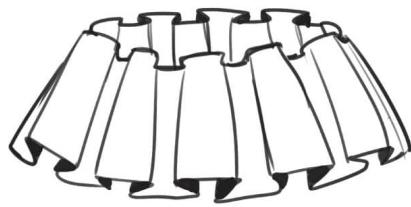
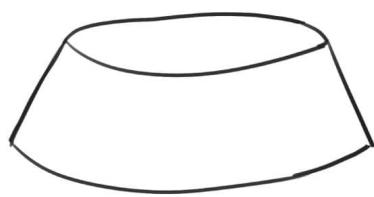


C

ORGANIZE THE OUTLINE THREE-DIMENSIONALLY.



APPLICATION A



## APPLICATION B

RUFFLED  
HEADBAND

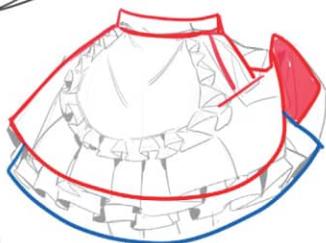


APRON

SLEEVE



SKIRT



## FOLDS AND MOVEMENT



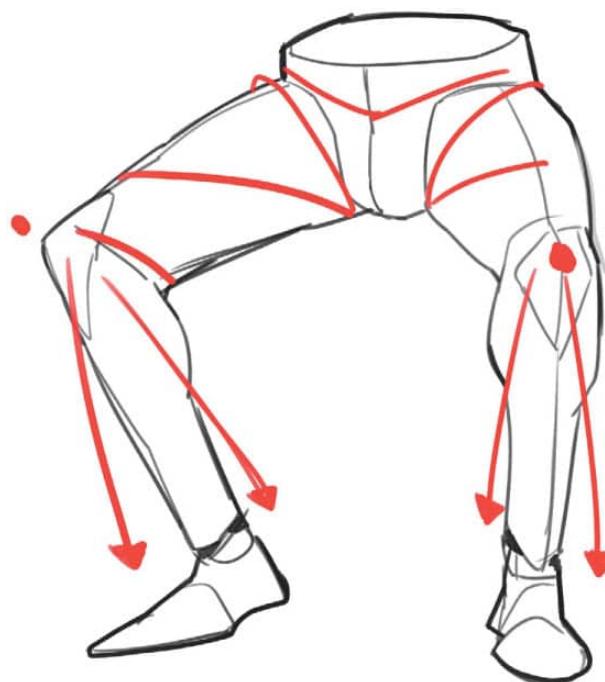
As with suit jackets, if a garment includes shoulder pads, the shape of the shoulder will be maintained, even when the body moves.



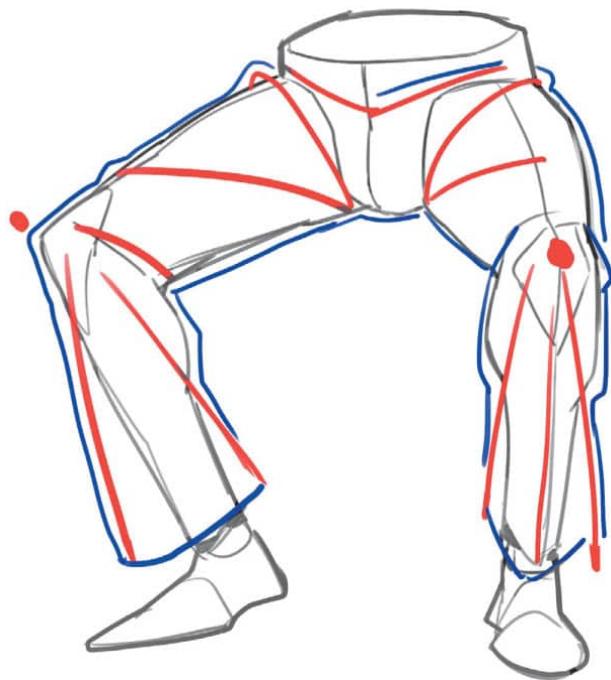
**1.** Draw the human body using geometrization.



**2.** Draw the folds.

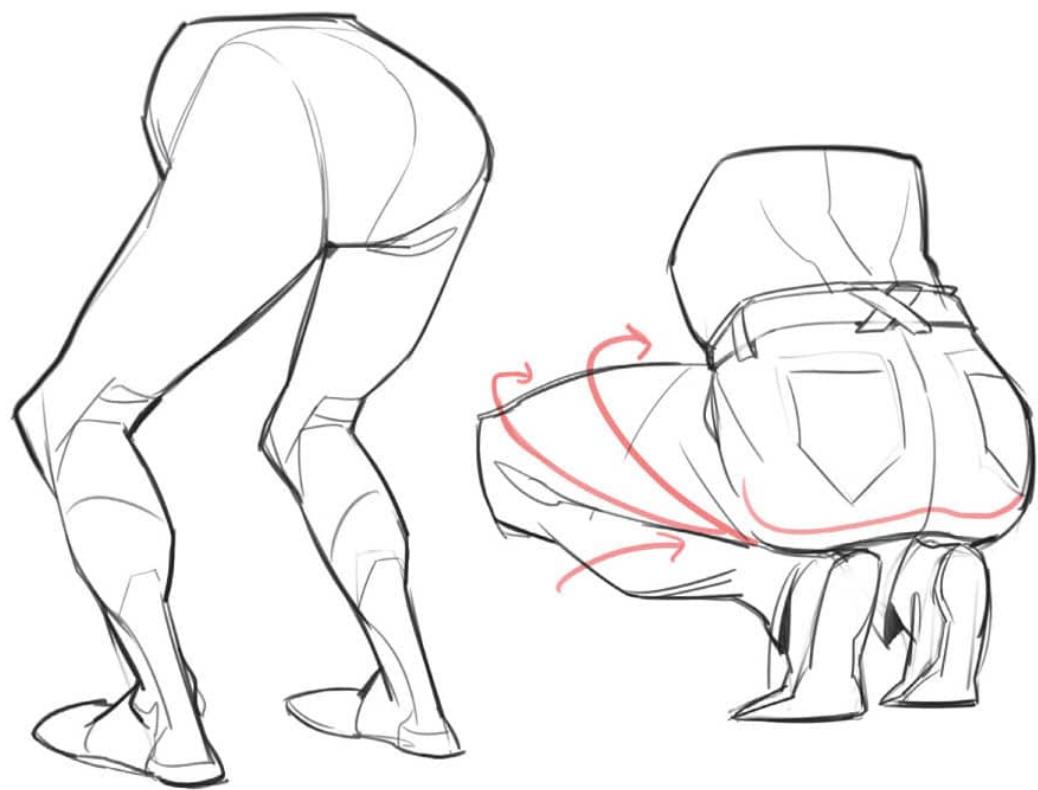


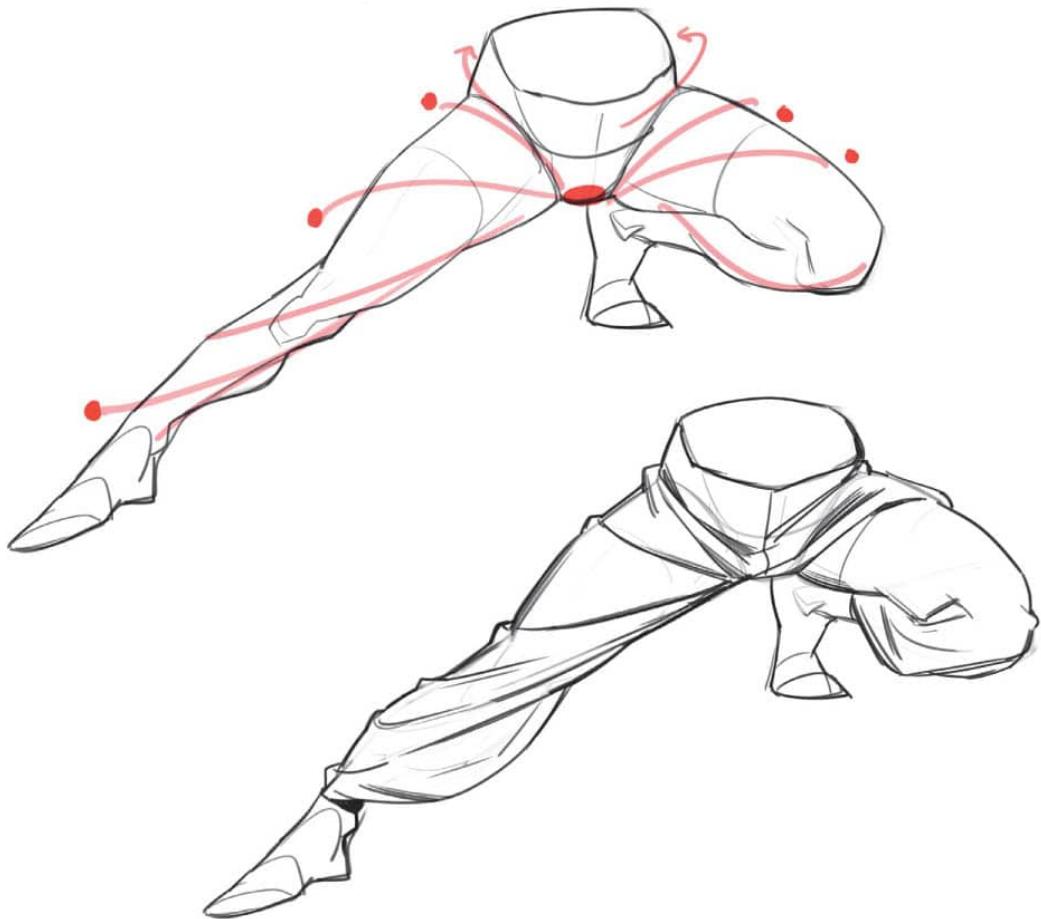
**3.** Add volume to the folds.



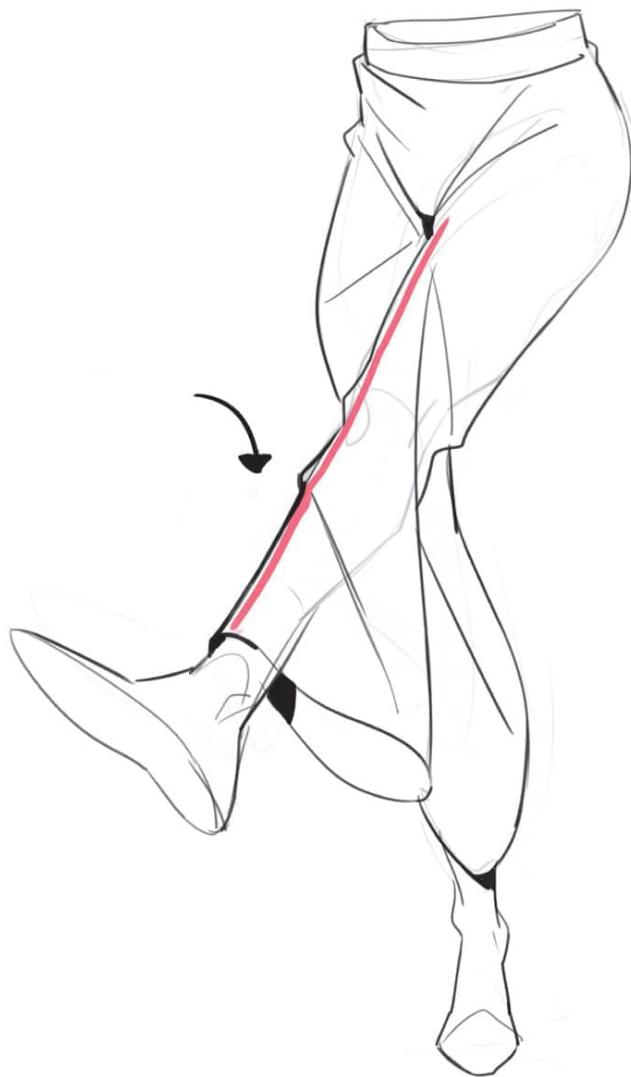
**4.** Clean up and add details.



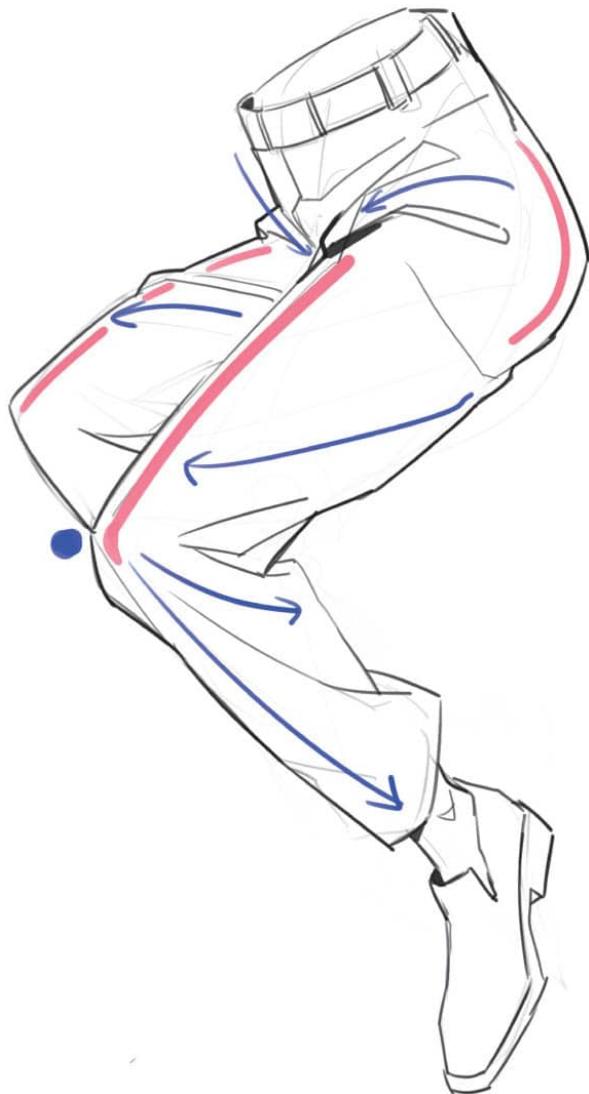


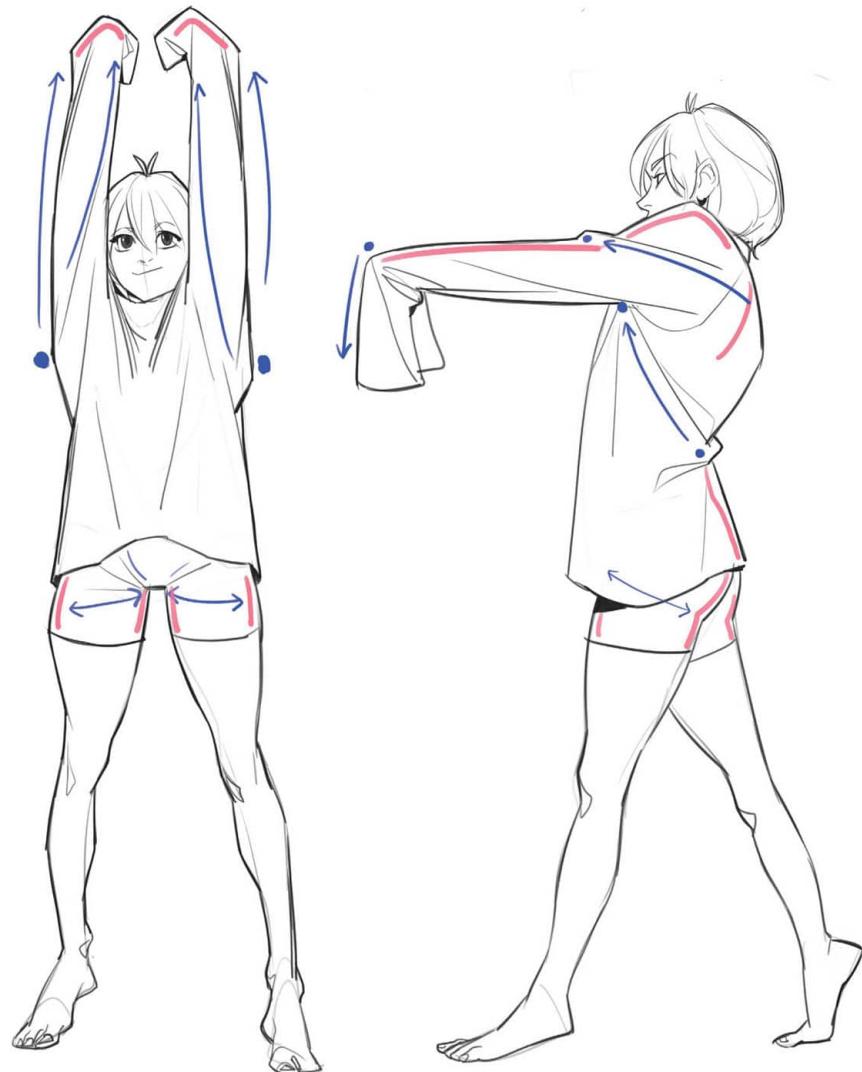


Draw the basic shape “three-dimensionally.”



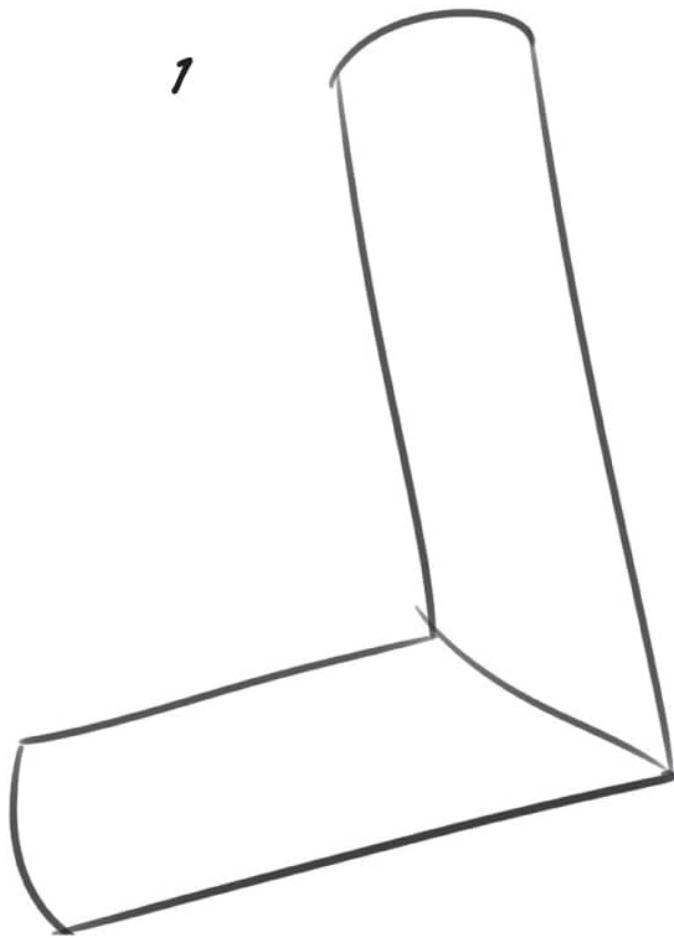
As the leg is lifted, folds take shape in the direction the force is applied.



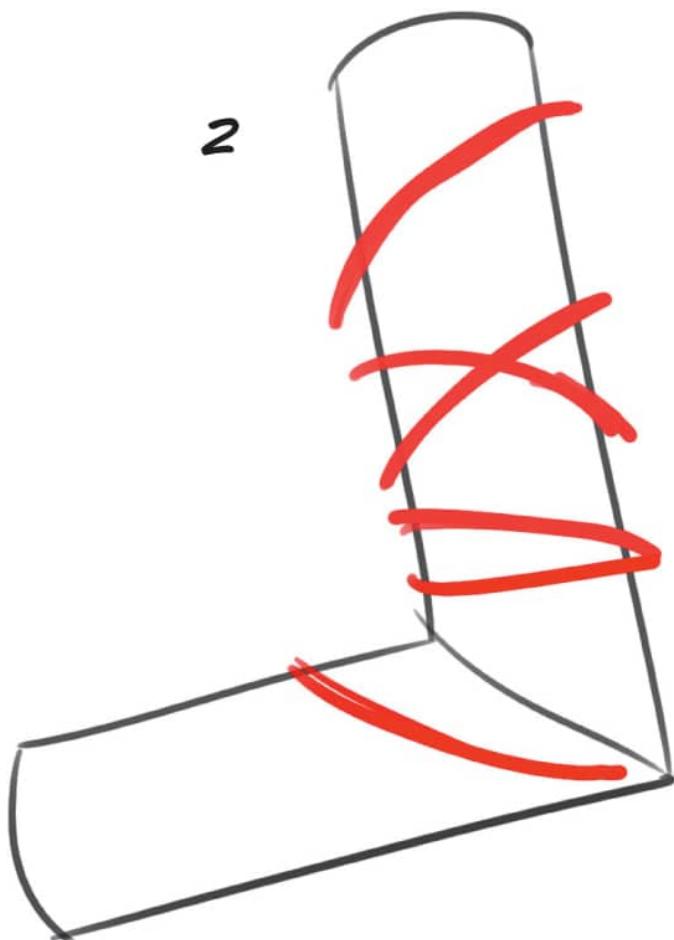


Study the part of the clothing that touches the skin and the part that remains in contact with the body. Draw wrinkles based on the stretching and folding of the material.

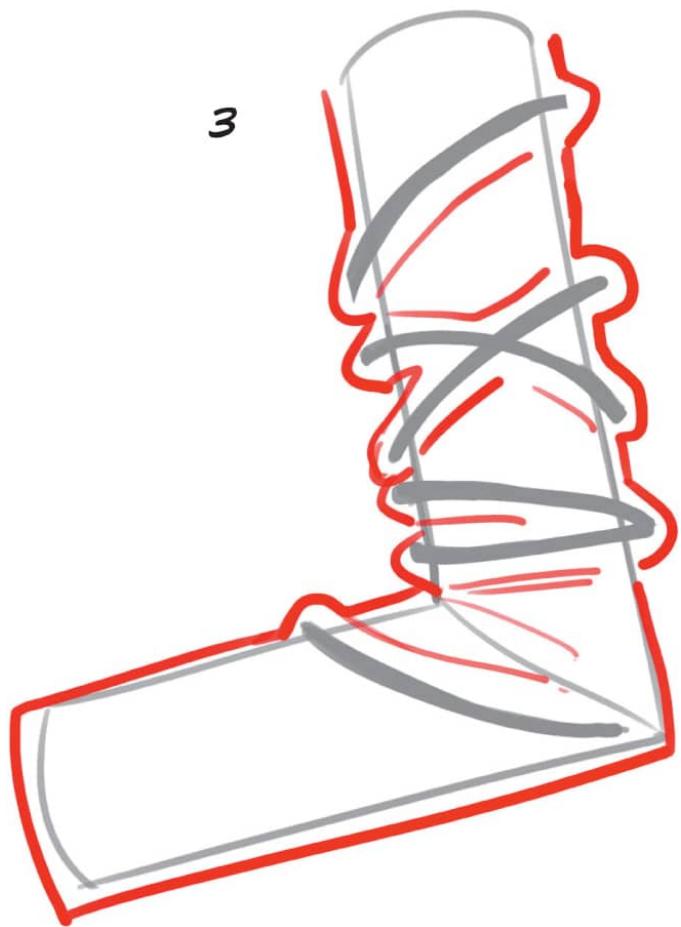
1. Draw the basic shape with dimension.



2. Add dimensional fold lines that conform to the shape.

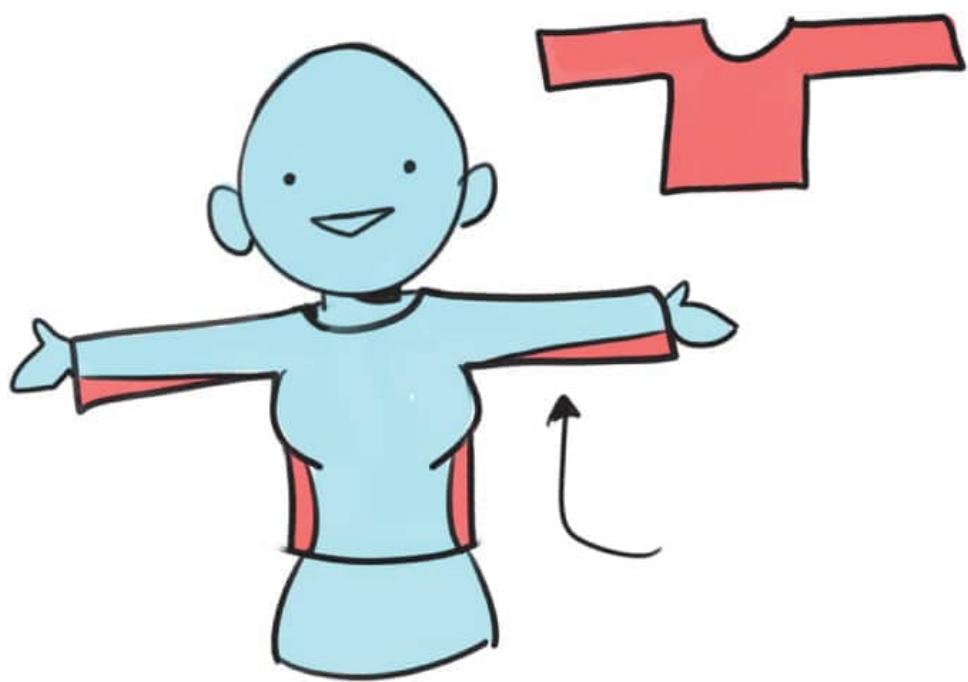


**3.** Sketch the volume of the folds.

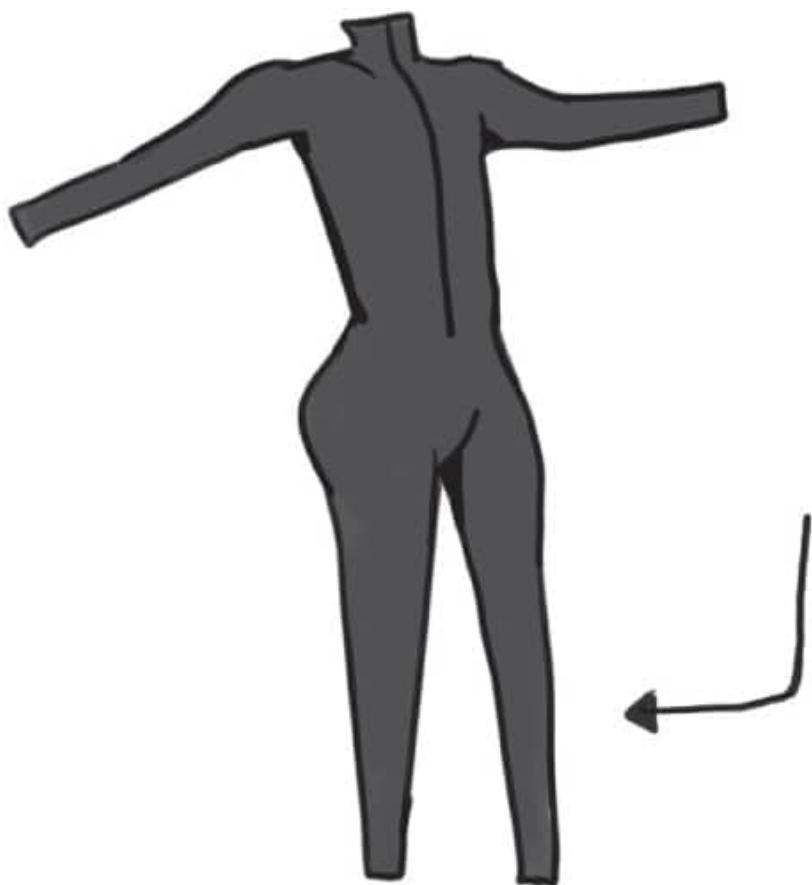


4. Erase unnecessary lines and add details to the folds.





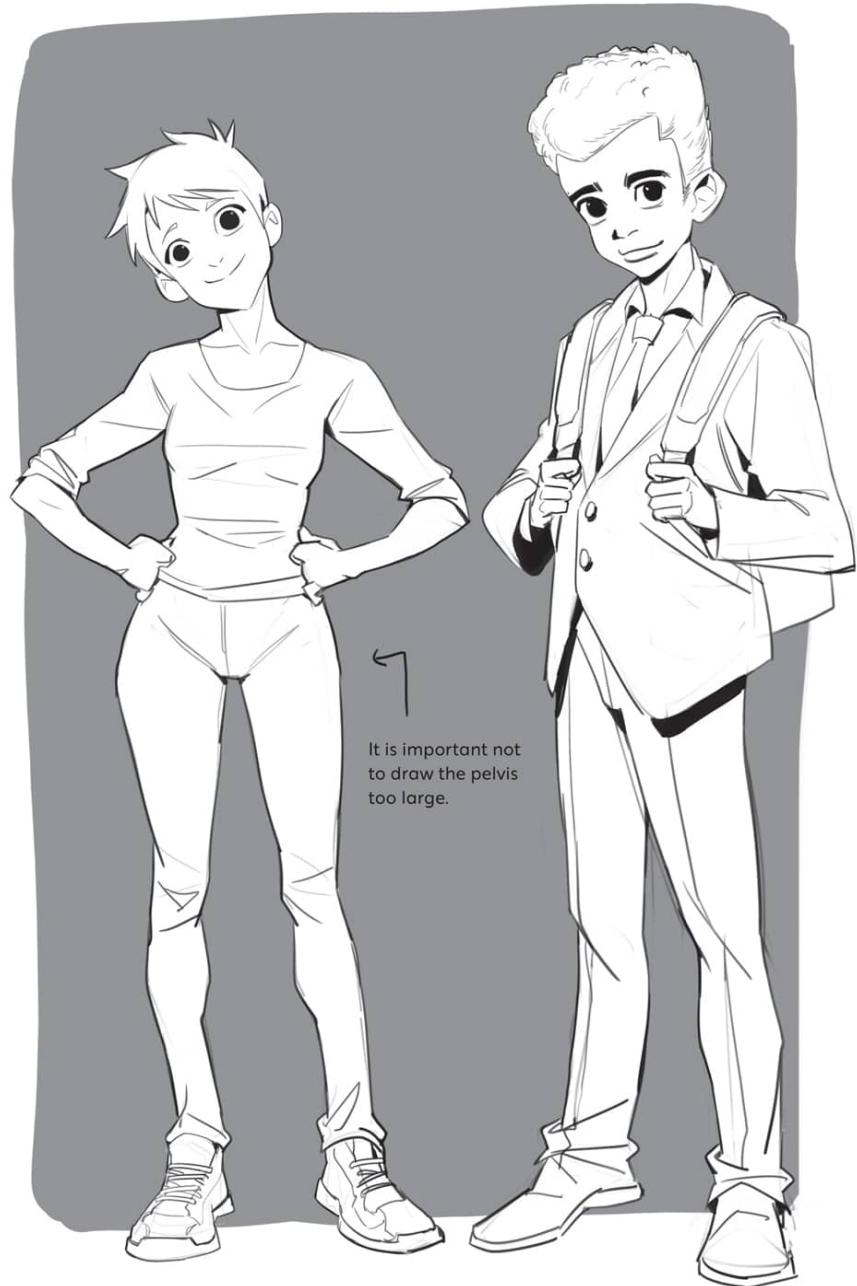
No matter how tight-fitting the clothes, they aren't cut out to perfectly fit our bodies, so there's extra space in these areas.



The tighter an outfit is tailored to fit the body, the fewer the folds.

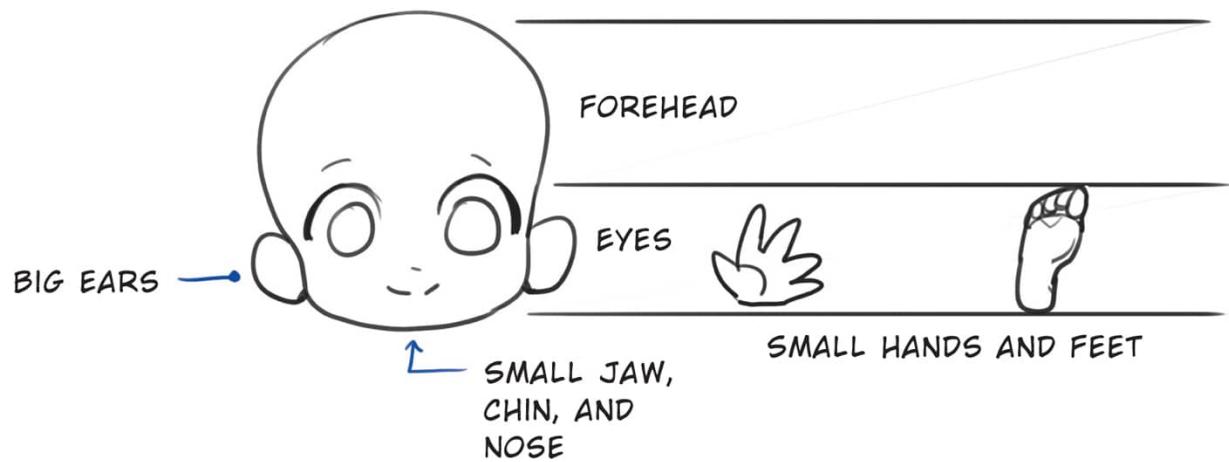


## PROPORTION AND CLOTHING FOR YOUTH

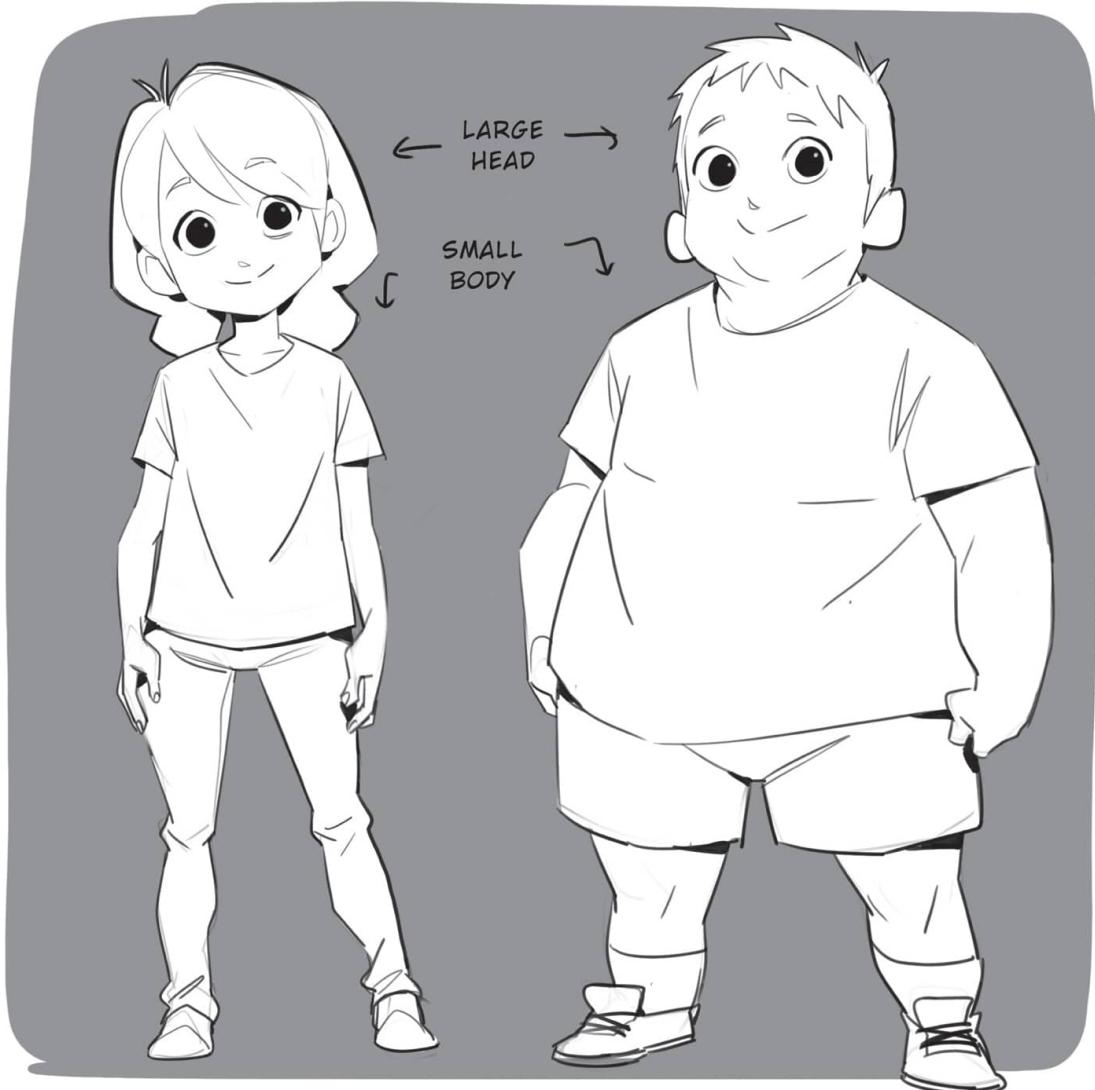


Teens should be given a relatively large head proportion than an average adult.

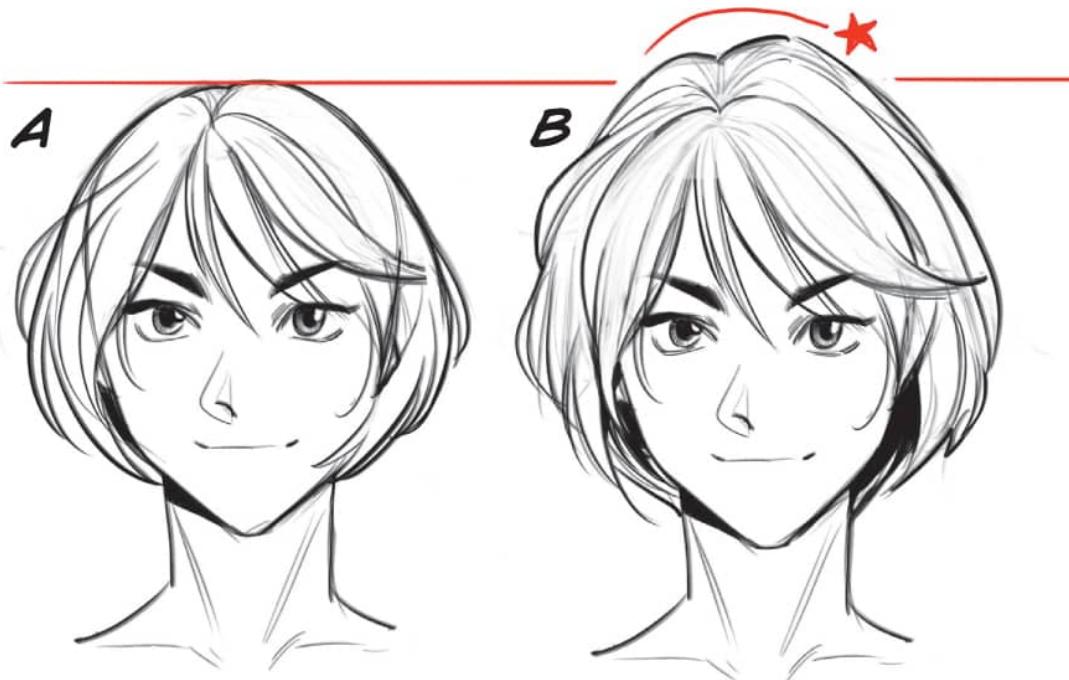
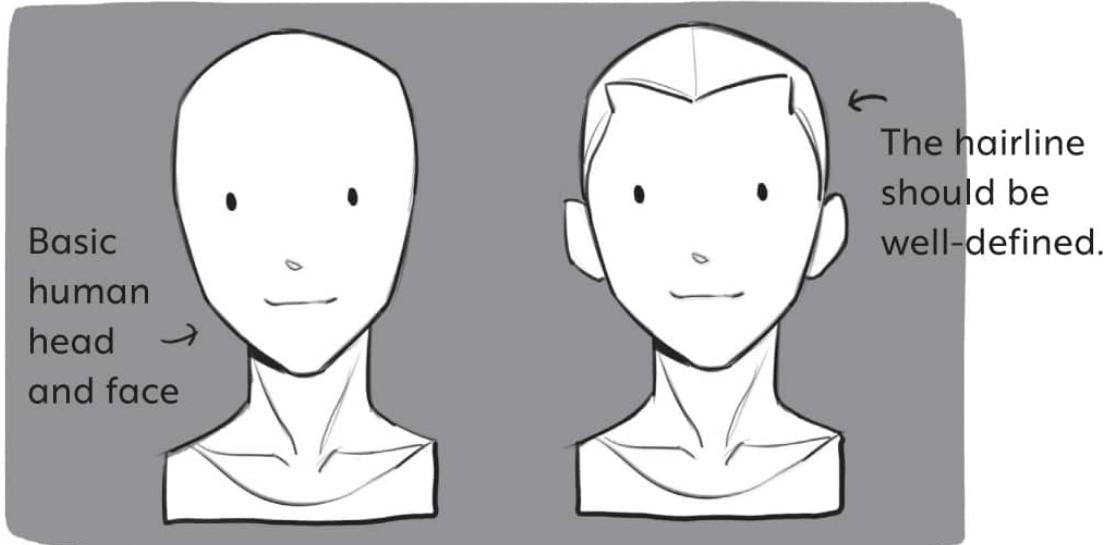
Like teens, younger children have larger head proportions than adults.



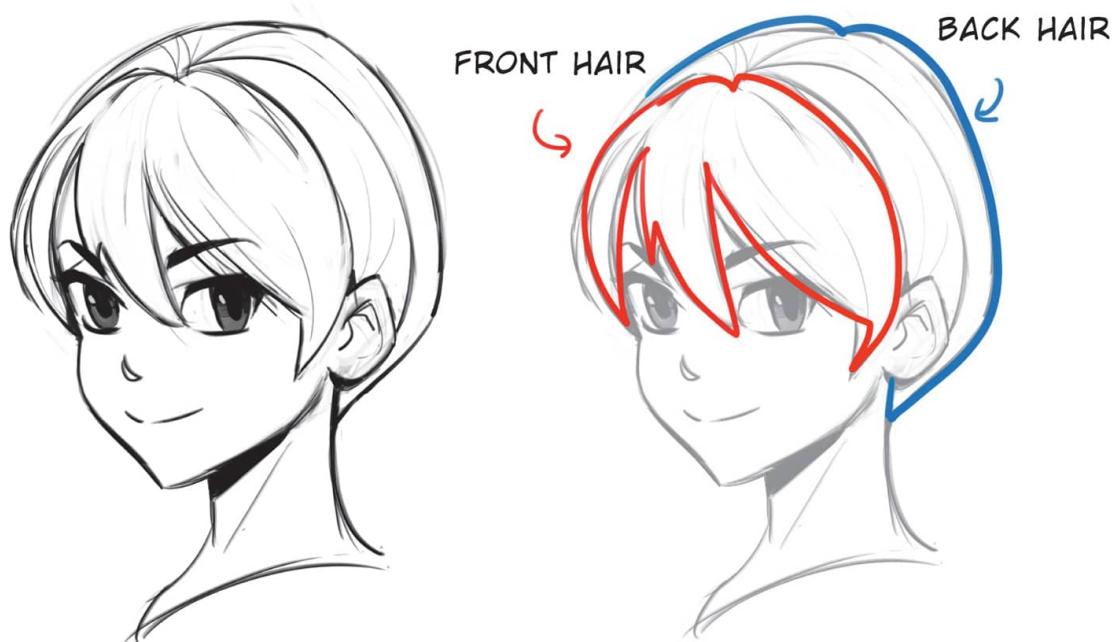
Some children are very skinny, but they usually have fleshy cheeks and fingers.



## HOW HAIR FRAMES THE HEAD AND FACE



The hair's lack of volume makes the drawing look unnatural and stuffy (A). Give it a sense of volume (B).



The division between the front hair and the back hair should clear.

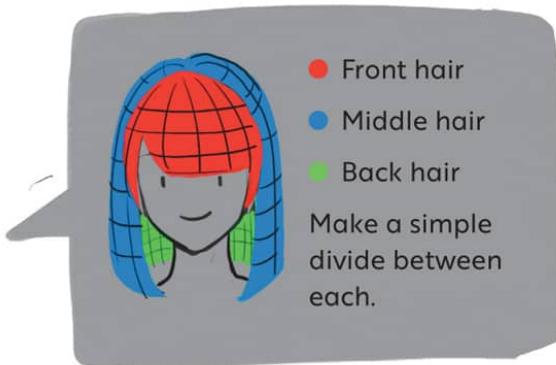


By adding stray hairs around the division between the two areas, you can draw natural, three-dimensional hair.

## SIMPLIFYING HAIR



Even when drawing complex forms of the hair, simplification is needed (A). Add details afterward (B).



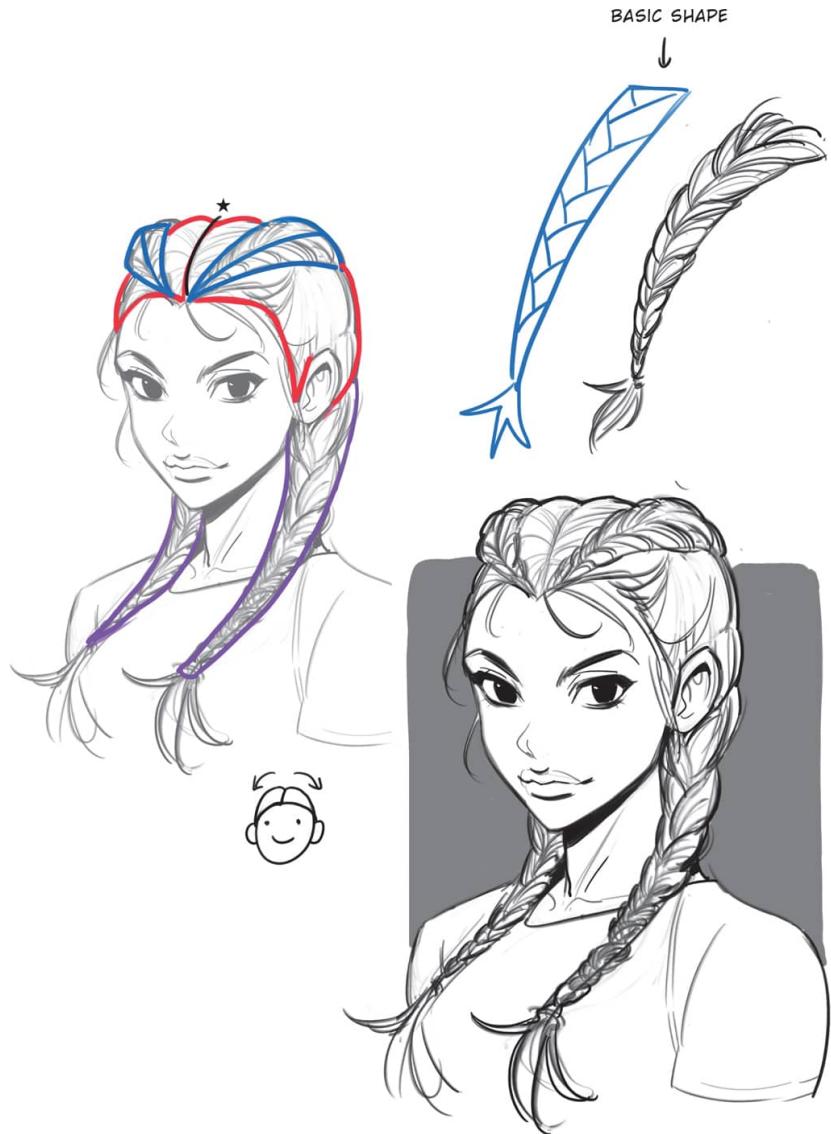
This technique also works on longer styles.

## HAIR WITH STRONG CURLS



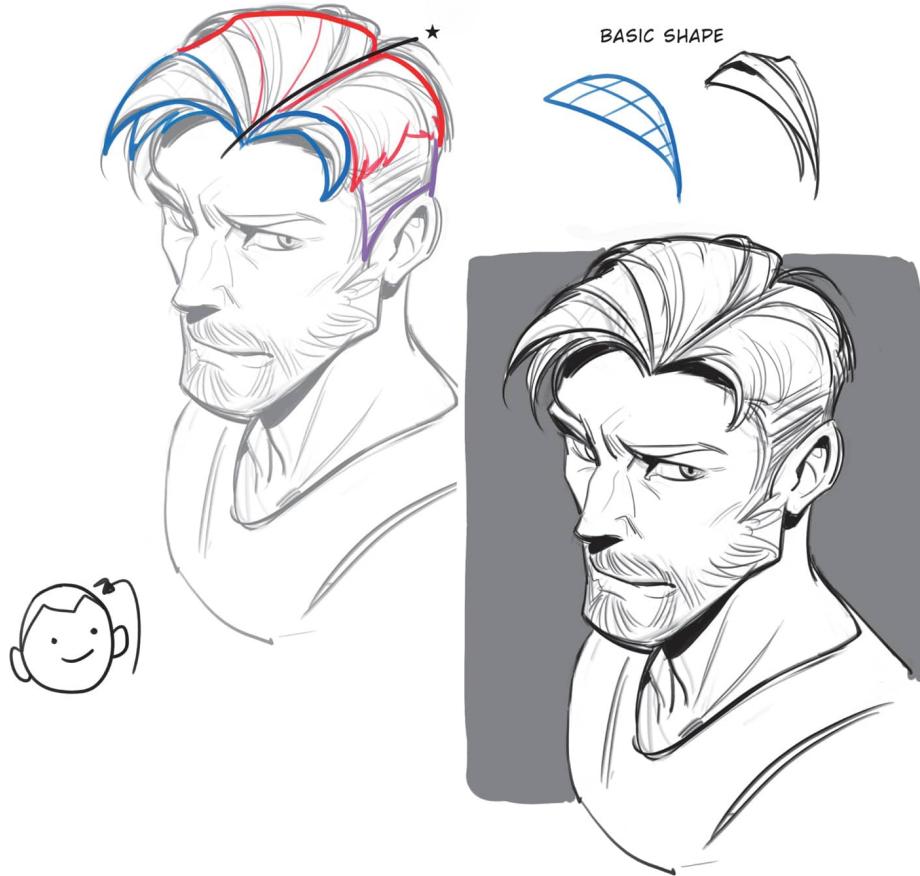
- ★ Divide the shape as though radiating from the crown of the head in a star shape.
- First
- Second
- The last part (in purple) is the outermost line, so you need to draw the curls clearly to convey the form of the hair.

## BRAIDED HAIR



- ★ From the crown of the head
- Divide the hair.
- Add the braids according to the shape of the head.
- Draw the braids using the basic shape.

## SHORT HAIR



With short hair, begin by drawing the hairline.

- ★ Divide the hair into large sections based on the hair part.
- Draw the front hair.
- Draw the back hair.
- When drawing short hair, use slashes.

## LONG WAVES



- Draw the front hair.
- Draw the back hair.
- Add longer back hair.
- Add details to the rest of the back hair and stray hairs.

## SHORT CUT



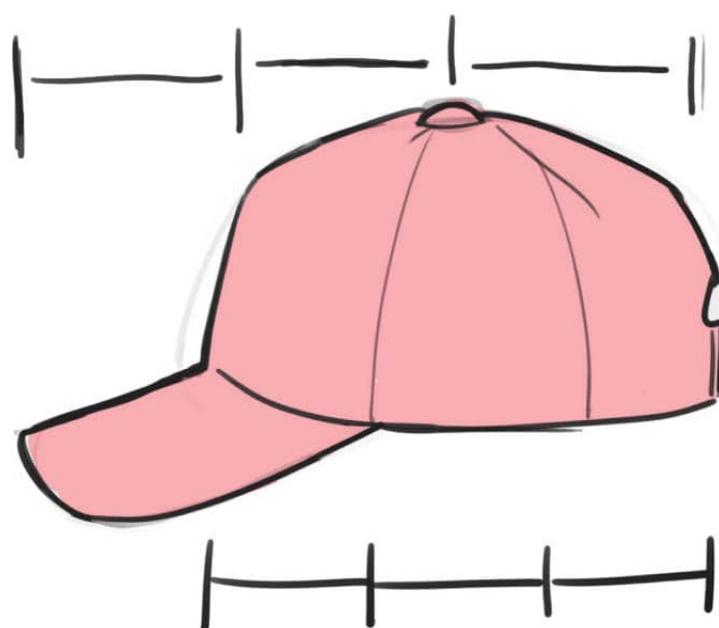
- ★ Divide the shape based on the hair part.
- Draw the front hair.
- Draw the back hair.

## PIXIE CUT

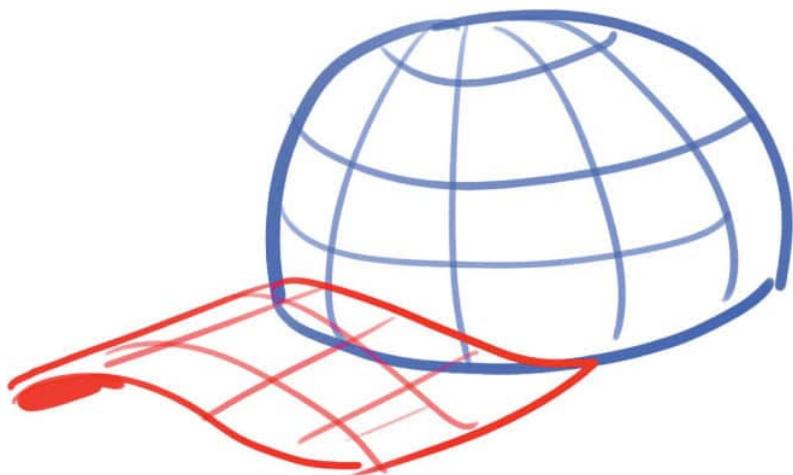


- ★ Hair that's very short has its center at the back.
- For very short hair, instead of dividing the hair into sections, simply add details to the ends of the hair around the shape of the head.
- Add texture with short lines.

## DRAWING HATS



When drawing a baseball cap, it's easier to draw if you check the proportions first.



Caps can also be easily geometricized.



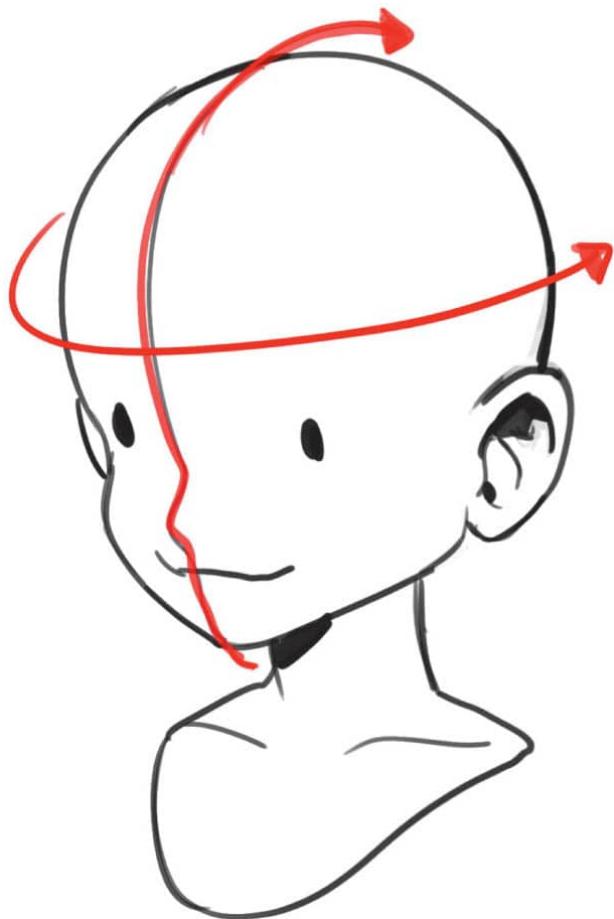
As with clothes, draw the cap as if it were placed on a dimensional human head.



Draw the hat to match the shape and position of the character's head.



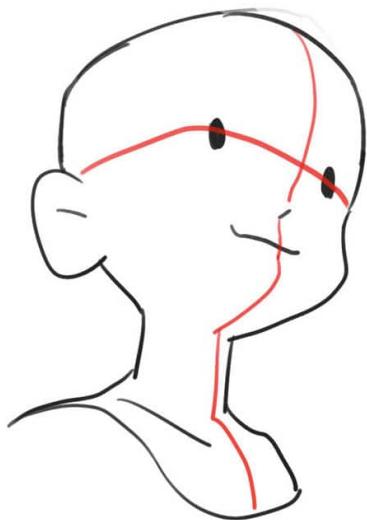
Whatever the shape of the hat, the basic principle is to place it on a dimensional head.



❖ Be mindful of the head's dimensionality.

Build the head correctly and place the hat.

Accessories or clothes must be first well drawn and drawn in the shape of the body. Drawing accessories or clothes while the drawing is incomplete can ruin the final shape.



FACE LOOKING UP

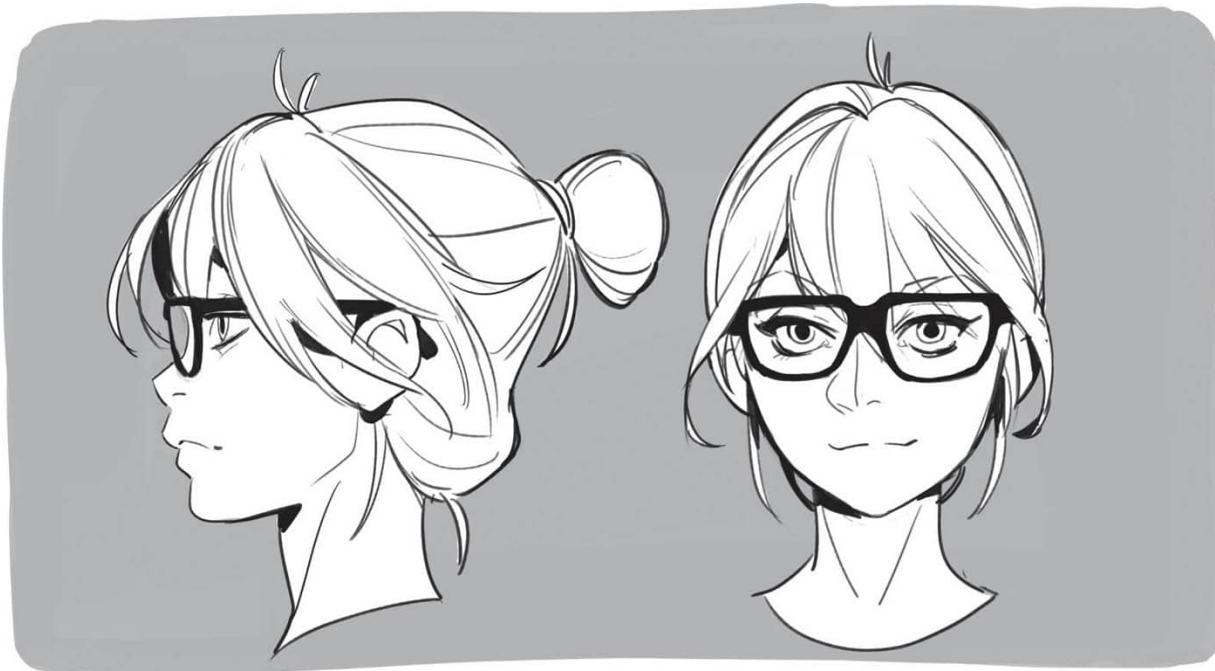


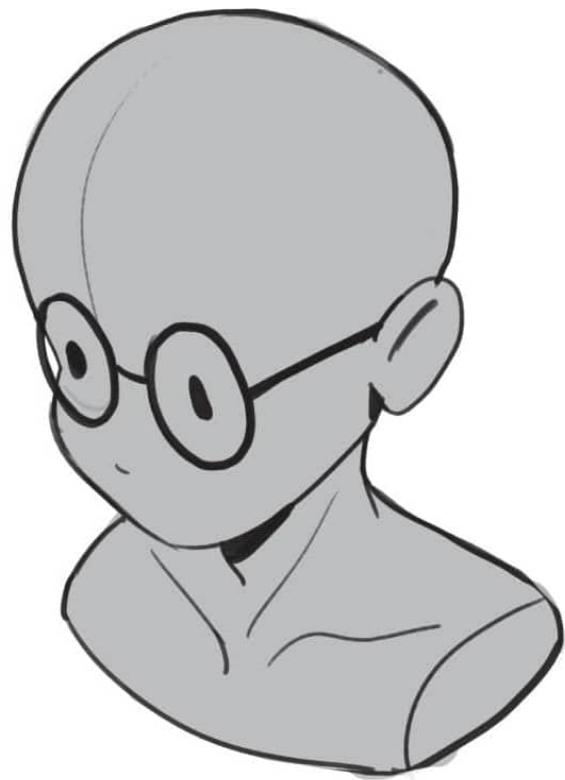
FACE LOOKING DOWN

## DRAWING GLASSES

Side and front views of glasses.

Glasses are accessories that are placed on the ears and nose.





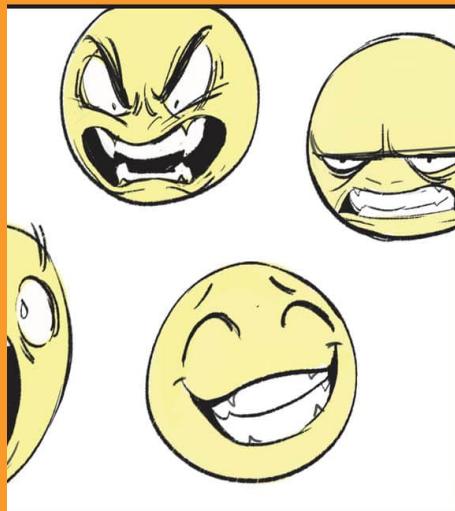
Don't draw glasses too close to the face.



Be sure to leave some space between the glasses and the face.

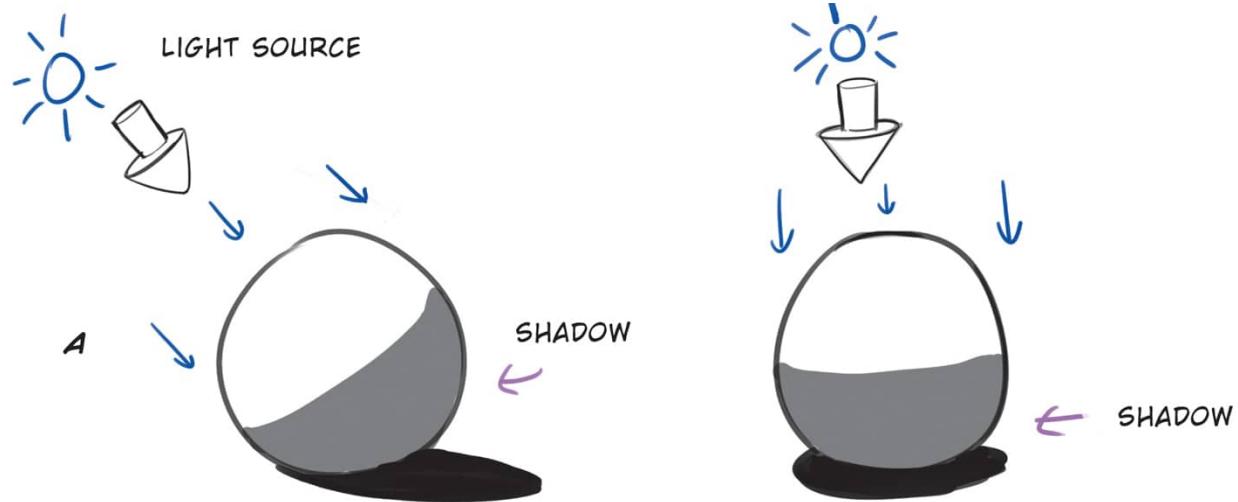
4

## CONVEYING DIMENSION, EMOTION & CHARACTER



# LIGHT AND SHADOW, SHAPE AND LINE

## BASICS OF LIGHT AND SHADOW



Once the direction of the light is set, it's easy to enhance line drawings with the addition of light and shadow.

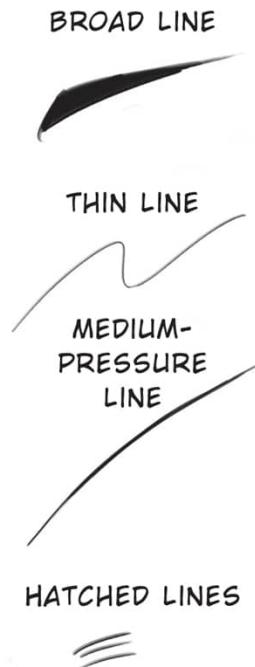
## APPLYING THE BASICS OF LIGHT AND SHADOW



By interpreting the overall shape and form of the hair surrounding the head, you can adjust the strength of the lines and shadows.

## CHARACTER APPLICATION





Use different lines to create a variety of textures and a sense of depth.

## TECHNIQUES FOR USING LINE



A

This example uses thick lines for the outlines and thin lines within them for the details of the figure.

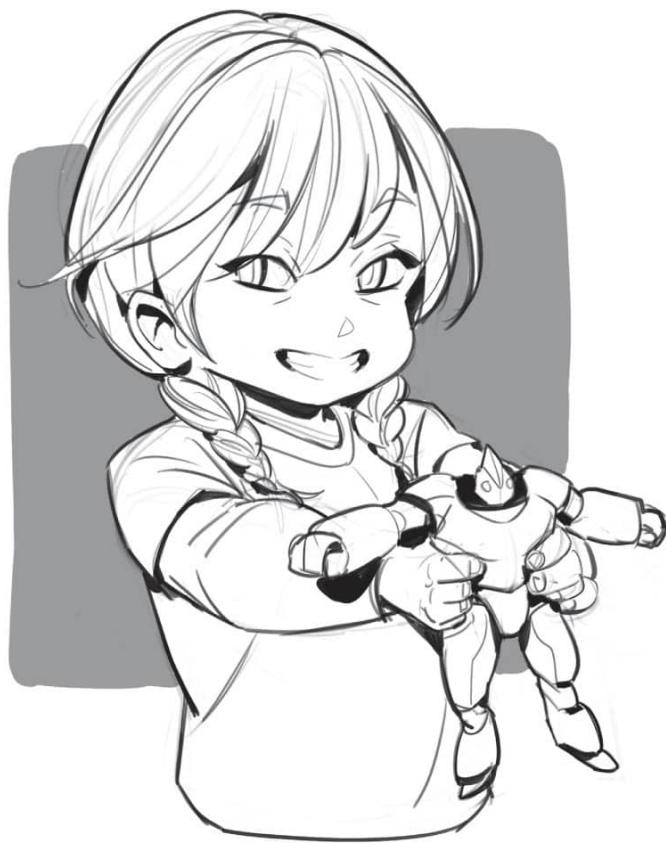
This is the easiest way to use lines. It gives a solid look to the drawing.



B

This example uses heavy lines that emphasize the darkest areas.

This approach is completed by adding shadows. It's most effective when used with color.



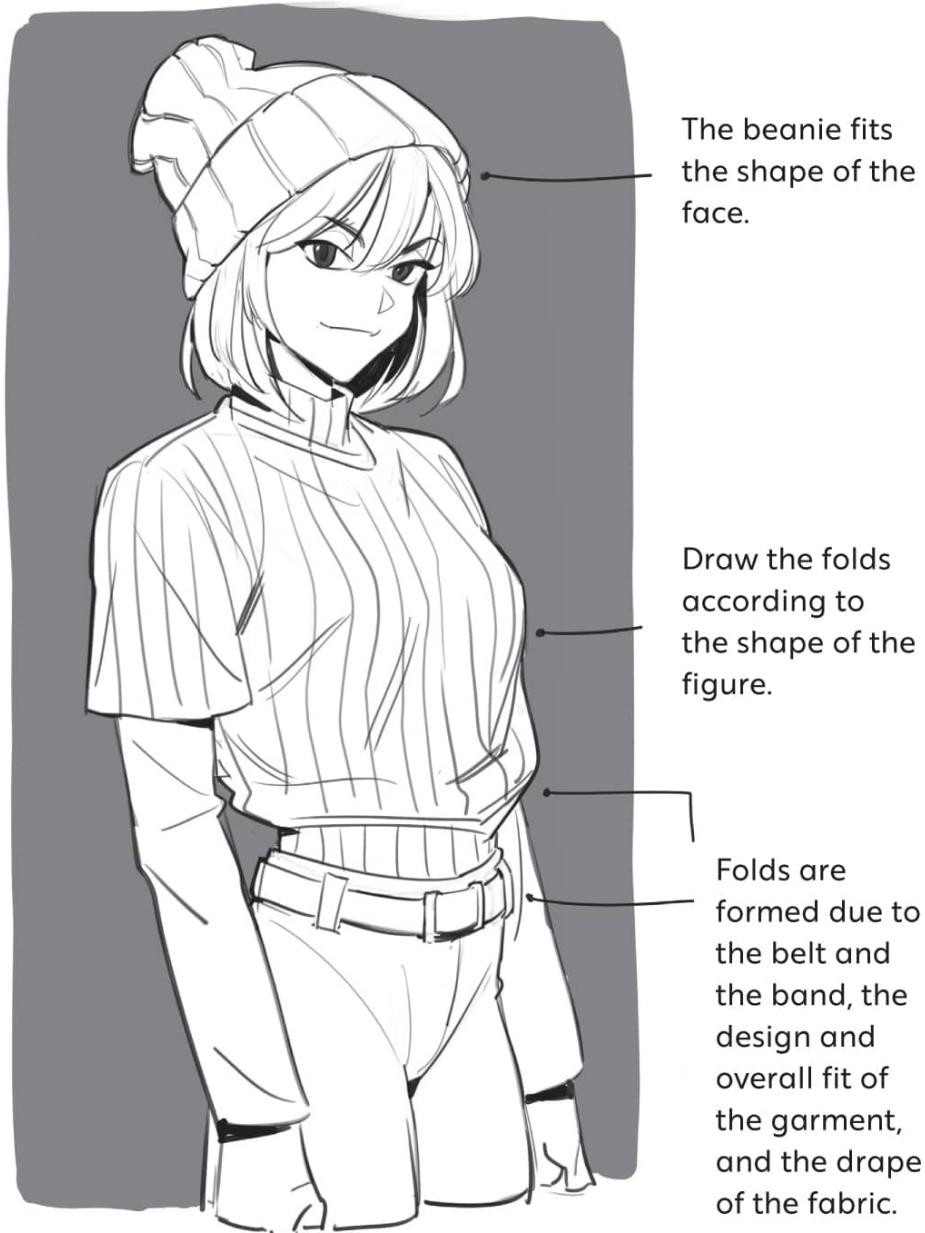
C

This method uses thick lines in the shadowy areas and thin lines in the lighter areas.

It's a good method for completion and speed.

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

In this drawing, the outer lines are mostly thick and the interior lines thin.



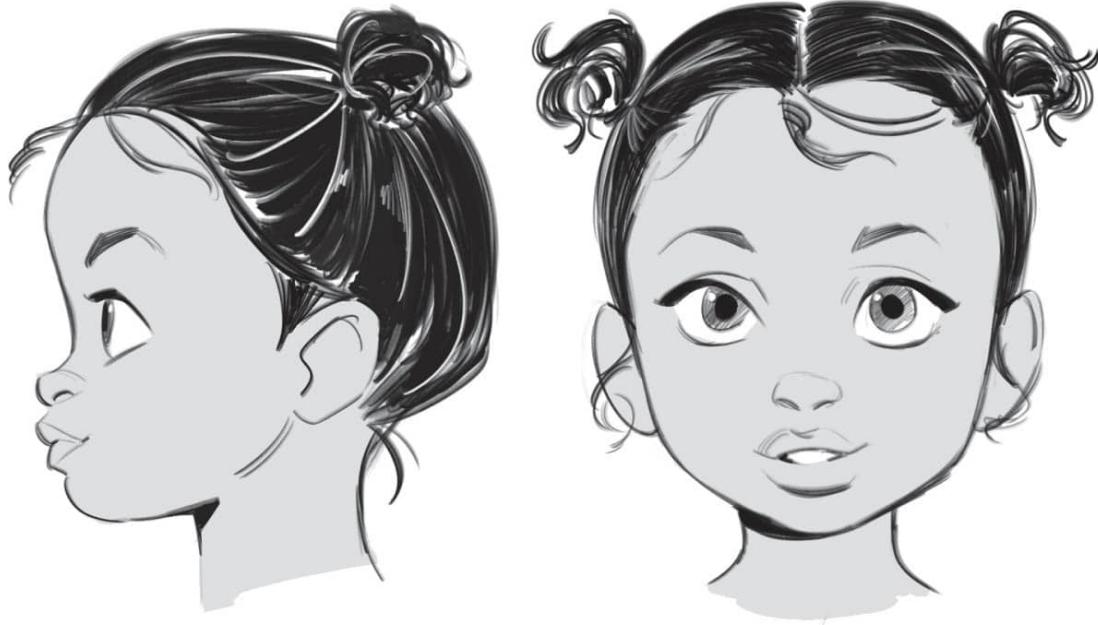


The hairstyle in this drawing begins with the hairline. The short hair added leaves the hairline visible.

Draw the folds of the T-shirts flowing from the figure's chest and shoulders.

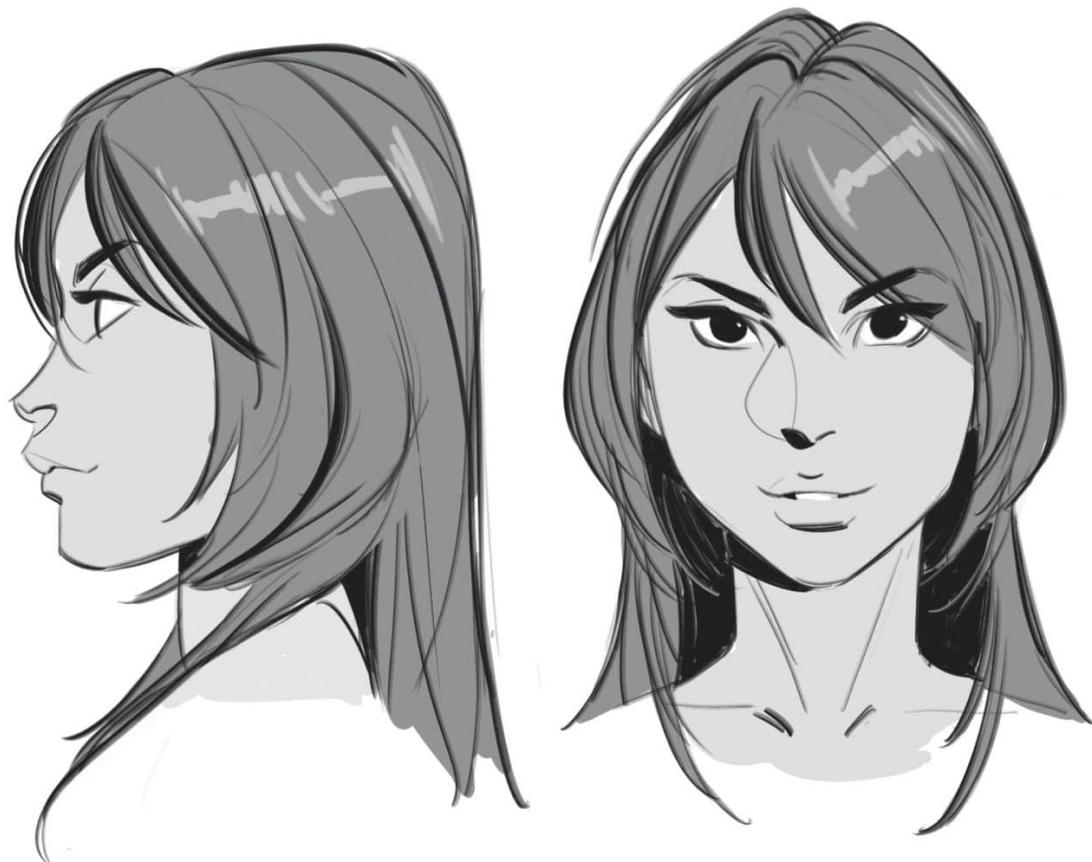
The folds of the clothes are created by the belted pants.

## BASIC FACIAL STRUCTURES



YOUNG GIRL

- Wide forehead
- Large eyes and ears
- Small nose and mouth
- Small chin



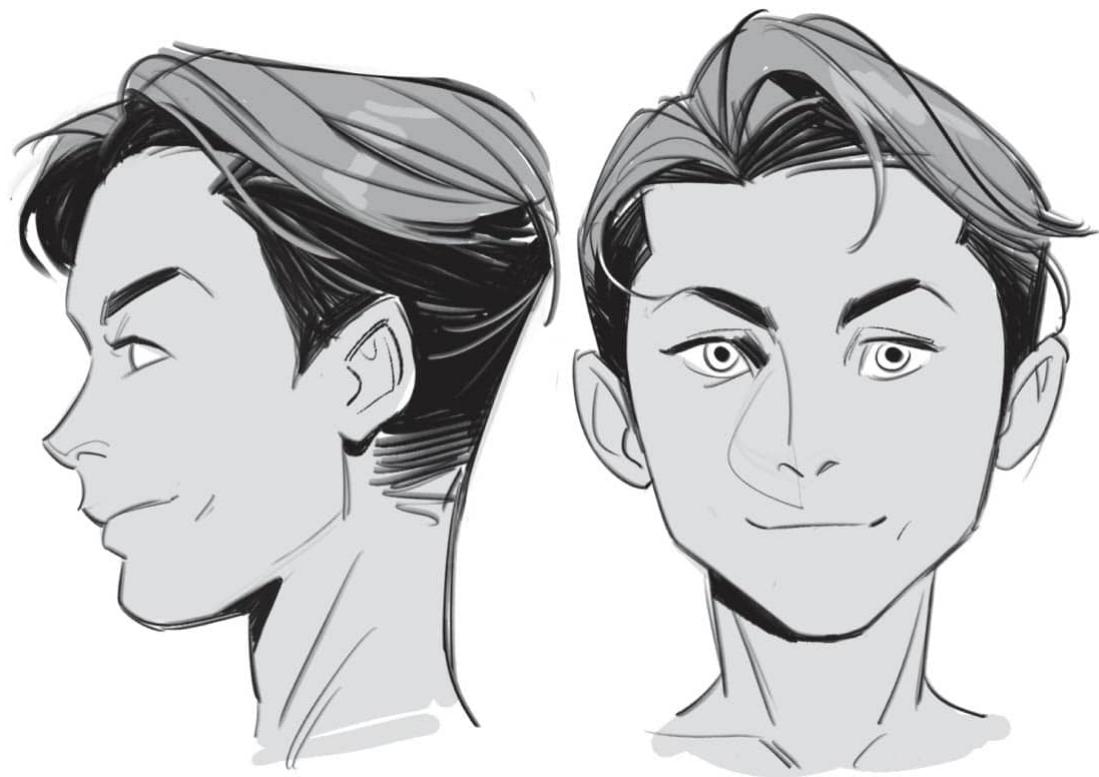
ADULT WOMAN

- Mature facial structure
- Fully developed chin
- Proportional eyes, nose, and mouth



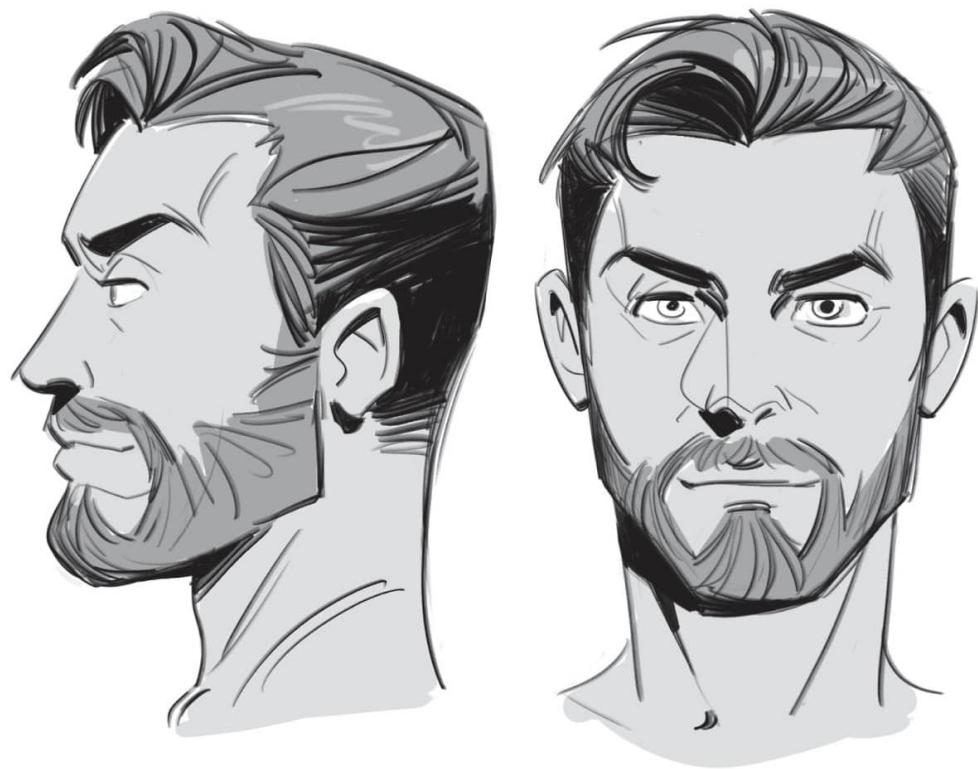
SENIOR WOMAN

- Strong wrinkles
- Based on overall facial proportions, the chin is larger.



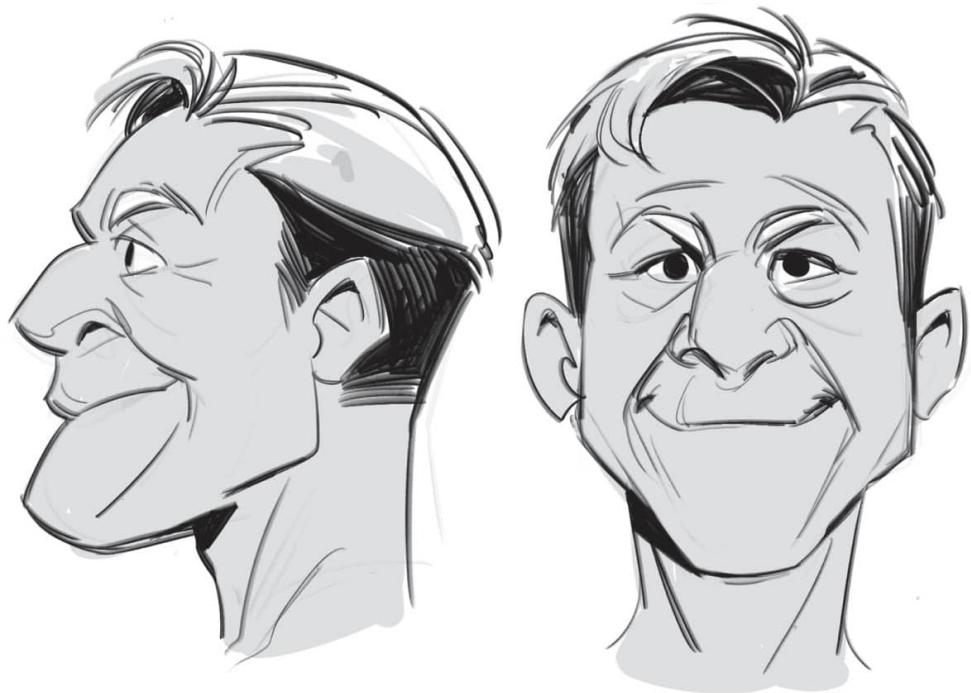
YOUNG BOY

- Wide forehead
- Developed cheek and jaw
- Neck skinny compared with the width of the face
- Big ears



ADULT MAN

- Neck and face about the same width
- Slight wrinkles around the eyes
- Jawbone and cheekbones emphasized

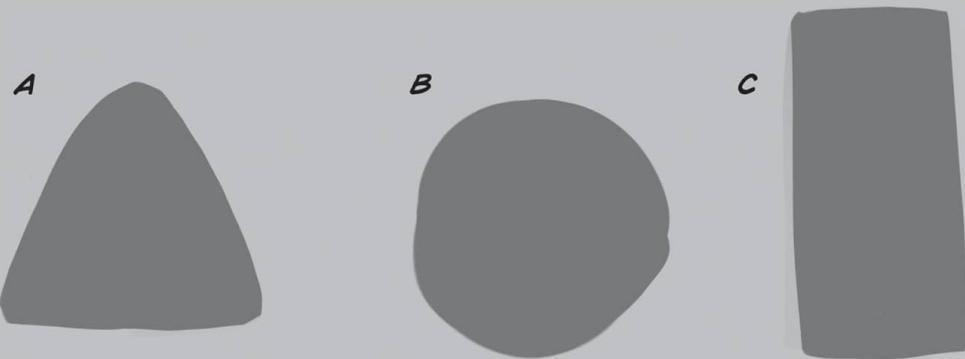


SENIOR MAN

- Skinnier neck due to a loss of muscles
- Stronger wrinkles due to aging
- Larger chin

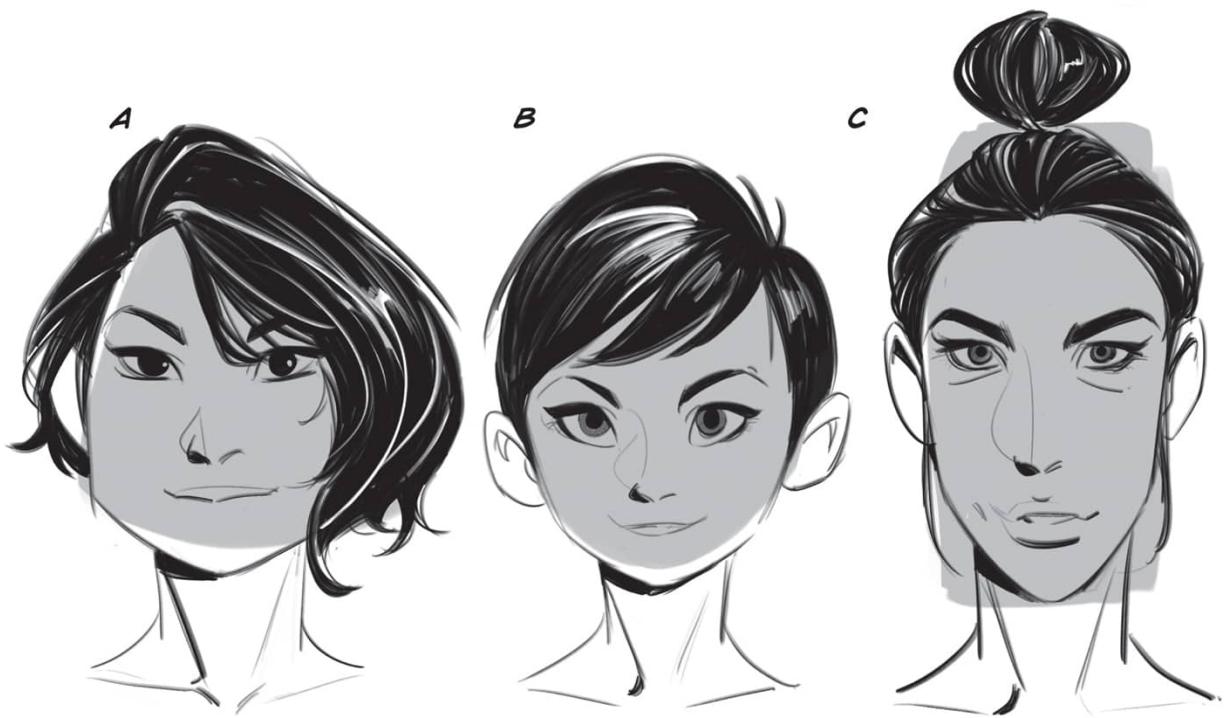
## FACE SHAPES

Faces also come in many different shapes.  
It wouldn't be fun if everyone had the same face!



One of the easiest ways to design a face is to start with a single shape as a reference.

Everyone has their own unique face shape. Starting with simple geometric shapes will help you draw faces that are unique and have their own strong personalities.



ROUND FACE



LONG FACE



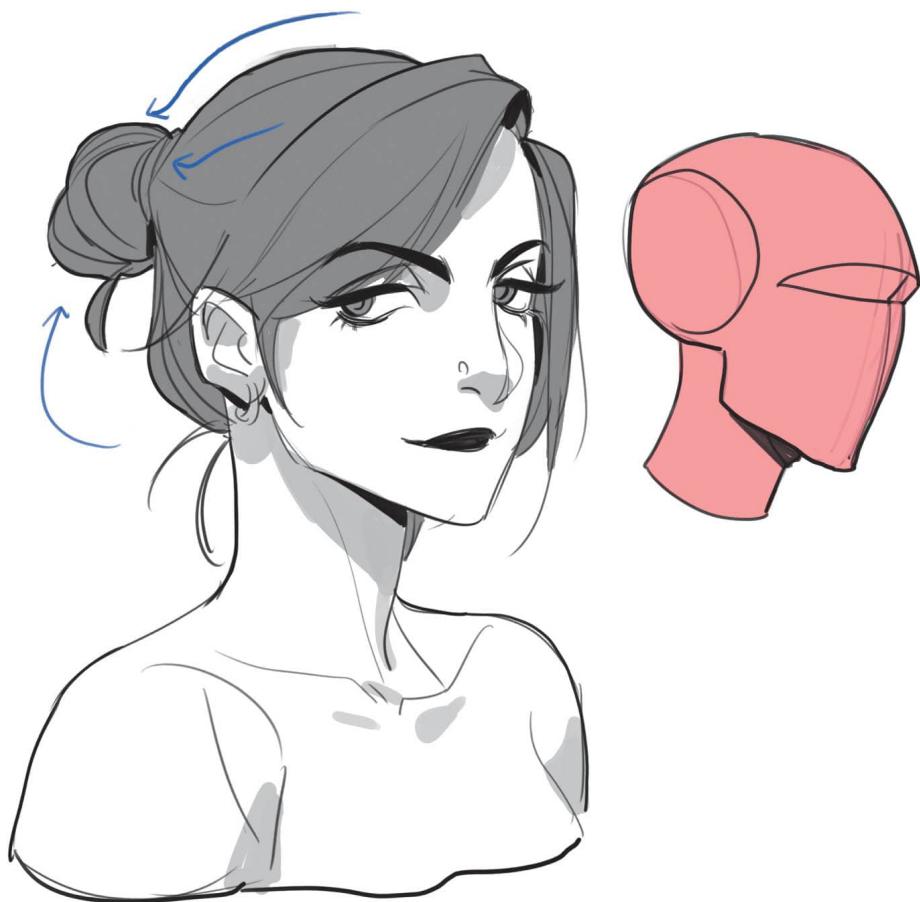
**ANGULAR FACES:** Though both these faces are angular, you can give them different looks by altering their shapes and proportions.

## DRAWING FACES FROM DIFFERENT ANGLES



### FROM BELOW

The underside of the chin and the beginning of the neck are visible. The bottom of the nose can be seen, and the jaw area generally looks bigger. The underside of the hair is also emphasized.



### NEAR PROFILE

When hair is tied back, the hair that's gathered runs along the shape of the head toward the direction of the tie.



### From Above

A face shown from above, or one that's looking down, shows more of the crown or forehead. Use the crown as the base when drawing the hairline.

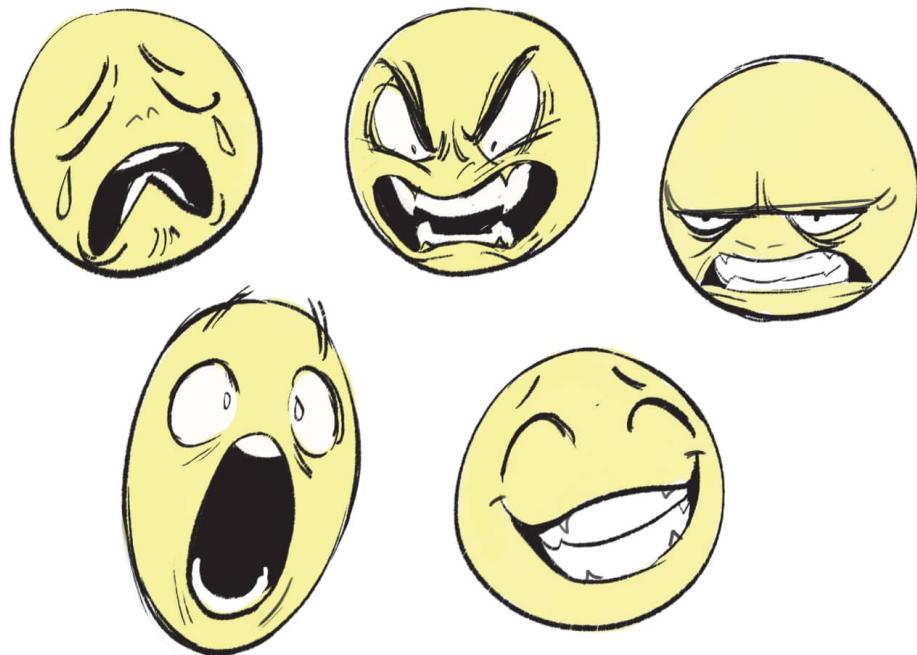


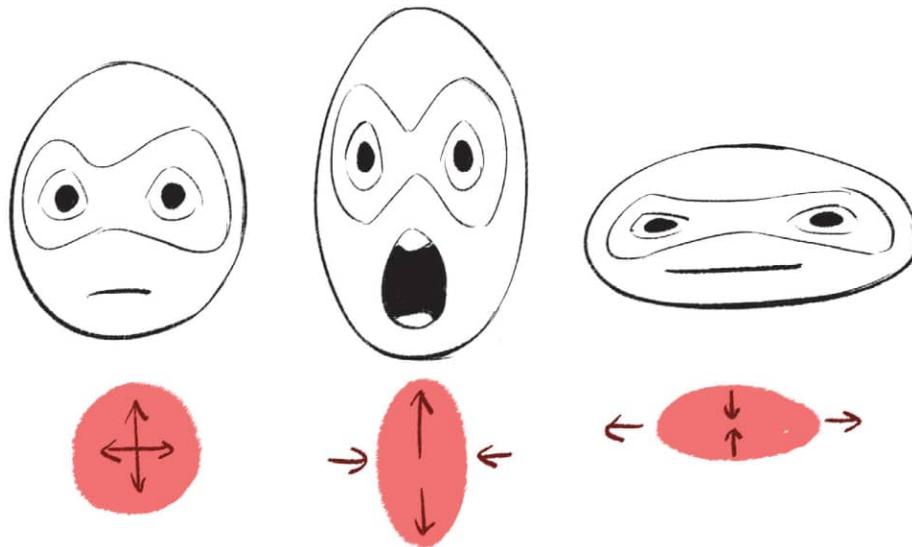
### THREE-QUARTER VIEW

Draw the basic shape of the hair based on the shape of the head.

## EMOTION AND EXPRESSION

Facial expressions convey the character's emotions and give the story authenticity. Drawings that effectively express emotions are burned into the viewer's memory.



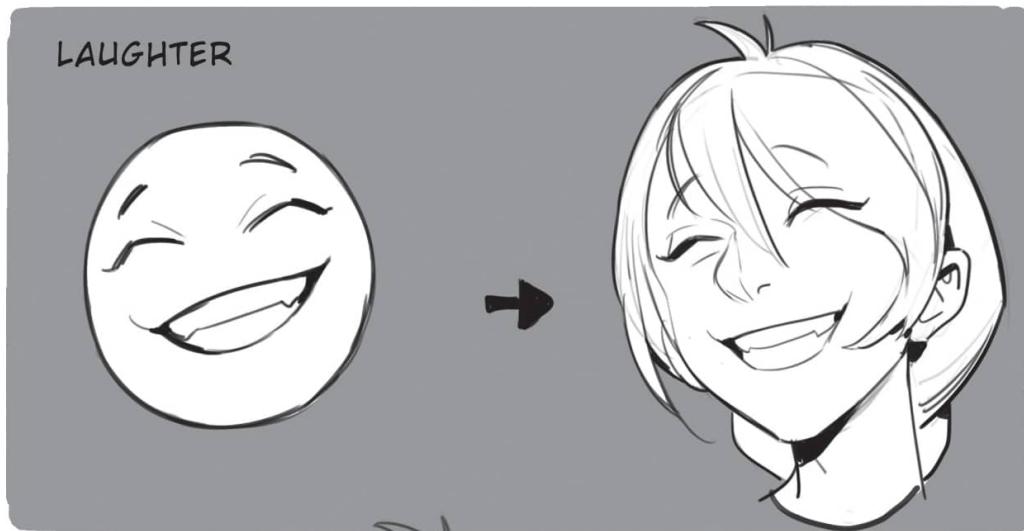


A person's overall facial form changes, depending on the expression. These examples are much exaggerated. Adjust the level of exaggeration to support the drawing style, the story, and its characters.



Squashing or stretching the facial form to reflect the visual direction of an emotion helps to reinforce an expression.

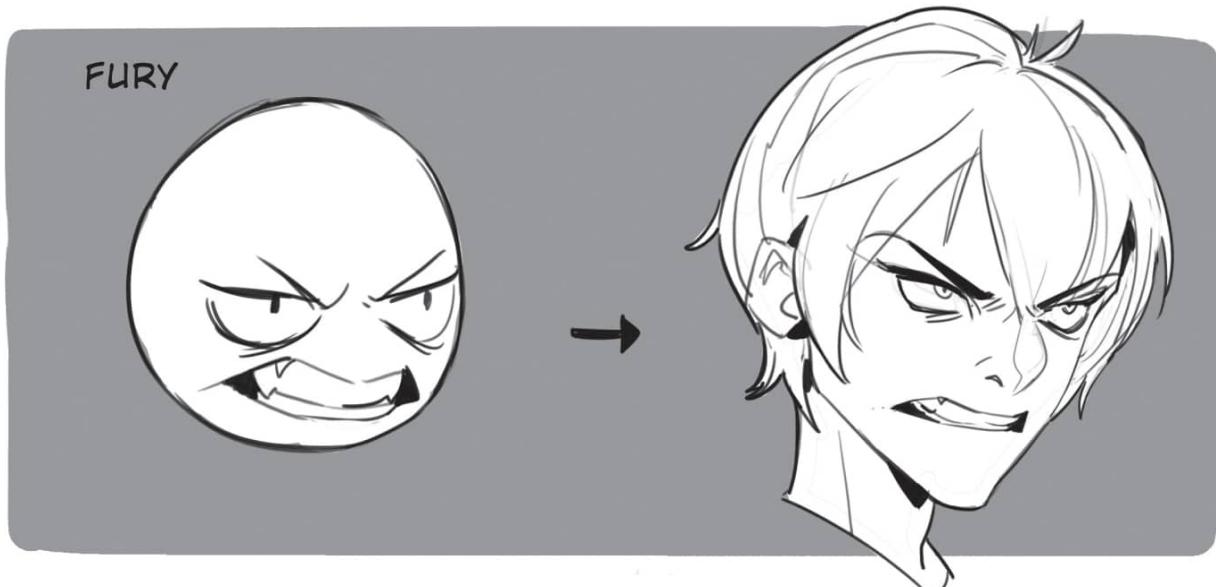
## EXPRESSING THE SUBTLETIES OF EMOTION



When you laugh, the cheeks expand as the muscles around the mouth are pulled outward, and the lower part of the eyes rise upward.



The expression won't be natural unless the surrounding muscles move together.



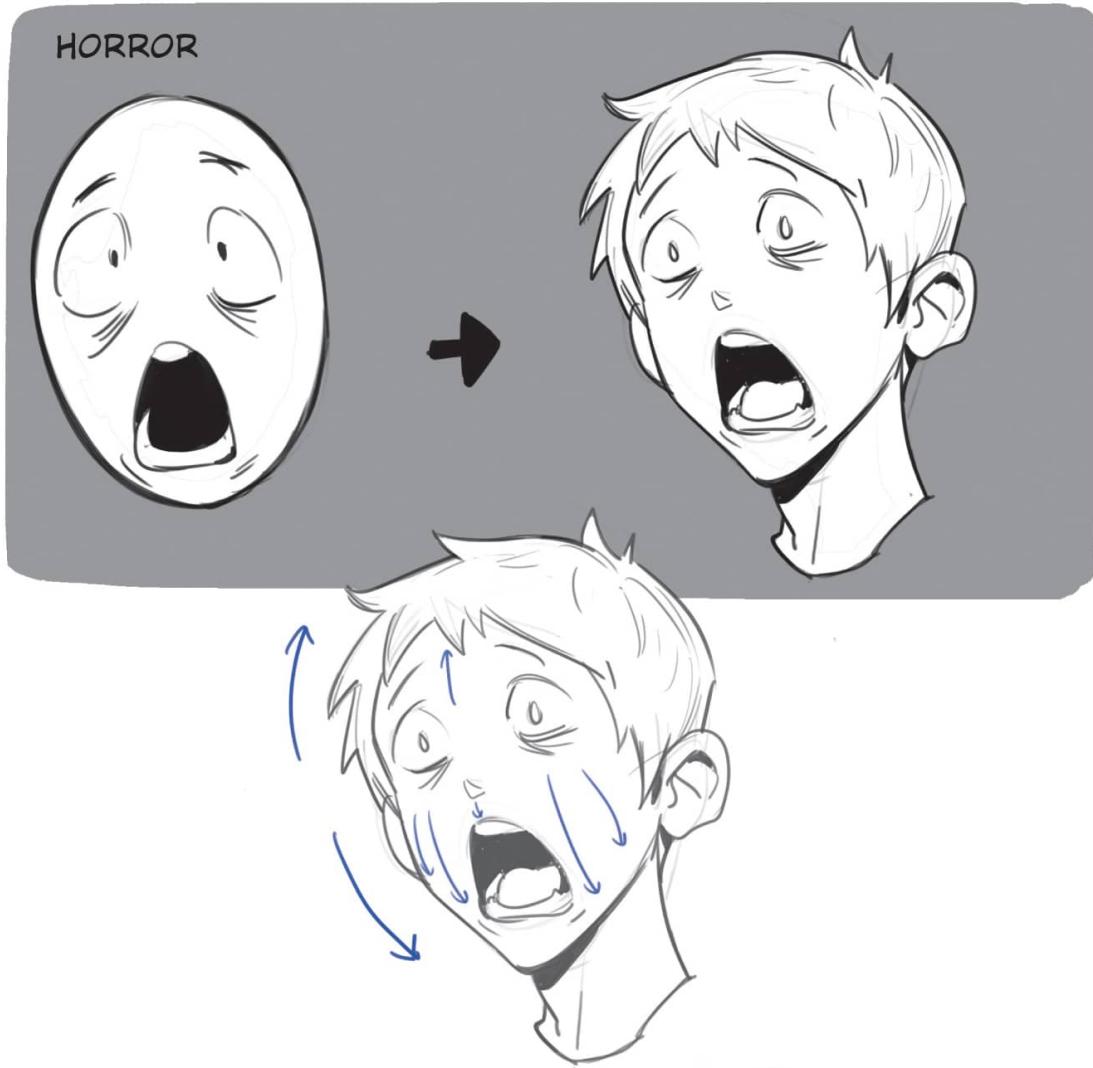


As the eyebrows are overly furrowed, lines form between them.

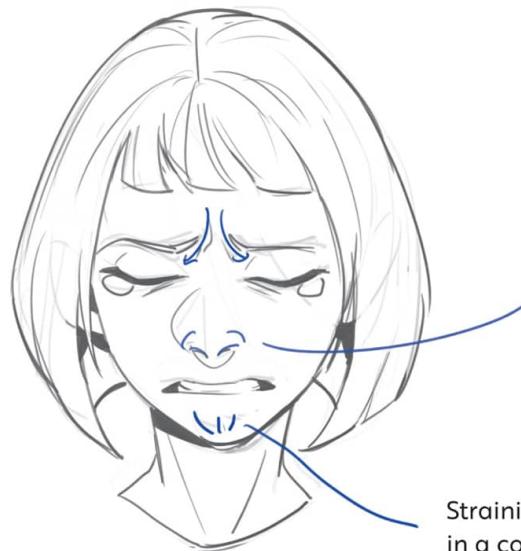
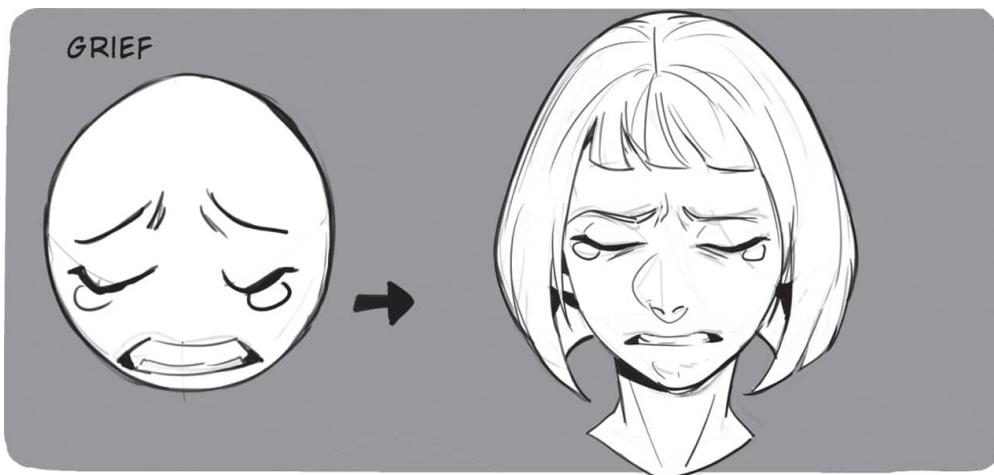


An upward-facing “disgust wrinkle” will also appear.

As the teeth are clenched, the lines around the mouth are pulled down.



As the mouth opens, the overall shape of the face is stretched vertically.

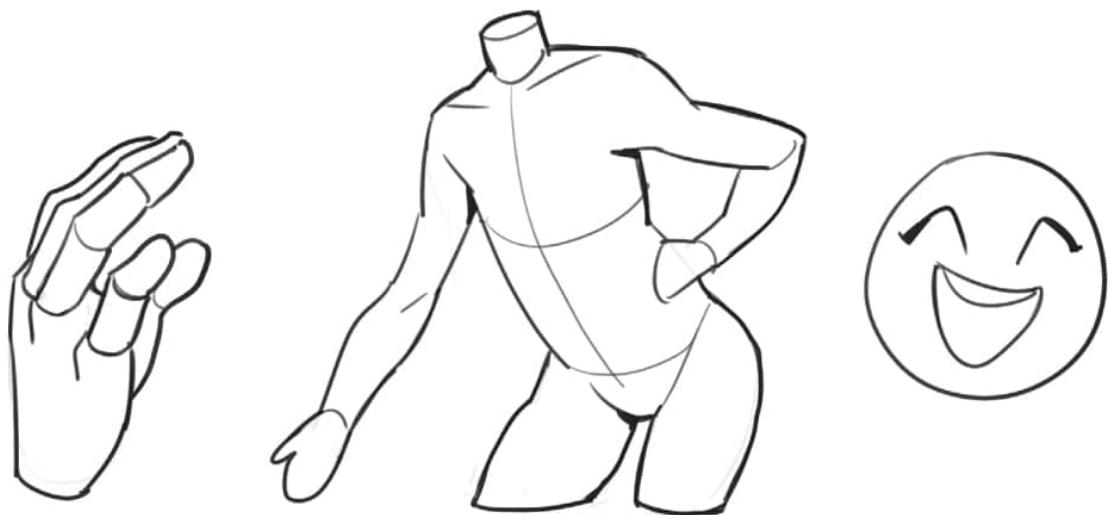


Worry lines: Though lines form on the nose, drawing all the lines won't look natural, so simply express it through the angle of the nose.

Straining your chin will result in a cobblestone chin.

## GESTURES THAT ENHANCE EMOTION AND STORY

Rather than just using expressions, action is conveyed most effectively when the body, hands, and facial expressions all act out an intended story, or according to the situation and the reaction of the character.





It's a good idea to make little doodles or visual notes like these before starting your drawing.



It's a good idea to make little doodles or visual notes like these before starting your drawing.

Looking in the mirror or taking a picture of yourself to use as a visual reference will help you draw a more natural gesture or pose.

## TELLING A STORY

Drawings that tell a story make a lasting impression on the viewer. For basic exercise, remember the following three elements.

1. A character's personality
2. Situation or interaction
3. Reaction or result

This is a very simple method of practice.



1. A bubbly personality
2. Success through hard work
3. Joy



1. Child with a lot of empathy (A)
2. Child whose puppy passed away (B)
3. Offering comfort



1. Sassy child
2. Taking a selfie with a smartphone
3. In a cheeky manner

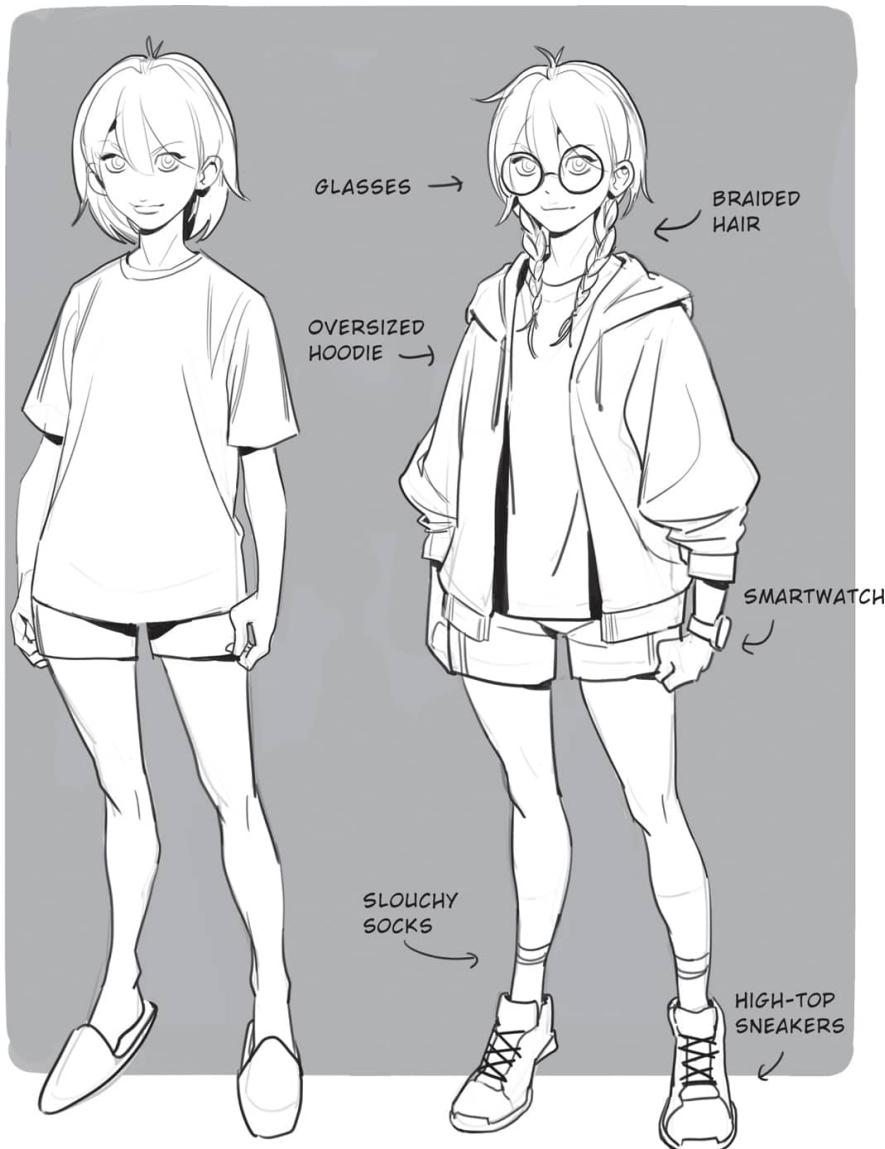


1. Child who's a kibitzer (A)
2. Child in a competitive game (B)
3. Bickering



## CREATING A CHARACTER'S BACKSTORY

After drawing a character, add external characteristics to it. For practice, try giving each character four or more items.



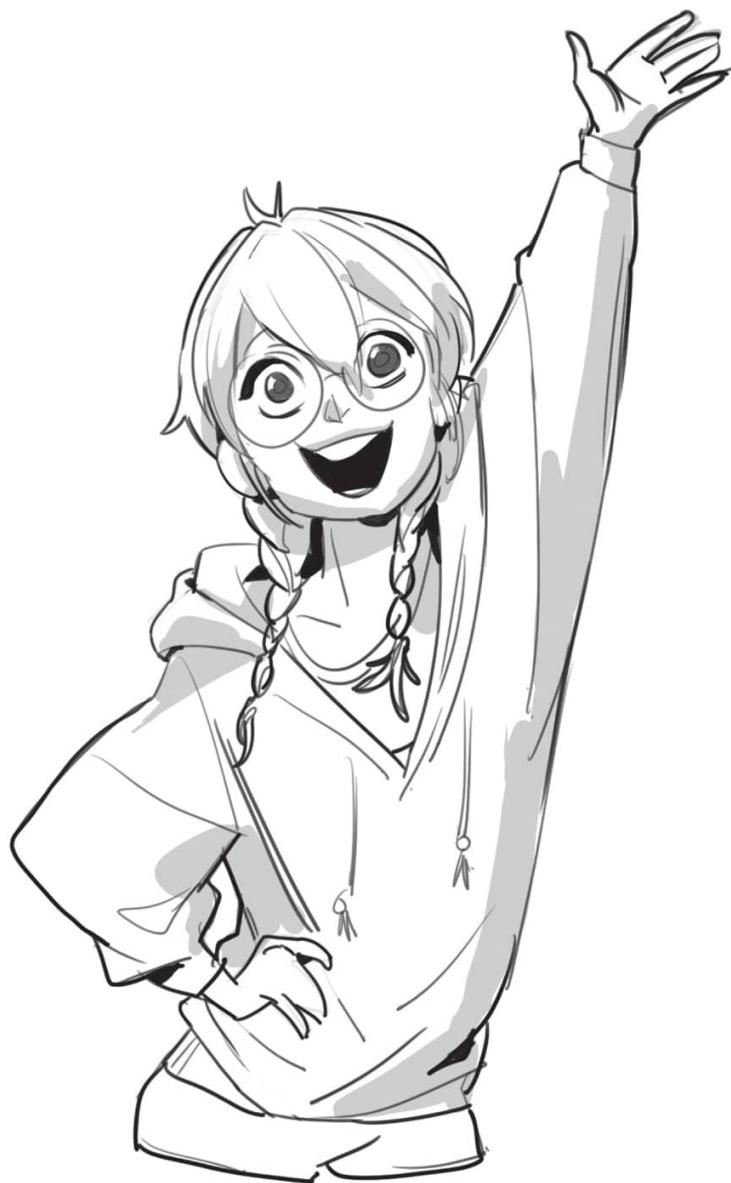
While any character can wear T-shirts and shorts, you'll support their personality and backstory through visual details.



LIKES RAMEN



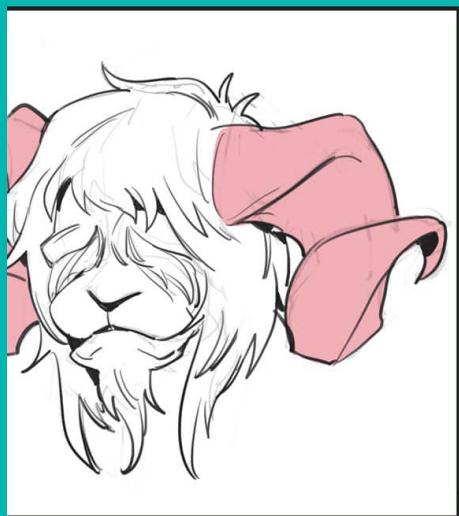
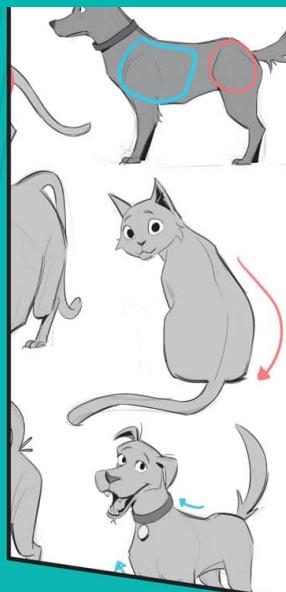
ENJOYS VIDEO GAMES



HAS AN OUTGOING PERSONALITY, WHICH IS REVEALED THROUGH GESTURES AND FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

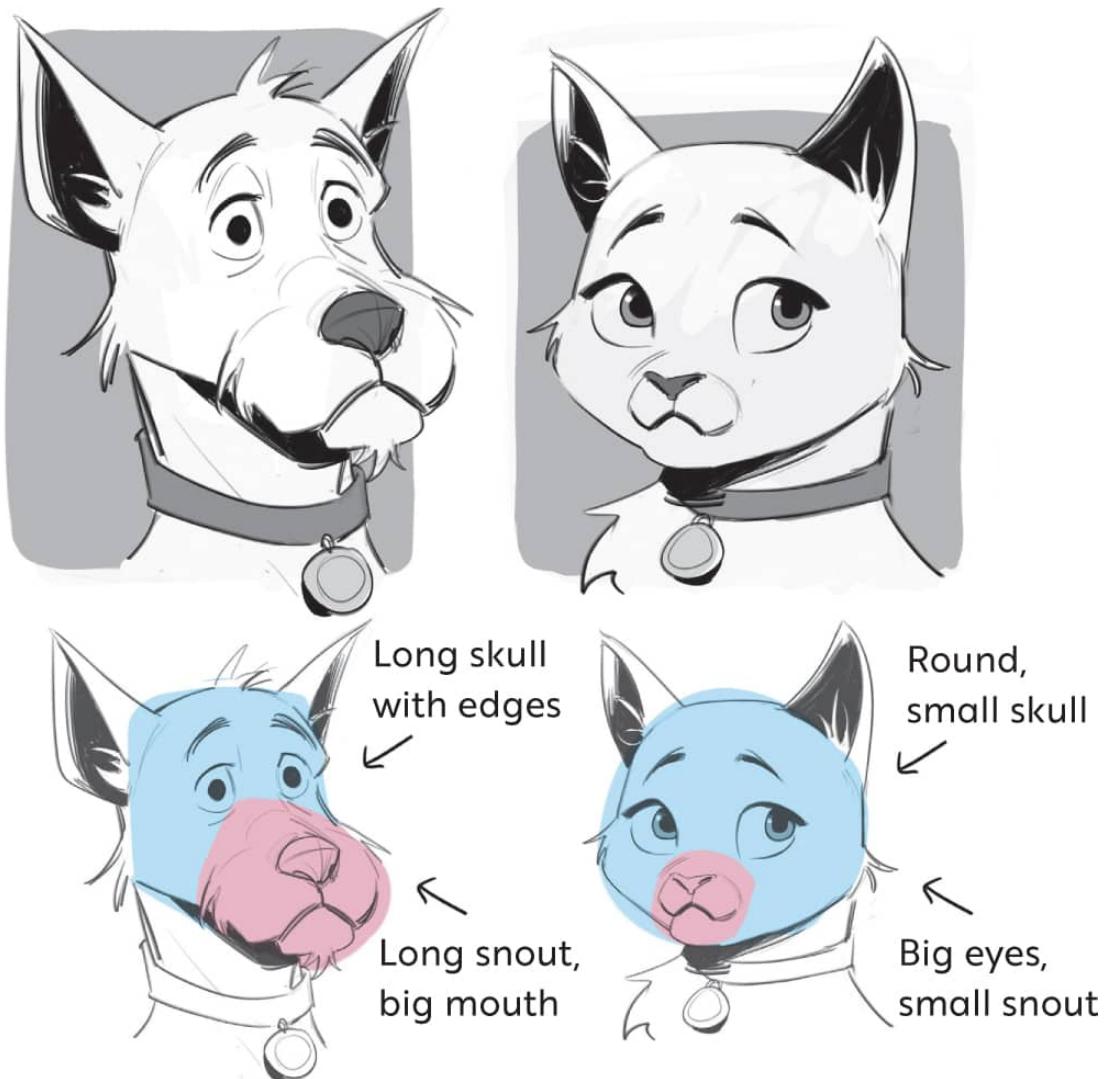
Following these steps will help you design and draw unique characters.

## PETS, CHIBIS & SIDEKICKS

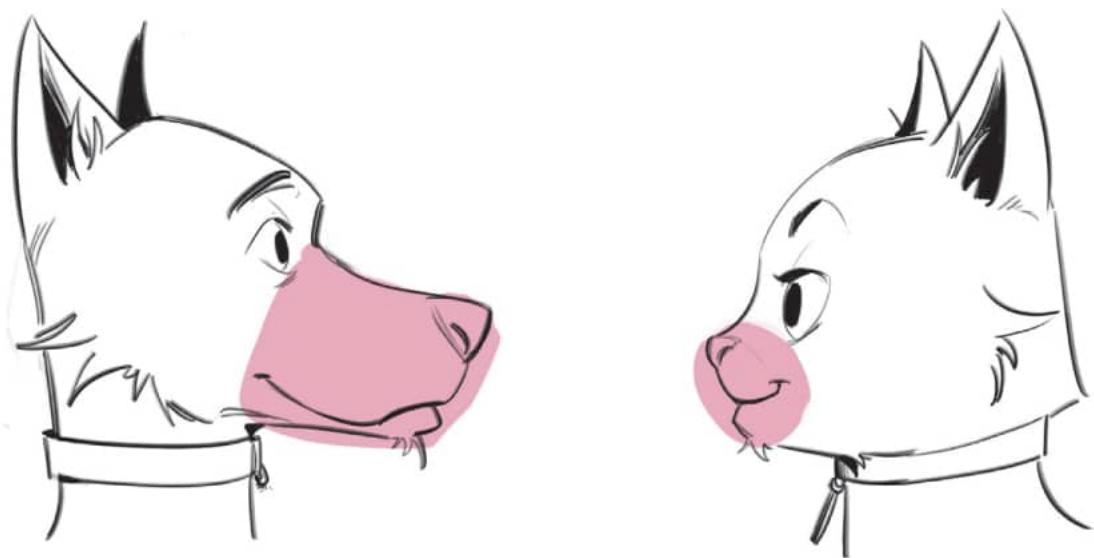


## PETS WITH PERSONALITY

As with human faces, you can design and build animals' faces using simple shapes.



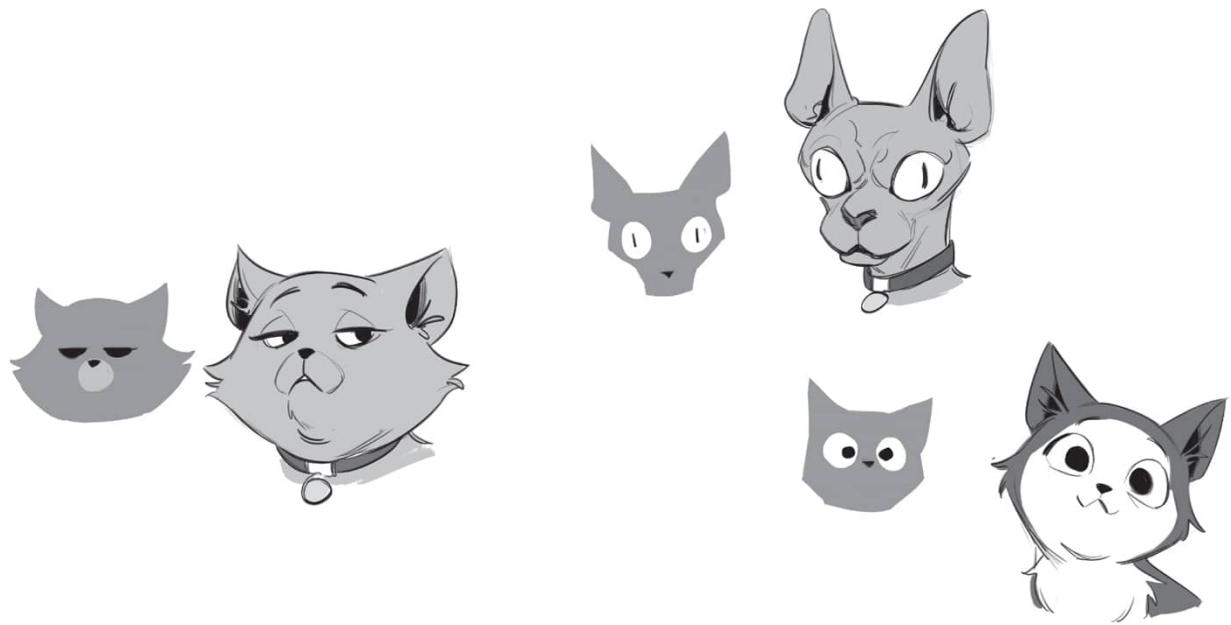
Certain dog breeds (e.g., bulldog, pug) have smaller mouths.



The biggest difference between dogs and cats is the mouth's appearance.



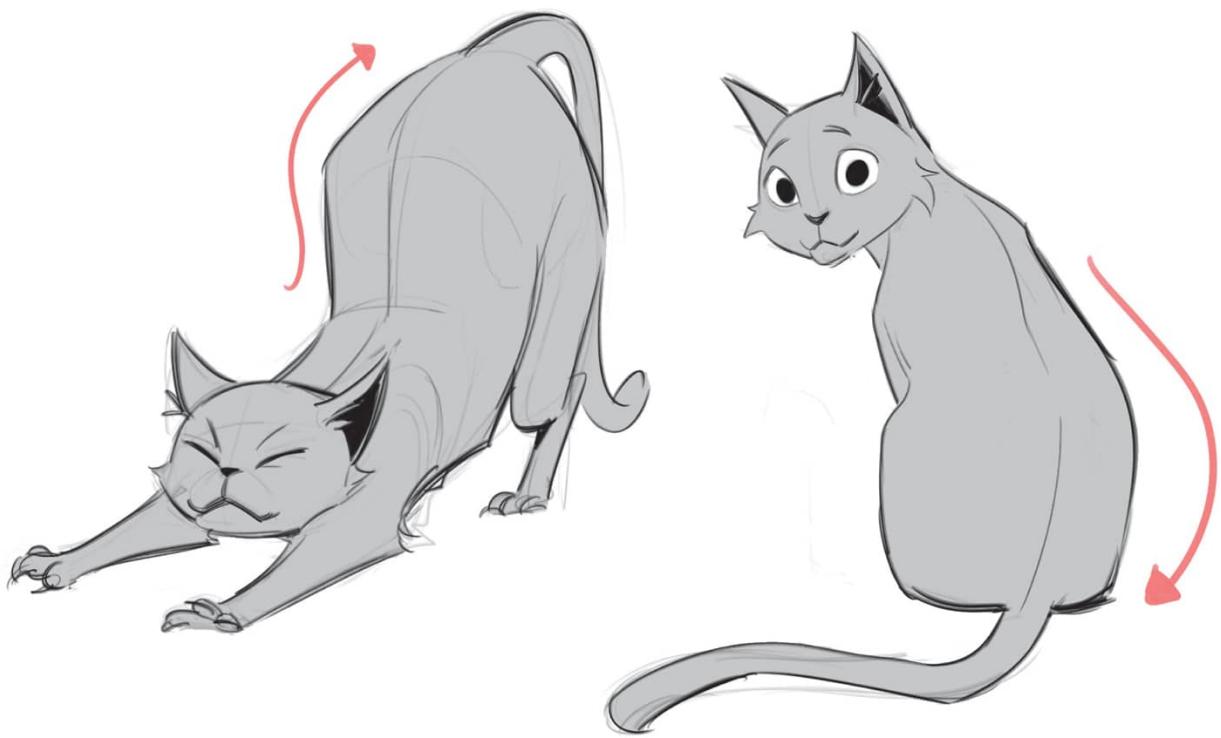
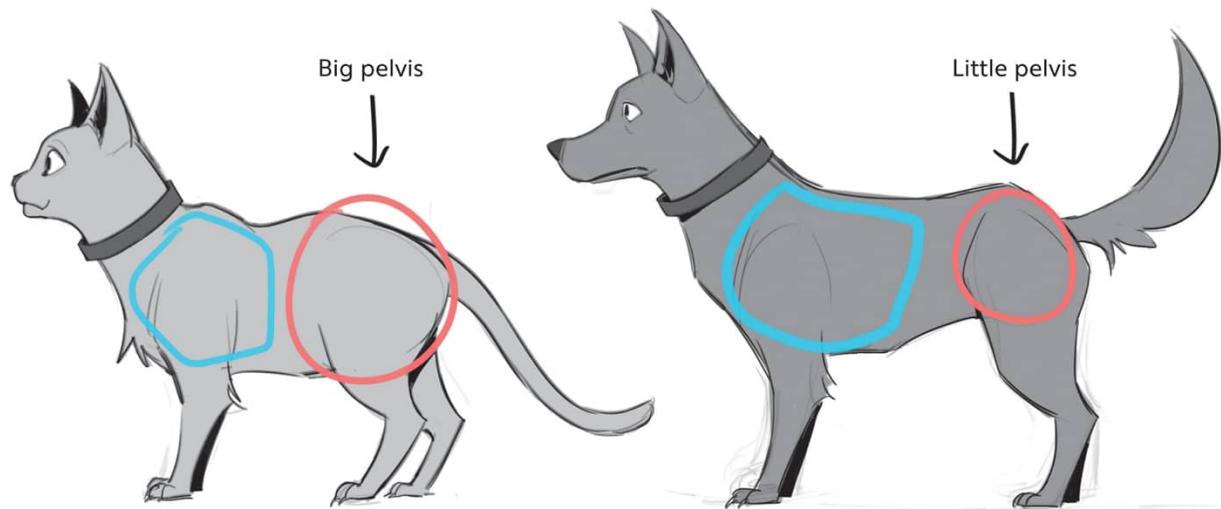
Dogs have different characteristics based on breeds.



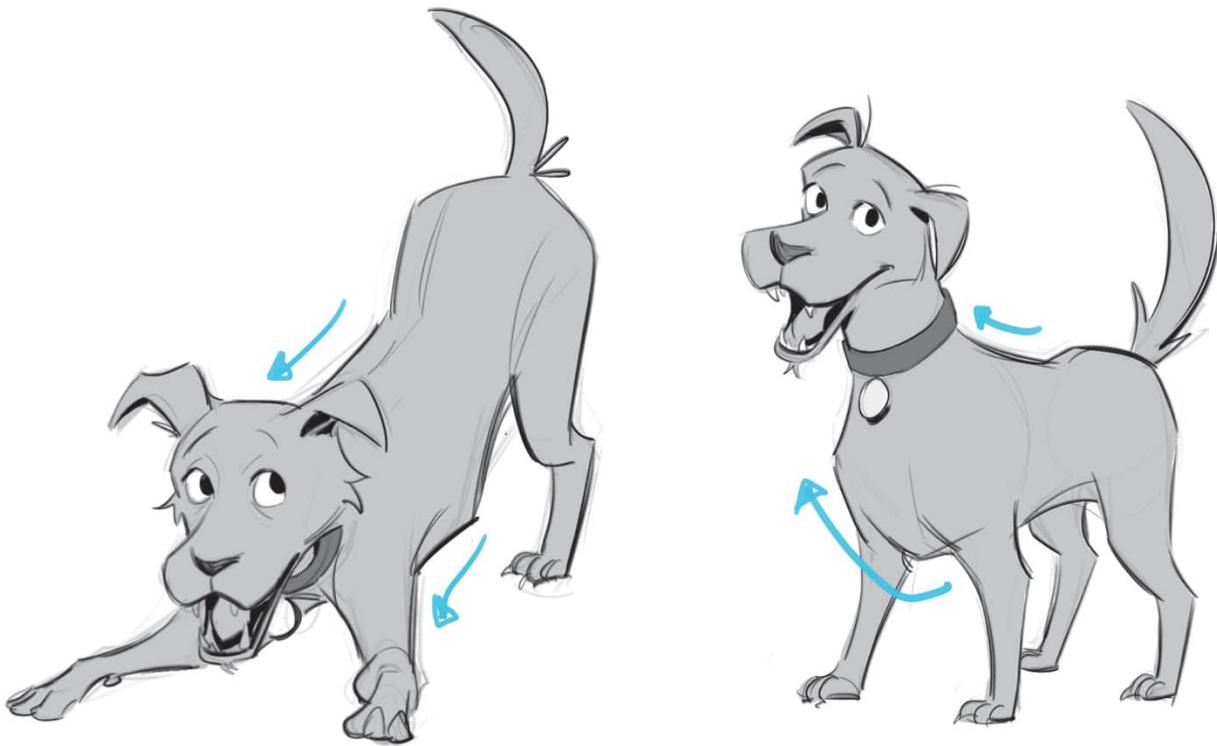
When drawing the animal, be sure to capture its biggest characteristics.

## CLASSIC PET POSES

Apply the basic proportions of your animal character's body to all their poses.

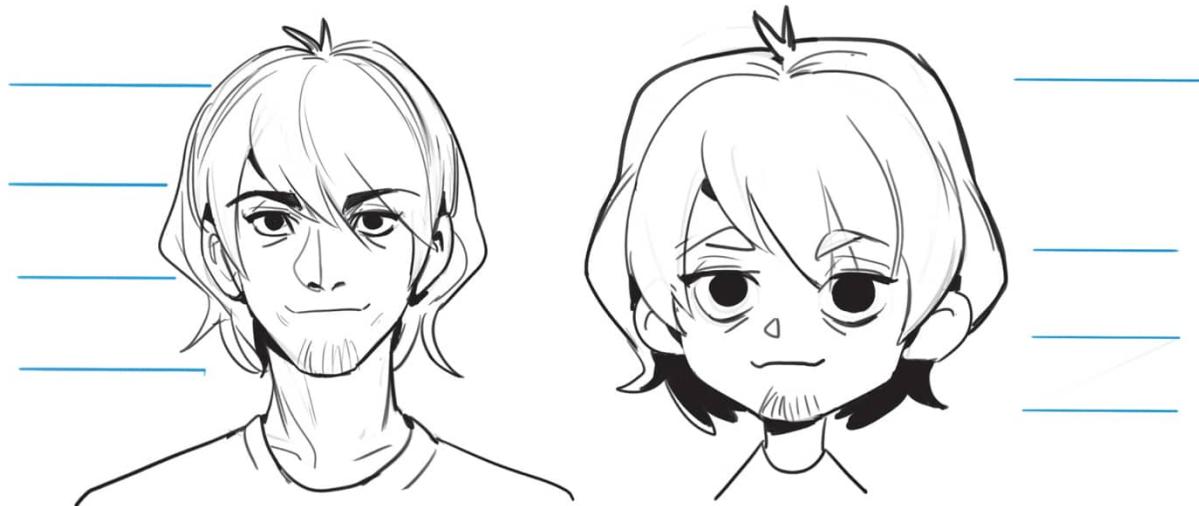


Cats have more fluid curves.



Dogs have fewer ball-jointed bones than cats, which results in stiffer-looking gestures.

## CHIBI CHARACTERS



The space between the top and second lines shows that a chibi's forehead is relatively large compared with that of a typical human head.



You can draw different eye styles.



$\frac{1}{2}$

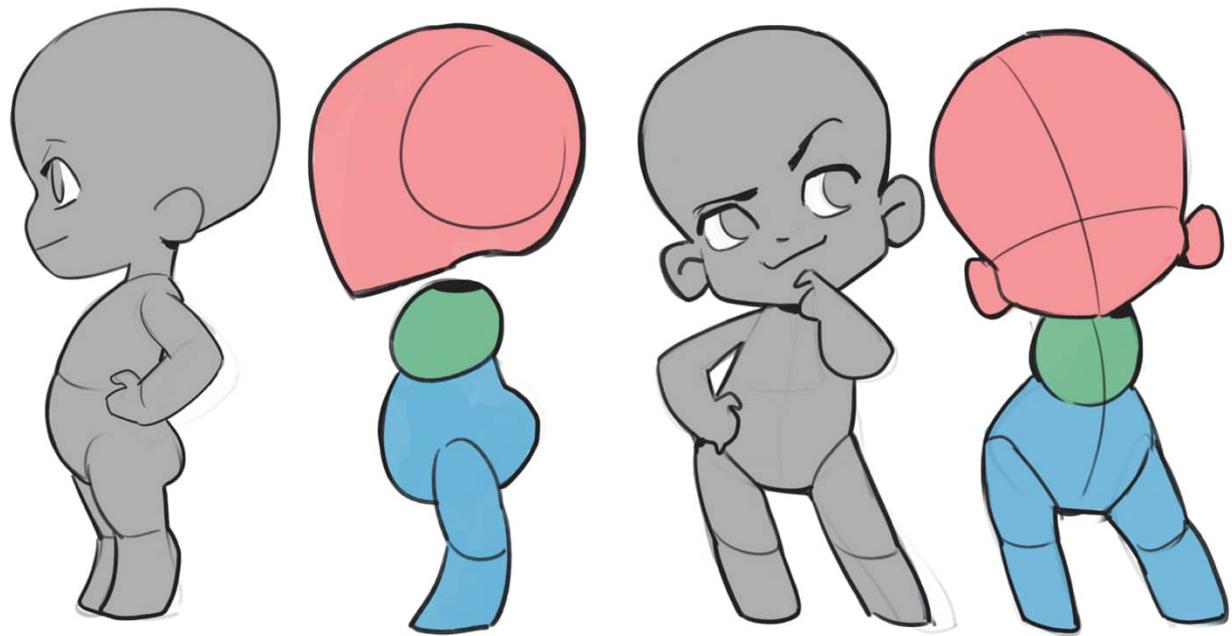
$\frac{1}{2}$

The proportion of a chibi figure is two heads tall.

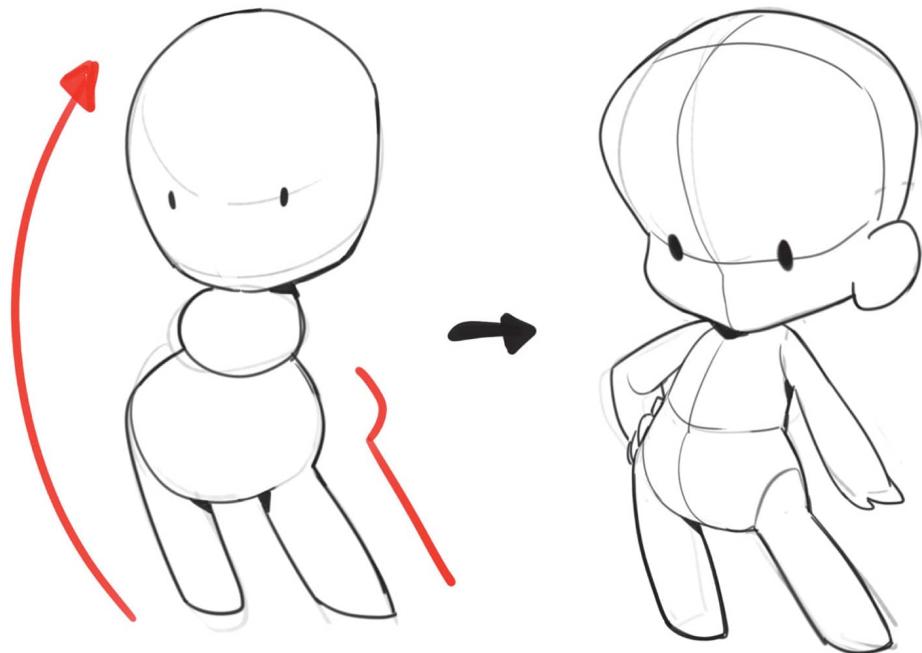


The forehead takes up half the head. Enlarge and add emphasis to the eyes.

The mouth and nose should be small.

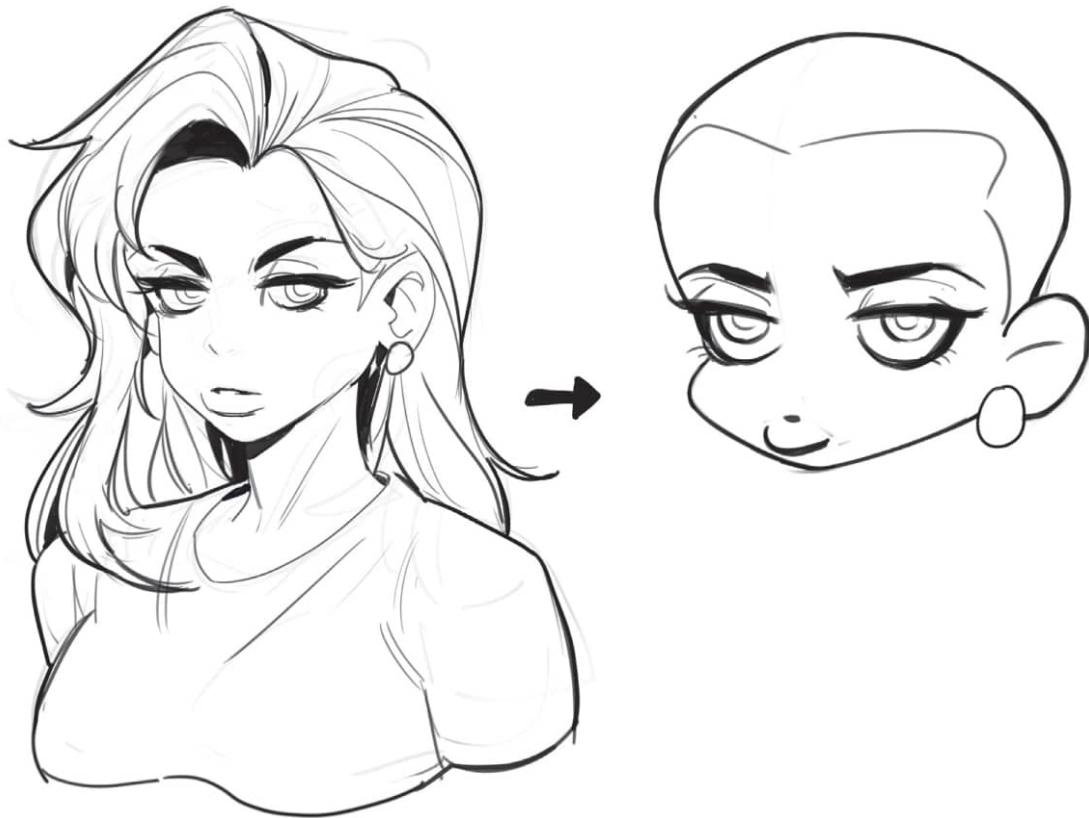


Since a chibi's figure is extremely simplified, try exaggerating the gesture. Build the basic form first.



Since there has been much alteration to the shape, try exaggerating the gesture just as much.

## CREATING CHIBIS WITH CHARACTER



- Thick lips
- Eye makeup and lush brows
- Half-closed eyes
- Luxuriant hair
- Large breasts

*(the last two are applied below)*

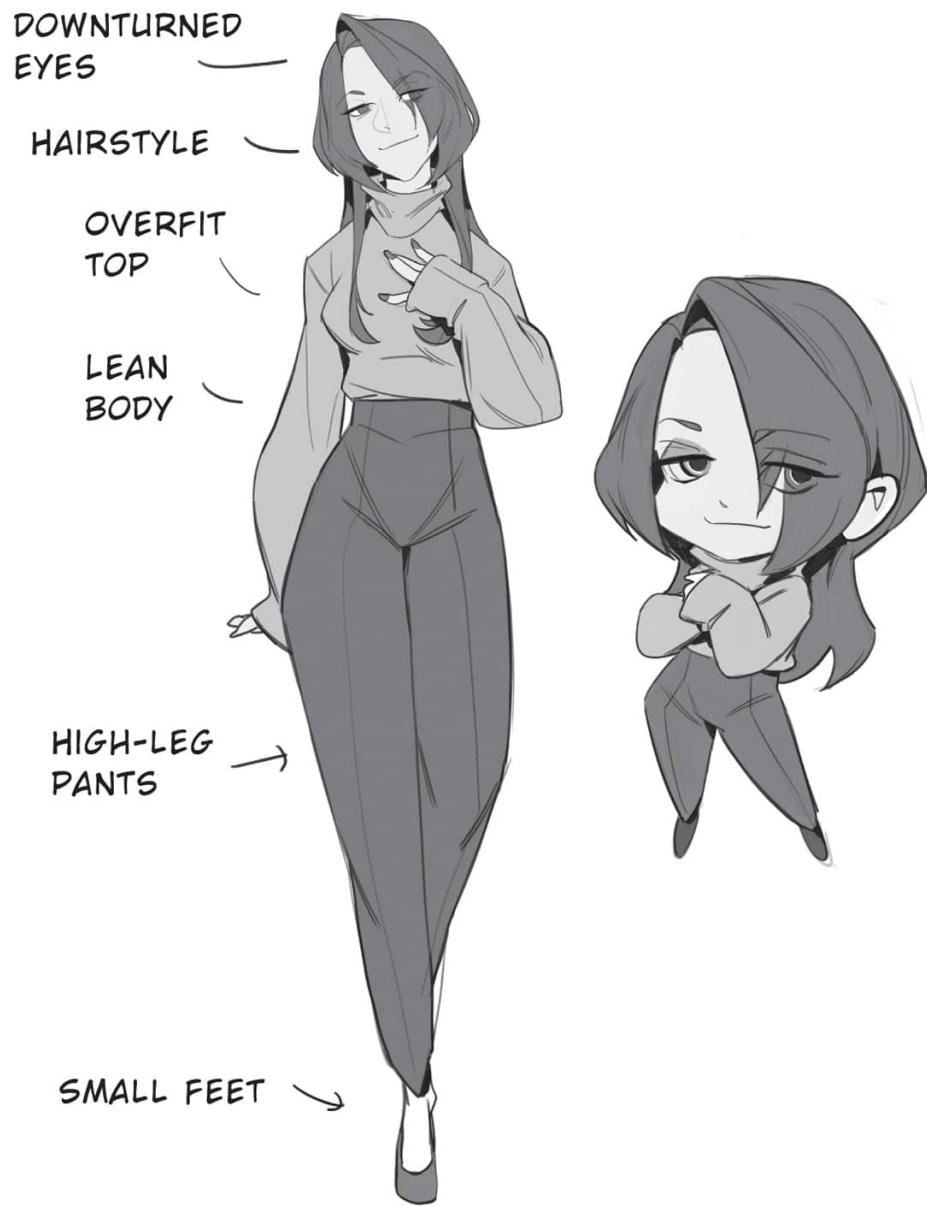


Draw with the clothes that the regular-sized character would usually wear.



Coloring and arranging elements that match a friend's personality and interests will make a perfect gift.

You can express a chibi's individuality through various details. Enhance the character's characteristics bit by bit while maintaining the cute proportions.



Even a character that isn't cute can be made into a chibi.



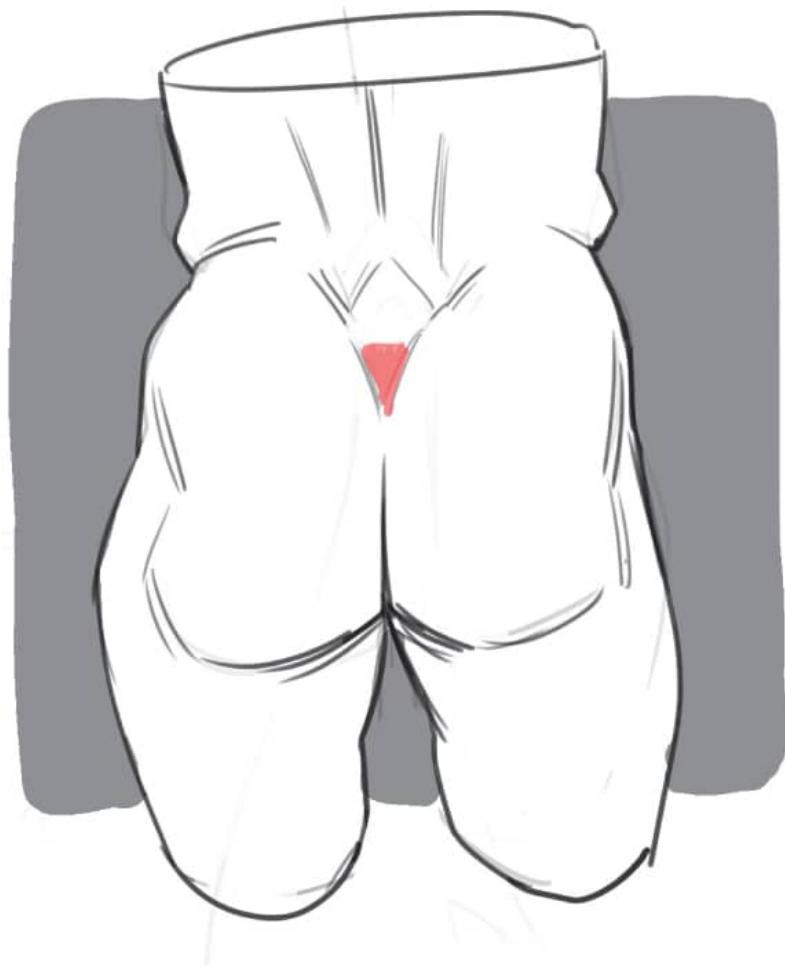
By staying true to your character's qualities, you can maintain their individuality as well as the cuteness of the chibi.

## KEMONOMIMI AND ANTHROS

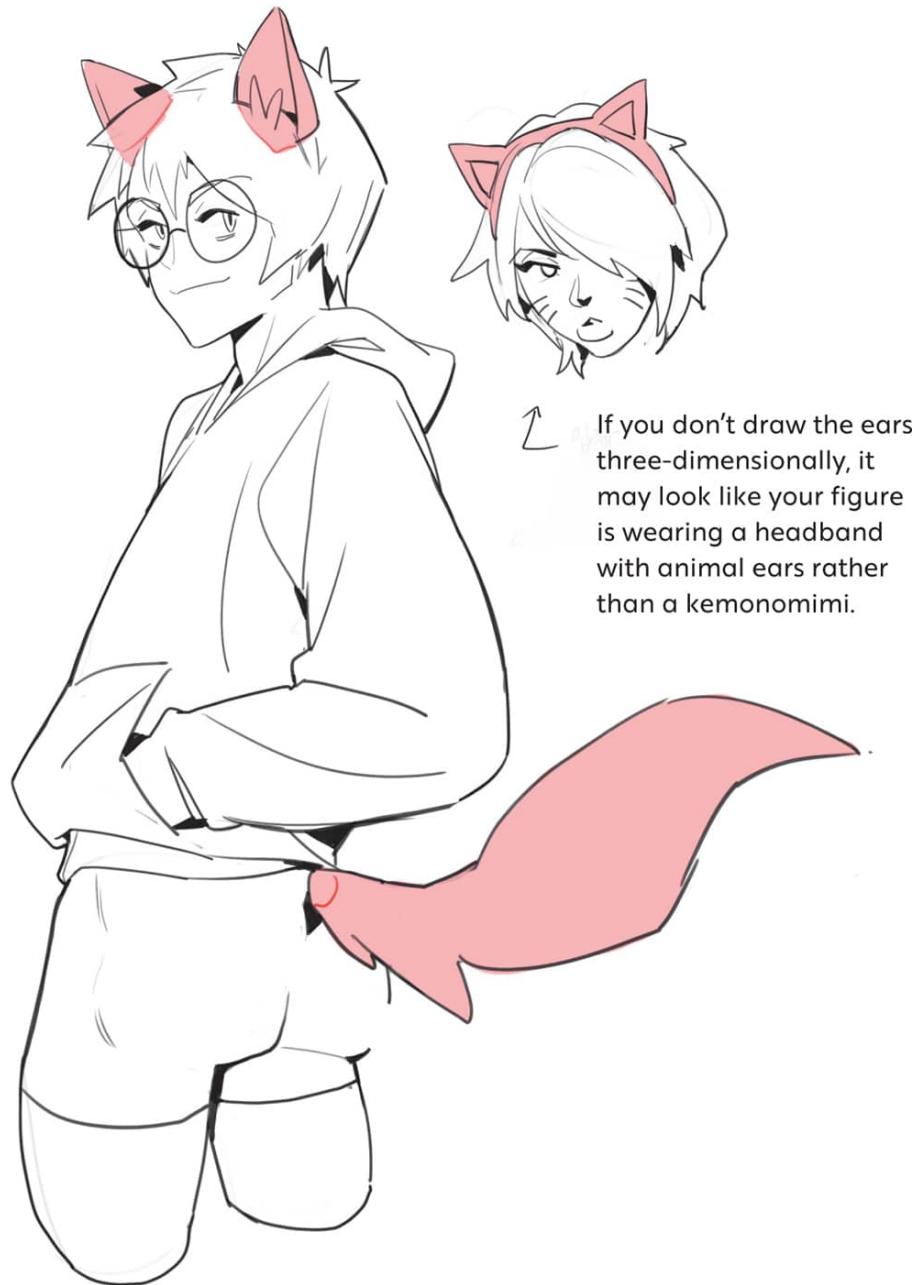
A *kemonomimi* is a human figure with animal characteristics, such as horns, ears, teeth, or tail.



Draw the ears three-dimensionally.



Place the tail at the base of the spine.



If you don't draw the ears three-dimensionally, it may look like your figure is wearing a headband with animal ears rather than a kemonomimi.

Consider which part of the head the ears should be placed on when making your drawing.



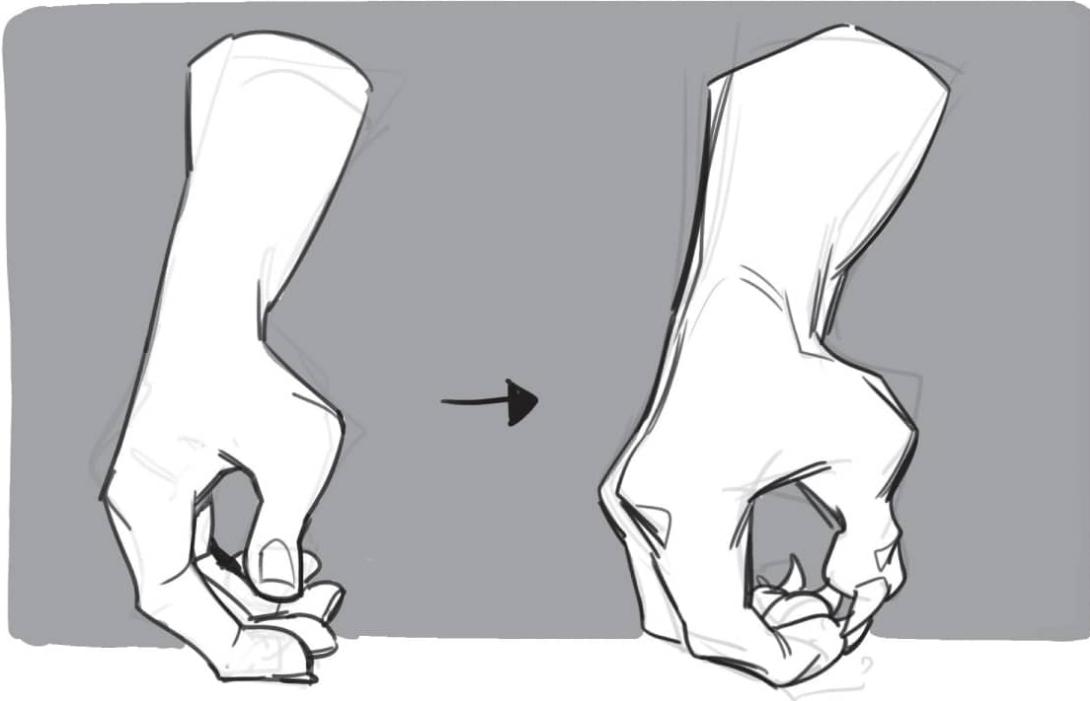


When designing your animal-inspired character, you can draw an *anthro* (A)—an animal character with human qualities—or a *kemonomimi* (B).

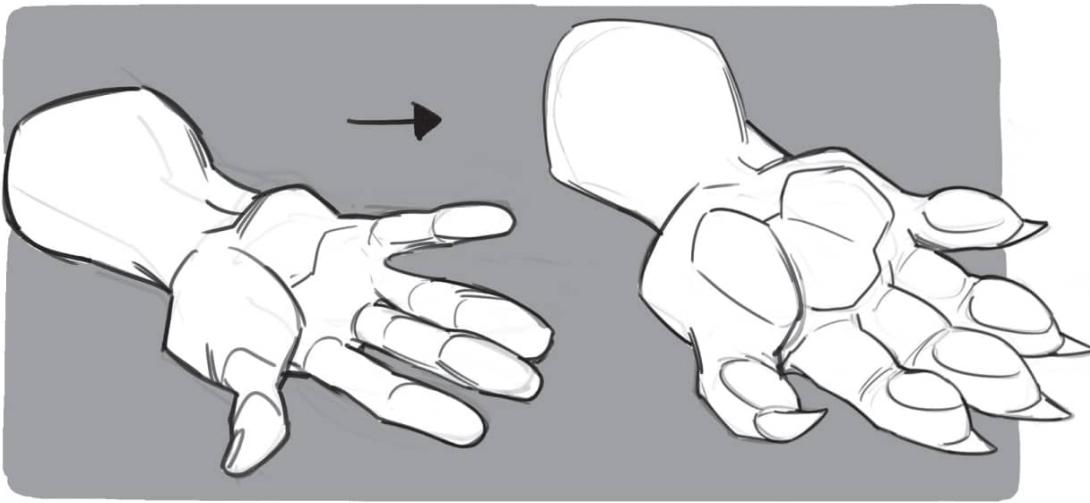
Another example of an animal-inspired character that can be drawn as an anthro or a kemonomimi.



## HAND PROPORTIONS



Even with anthros, different proportions can create different moods.



Add more flesh to the palm and draw the toe beans.



Remember to emphasize the finger bones in your anthro's paws or hand.

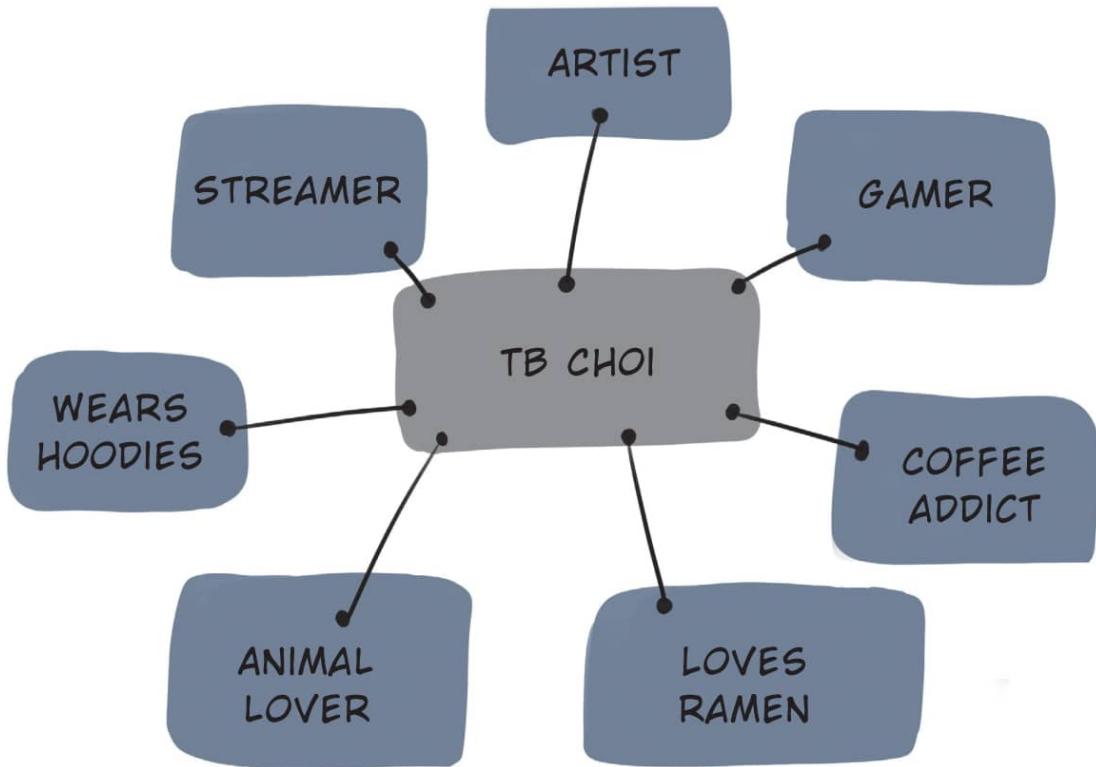
6

## EXERCISE: DESIGN & DRAW A CHARACTER



## DRAWING A FRIEND

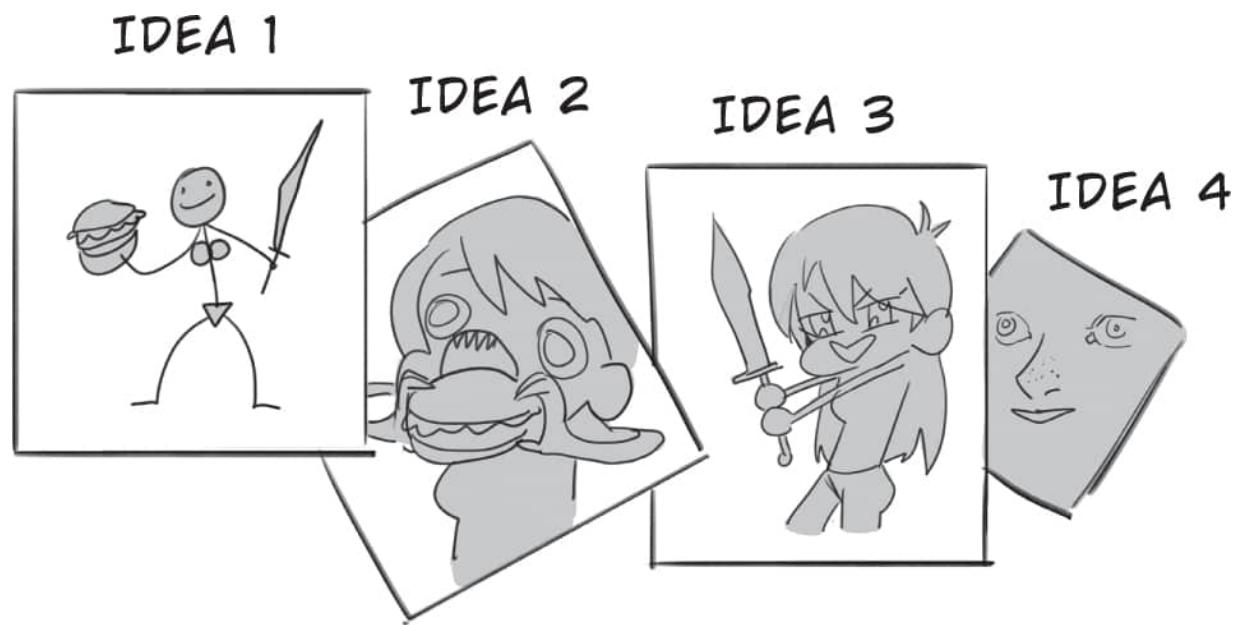
For this exercise, start by making a mind map. I've made this mind map of my own qualities and preferences.



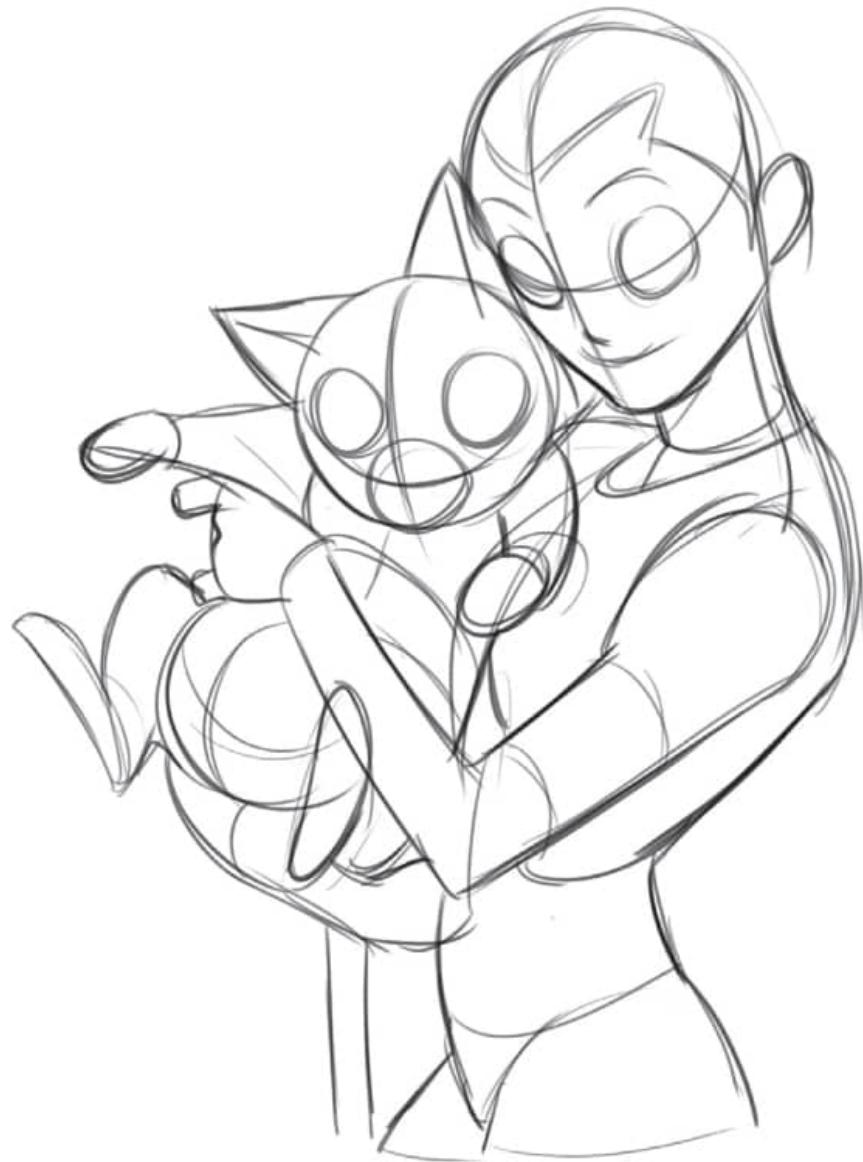
To create a character, write down what the character likes, then try to create a drawing that expresses their personality.



Do the same when drawing your friend—start with a mind map of their characteristics before you begin sketching.



After sketching out various ideas, choose one that you like and proceed with drawing.



Draw the basic form using figures. Since it's a rough sketch, try establishing a sound structure.



Develop the basic form.



Draw the defining lines. It's important to make them neat and tidy.

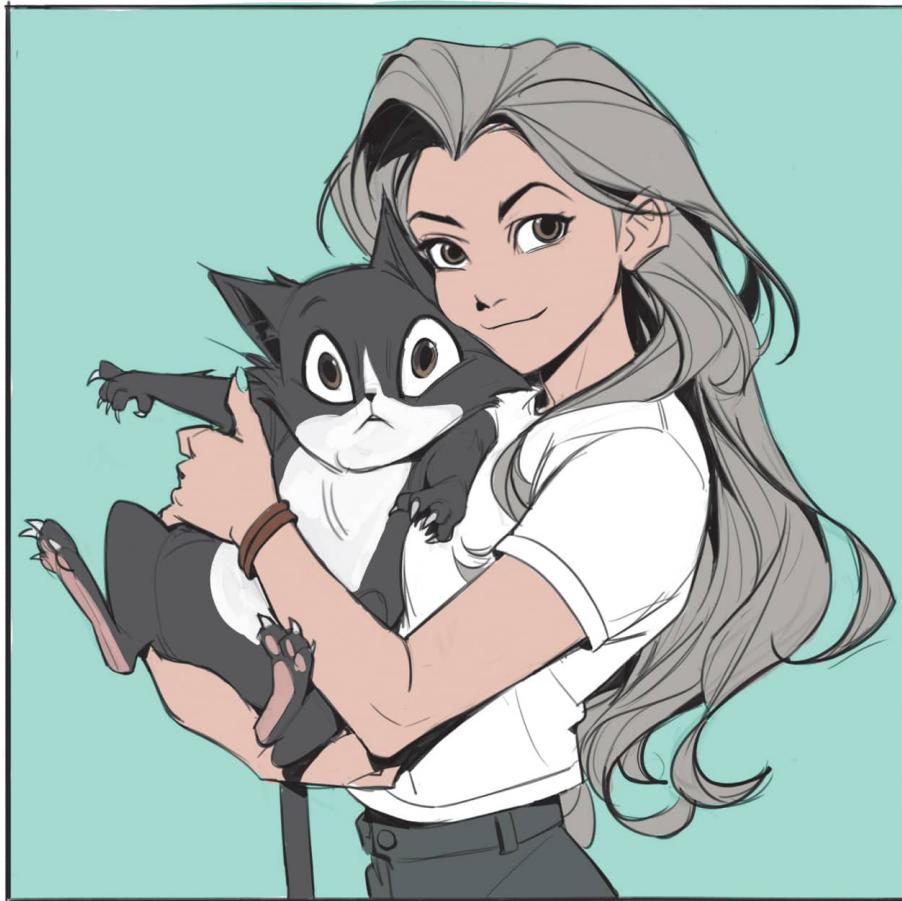


An easy way to get high-quality images without having to do a lot of coloring is to maximize the quality during the drawing process.



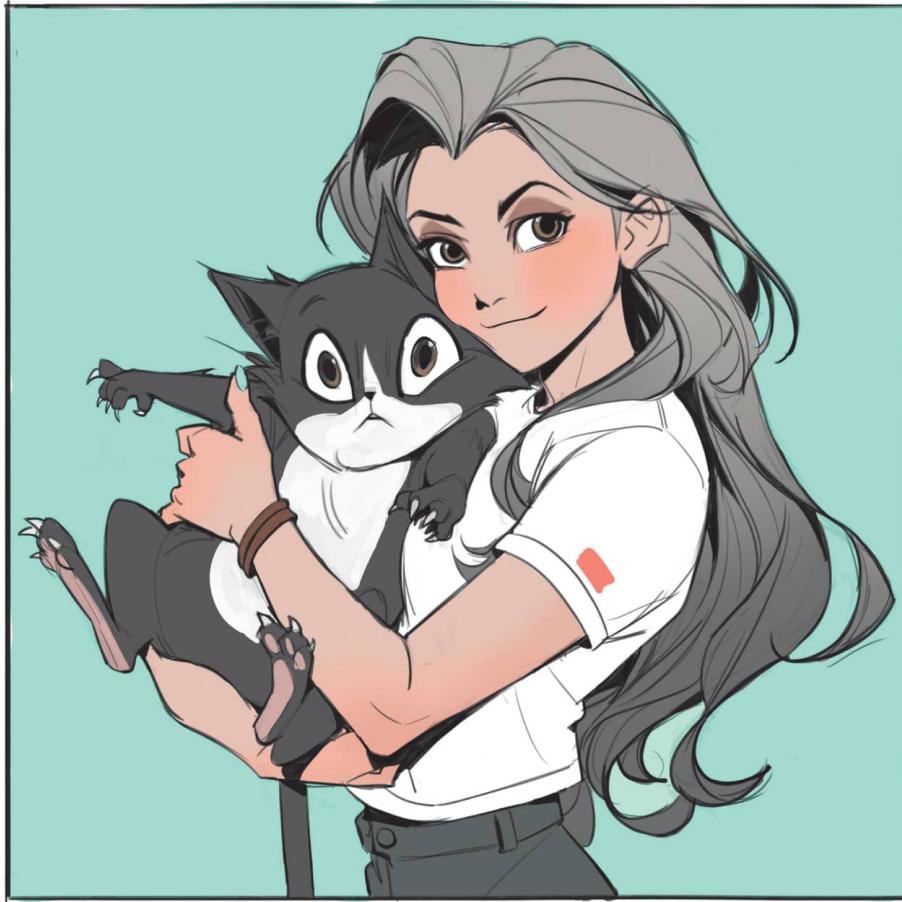
Add shading while inking the lines.

## ADDING COLOR



Just apply the basic colors. If you're afraid to paint light and shade when coloring, you can maintain the clarity of the picture with a neat line and a tone of color.

Since the shadows were applied while inking the lines, it's okay to add just one or two colors in a range of values.

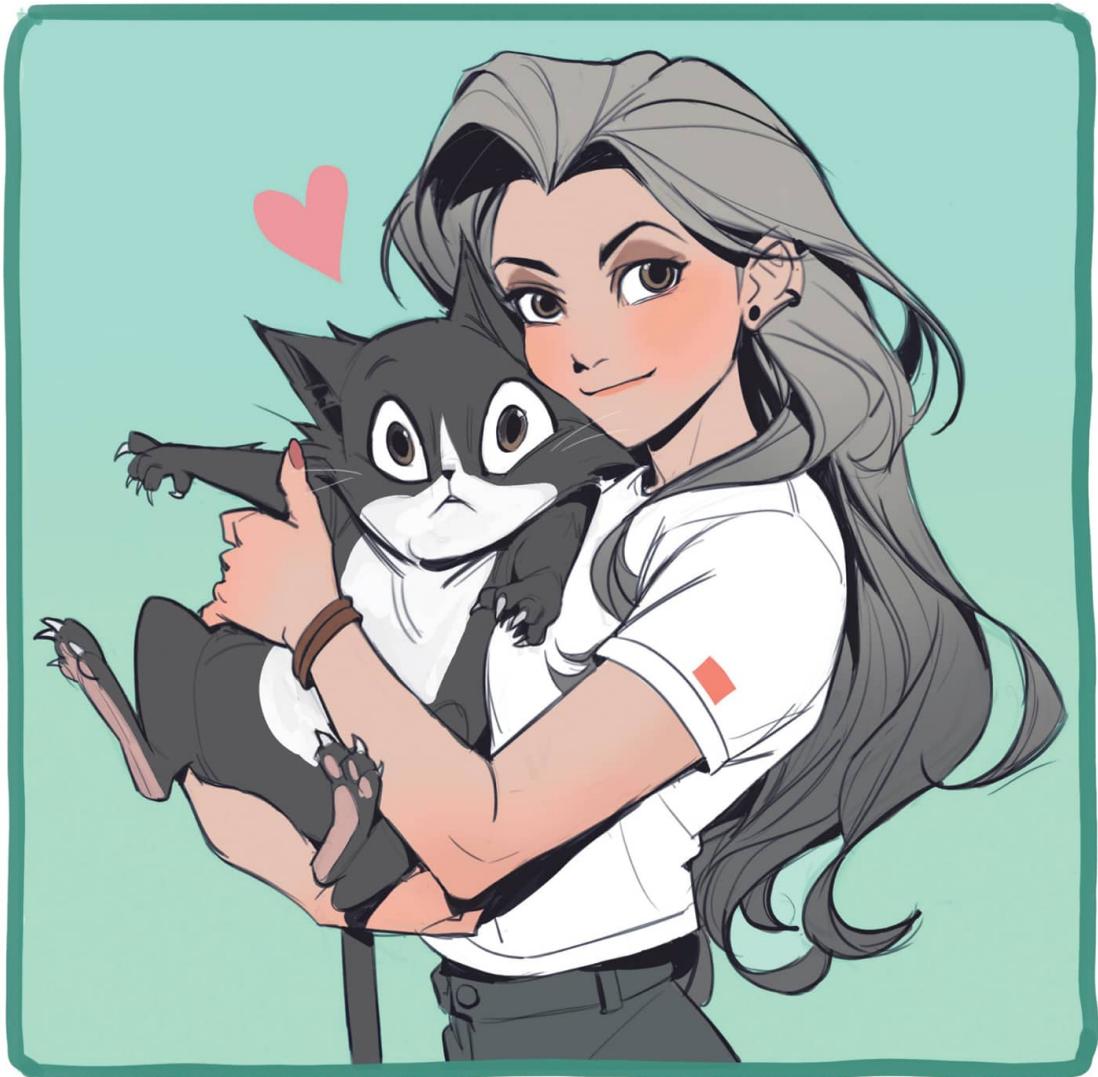


Apply makeup to the eyes, blush to the cheeks, and other details to the face.

Add touches of light red to the hands and elbows.

Apply a gradation effect to the color of the hair.

Adding borders and other graphic elements allows you to more easily create high-quality drawings.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**TB Choi** is a character/concept artist and drawing instructor specializing in anatomy and character design. Included among her many celebrated film, animation, and gaming clients are Adobe, EA (Entertainment Arts), Sony Pictures, Guerilla Games, Netflix, Reel FX, Riot Games, Blizzard, and Epic Games. To see more of TB's work, visit her on Instagram [@tb\\_choi](#) and on Twitter [@TB\\_Choi12](#).

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