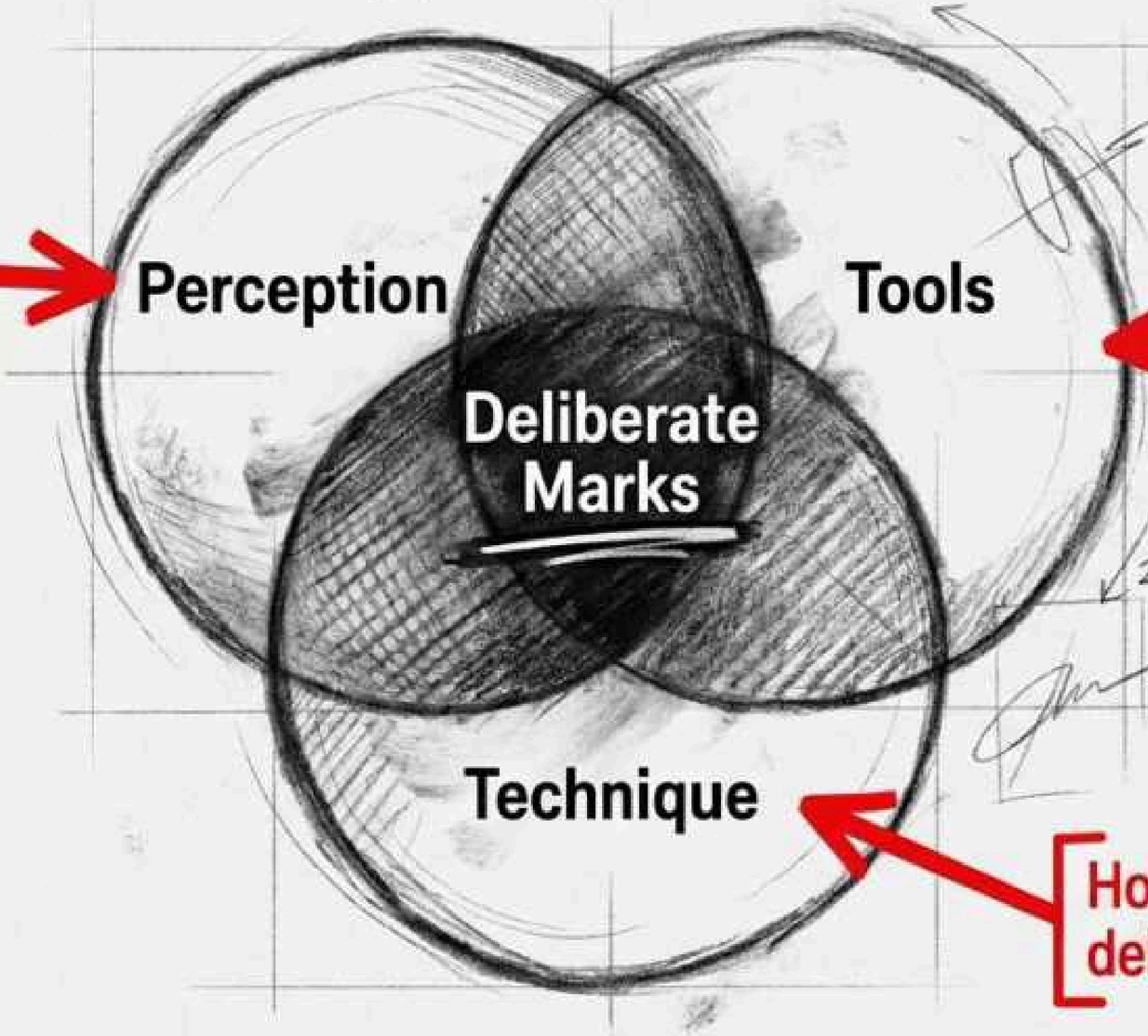
Every subsequent skill depends entirely on mastering perception and tools first.

¶ 1.1



Why do we draw what what we know instead of what we see?

What do specific tools actually do?

How do we make a deliberate, confident line?

¶ 1.2

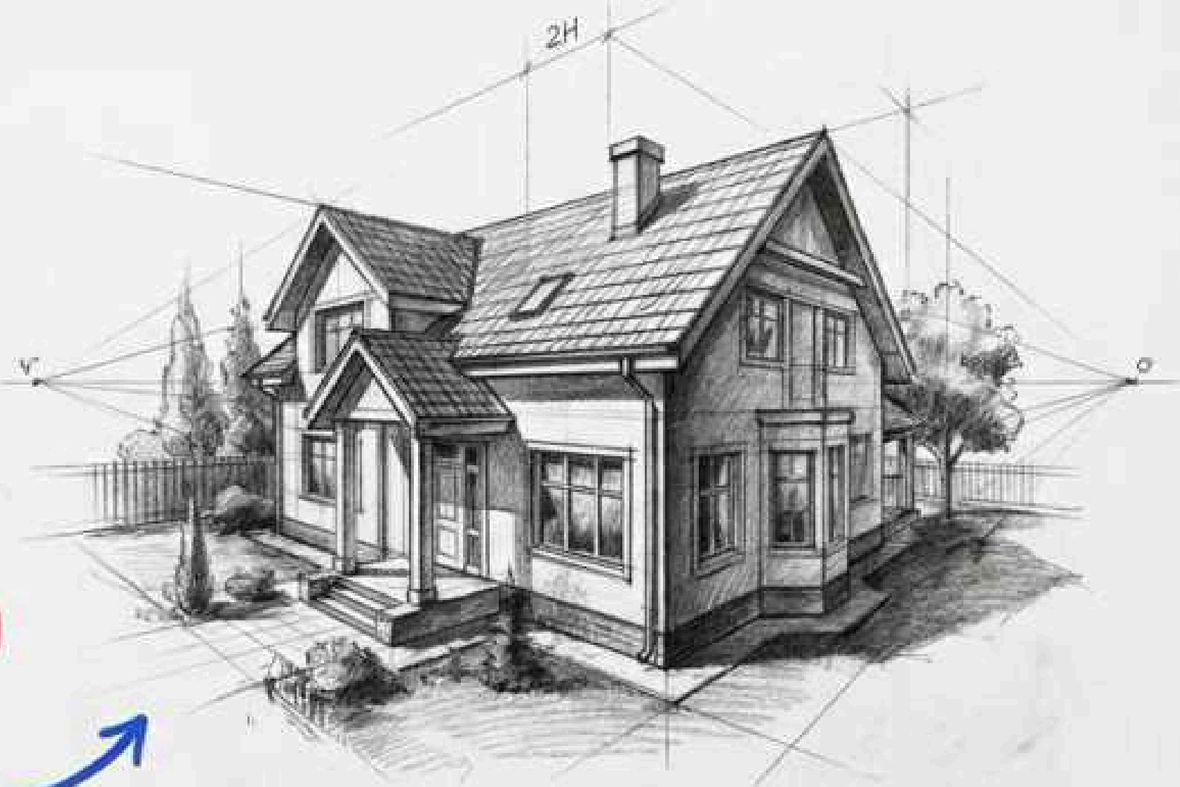
Beginners draw symbols held in memory
rather than the reality in front of them.



≠

The Gap

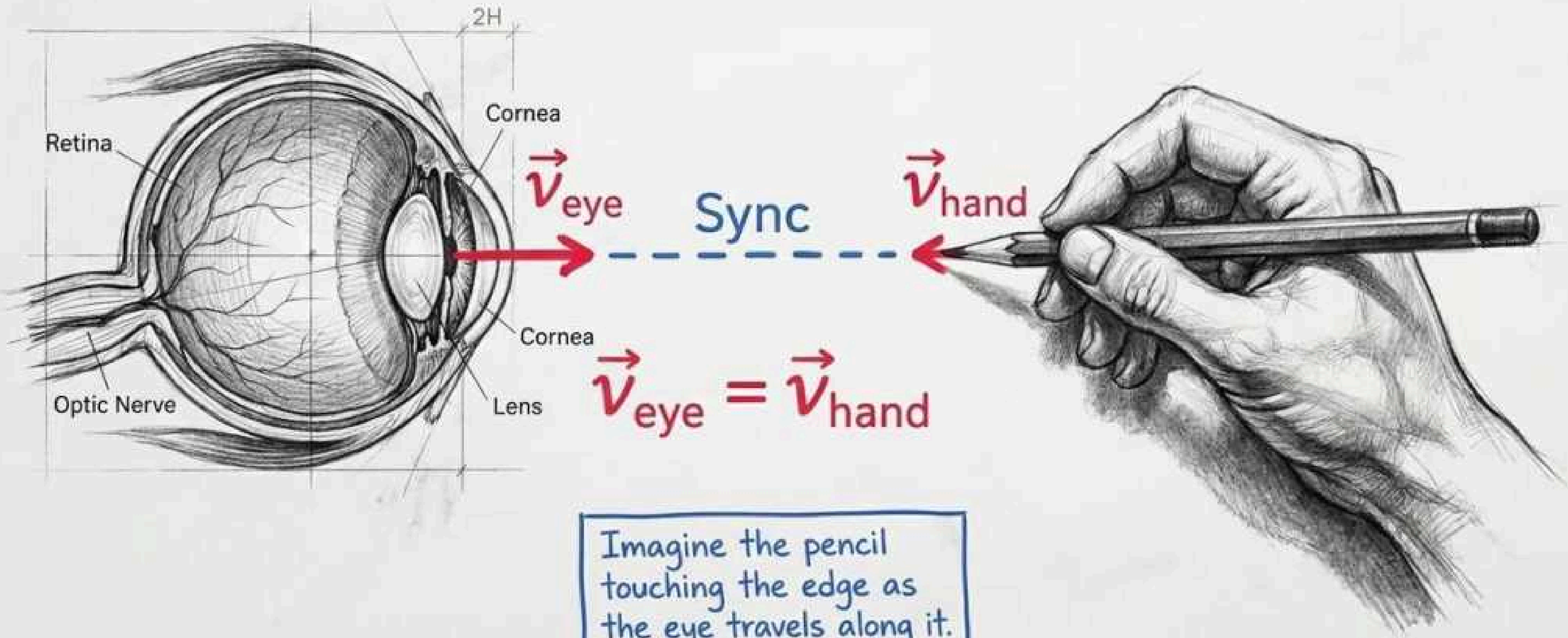
The Symbol
(Memory)



The Reality
(Perception)

¶ 1.3

The cure is to synchronize the eye and the hand to move as a single entity.

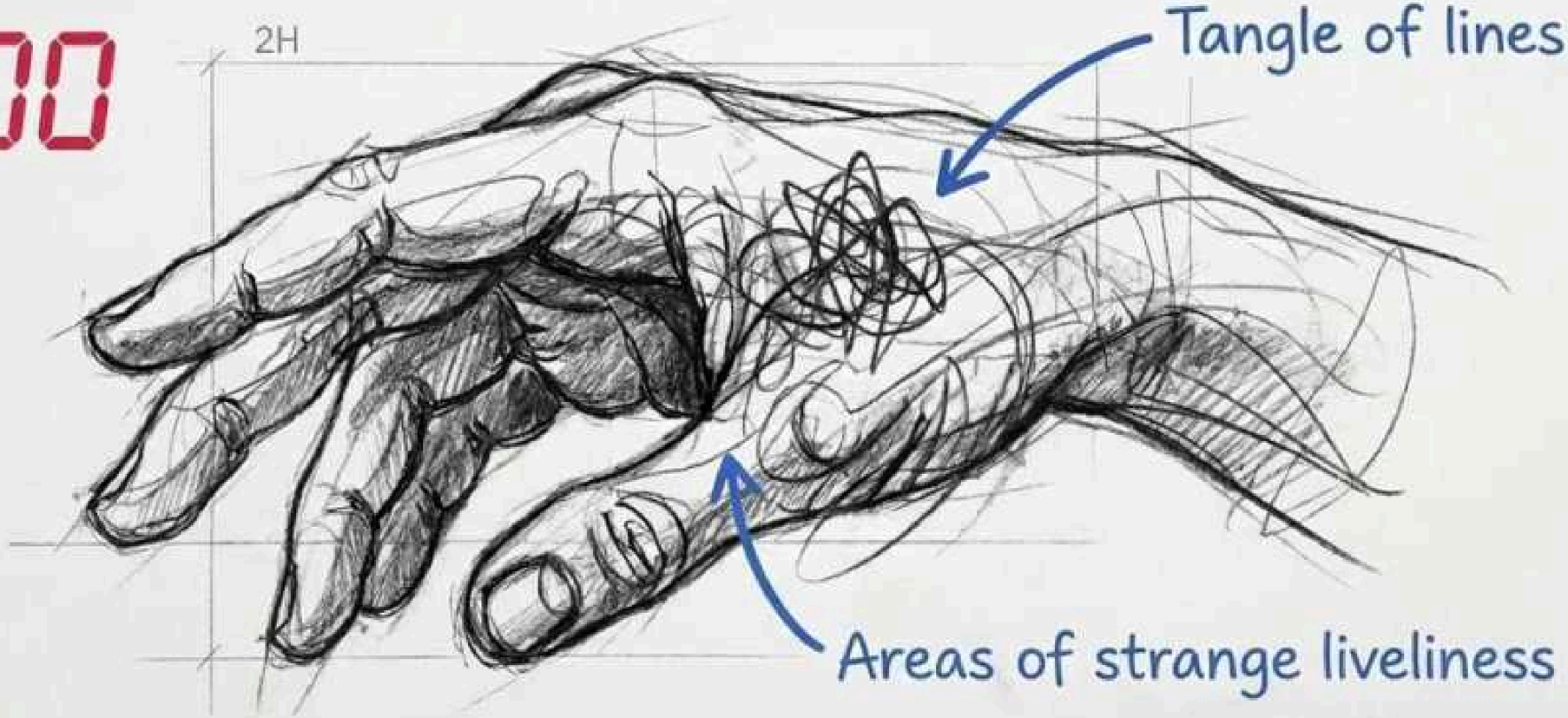


Imagine the pencil touching the edge as the eye travels along it.

¶ 1.4

Blind contour drawing forcibly trains the neurological link between looking and moving.

5:00

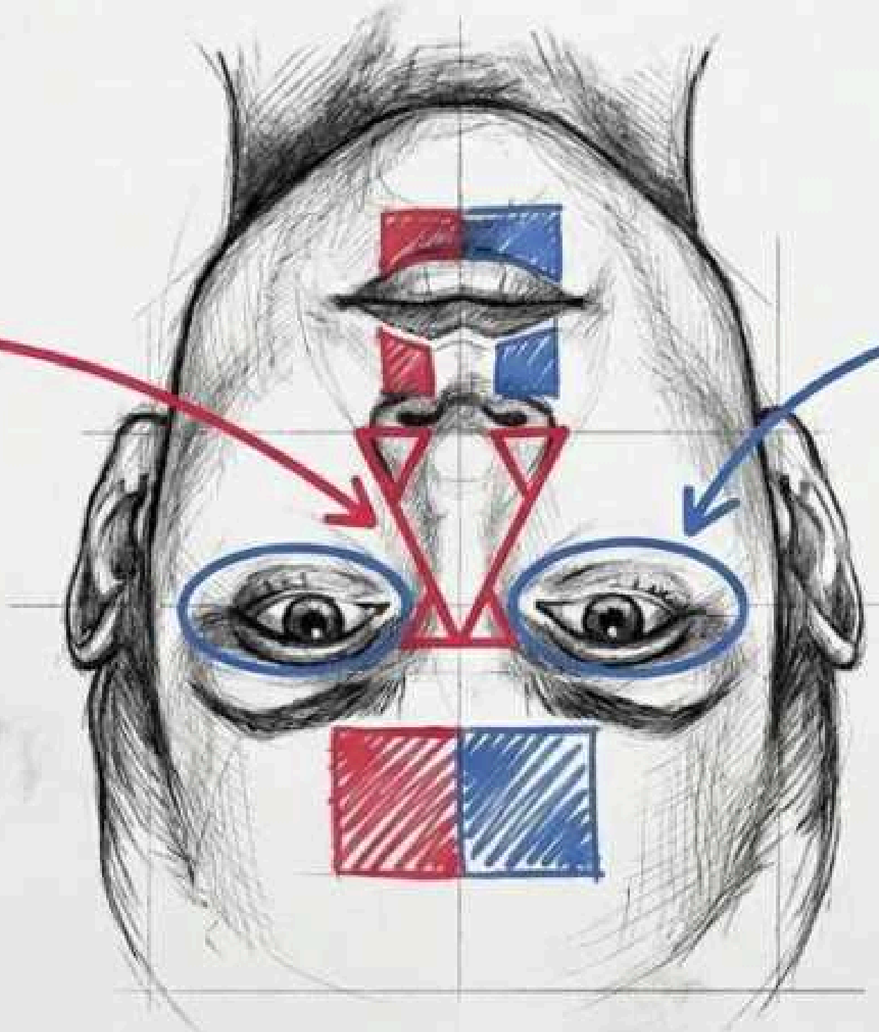


Look only at the subject. Never at the paper.

Inverting the subject prevents the mind from naming the parts.

¶ 1.5

Brain fails to recognize "eye" or "nose"

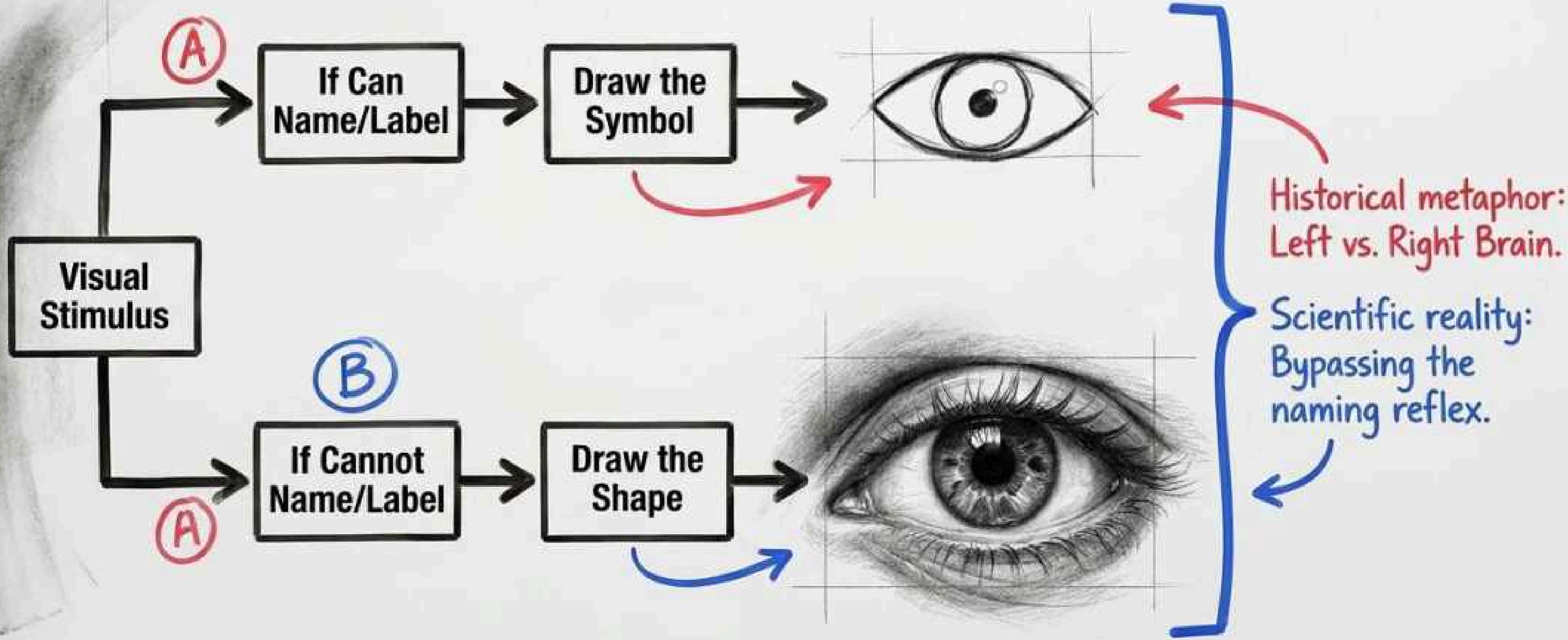


Mind is forced to see "Curve A" or "Angle B"

Finish the drawing before turning it right-side up.

¶ 1.6

When you cannot label a shape, you stop drawing the label and start drawing the truth.

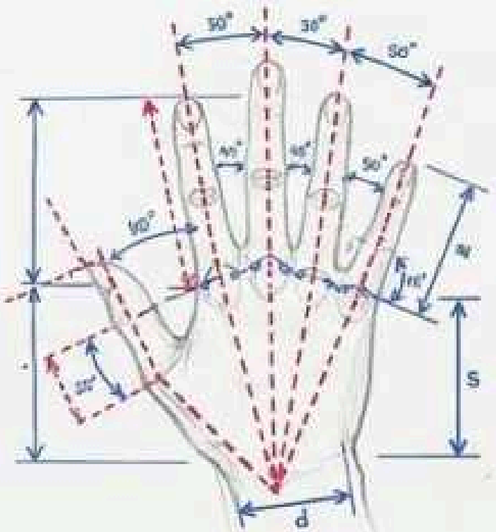


Drawing relies on five distinct perceptual skills that must be practiced individually.

¶ 1.7

1. Edges
2. Spaces
3. Relationships
4. Lights & Shadows
5. Gestalt








Combined skill follows isolated practice.

¶ 1.8

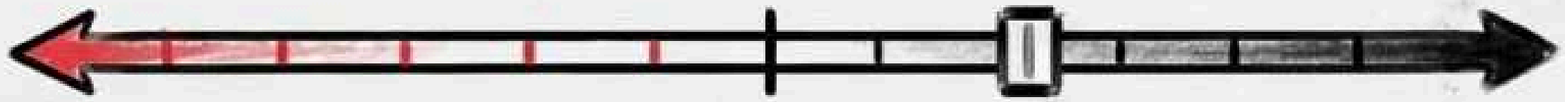
The modern pencil is a precise chemical mixture, not lead.



16th-Century
Borrowdale Mineral

Graphite + Clay + Firing = Core

(Soft/Dark) (Hard/Light)



More Clay
(Harder)

More Graphite
(Softer/Darker)

Nicolas-Jacques Conté's 1795 Patent

¶ 1.9

The H-B code determines the exact ratio of crispness to darkness.

Softer grades wear faster.
Keep a knife handy.



H
(Hard)

HB
(Middle)

B
(Black)

Beginner's Core Set: HB, 2B, and 4B

Charcoal provides broad tones, while kneaded erasers pull pigment rather than scrub it.

Vine Charcoal →	Lighter, easier to erase
Compressed Charcoal →	Darker, harder to remove



Fixative Spray: Prevents rubbing.

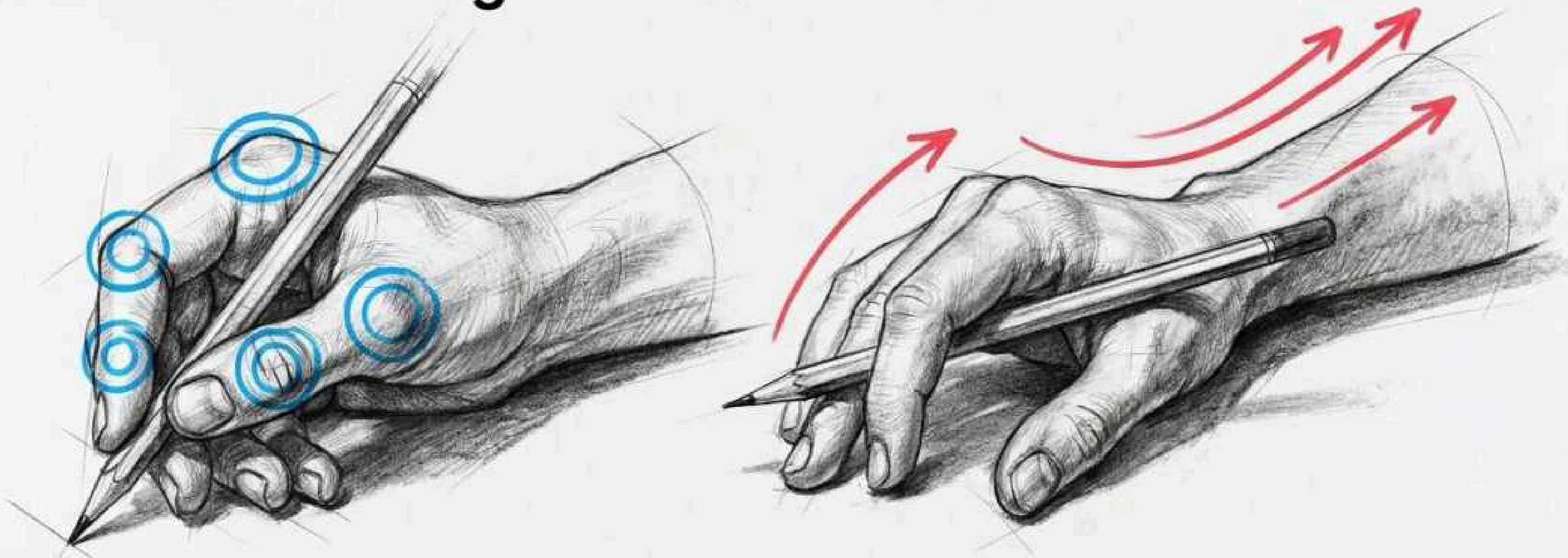
¶ 1.11

Cheap materials remove the fear of ruining the page, and fear is what makes lines timid.



Alternating your grip shifts control between the fingers and the shoulder.

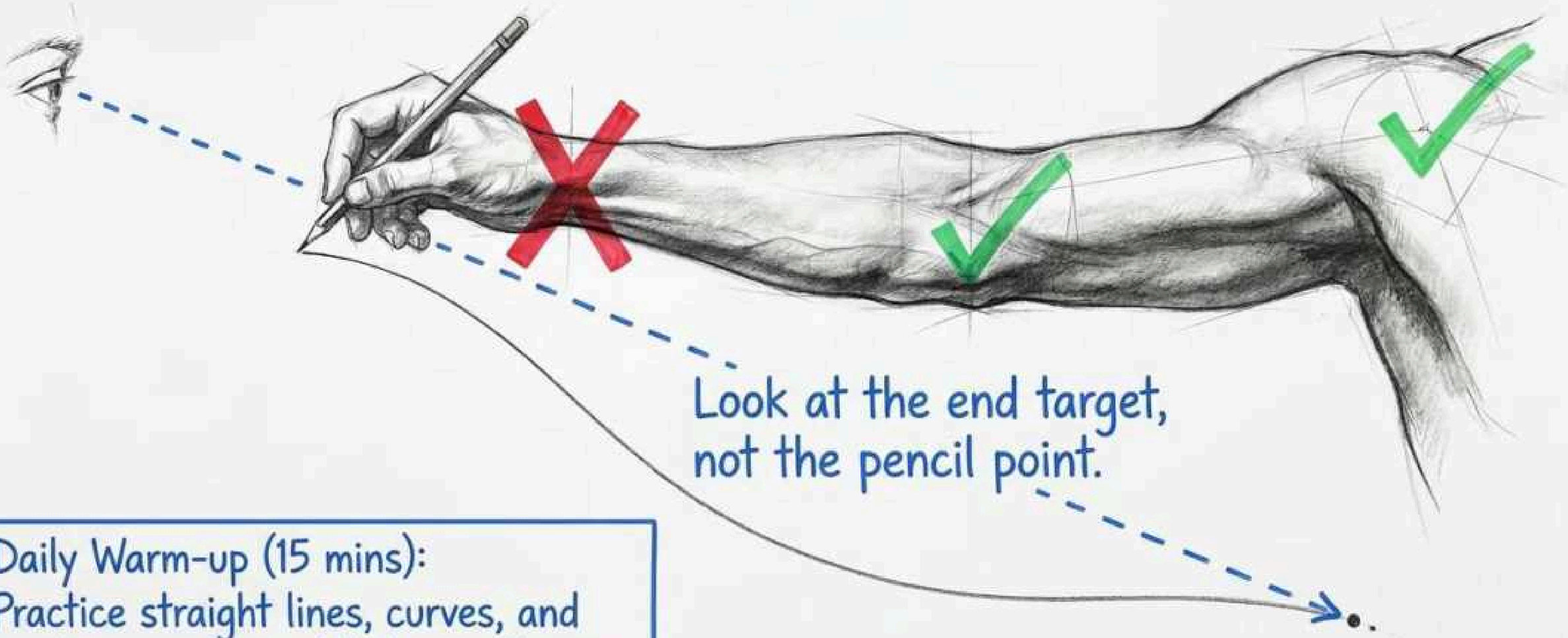
¶ 1.12



Writing Grip:
Details and Control

Overhand Grip:
Broad Strokes and Swing

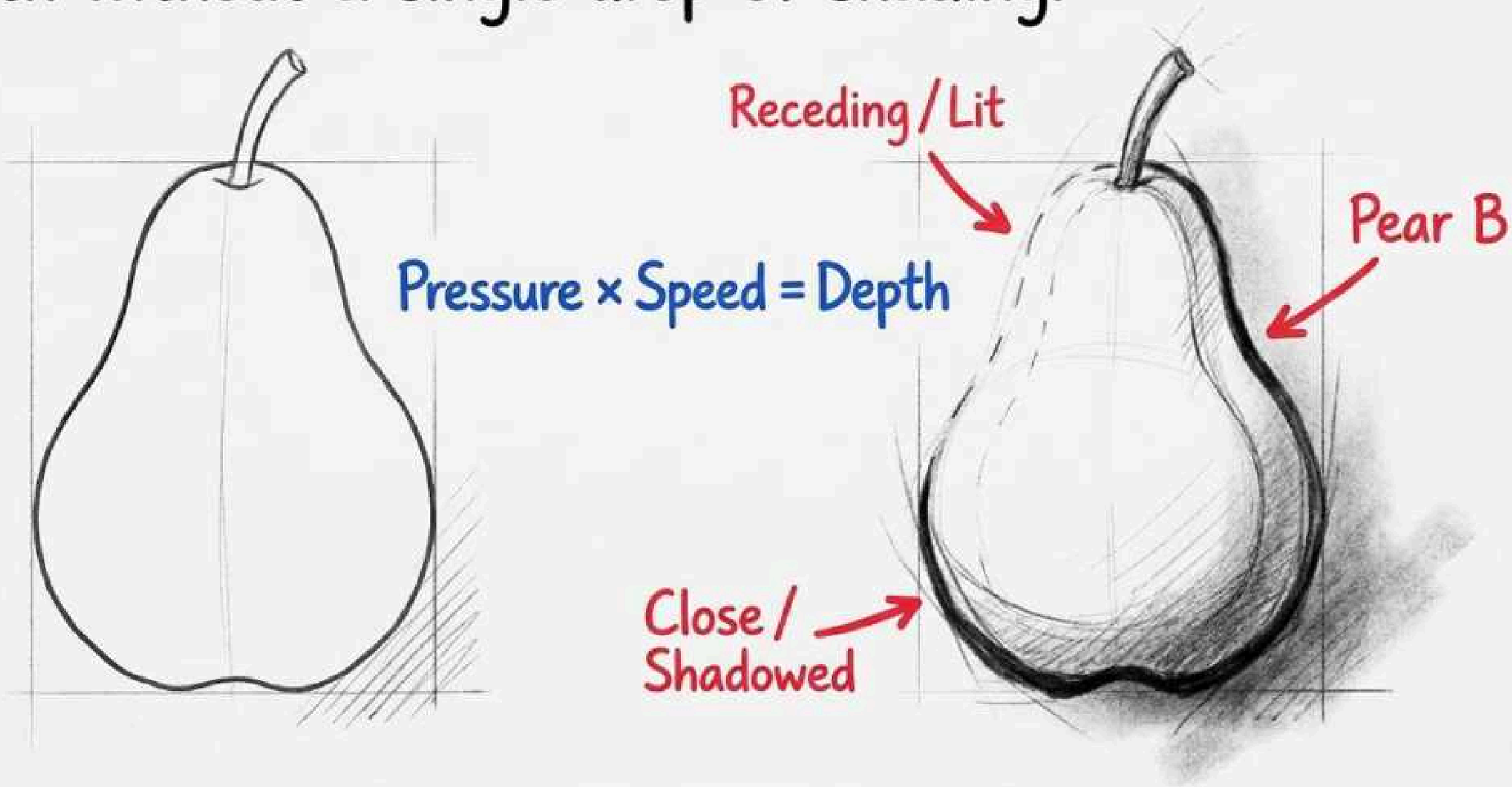
Confident lines are executed by the larger pivot points of the arm.



Daily Warm-up (15 mins):
Practice straight lines, curves, and circles on newsprint to loosen the arm.

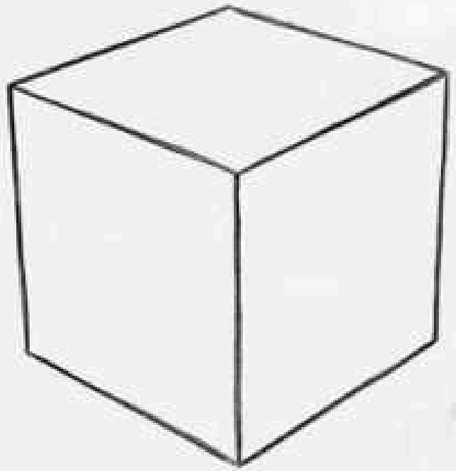
Modulating your pressure and speed creates depth without a single drop of shading.

¶ 1.14



Knowing which type of line you are drawing keeps every mark purposeful. ¶ 1.15

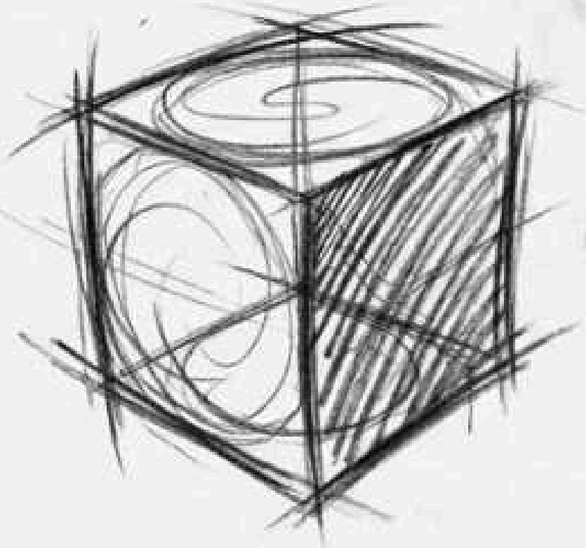
1. Contour



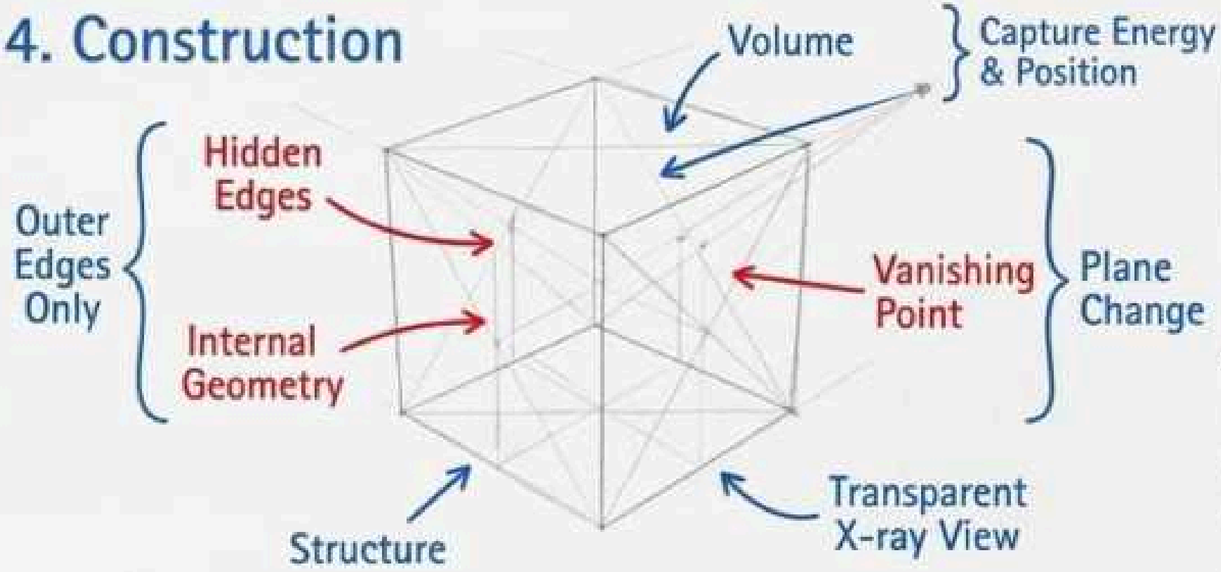
2. Cross-Contour



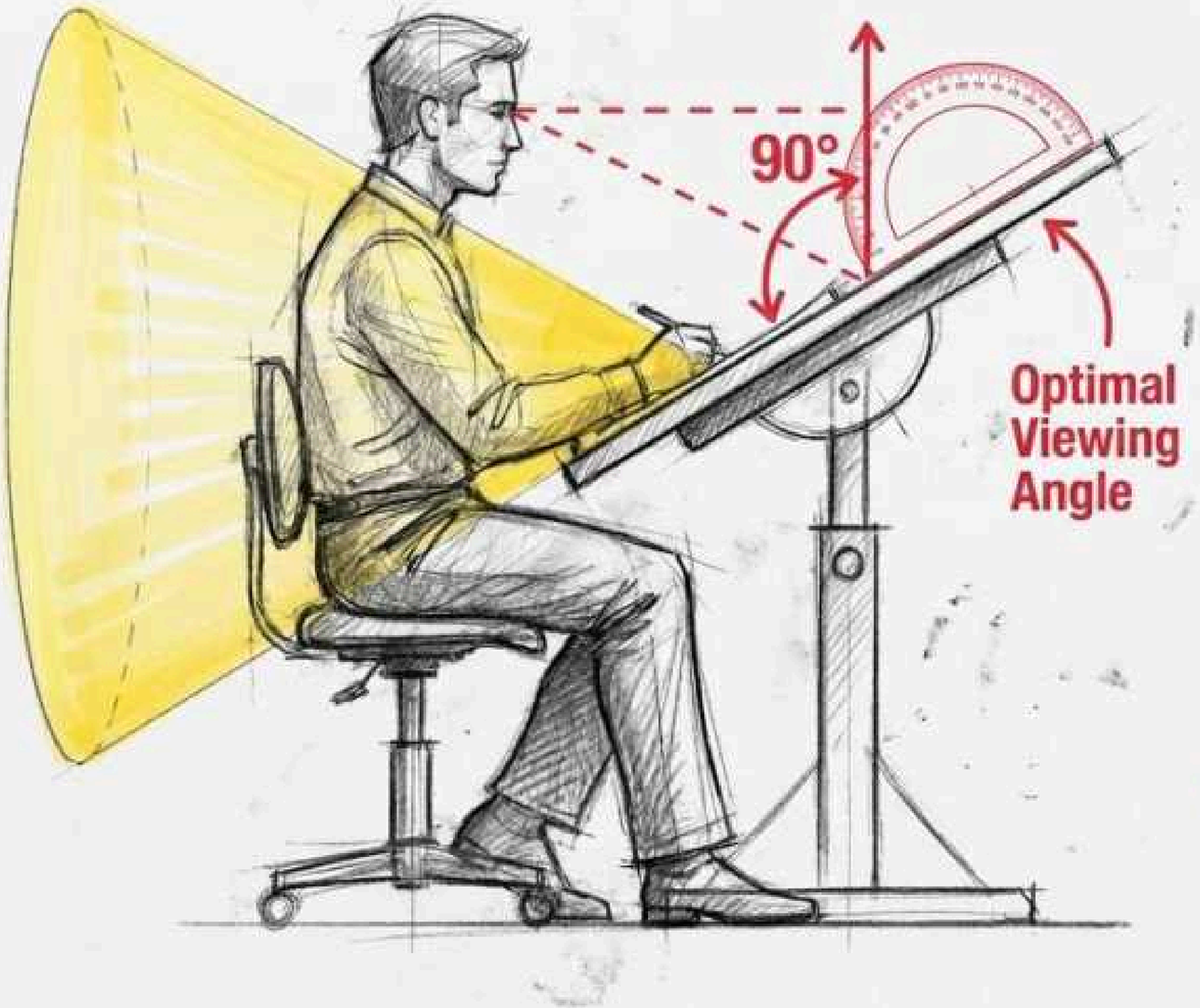
3. Gesture



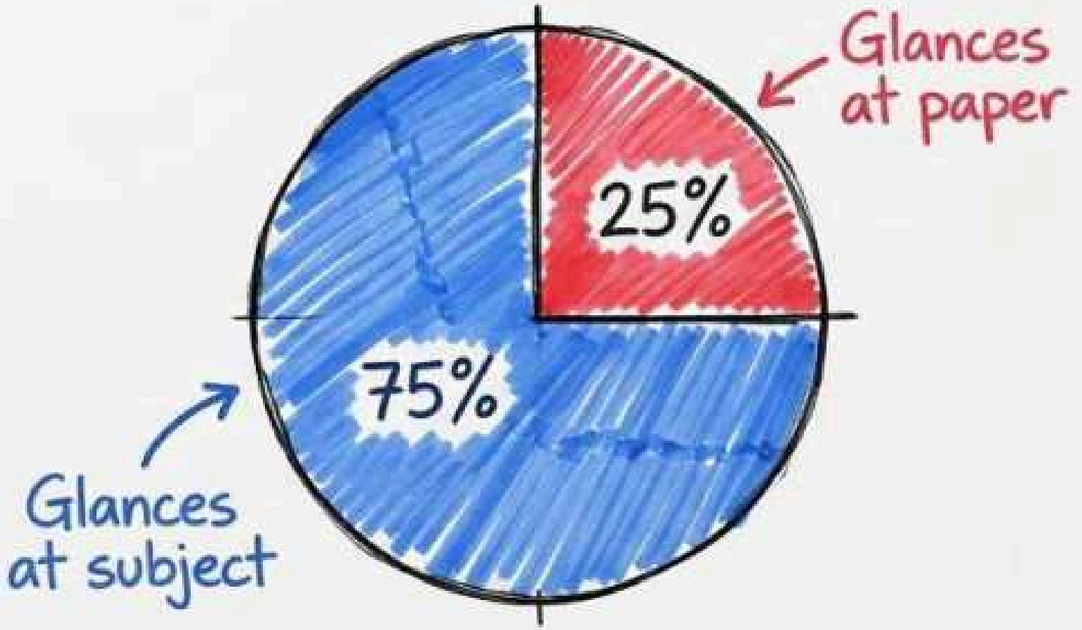
4. Construction



¶ 1.16



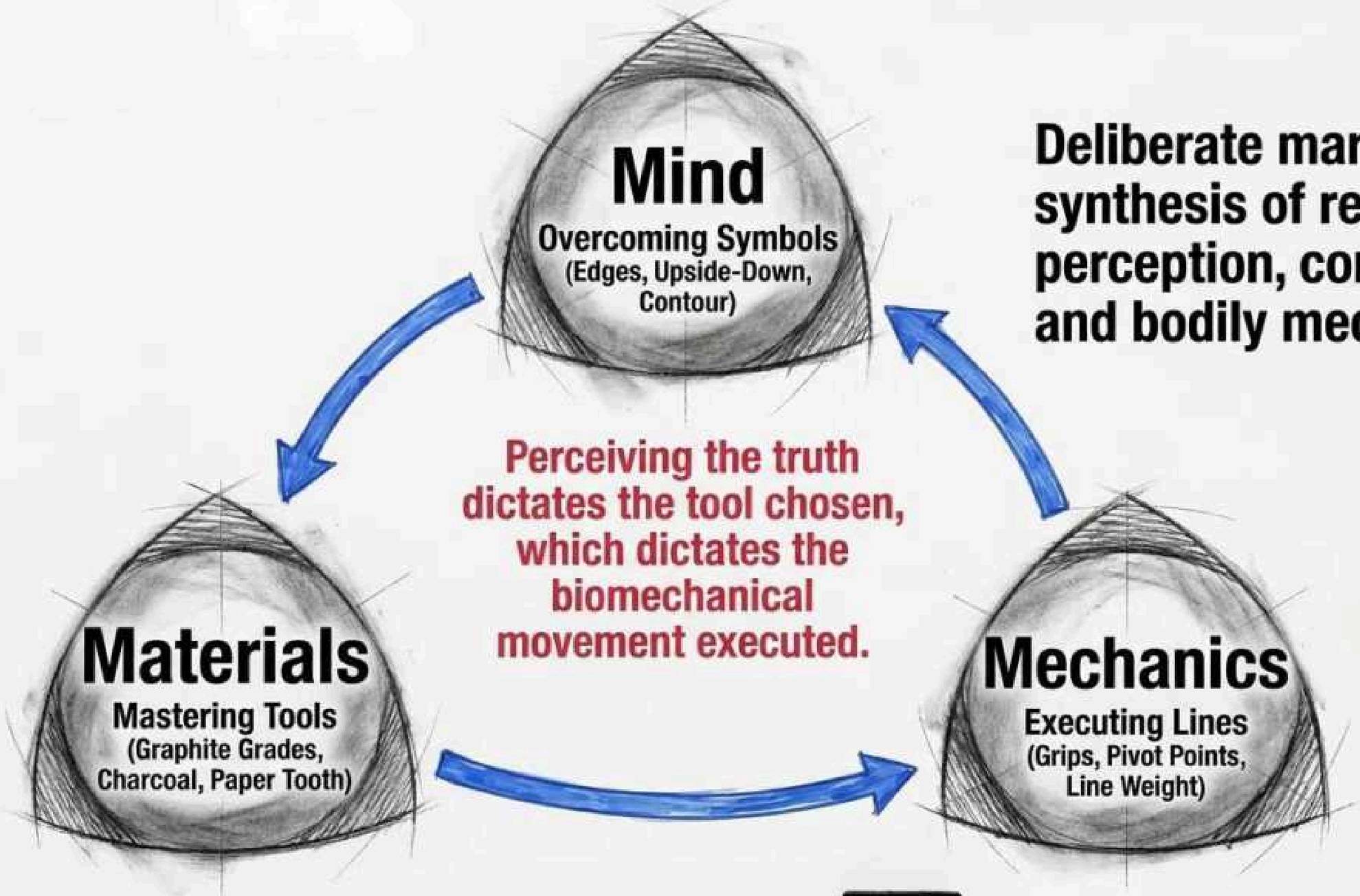
Setting the scene optimizes your line of sight and prevents visual distortion.



Maintain a 3:1 Ratio

¶ 1.17

Deliberate marks are the synthesis of rewired perception, correct tools, and bodily mechanics.



¶ 1.18

Seeing is the start, but next we must learn to mathematically build the form.

Lecture 2: Shape, Proportion, Gesture, Sighting, and Negative Space

