

HOW TO DRAW

THE HUMAN FIGURE

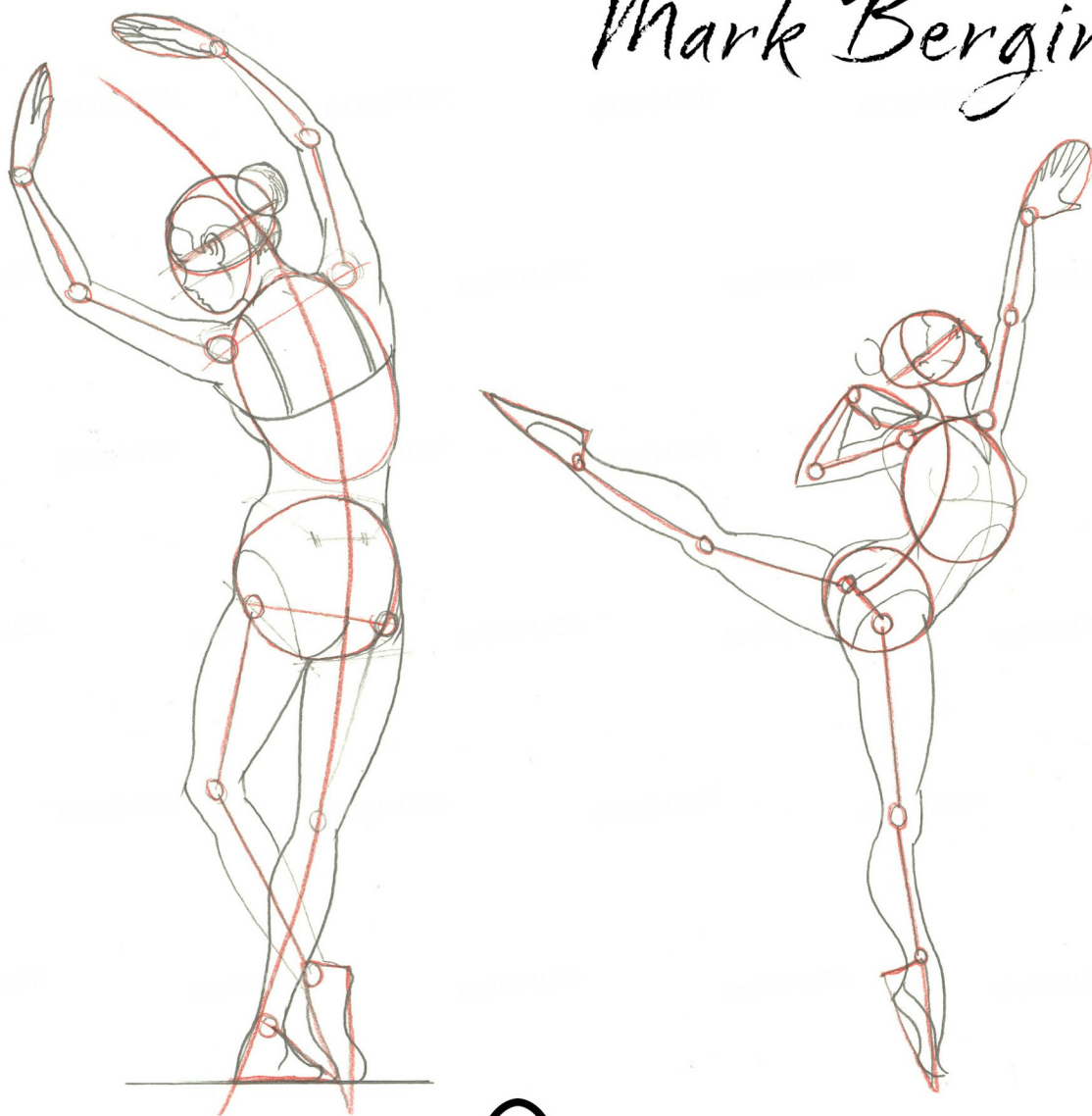


Mark Bergin

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THE HUMAN FIGURE

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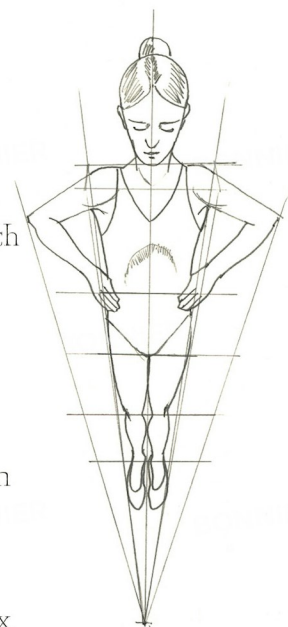
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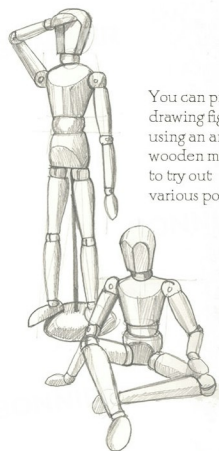
Contents

4.....	Making a start
6.....	Figure proportions
8.....	Perspective
10.....	Drawing materials
12.....	The muscles
14.....	The head
16.....	Ears, nose and mouth
18.....	The eyes
20.....	The hands
22.....	The feet
24.....	Standing figure
26.....	Balance and motion
28.....	Walking figure
30.....	Running figure
32.....	Glossary and Index



Making a Start

Learning to draw is about looking and seeing. Keep practising, and get to know your subject. Use a sketchbook to make quick drawings. Start by doodling, and experiment with shapes and patterns. There are many ways to draw; this book shows only some methods. Visit art galleries, look at artists' drawings, see how friends draw, but above all, find your own way.



You can practise drawing figures using an artist's wooden model to try out various poses.



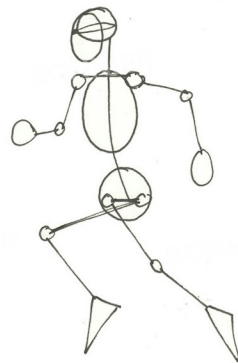
Try sketching wooden model details over photos or existing drawings of people to break it down and see how the two match up.



Sketch people in everyday surroundings. This will help you to draw faster to capture the main elements of a pose quickly.



Try sketching friends and family at home.

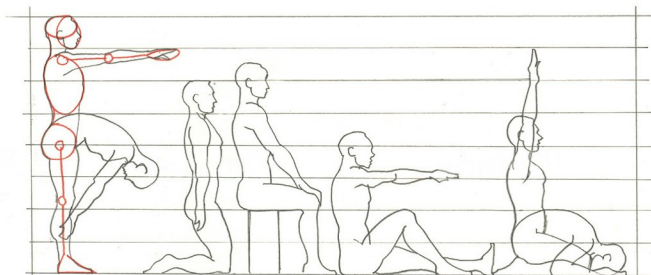
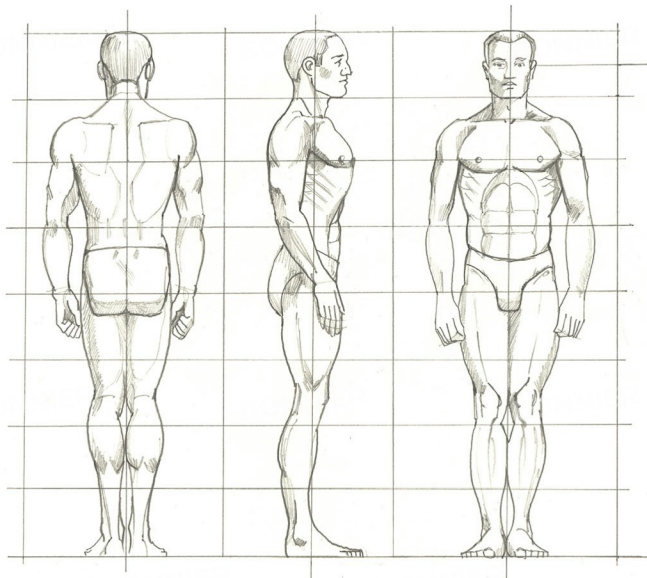


You can create new poses by drawing simple stick figures.

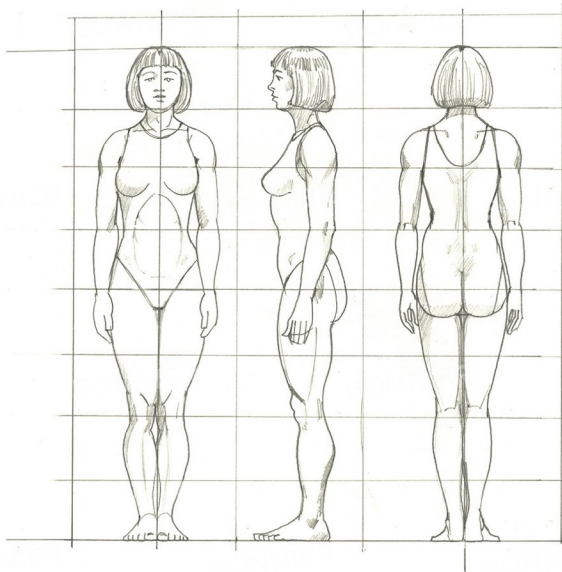
Figure proportions

This page shows the standard proportions of a human figure. Normally the length of a human head will fit seven or eight times into its body height.

The proportions of a male figure shown from different views.



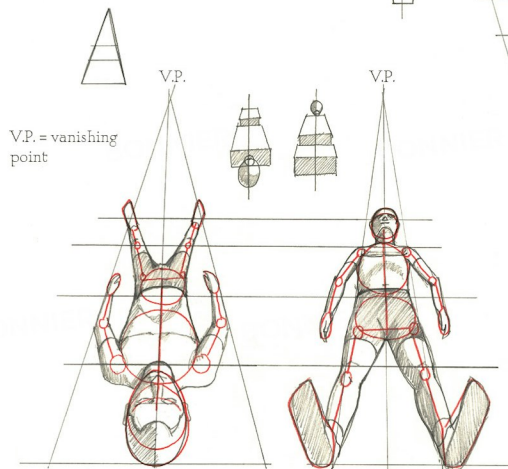
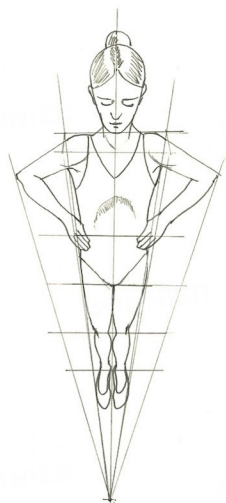
The above image shows the height variation of a figure in different positions.



The proportions of a female figure shown from different views.

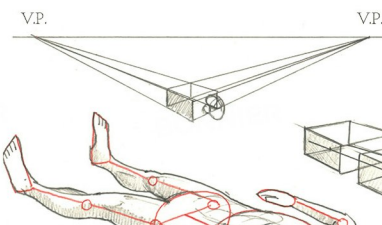
Perspective

If you look at a figure from different viewpoints, you will see that whichever part is closest to you looks larger, and the part furthest away from you looks smallest. Drawing in perspective is a way of creating a feeling of depth – of showing three dimensions on a flat surface.

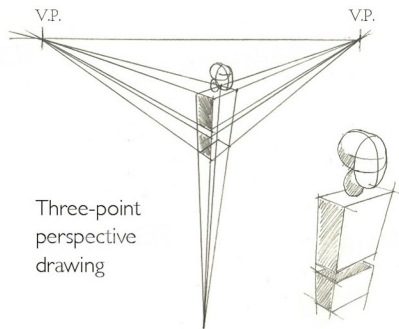


The vanishing point (V.P.) is the place in a perspective drawing where parallel lines appear to meet. The position of the vanishing point depends on the viewer's eye level.

Two-point perspective drawing



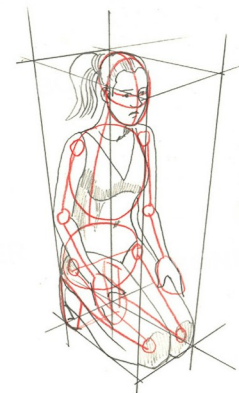
Two-point perspective uses two vanishing points one for lines running along the length of the object and another on the opposite side for lines running across the width of the object.



Three-point perspective drawing

Three-point perspective drawings use three vanishing points. This method is good for drawing objects at angles.

Once you have the basic components of the body, move on to drawing in the stick-figure skeleton. From here you can draw the shape of the body.



Drawing materials

Try using different types of drawing papers and materials. Experiment with charcoal, wax crayons and pastels. All pens, from felt-tips to ballpoints, will make interesting marks – or try drawing with pen and ink on wet paper.



Felt-tip

Felt-tips come in a range of line widths. The wider pens are good for drawing in large areas of flat tone.



Pencil

Hard pencils are greyer and **soft pencils** are blacker. Hard pencils are graded from 6H (the hardest) through 5H, 4H, 3H and 2H to H. Soft pencils are graded from B, 2B, 3B, 4B and 5B up to 6B (the softest).

Charcoal is very soft and can be used for big, bold drawings. Ask an adult to spray your charcoal drawings with fixative to prevent smudging.

Pastels are even softer than charcoal, and come in a wide range of colours. Fixative can also be sprayed on pastels to keep the colours locked in place.

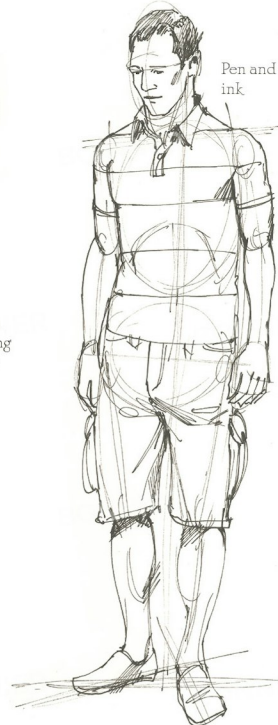
You can create special effects by scraping away parts of a drawing done with **wax crayons**.



Pastels



Silhouette is a style of drawing that uses only a solid black shadow.

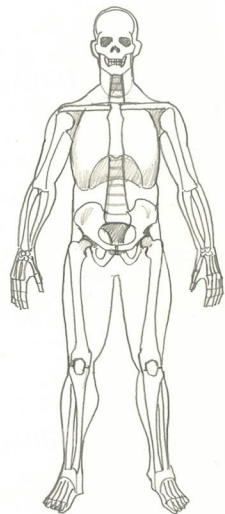


Pen and ink

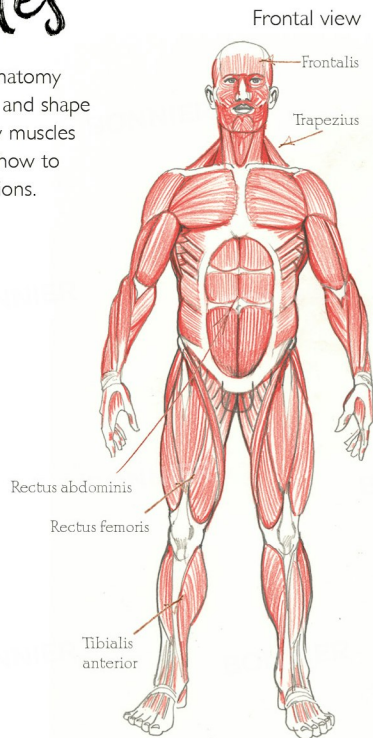
Lines drawn in **ink** cannot be erased, so keep your ink drawings sketchy and less rigid. Don't worry about mistakes as these lines will get lost in the drawing as it develops.

The muscles

The muscular structure of the anatomy affects the outward appearance and shape of the body. Understanding how muscles move can help you understand how to draw the body in different positions.

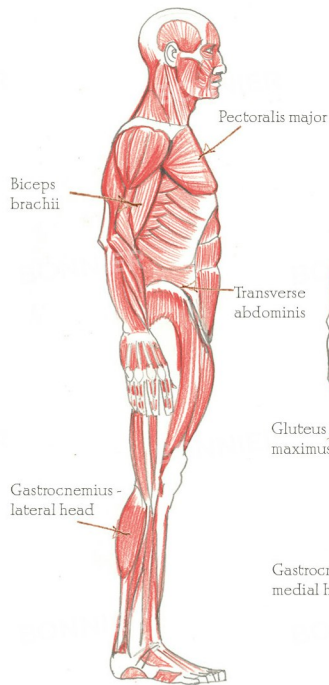


The skeleton is made up of bones which create a framework for the muscles.



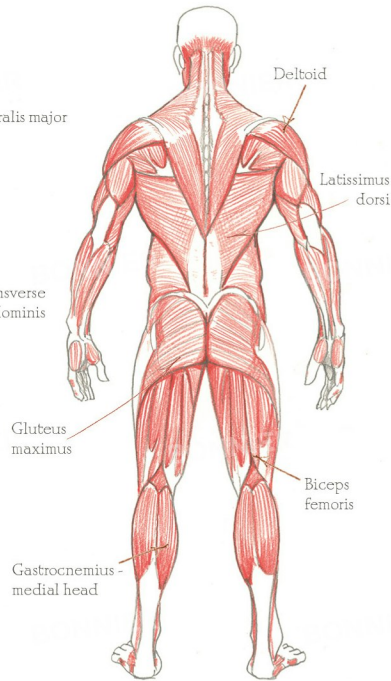
This front view shows all the muscles in the chest and stomach.

Side view



This view shows all the muscular structure from the side.

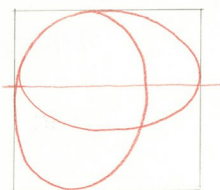
Back view



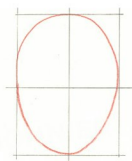
This view shows all the muscular structure from the back.

The head

The head is a difficult shape to draw. It includes some of the most expressive features of the body. Using construction lines helps to place the eyes, nose, ears and mouth accurately on the head.

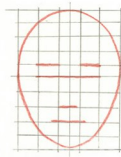


Draw the main shape of the head by overlapping two ovals.

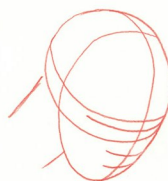
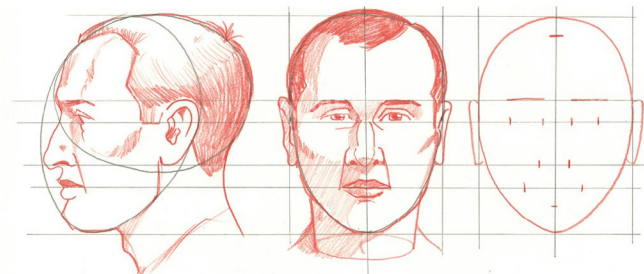


Frontal view

Squaring up the paper can help you to decide the positions of the facial features.



When drawing the head from different angles, construction lines can help to keep the features in the correct positions.



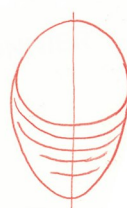
Draw in construction lines to show where facial features begin and end.



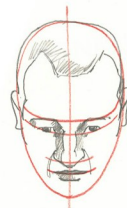
These construction lines have been used to draw a male head.



These construction lines have been used to draw a female head.



These construction lines show the head facing downwards.



The curved construction lines help you to place the features.



Add detail and any extra features such as hair.



These construction lines show a head facing upwards.



Draw in the features. Do not forget the underside of the chin.



Complete any details and remove unwanted construction lines.

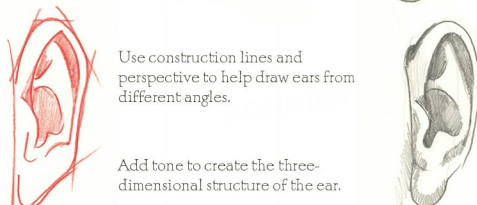
Ears, nose and mouth

The ears, nose and mouth are important features of the head. See how they are constructed and how they look viewed from different angles.

The basic shape of an ear is made with several curved lines.

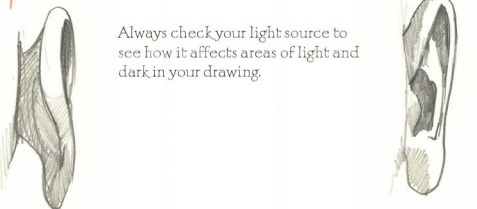


Use construction lines and perspective to help draw ears from different angles.



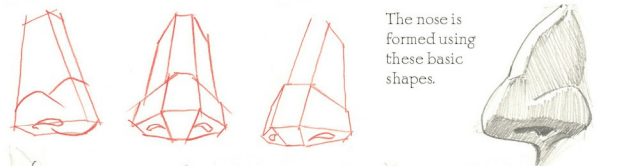
Add tone to create the three-dimensional structure of the ear.

Ears can be many different shapes and sizes; however, their construction is essentially the same.



Always check your light source to see how it affects areas of light and dark in your drawing.

The nose is formed using these basic shapes.



Noses can be many different shapes and sizes.



Viewed from below, the nostril cavities need heavy shading.



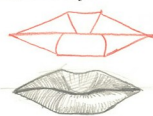
Viewed from above, the nostrils cannot be seen.



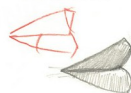
This view captures almost all of the features of the nose.



The mouth is formed using these basic shapes. Add tone and shade to define the lips.



The side view of the mouth is formed by a triangular shape using curved lines.



Viewed from below, the mouth is curved downwards at each side.



To draw an open mouth, leave areas of white for the teeth. Add some shading under the top lip.



A wide-open mouth shows the tongue.

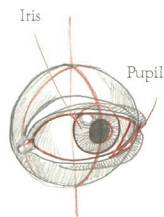


A smiling mouth is much wider and shows more teeth.



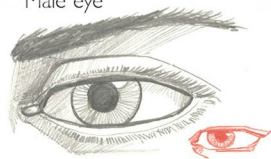
The eyes

Each eyeball sits in a socket in the head. It is surrounded by the protective eyelids. The eyes and eyebrows are packed with expression.



The eyeball is spherical in shape. Its most visible features are the iris and pupil. Start by drawing a spherical eyeball. Add the shape of the eyelids.

Male eye



Once the visible part of the eye is drawn, add detail to the iris. Leave an area of white for a highlight.

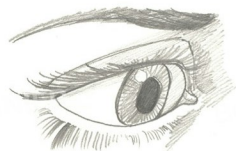
Female eye



Consider details around the eye: the length of the eyelashes and the eyebrow shape.

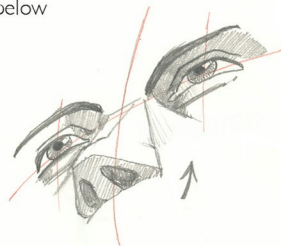


When drawing the eye from the side it is important to use perspective.

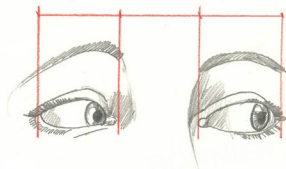


Check your light source before adding tone to the drawing. Darker areas tend to be where the nose projects out from the eyes.

Eyes from below



When drawing the eyes from this angle, use a downward-curved construction line to place them accurately.

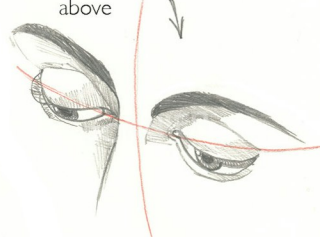


When drawing both eyes it is very important that they relate correctly in scale. It helps to start your drawing using carefully worked out construction lines.



Partially shut eyelids show less of the eyeball. Add more shaded areas.

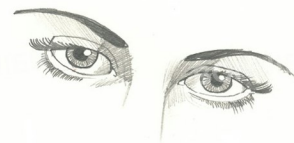
Eyes from above



Drawing the eyes from above means you see less of the eyeball.



With this view it is important to consider the light source.

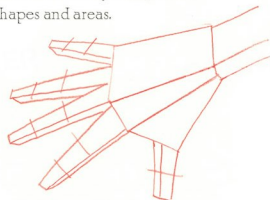


The position of the pupil and iris is important as it shows where the eyes are looking. Keep their direction similar.

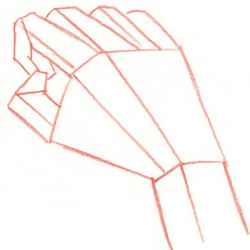
The hands

The hand is one of the most complex parts of a figure to draw. It consists of many moving parts, and therefore can be drawn in a huge variety of poses.

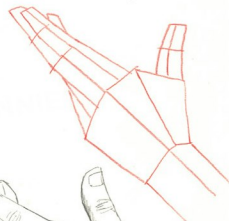
The hand can be broken down into basic shapes and areas.



Each finger has three sections, a thumb has two sections, and the main area of the hand has three.



Sketch in these shapes as three-dimensional boxes. Construction lines can then be drawn for a variety of poses.



Using the construction lines as a guide, you can draw the hand. Add tone and detail to finish off.



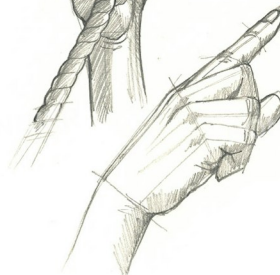
Try drawing the hand in many different poses. Careful use of construction lines and practise will help.



Use tone to emphasise the shape and position of the hand.

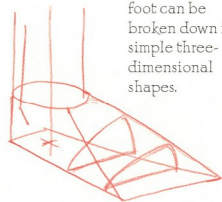


The construction lines have been left in each of these drawings. You can see how the drawings have evolved.



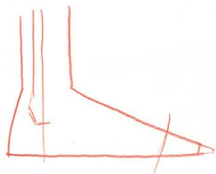
The feet

Feet come in all shapes and sizes and can be drawn in many different poses. The construction lines for a simple side view usually start with a triangle shape, then the toes are added and the ankle is positioned.



A simple triangular-shaped side view of the foot.

Using these construction lines as a guide, draw in the toes and anklebone.

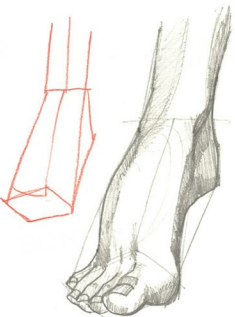


The base of the foot is a simple trapezoid shape. Indicate the toes and the ball of the foot.

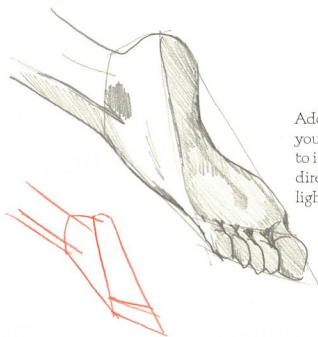


Using these construction lines as a guide, draw in both views of the foot.

The shape of the foot can be broken down into simple three-dimensional shapes.



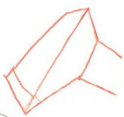
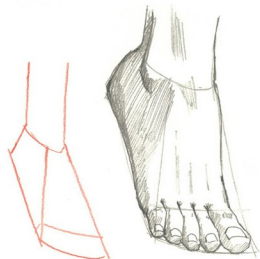
Draw in the toes. Position them within the area of the construction lines.



Add tone to your drawing to indicate the direction of the light source.



This page shows the foot drawn in a variety of different poses. The construction lines have been left in to show how the shape and position of the foot have evolved.



Standing figure

A standing figure can be drawn using a simple framework of construction lines. This basic starting point is a very good way to establish the correct proportions of a human figure in your drawing. The standing figure is a surfer holding his board.

Draw two small circles either side of the hips; this will be the top of the legs. Draw a horizontal line to join the circles.

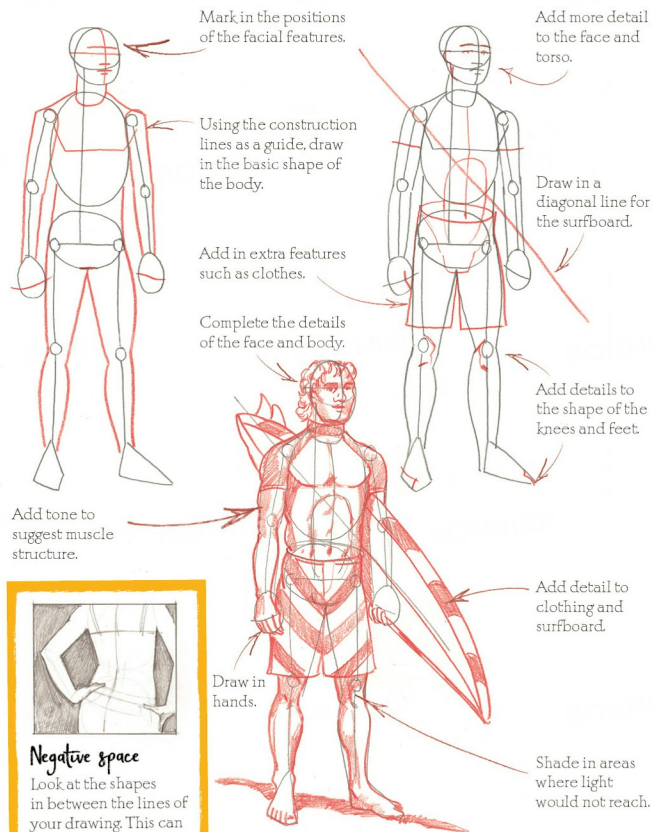
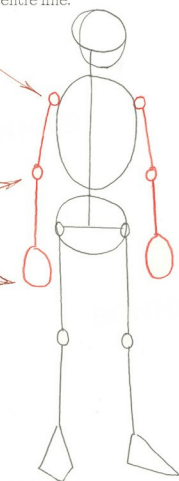
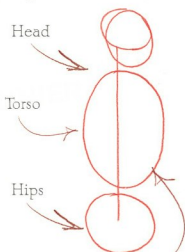
Add straight lines for both legs. Indicate the knee joints with small circles.

Add two small circles for the shoulders either side of the large oval. Draw in both arms using straight lines. Indicate the elbow joints using straight lines.

Add ovals to each arm for the hands.

Add triangles to show the shape and direction of the feet.

Start by drawing in a large oval between two circles for the head, torso and hips. Then add a centre line.



Negative space

Look at the shapes in between the lines of your drawing. This can help you spot mistakes.

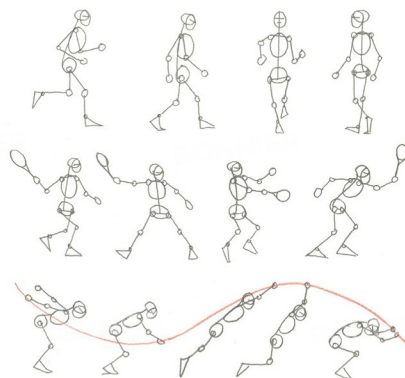
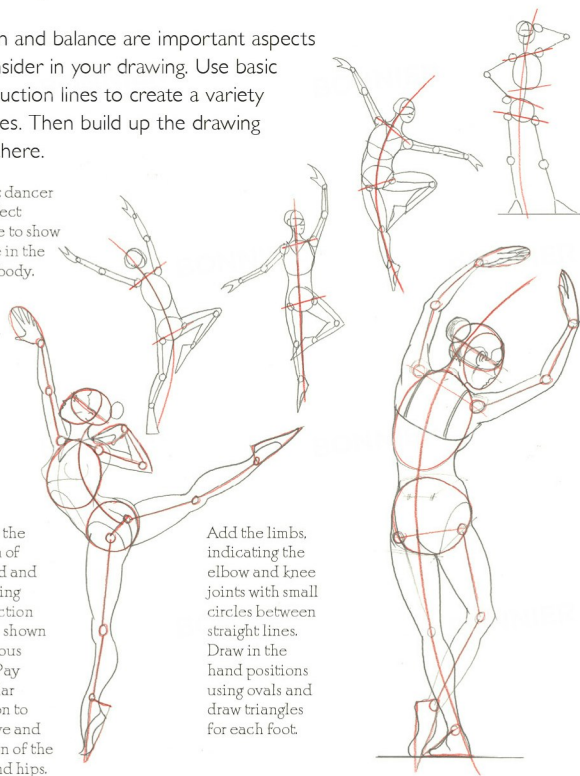
Balance and motion

Motion and balance are important aspects to consider in your drawing. Use basic construction lines to create a variety of poses. Then build up the drawing from there.

A ballet dancer is a perfect example to show balance in the human body.

Draw in the position of the head and body using construction lines (as shown in previous pages). Pay particular attention to the curve and direction of the spine and hips.

Add the limbs, indicating the elbow and knee joints with small circles between straight lines. Draw in the hand positions using ovals and draw triangles for each foot.



Using construction lines, draw a simple stick figure either running or walking. Study people as they walk by to see how their body moves.

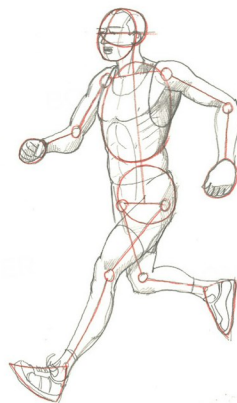
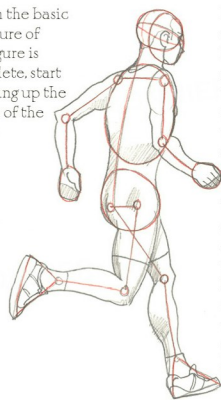
This figure shows a tennis player. Note the changes in balance as the racket is swung.

This figure is performing a long jump. The red line shows the flow of the hands through each stage of the jump.

When the basic structure of the figure is complete, start building up the shape of the body.

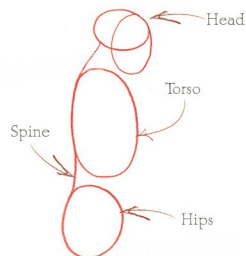
Keep the drawing quite light and sketchy at first, until you are confident that the proportions are right.

Then begin to add tone and detail to finish the drawing. Remember to remove any unwanted construction lines.



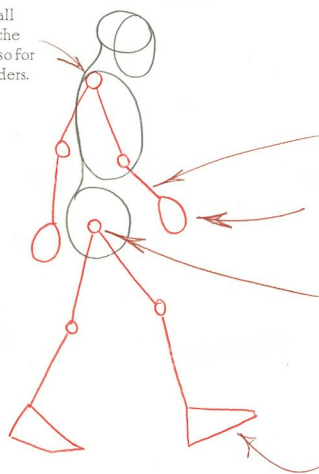
Walking figure

A simple walking movement is a good starting point for drawing a figure in motion. In this case, the figure is viewed from the side, so remember to consider which parts of the body will be seen.



Draw in the basic shapes for the head, torso and hips. Join these shapes with a line for the spine.

Add a small circle on the upper torso for the shoulders.

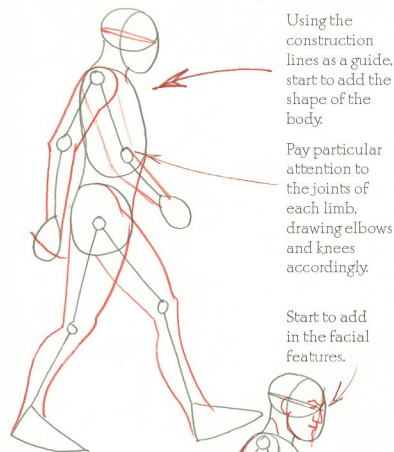


Add straight lines for the arms with small circles at the elbow joints.

Draw ovals to indicate the hands.

Draw a small circle in the middle of the hips. This indicates the top of each leg. Add straight lines for the legs with small circles for the knee joints.

Add in a basic triangular shape for each foot.



Using the construction lines as a guide, start to add the shape of the body.

Pay particular attention to the joints of each limb, drawing elbows and knees accordingly.

Start to add in the facial features.

Add in muscle structure.

Using the ovals as a guide, add detail to the hands.

Add muscles to the legs using the joints as a guide.

Add shoes.

Add shade to areas where light will not reach.



Mirror

You can often see mistakes in a drawing by looking at it in reverse in a mirror.

Complete the details of the facial features and hair.

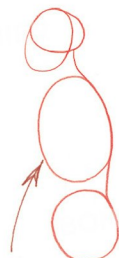
Add clothing to the figure.

Add tone for definition.

Add socks.

Running figure

A running figure makes a dynamic and powerful action pose. Study the shapes made by someone running and then draw the basic structure. Try to get a strong sense of movement to give life to your drawing.



Draw in the basic shapes for the head, torso and hips. Add a line for the spine.

Add a small circle either side of the upper torso to mark the shoulders.

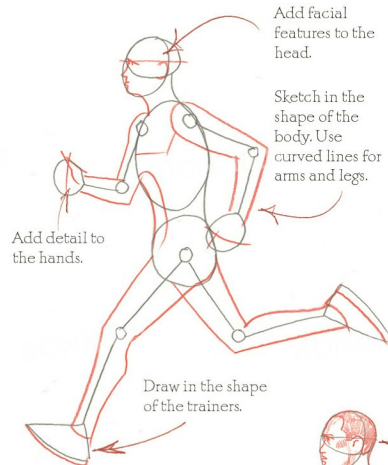
Draw in the arms using straight lines with small circles to indicate the elbow joints.

Add ovals to position the hands.

Draw in the legs using straight lines with small circles for the knee joints.

Each limb is bent at the joint.

Add in a basic triangular shape for each foot.

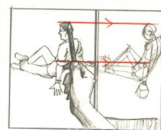


Add facial features to the head.

Sketch in the shape of the body. Use curved lines for arms and legs.

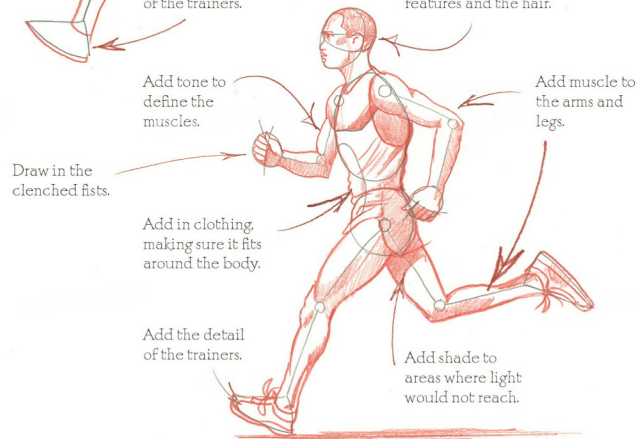
Add detail to the hands.

Draw in the shape of the trainers.



Proportions

Hold a pencil out at arm's length. Use it to help measure the proportions of the figure.



Complete the details of the facial features and the hair.

Add tone to define the muscles.

Add muscle to the arms and legs.

Draw in the clenched fists.

Add in clothing, making sure it fits around the body.

Add the detail of the trainers.

Add shade to areas where light would not reach.

Glossary

Centre line Often used as the starting point of the drawing, it marks the middle of the object or figure.

Composition The arrangement of the parts of a picture on the drawing paper.

Construction lines Guidelines used in the early stages of a drawing, and usually erased later.

Fixative A type of resin used to spray over a finished drawing to prevent smudging. **It should only be used by an adult.**

Light source The direction from which the light seems to come in a drawing.

Perspective A method of drawing in which near objects are shown larger than faraway objects to give an impression of depth.

Pose The position assumed by a figure.

Proportion The correct relationship of scale between each part of the drawing.

Silhouette A drawing that shows only a flat dark shape, like a shadow.

Vanishing point The place in a perspective drawing where parallel lines appear to meet.

Index

B
balance and motion
26-27

C
centre line 24
charcoal 10-11
construction lines
14-15, 16, 19,
20-21, 22-23,
24-25, 26-27, 29,
31
crayons 11

D
drawing materials
10-11

E
ears, nose and mouth
14, 16-17
eyes 14, 18-19

F
feet 22-23, 24-25
26, 28
felt-tips 10
figure proportions
6-7
fixative 11

H
hands 20-21, 24-25,
26, 28-29, 30-31
head 14-15, 24, 26,
28, 30-31

I
ink 11

L
light and shade 16-17
18-19, 23, 25, 29, 31

M
materials 8-9
mirrors 29
muscles 12-13, 25,
29, 31

N
negative space 25

P
pastels 11
pencils 10
pens 10-11
perspective 8-9
poses 4-5, 20-21,
22-23, 26
proportions 31

R
running figure 30-31

S
silhouette 11
sketching 12-13
standing figure 24-25

V
vanishing points 8-9

W
walking figure 28-29