

HOW TO DRAW

FANTASTIC
BEASTS

Easy to follow
AMAZING ART!
Step-by-step

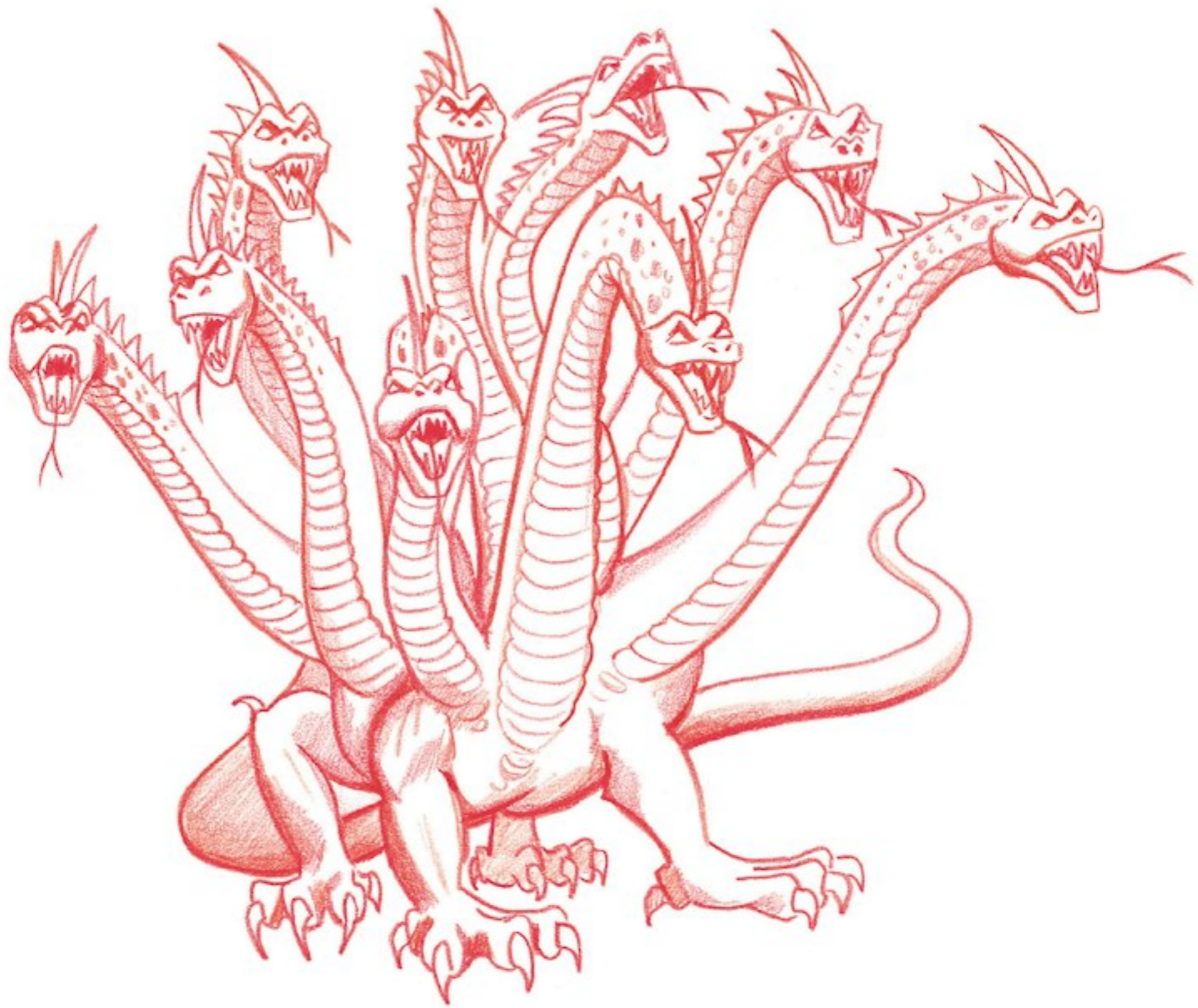
Mark
Bergin



HOW TO DRAW

FANTASTIC BEASTS

Mark Bergin



Hatch



First published in the UK in 2007 by The Salariya Book Company Ltd
This edition published in the UK in 2025 by Hatch Press,
an imprint of Bonnier Books UK
4th Floor/Victoria House
Bloomsbury Square, London WC1B 4DA
Owned by Bonnier Books
Sveavägen 56, Stockholm, Sweden
www.bonnierbooks.co.uk

Copyright © 2025 by Hatch Press

1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

All rights reserved

ISBN 978-1-83587-194-2

Printed in China



Contents

- 4 Making a start
- 6 Perspective
- 8 Using photos
- 10 Materials
- 12 Sketching
- 14 Centaur
- 16 Dragon
- 18 Gryphon
- 20 Hydra
- 22 Minotaur
- 24 Pegasus
- 26 Phoenix
- 28 Troll
- 30 Unicorn
- 32 Glossary and Index



Making a start

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

Remember that practise makes perfect. If a drawing looks wrong, start again. Keep working at it - the more you draw, the more you will learn.

Creating your own beasts is all about imagination, so don't be afraid to push boundaries and get creative with the combinations of creatures you put together.



Perspective

If you look at any object from different viewpoints, you will see that the part that is closest to you looks larger, and the part furthest away from you looks smaller. Drawing in perspective is a way of creating a feeling of space – 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. Sometimes a low viewpoint can give your drawing added drama.

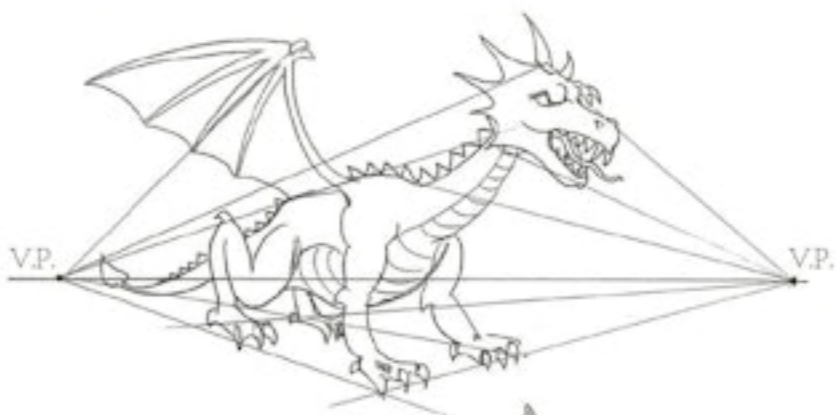
Two-point perspective drawing

Two-point perspective uses two vanishing points: one for lines running along the figure, and one on the opposite side for lines running across the figure. This gives a very realistic effect.

Low eye level
(view from below)



Normal eye level



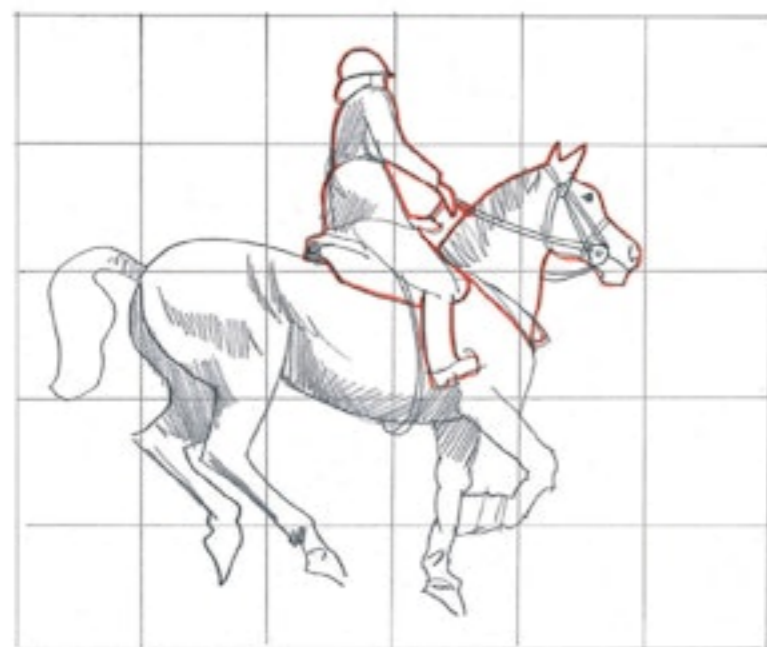
High eye level
(view from above)



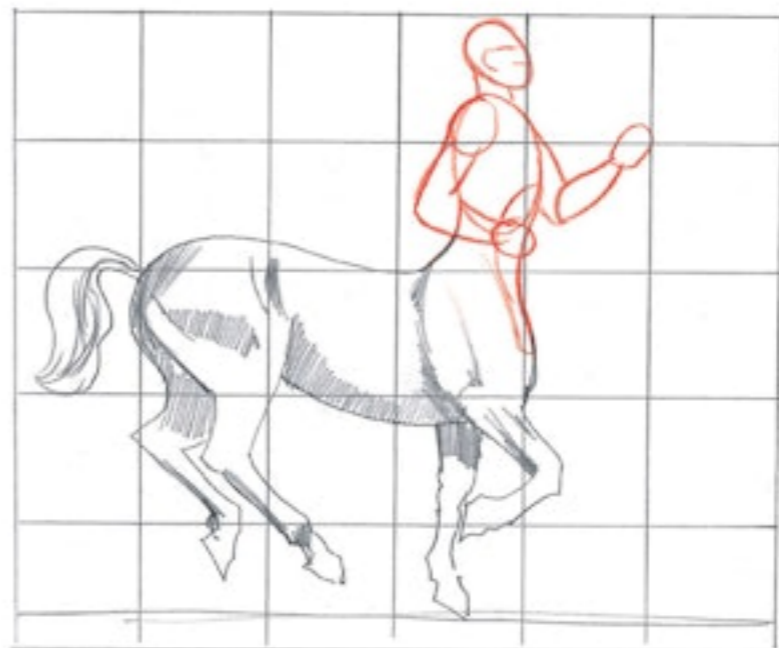
Using photos

Drawing from photographs of real people and animals can help you identify shape and form. This will help to make your imaginary creatures more realistic and in proportion.

Make a tracing of a photograph and draw a grid of squares over it.



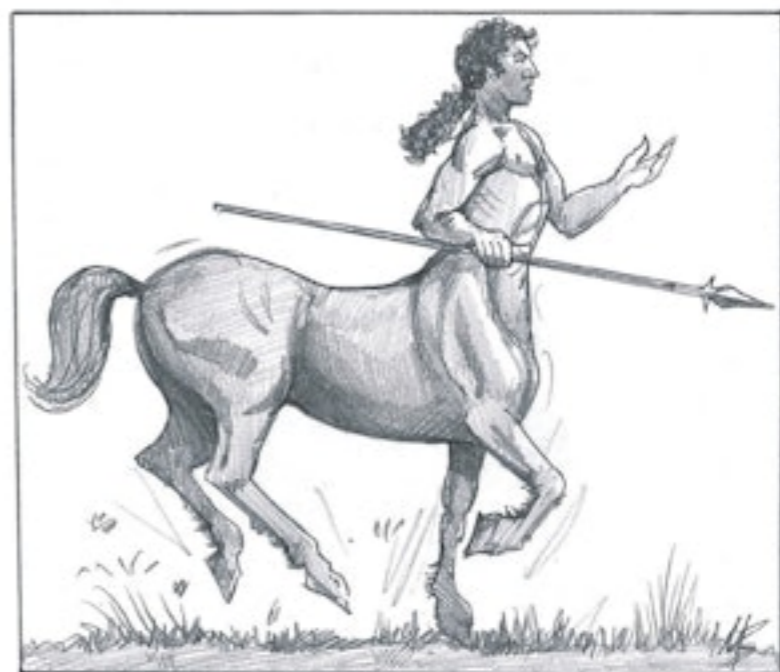
Now take a piece of drawing paper and draw another grid, enlarging or reducing the squares but keeping the same proportions. You can now copy the shapes from each square of your tracing to your drawing paper, using the grid as a guide. Draw only the parts you want to copy - in this case we are drawing a centaur, so don't need the rider or the horse's head.



Now you can add in any extras you want like the centaur's upper torso. Use simple ovals and circles to sketch in the head and arms (see page 14 for more).

To make your drawing look three-dimensional, decide which side the light is coming from so you can put in areas of shadow.

Sketch in an overall tone and add ground texture to create interest and a sense of movement. Pay attention to the position of your drawing on the paper this is called composition.



Materials

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

Try **cross-hatching** this means pencil lines that criss-cross one another to slowly build up and develop tone.



Remember, the best equipment and materials will not necessarily make the best drawing - practise will!

Ink silhouette



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

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

Drawing pens can be used with a cross-hatching technique for tone.

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.

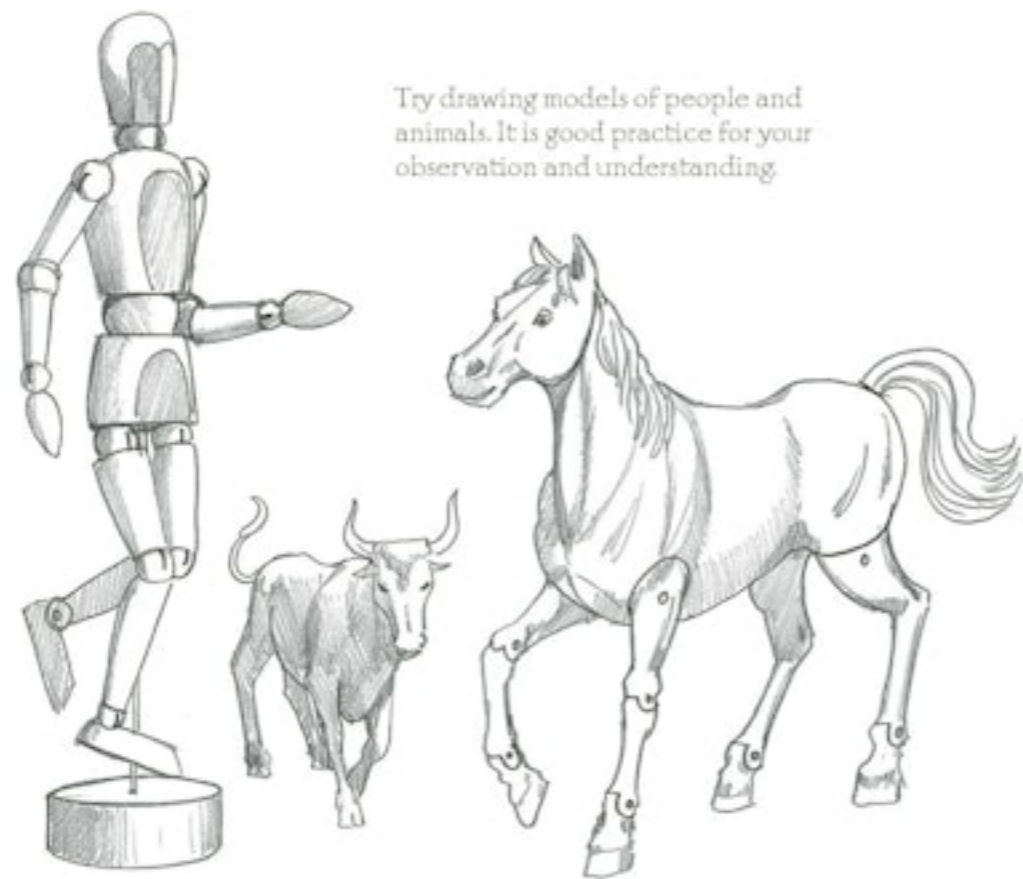
Wax crayons can be scraped away from parts of a drawing to create special effects.

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



Sketching

You can't always rely on your memory, so look around and find real-life things you want to draw. Taking a sketchbook with you wherever you go is one of the best ways to build up your drawing skills. Learn to observe objects: see how they move, how they are made and how they work. What you draw should be what you have seen. Since the Renaissance, artists have used sketchbooks to record their ideas and drawings.



Try drawing models of people and animals. It is good practice for your observation and understanding.



There are many places to observe animals, from pets at home to animals in fields.

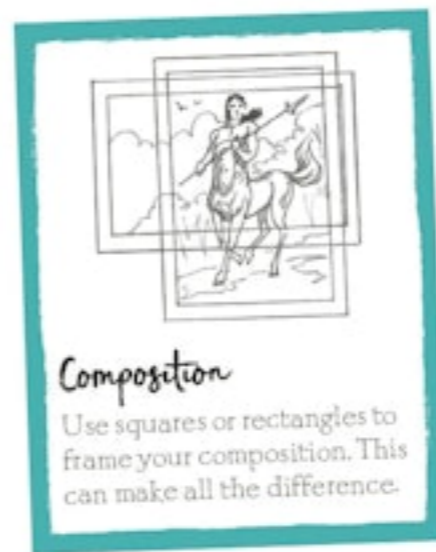
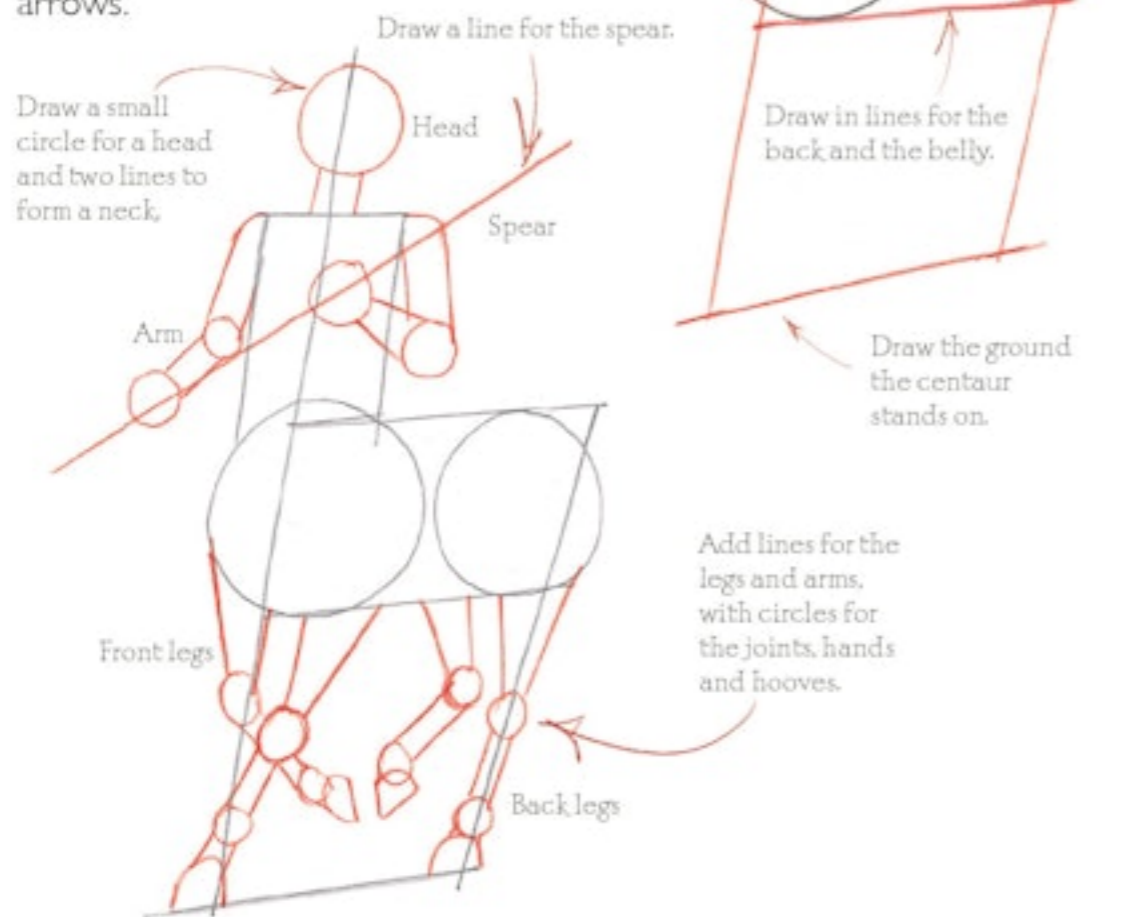
Drawing pets is a good way to study their movements, muscles and anatomy.



A quick sketch can often be as informative as a careful drawing that has taken many hours.

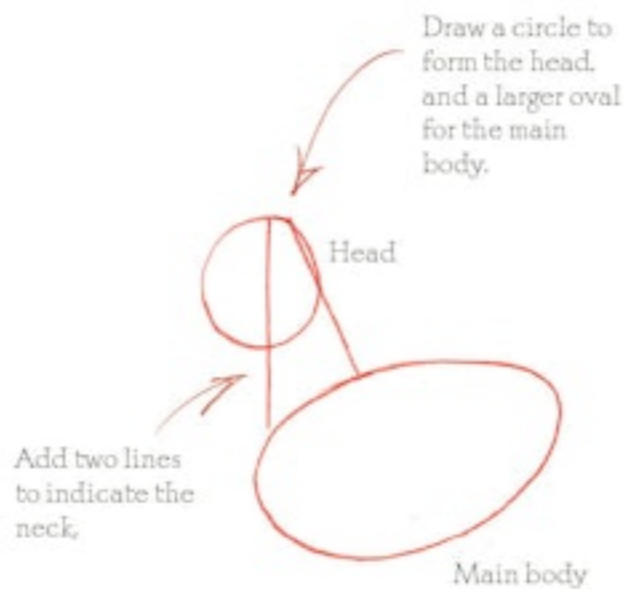
Centaur

A centaur is half horse, half man. Centaurs were said to have come from the mountains of Thessaly in Greece, and were wild, lawless and savage. The Greek hero Heracles killed centaurs with poison-tipped arrows.



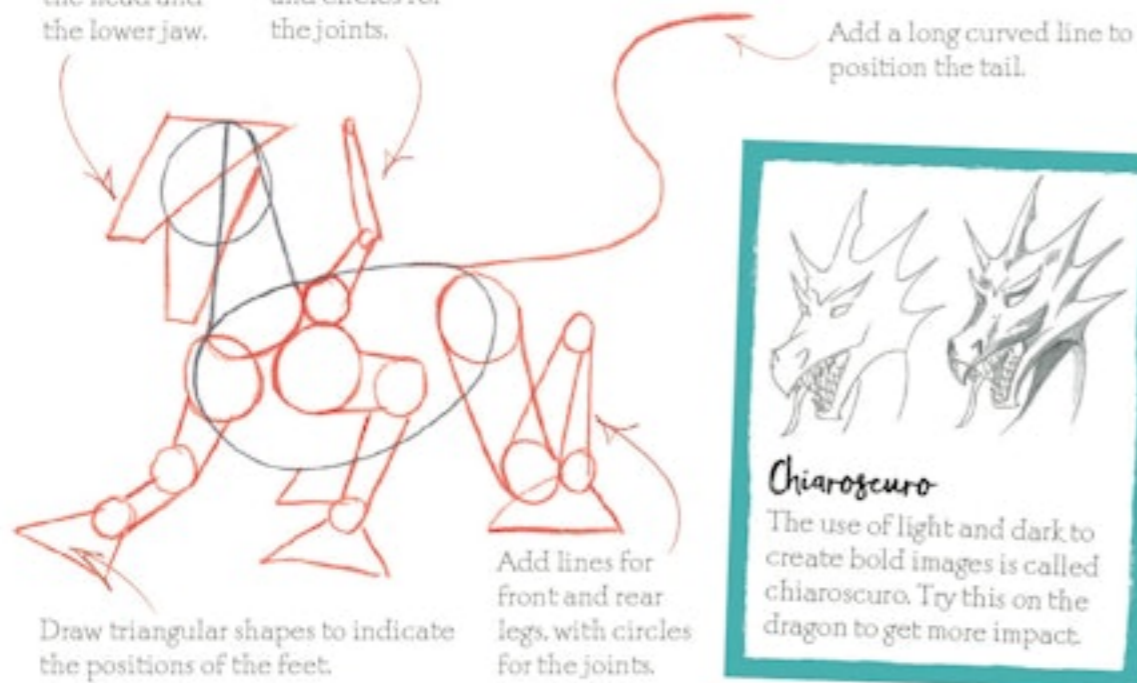
Dragon

Dragons are thought to have magical and spiritual powers, and are common to many cultures of the world. These cunning creatures typically have scaly bodies, wings and fiery breath.



Sketch in shapes for the top of the head and the lower jaw.

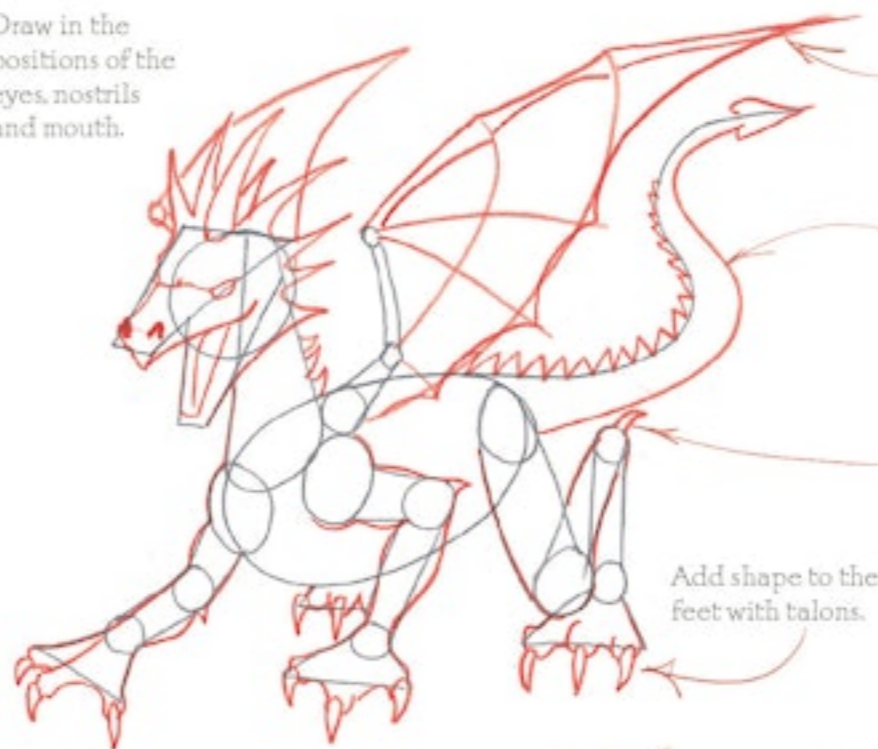
Draw in lines for the wing base and circles for the joints.



Chiaroscuro

The use of light and dark to create bold images is called chiaroscuro. Try this on the dragon to get more impact.

Draw in the positions of the eyes, nostrils and mouth.



Add shading to the wings and lines to show wing folds.

Finish drawing the face by adding teeth and a tongue.

Add detail to the chest and underside of the tail.

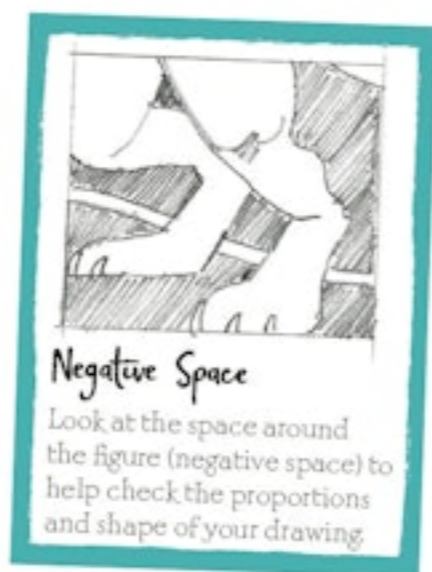
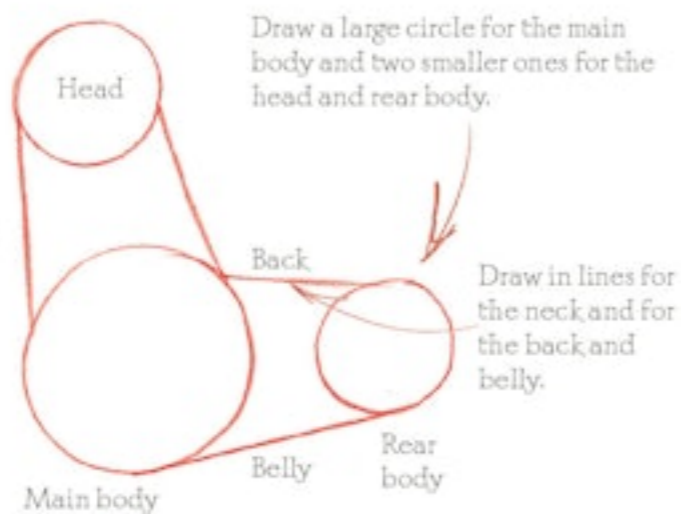
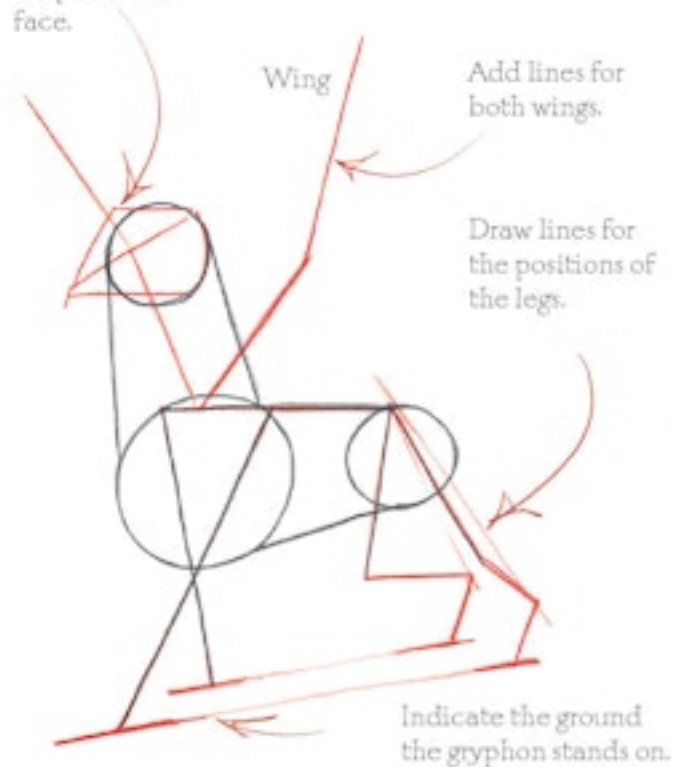
Draw the feet and talons in more detail.



Gryphon

The gryphon (griffin) or lion-eagle was considered to be the king of the air, and was a powerful and majestic creature. In Persian culture, gryphons are shown drawing the sun across the sky.

Draw a pyramid shape for the face.



Wing construction

First draw two straight lines.

Add two oval shapes.

Add muscles to the wing.

Indicate the groups of feathers.

Carefully draw in rows of feathers.

Add shading under the front edge of the wing.

Sketch in the beak, ears and eyes.

Add the wing (see left).



Sketch in the front feet.

Add detail of back feet and legs.

Add a curved, lion-like tail.

Finish drawing the detail of the gryphon's head.

Add feathers (see left).



Draw the sharp eagle's talons.

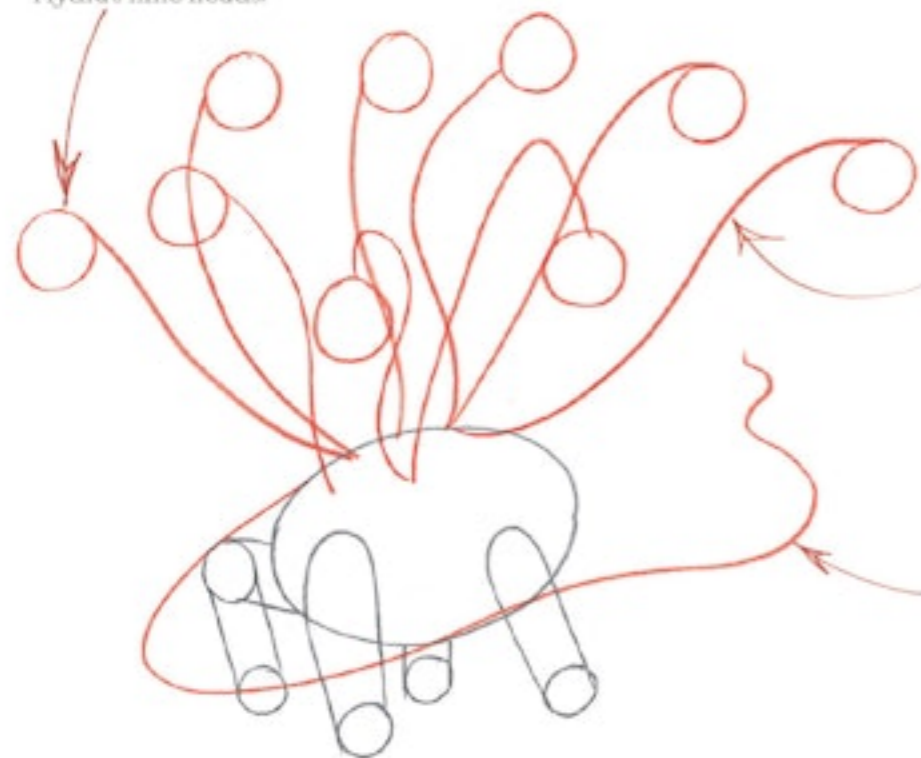
Use short strokes to draw the chest feathers.

Add hair to the tip of the tail.

Hydra

The Hydra in Greek mythology was said to guard the entrance to the underworld beneath the waters of Lake Lerna. Heracles killed this hideous creature as one of his twelve labours.

Draw a circle for each of the Hydra's nine heads.



Add two lines to join this leg to the body.



Draw a large oval for the main body.

Draw four tube shapes for the legs.

Draw long, curvy neck lines from the back of each head to the body.

Lightly sketch in a long, wavy line for the tail.

Sketch in each of the Hydra's heads.



Add two more curved lines to each neck to show the underside.

Add another line to complete the tail.

Draw the Hydra's feet using curvy lines to add shape to the legs.

Draw in the details of each face, adding sharp teeth, tongues and eyes.

Add curved lines up the underside of each neck.



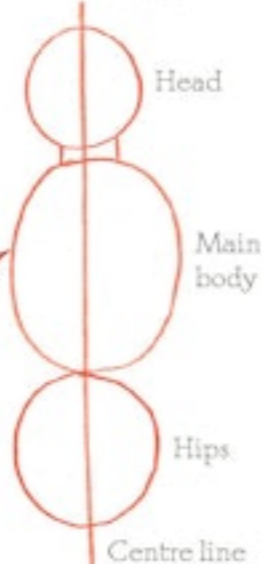
Partially shade each neck, and other areas where light would not reach.

Minotaur

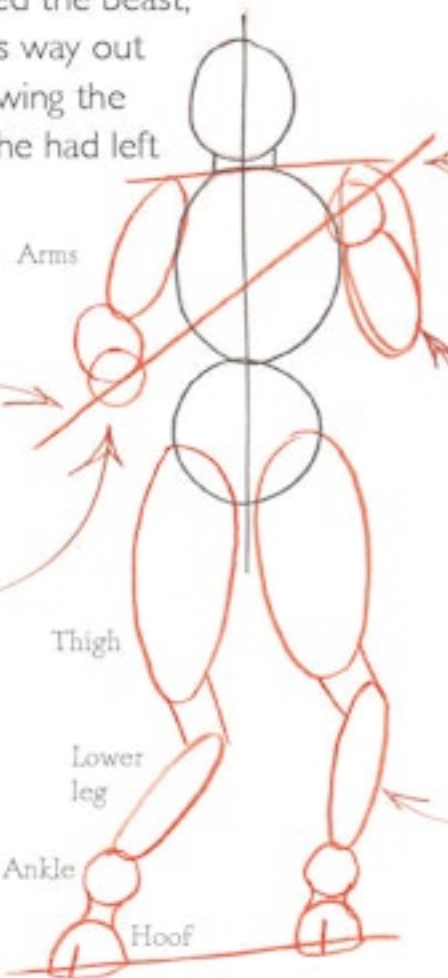
The Minotaur was half man, half bull. This creature of Greek myth was said to dwell in the labyrinth constructed by King Minos at Knossos. Theseus eventually killed the beast, then found his way out safely by following the trail of string he had left to guide him.

Sketch in two circles and an oval to form the head, main body and hips.

Draw a vertical line through the centre.



Draw a straight line passing through the hand shapes for the axe's haft.



Arms

Thigh

Lower leg

Ankle

Hoof

Draw a line to indicate the top of the shoulders.

Sketch two ovals, one smaller and overlapping the other, to show the right arm bent at the elbow. Add a circle for the hand.

Draw a large oval for each thigh, then smaller ovals for the lower legs. Add two lines to join the two. Add circles at the end of each leg for ankles, and sketch in the hooves with two semicircles.

Lightly sketch in the positions of eyes, ears and nostrils.



Add a loincloth around the hips.

Add a second line to create the haft of the axe, then add the blade.

Draw in the torso, marking in muscle shapes.

Sketch in a short, lion-like tail. Add more detail to the head, and sketch in hair on the neck.



Draw in axe details.

Shade areas of the body to show muscles.

Shade the thighs and lower legs. Add small tufts to the ankles.

Finish off the tail with pencil strokes following the direction of the hair.

Erase your construction lines once you have finished with them.

Pegasus

Pegasus, the Greek winged horse, was said to have been born from the blood spilt by Medusa's murder. Pegasus aided the Greek hero Bellerophon against the Chimera and the Amazons. He also brought thunderbolts to Zeus, the king of the gods.

Draw three lines from the head and another line across to form the muzzle.

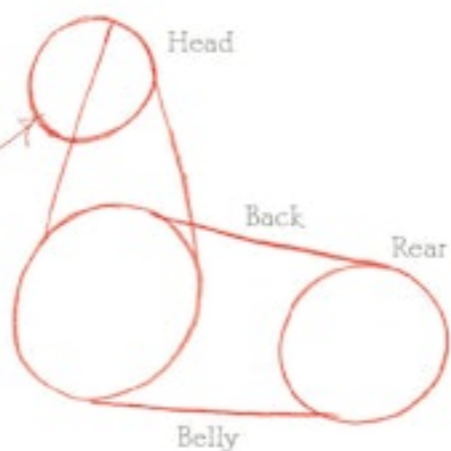
Sketch in a V-shaped line to show the base of the neck.

Draw lines for the directions of the front and back legs.

Draw a triangle shape for the neck and a circle for the head.

Draw two circles, one slightly larger than the other, for the body. Add lines for the back and belly.

Draw a crooked line to indicate the front wing base.



Proportion

To keep the object you are drawing in proportion, choose a unit of measurement that you can relate back to. Here, the width of Pegasus has been divided into three. You can also mark key points in the drawing to take measurements from.

Wings

Draw a bent line for the front of the wing.



Draw a simple, curved shape for the main part.



Indicate the rows of feathers.



Neatly draw in the overlapping feathers.

Sketch in the horse's eyes, mouth, nostrils and ears. Add a mane.



Draw in wing shapes.

Indicate the flowing tail.

Draw in more lines to give the legs shape. Add circles for joints.

Draw small wing feathers first, then longer feathers.

Add more detail to the horse's head.



Add more detail to the tail.

Shade in the muscle shape.

Phoenix

The phoenix is a mythical bird said to live for up to 1,461 years. It has red and gold plumage. Each time it nears the end of its life, the phoenix builds a nest of cinnamon twigs that ignites. Both the bird and its nest are turned into ashes, from which a new phoenix arises.

Draw two curved lines almost parallel for the neck.

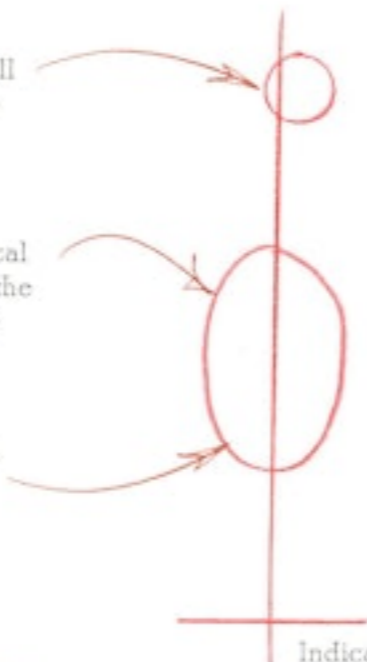
Draw thin legs splayed outwards. The tops of the legs look like short trousers.



Sketch a small circle for the head.

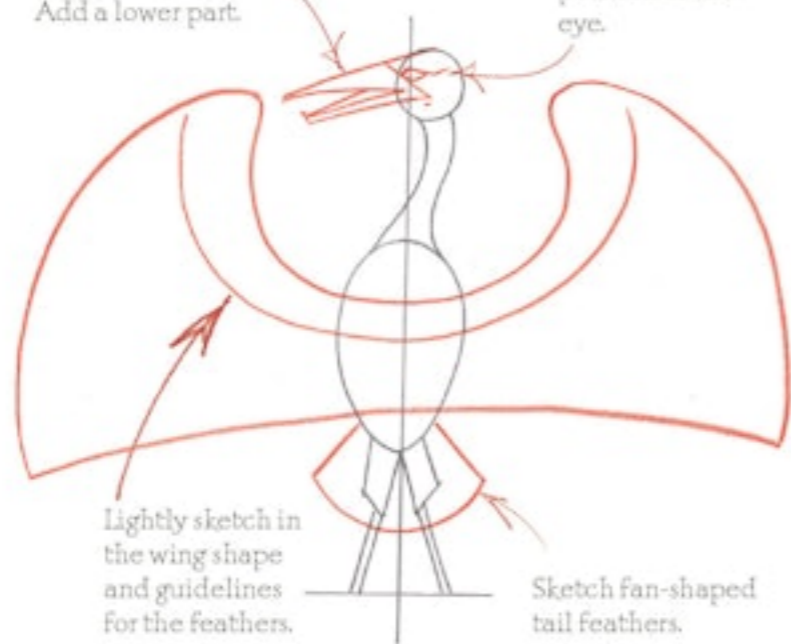
Draw a vertical line to mark the centre of the phoenix.

Draw a large oval for the body.



Draw a triangular-shaped top beak. Add a lower part.

Indicate the position of the eye.



Lightly sketch in the wing shape and guidelines for the feathers.

Sketch fan-shaped tail feathers.

Draw in the large lower feathers.

Add a plume of feathers to the back of the head.

Carefully sketch in the front of the wings.

Sketch in a blazing nest beneath the phoenix.

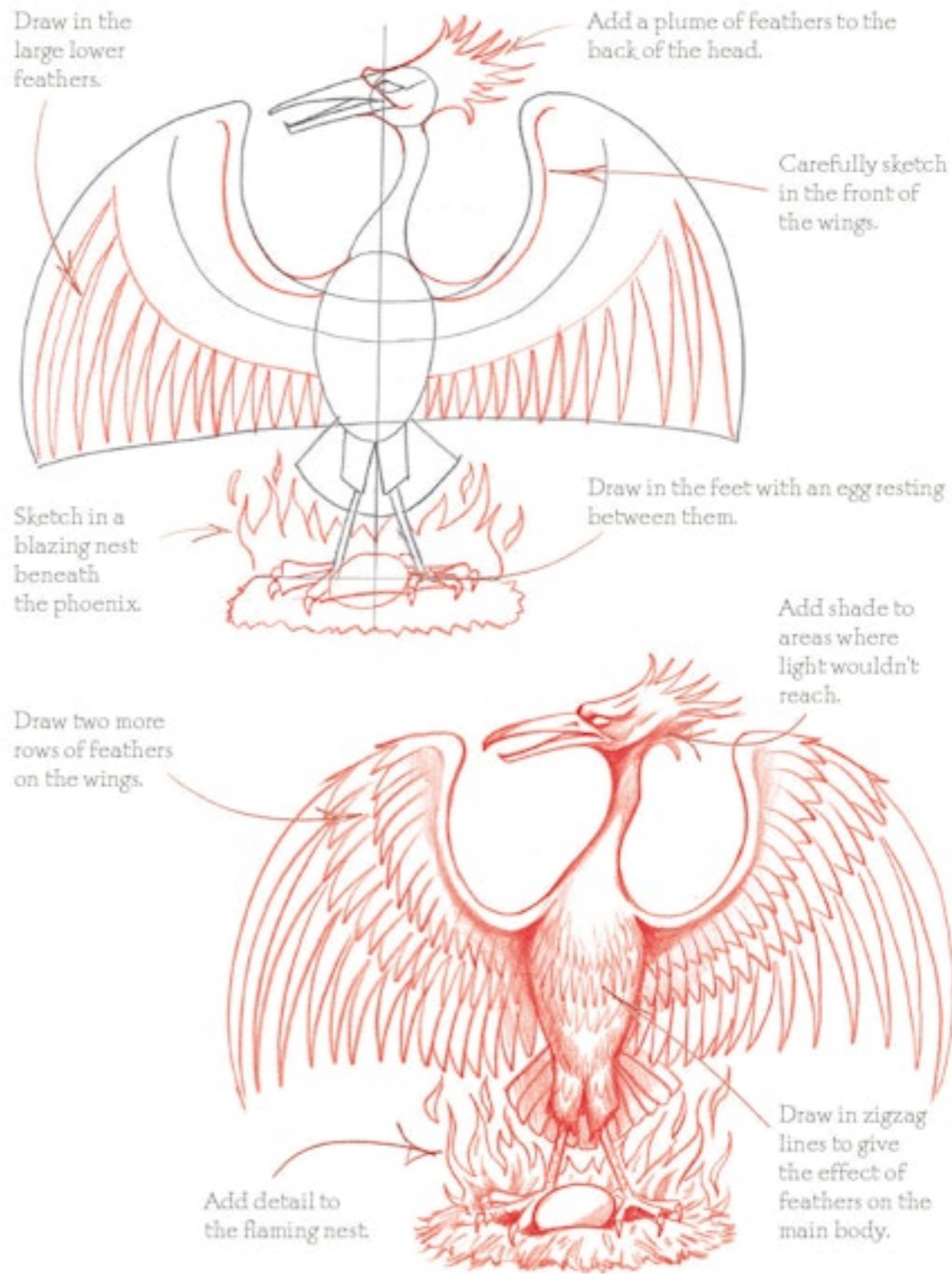
Draw in the feet with an egg resting between them.

Add shade to areas where light wouldn't reach.

Draw two more rows of feathers on the wings.

Add detail to the flaming nest.

Draw in zigzag lines to give the effect of feathers on the main body.

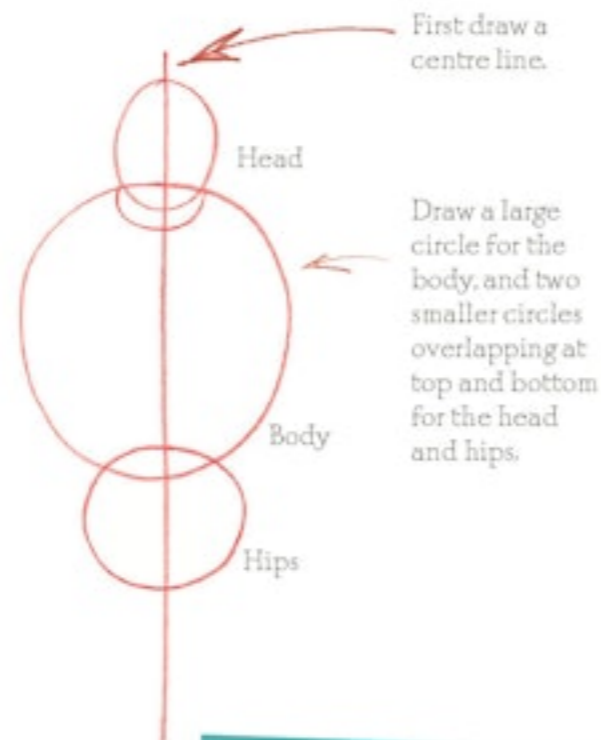


Troll

The large mountain troll features in many folk tales. They are said to be foul-smelling creatures that are dim-witted but powerful. Trolls are aggressive towards humans and carry a crude, primitive club as a weapon.

Sketch in a series of overlapping ovals to show the foreshortening of the arms.

Draw a straight line for the base of each foot and a curved line for the top.



Now draw a series of ovals for the legs.

Sketch in the troll's club.

Sketch in the troll's club.

Sketch in the kneecaps and the toes.

Add roots to the club to make it look like a tree that has been ripped from the ground!

Draw the hands in more detail.

Shade in areas to show the troll's size and muscles.

Use short, spiky lines to suggest fur on the troll's boots.

Draw in the toes on each foot.

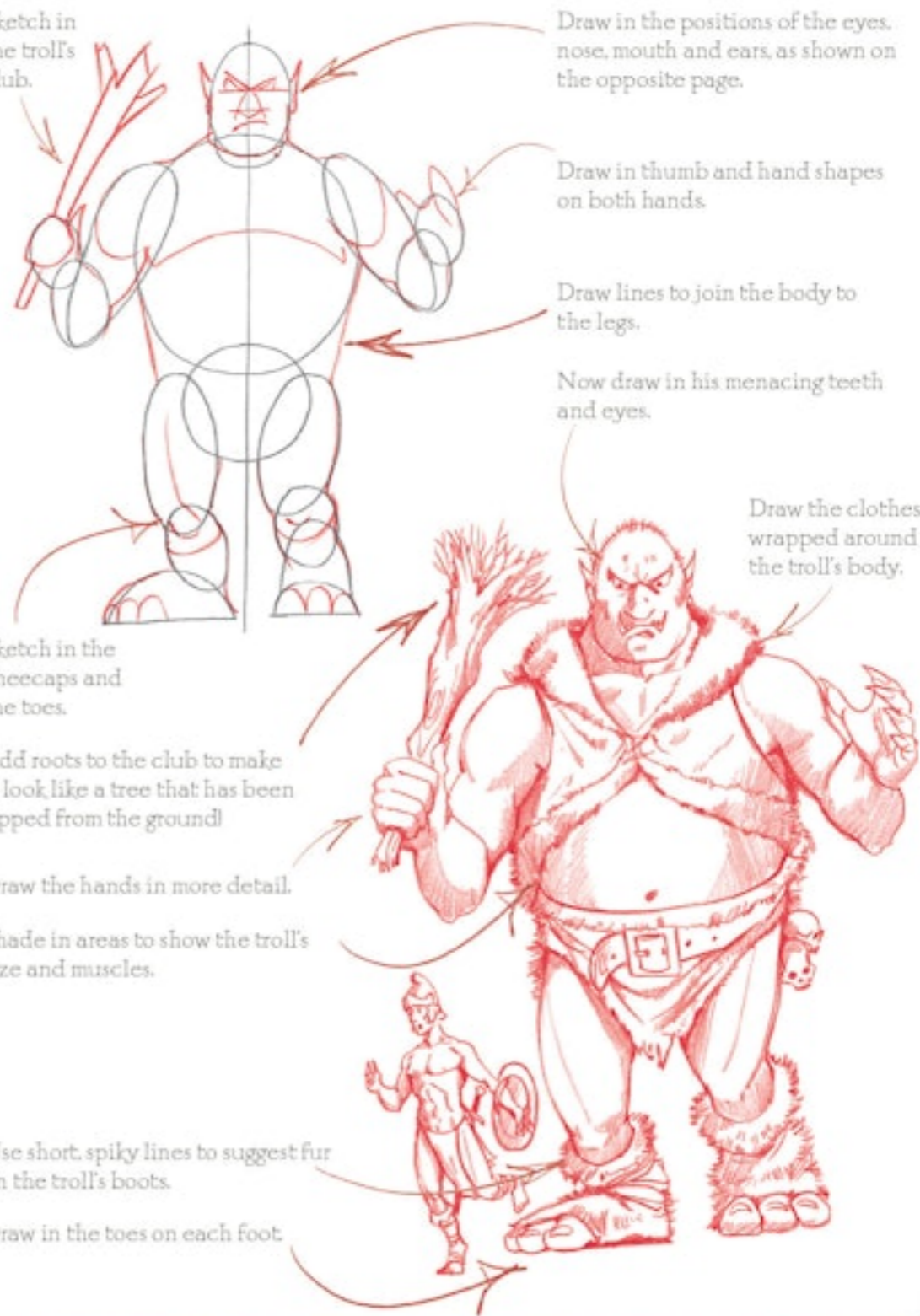
Draw in the positions of the eyes, nose, mouth and ears, as shown on the opposite page.

Draw in thumb and hand shapes on both hands.

Draw lines to join the body to the legs.

Now draw in his menacing teeth and eyes.

Draw the clothes wrapped around the troll's body.



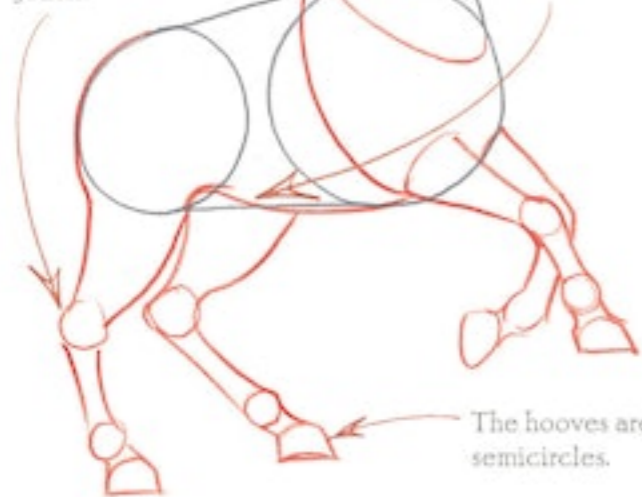
Unicorn

The unicorn is the fabulous horse with a twisted horn on its head. It is said to be fierce yet good, a selfless, solitary but always beautiful creature. The ancient Greeks thought that unicorns lived in India.

Sketch in the muzzle by drawing a smaller circle and then joining it to the head with two lines.

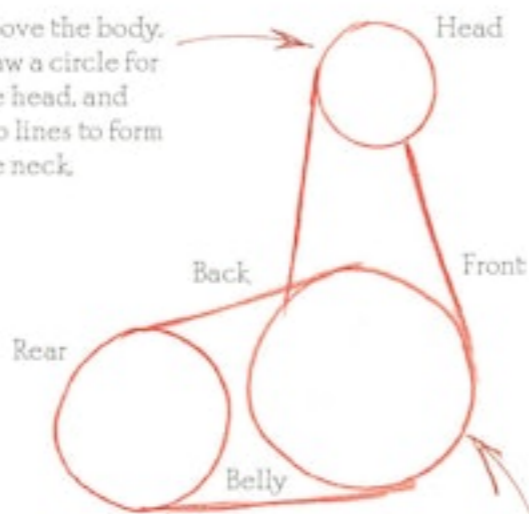
Add pointed ears.

Draw in the legs, using circles to show the positions of the joints.



The hooves are semicircles.

Above the body, draw a circle for the head, and two lines to form the neck.



First draw two circles, one slightly larger than the other. Then add lines for the back and the belly.

Curve the belly line upwards.



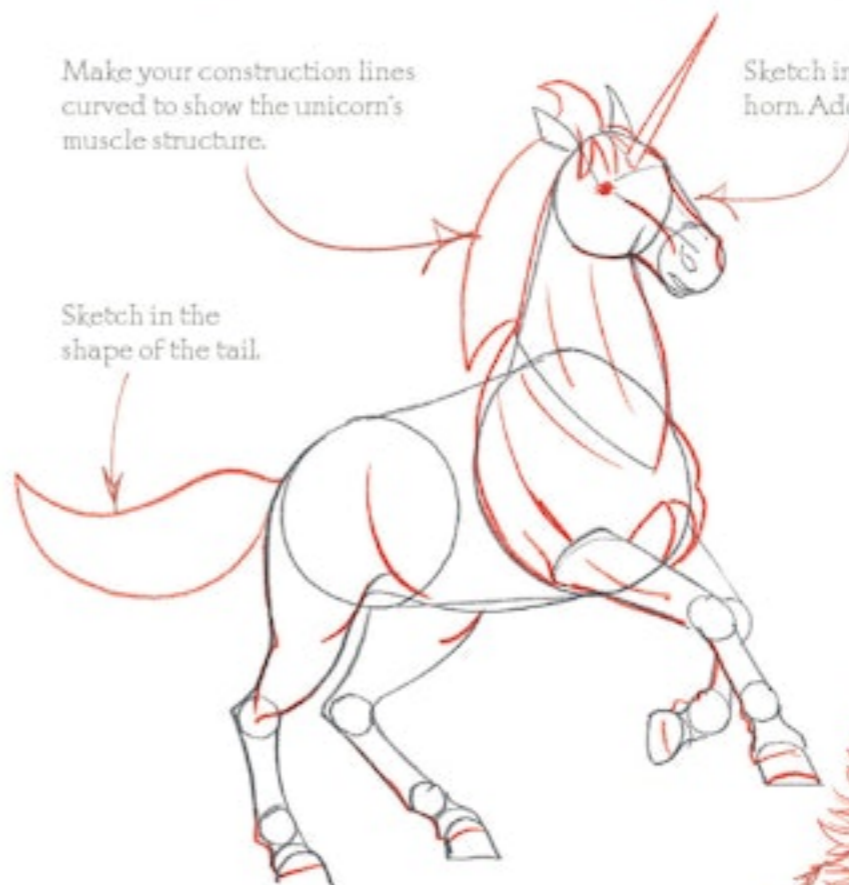
Using a mirror

Hold your picture up to a mirror to look at its reflection. This will help you see any mistakes in your drawing.

Make your construction lines curved to show the unicorn's muscle structure.

Sketch in the shape of the tail.

Sketch in the eyes, nostrils and horn. Add the unicorn's mane.



Use random jagged shapes to show the mane flowing backwards.

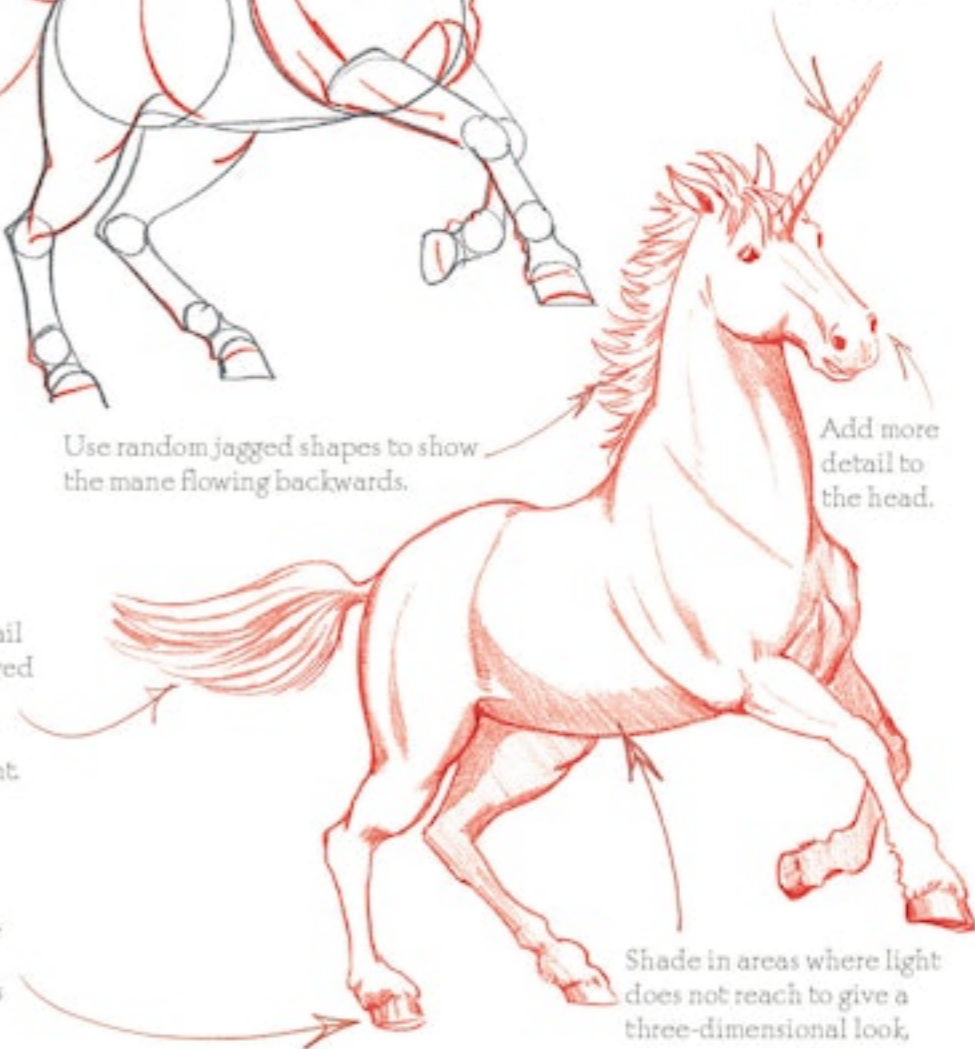
Draw more detail on the unicorn's horn.

Add more detail to the head.

Draw in the tail hair with curved lines flowing backwards to add movement.

Add detail and shading to the hooves. Leave some areas white as highlights.

Shade in areas where light does not reach to give a three-dimensional look.



Glossary

Chiaroscuro The use of light and dark to give a dramatic three-dimensional effect.

Composition The positioning of a picture on the drawing paper.

Construction lines Guidelines used in the early stages of a drawing.

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

Focal point A central point of interest.

Foreshortening The way an object is seen in perspective when angled toward the viewer. The nearer parts look larger than the further parts.

Light source The direction the light is coming from.

Negative space The empty space around a drawn shape.

Proportion The correct relationship of scale between parts of a drawing.

Reference Photographs or other images used as a guide when drawing, if drawing from life is not possible.

Squaring up Transferring a drawing accurately using square grids.

Three-dimensional Having an effect of depth, so as to look lifelike or real, rather than flat.

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

Index

C

centaur 14-15
charcoal 10-11
chiaroscuro 16
composition 9, 15
crayons 10-11
cross-hatching 10, 11

D

dragon 16-17

F

faces 28
fixative 11

G

gryphon 18-19

H

Hydra 20-21

L

light 9, 16, 21, 31

M

materials 10-11
Minotaur 22-23
mirrors 30

N

negative space 18

P

pastels 10-11
Pegasus 24-25
pencils 11
pens 11
perspective 6-7
phoenix 26-27
photographs 8-9
proportion 24

S

sketching, sketchbook
12-13

T

three-dimensional
drawing 6, 9, 30-31
troll 28-29
two-point
perspective 7

U

unicorn 30-31

V

vanishing points 6-7