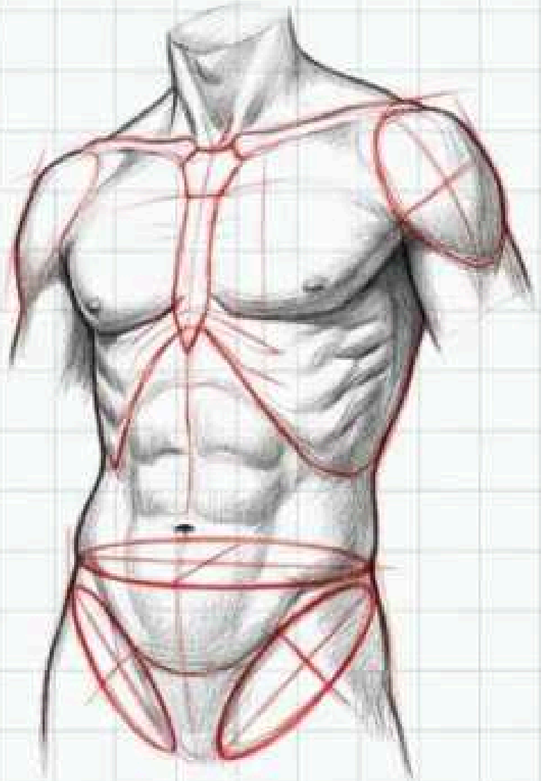
The Three Pillars of Drawing

¶ 6.1



Arrange the World

How do you hold the viewer's eye?



Construct the Subject

How do you draw the hardest, most rewarding subject?



Master the Craft

How do you build a lasting habit?

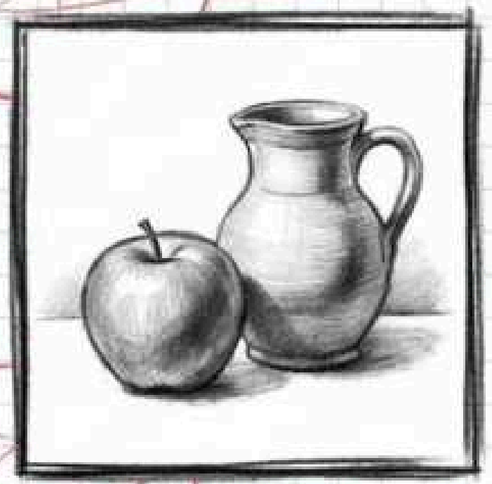
Format and Thumbnails

¶ 6.2

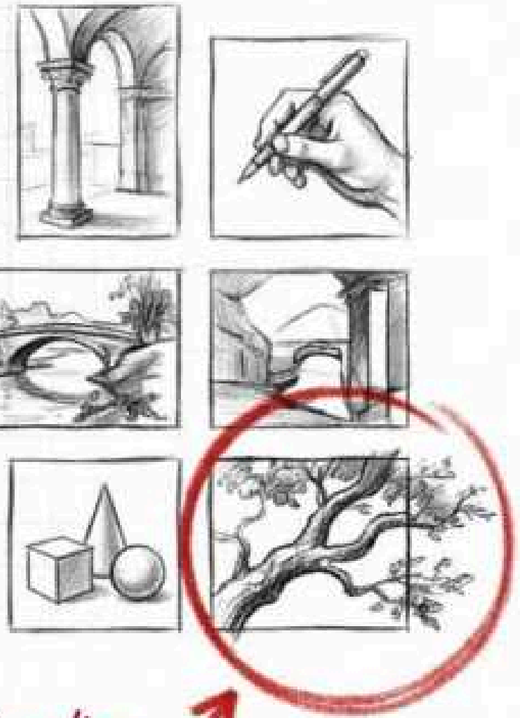
Choose the Format







Plan the Layout



Cropping implies a larger world.

5 Minutes of Planning = 1 Hour Saved

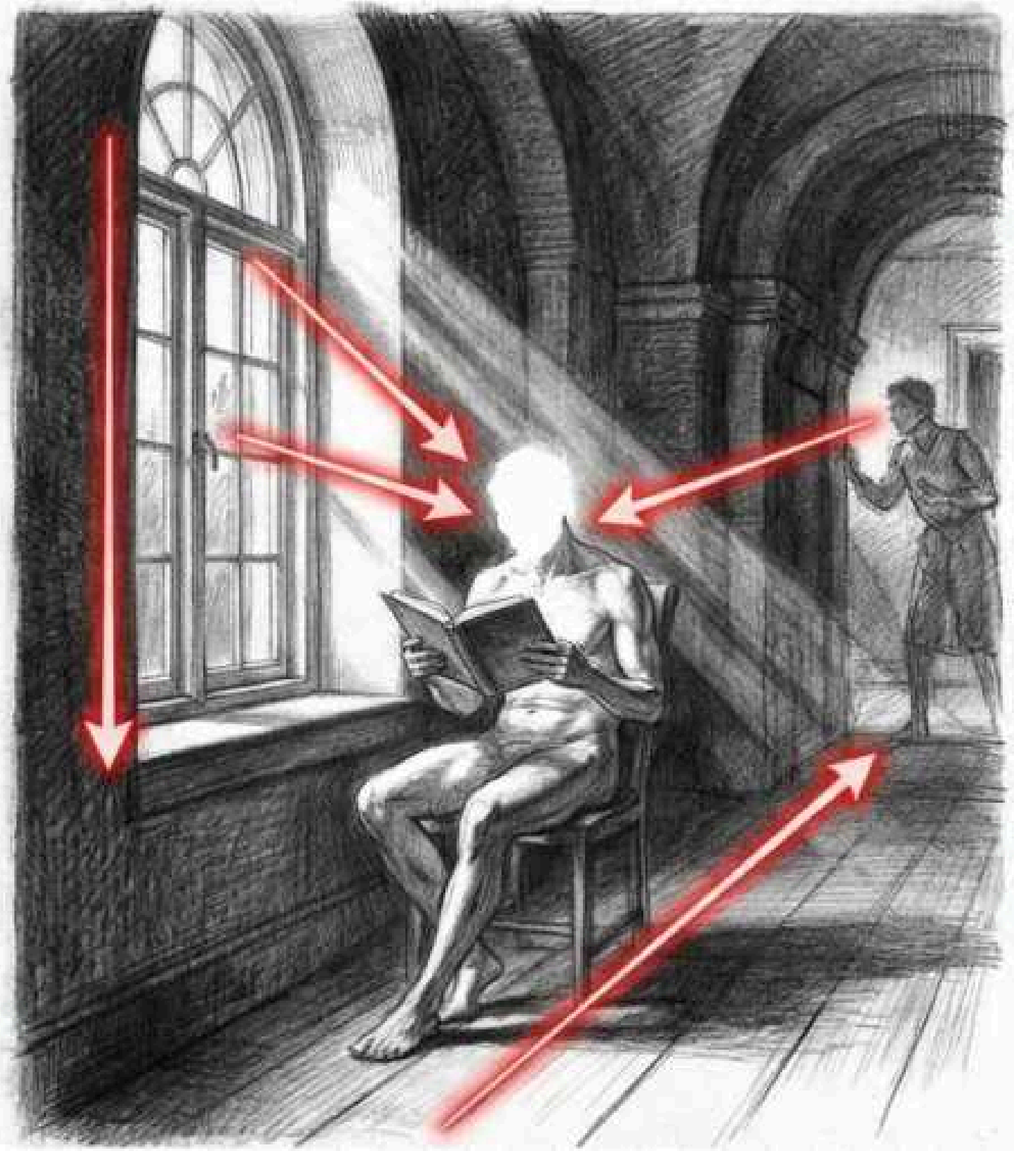
Engineering the Focal Point

¶ 6.3

How to Anchor the Eye:

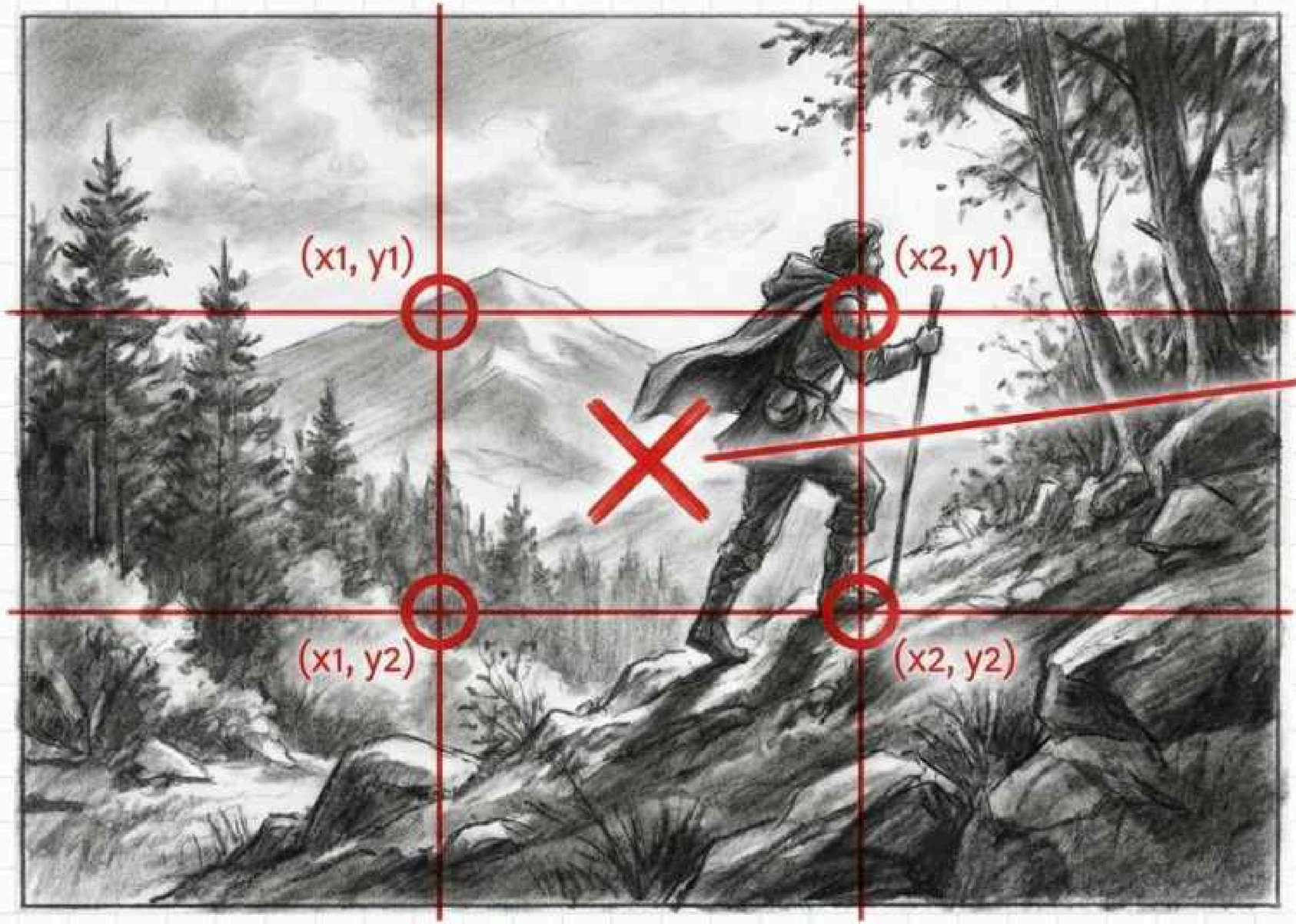
- Strongest Contrast (Bright vs. Dark)
- Sharpest Detail
- Unusual Shape
- Paths, Edges, and Gaze directions

Without a focal point, the eye has nowhere to rest.



The Rule of Thirds

¶ 6.4



Named by English artist John Thomas Smith, 1797.

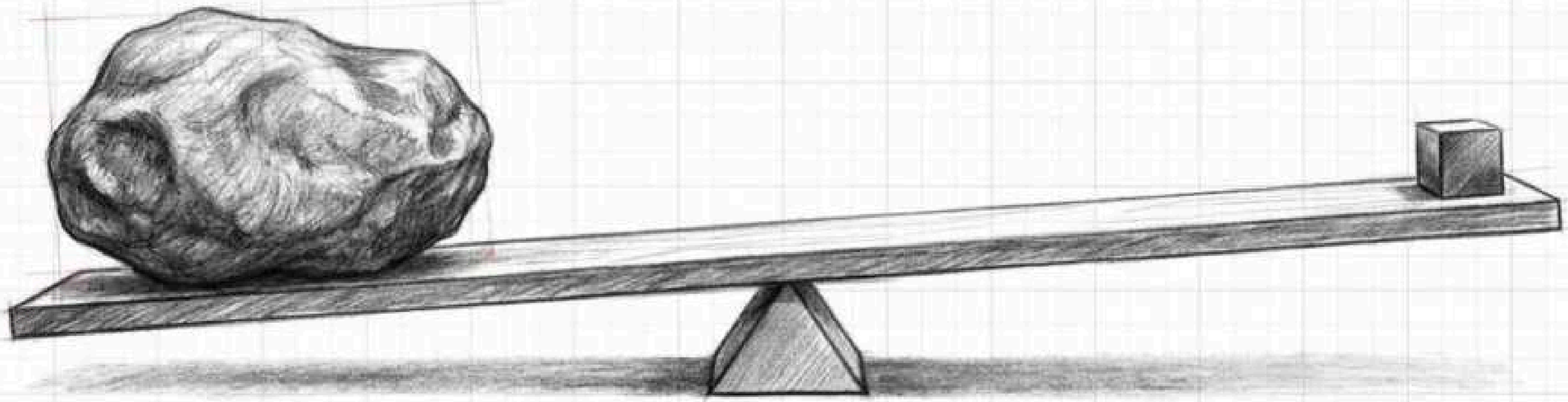
Avoid the center. Livelier compositions happen at the crossings.

Named by English artist John Thomas Smith, 1797.

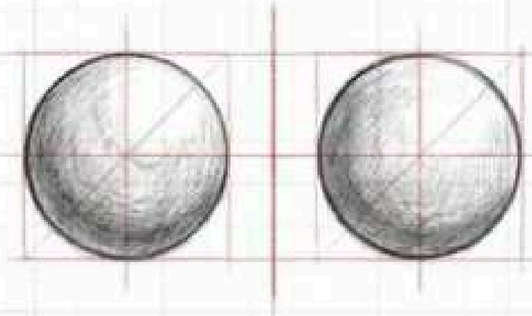
A starting guide, not a strict law.

The Physics of Balance

¶ 6.5

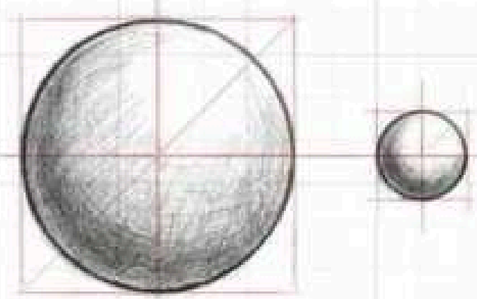


Symmetry



Formal, Stable, Still

Asymmetry



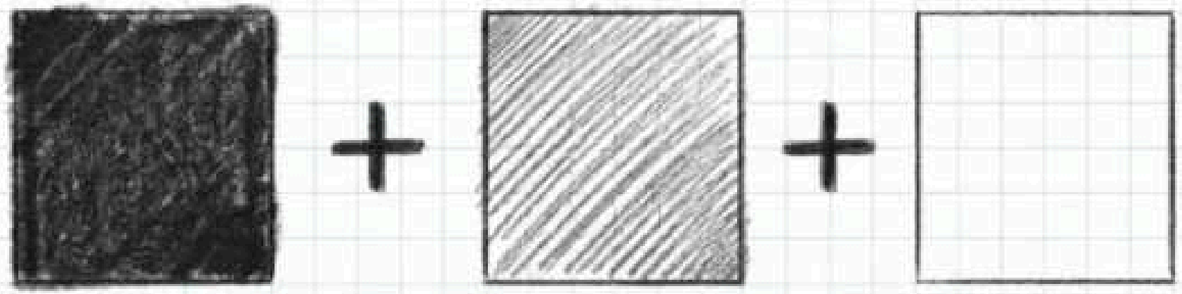
Active, Tense, Alive

How to Check Your Balance

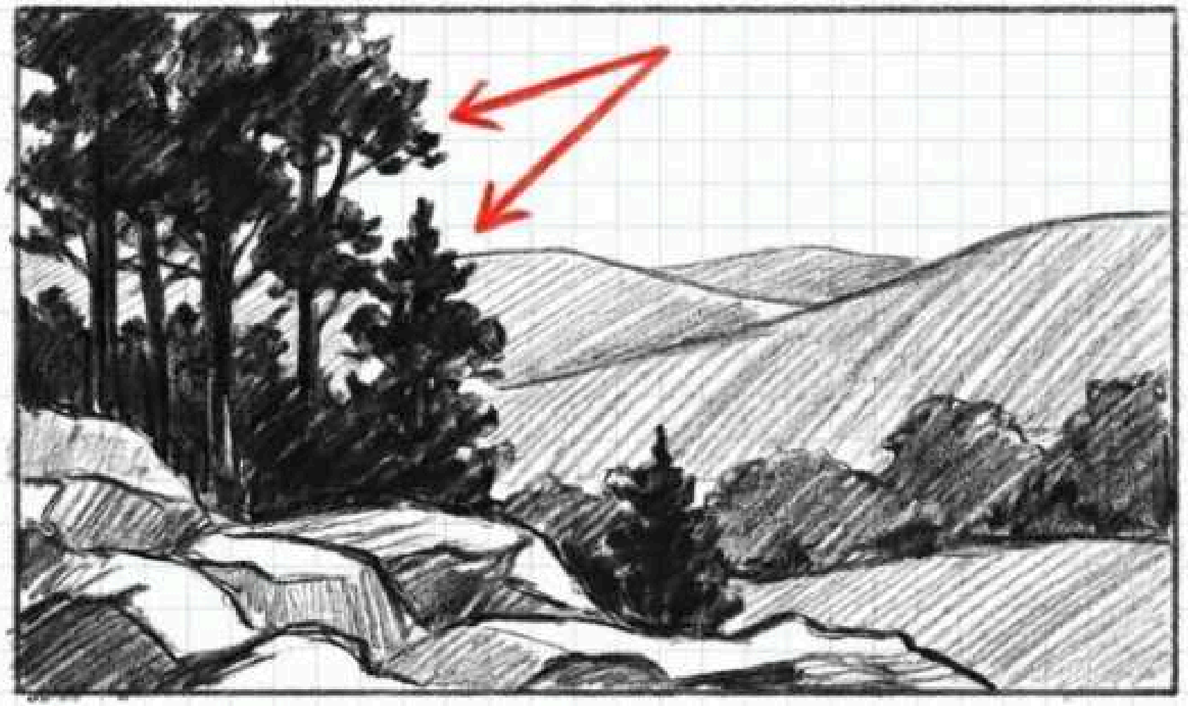
1. The Squint Test.
2. The Mirror Test (Imbalances you've grown blind to appear instantly in reverse).

Organizing Value Masses

¶ 6.6



Value 1 + Value 2 + Value 3

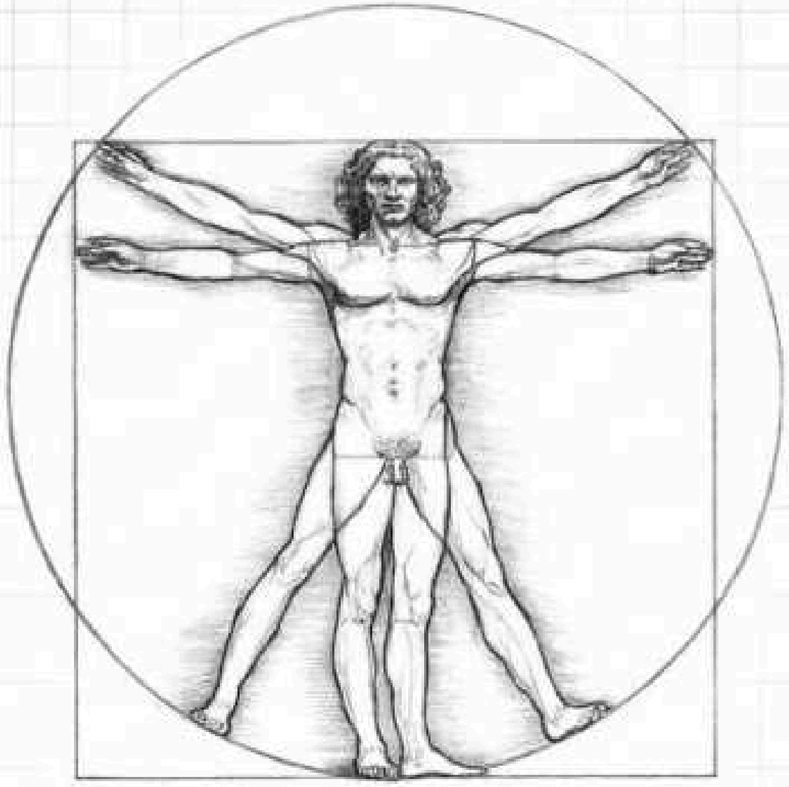


A strong thumbnail equals a strong drawing.

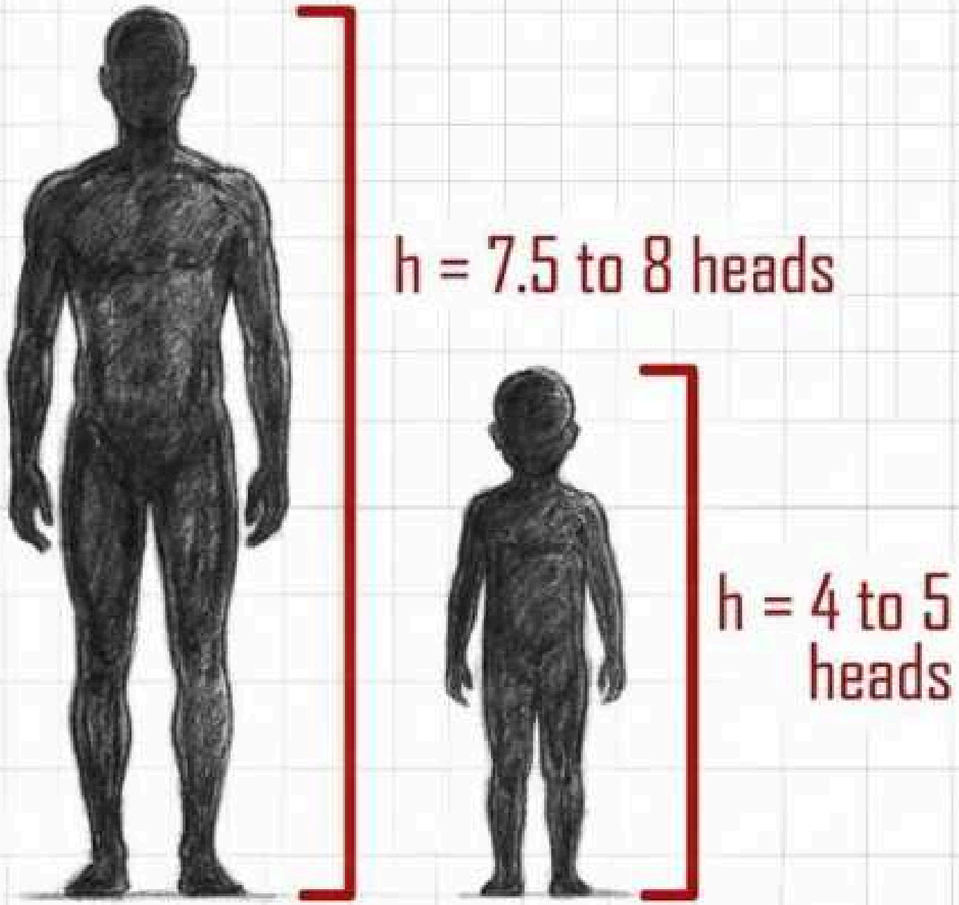
3 to 4 large value masses make a drawing read clearly from across a room.

The Proportional Canon

¶ 6.7

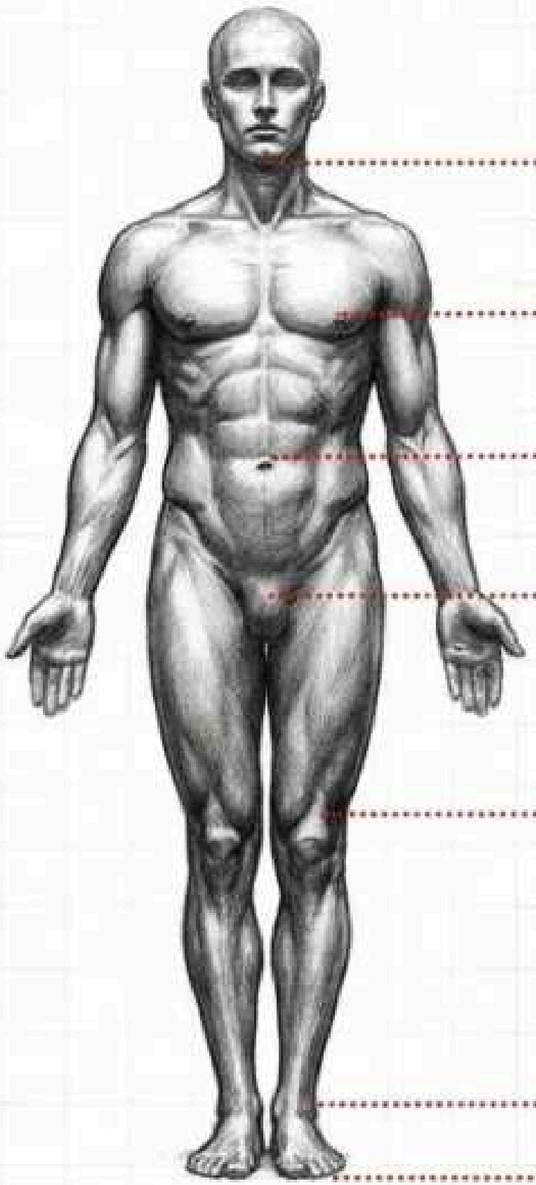


The Canon of Vitruvius: Classical ideals stretch the figure to 8 heads.



Real people vary. Use numbers as a guide, not a rigid rule.

The 7.5 Head Map



1: Chin

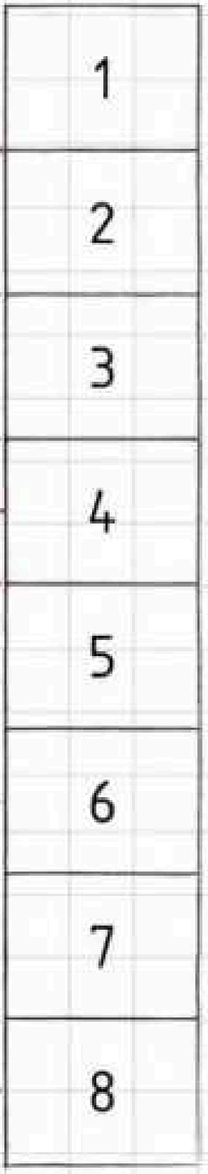
2: Nipples

3: Navel

3.75: Crotch (Center of the body)

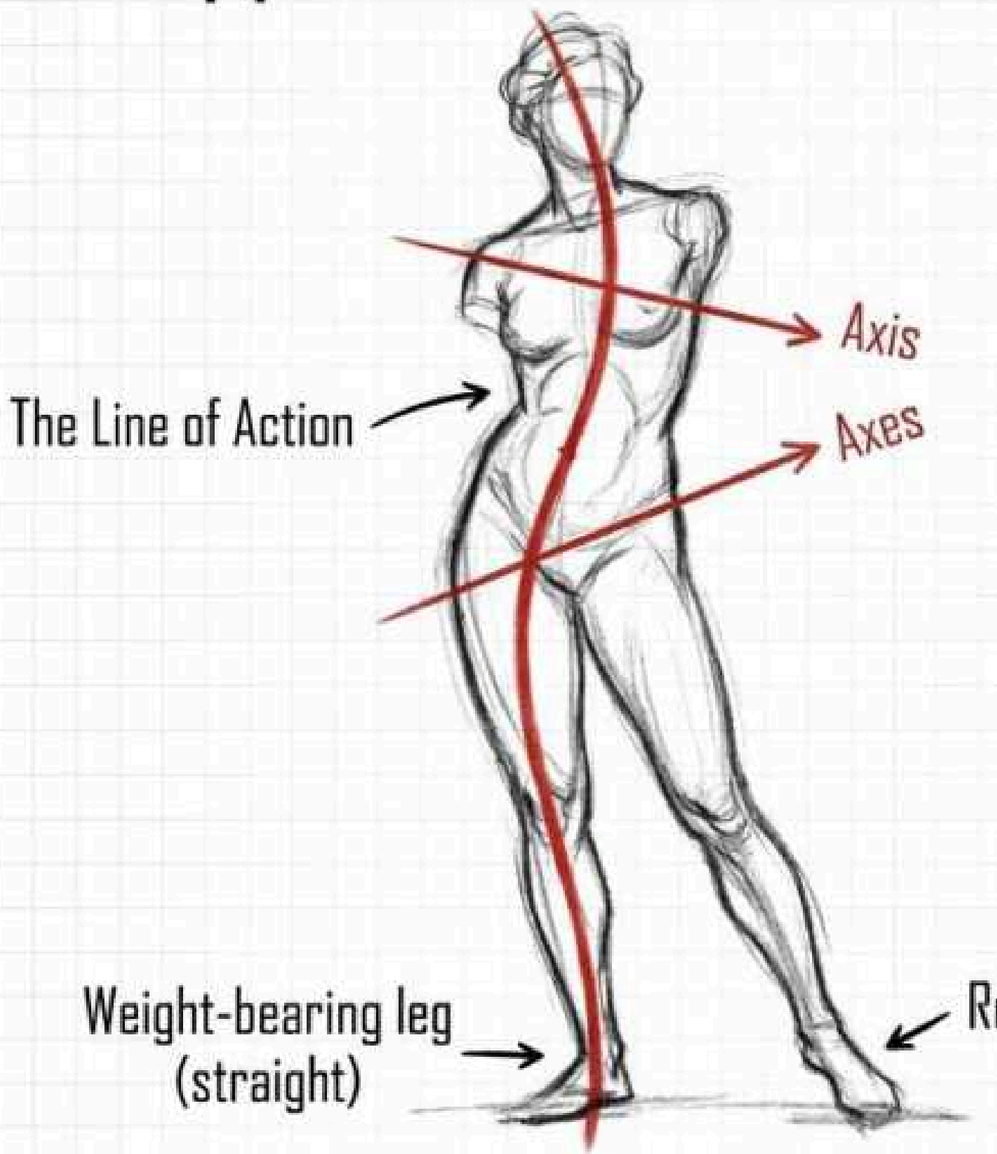
5.5: Knees

7.5: Feet



Gesture and Contrapposto

¶ 6.9

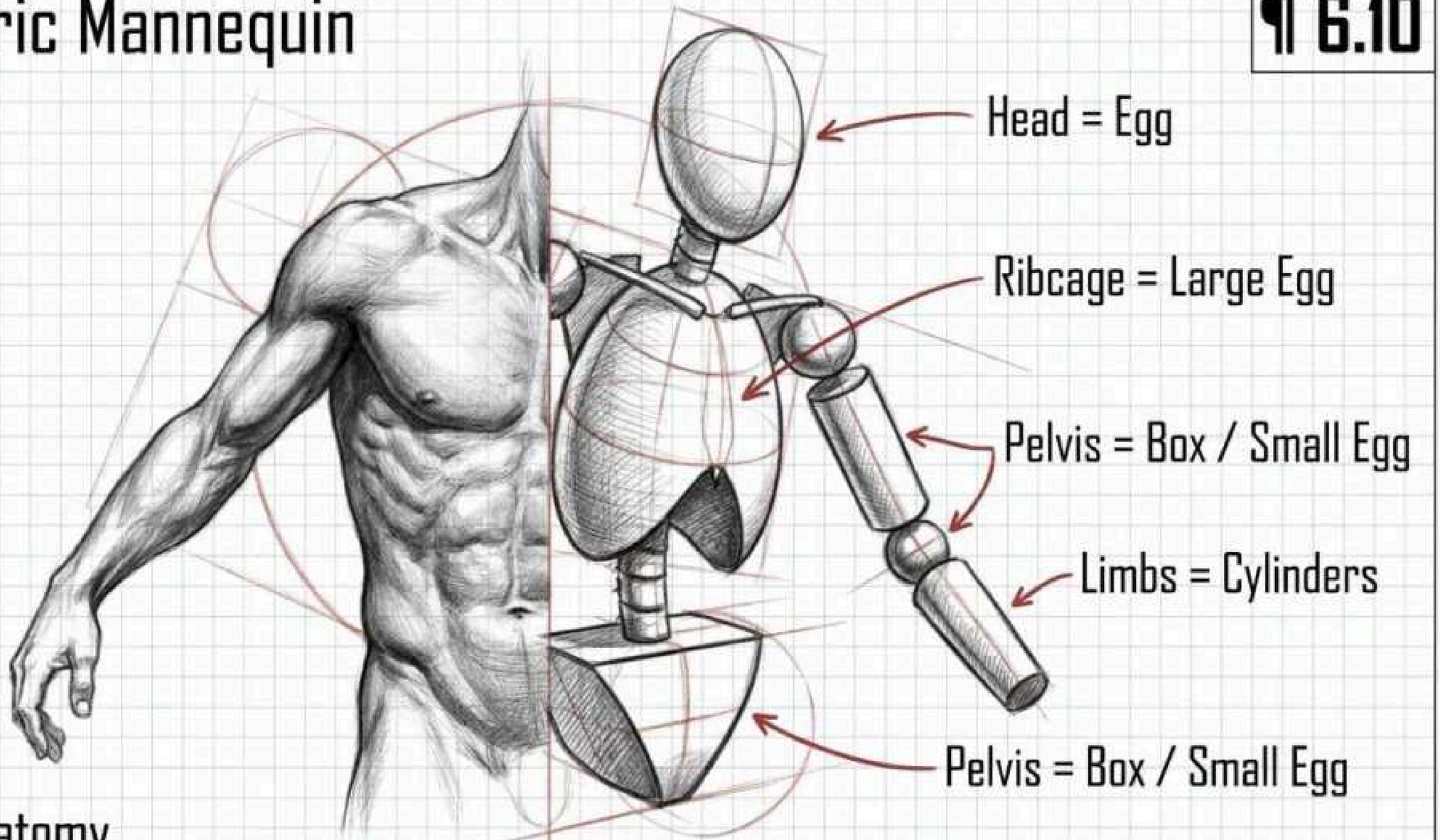


Contrapposto:
The counterpoise that
gives a standing figure life.

Always begin with 5-minute gesture poses before longer studies.

The Geometric Mannequin

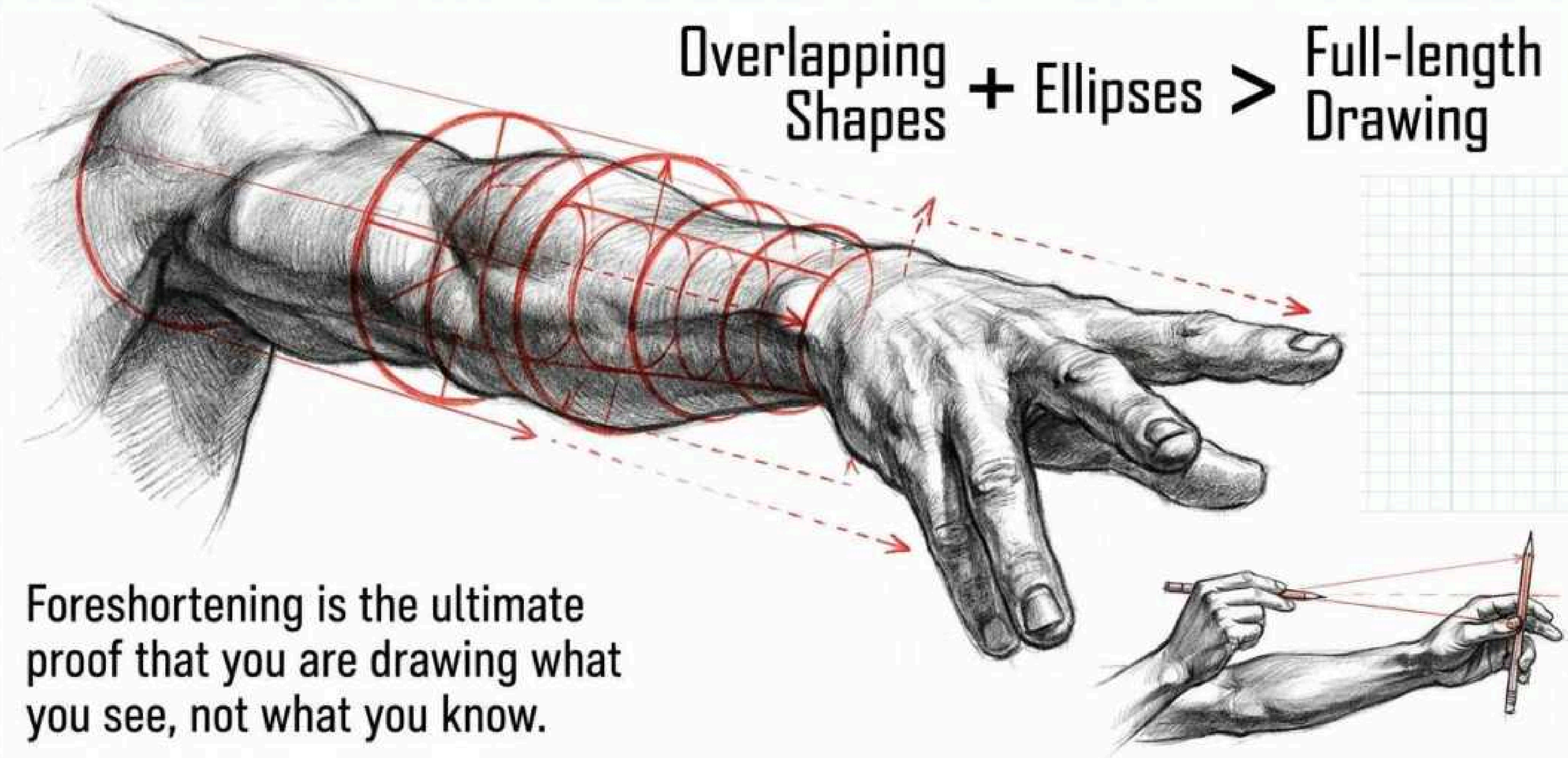
¶ 6.10



Pose before anatomy.
Build the habit through repetition.

The Mathematics of Foreshortening

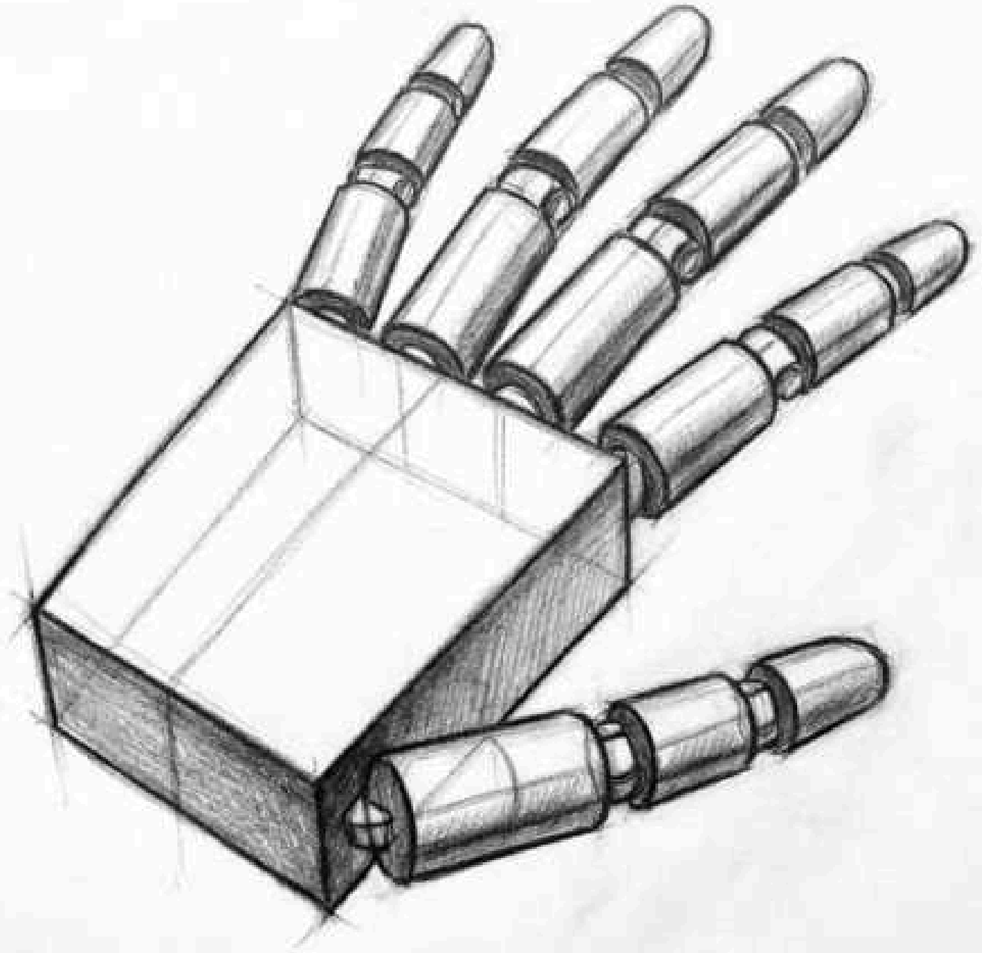
¶ 6.11



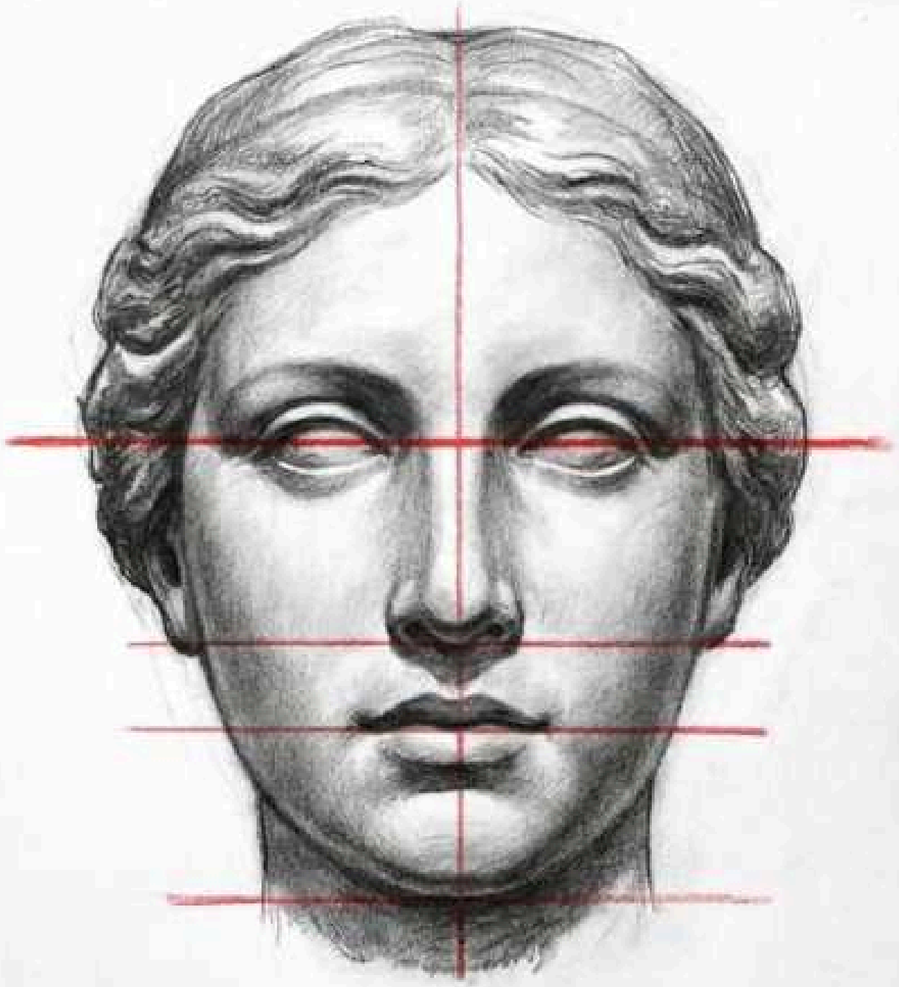
Foreshortening is the ultimate proof that you are drawing what you see, not what you know.

Constructing Hands and Faces

¶ 6.12



Treat the hand as a box. Draw your own—it is your always-available model.

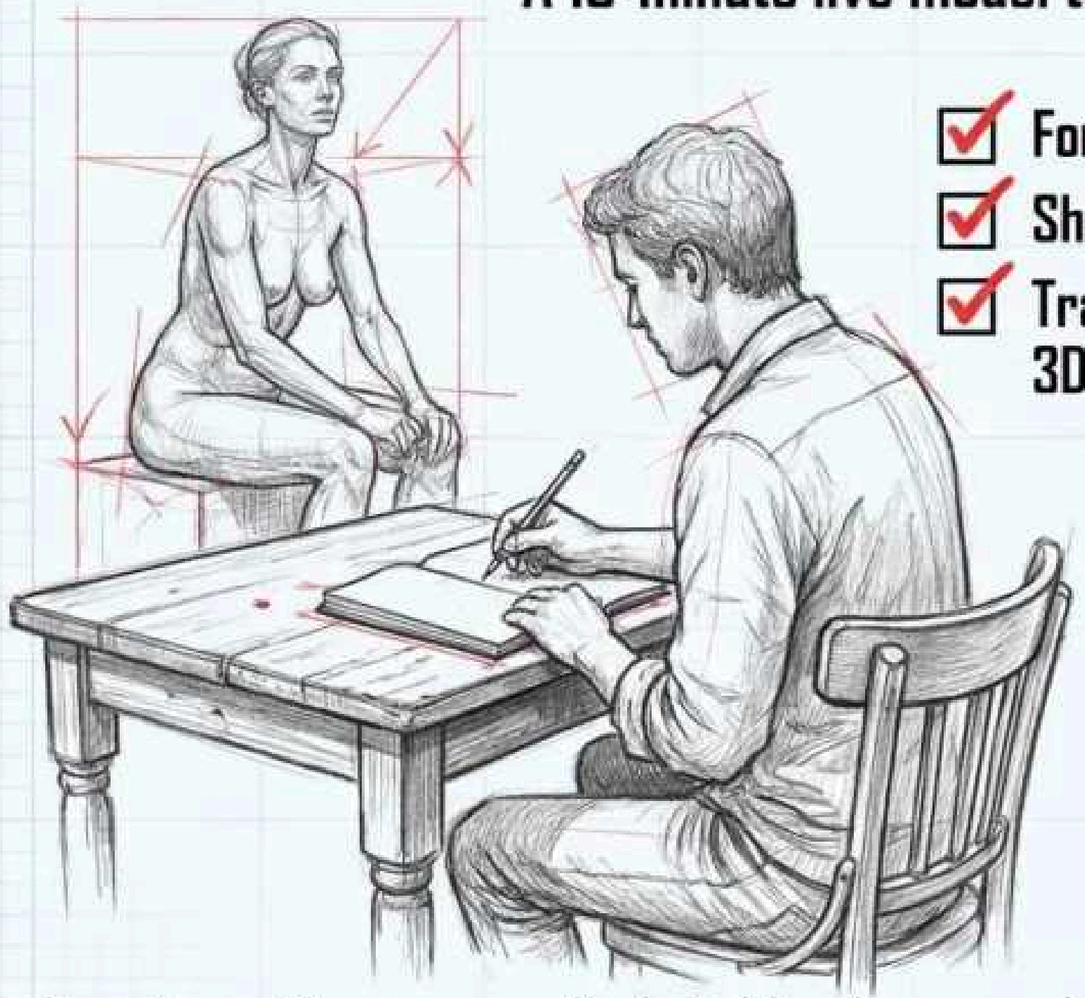


Eyes halfway down. Nose and mouth in the lower half.

Learning from Life

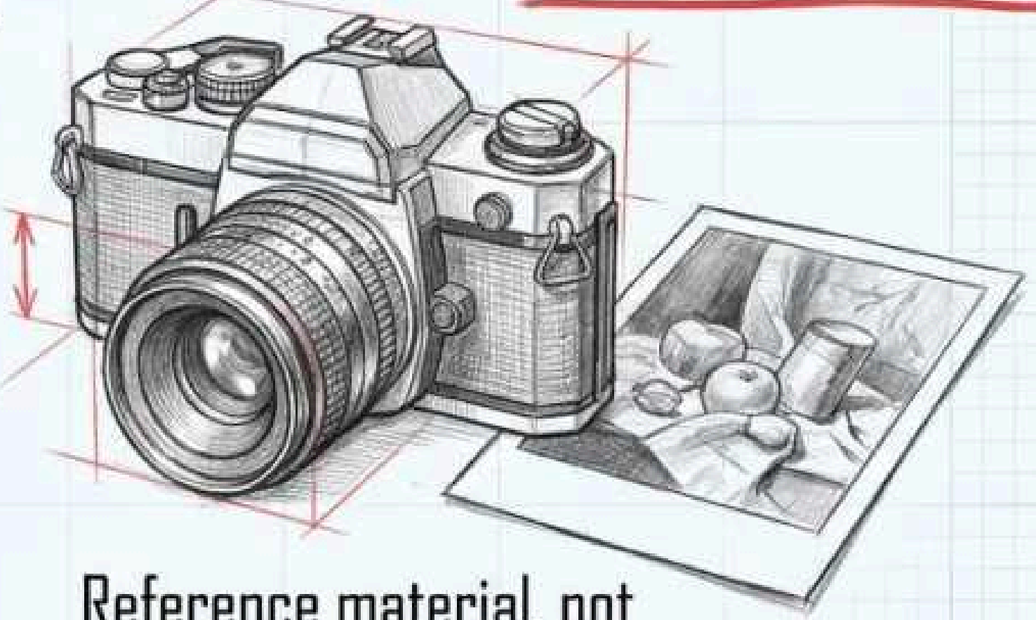
¶ 6.13

A 10-minute live model teaches more than hours copying a photograph.



- ☑ Forces choices
- ☑ Short poses
- ☑ Translating 3D to 2D

If using photos, shoot them yourself. Avoid copyright traps.

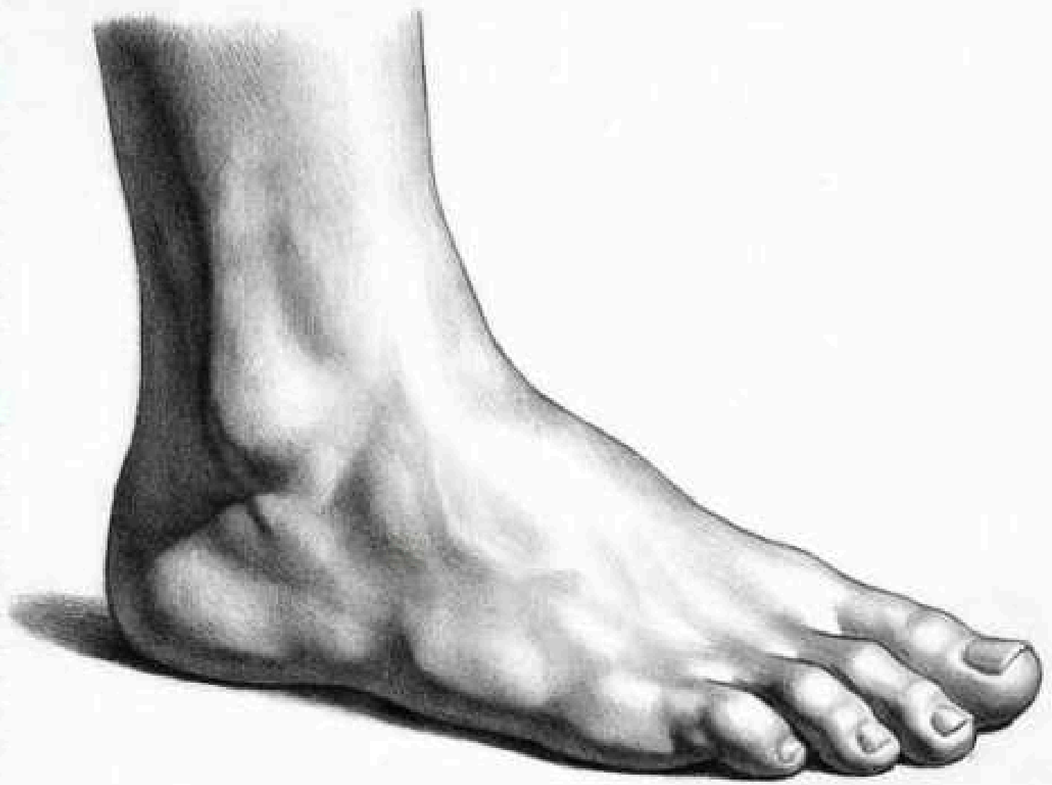


Reference material, not a substitute for life.

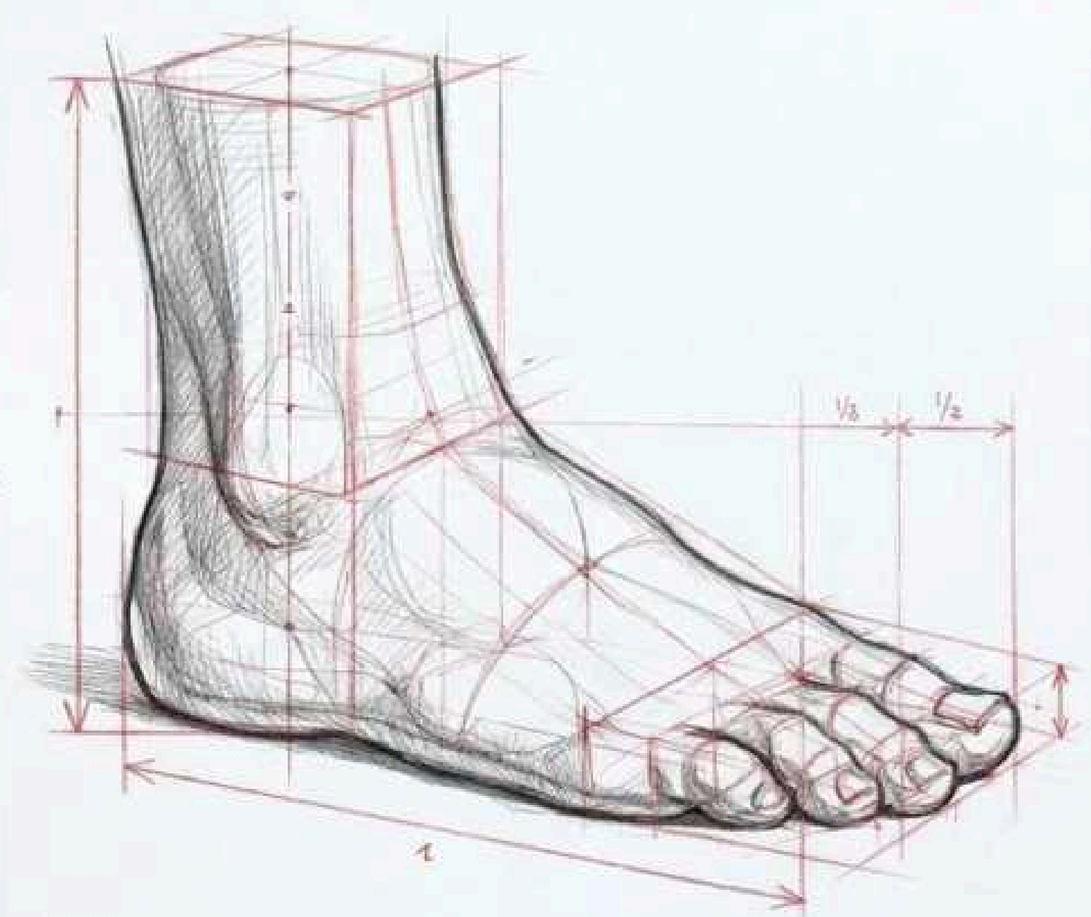
Action Item: Carry a small sketchbook everywhere.

The Master Study

¶ 6.14



The Bargue Drawing Course: Used by students (and Van Gogh) to train the eye.



An honest way to learn: Note every single decision the artist made.

The Daily Habit

¶ 6.15



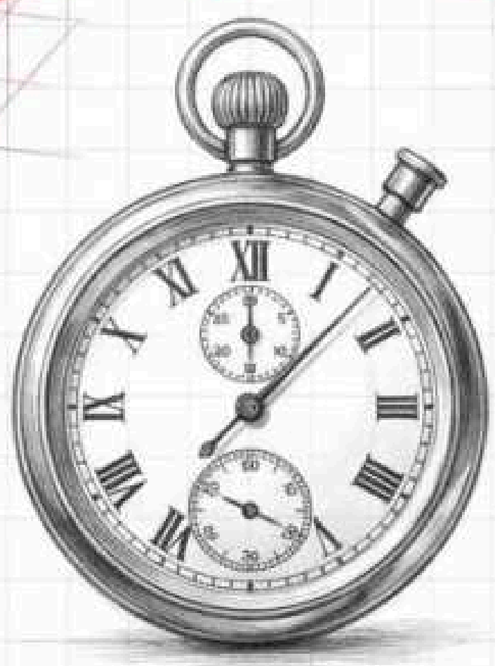
"Never let a day pass without drawing something."
– Cennino Cennini (c. 1400)

20 Minutes Daily. Quantity builds skill; save judgment for later.

The Deliberate Practice Loop

¶ 6.16

Constraints create focus.



Step 1
Warm-up
(2-minute gesture sketches)

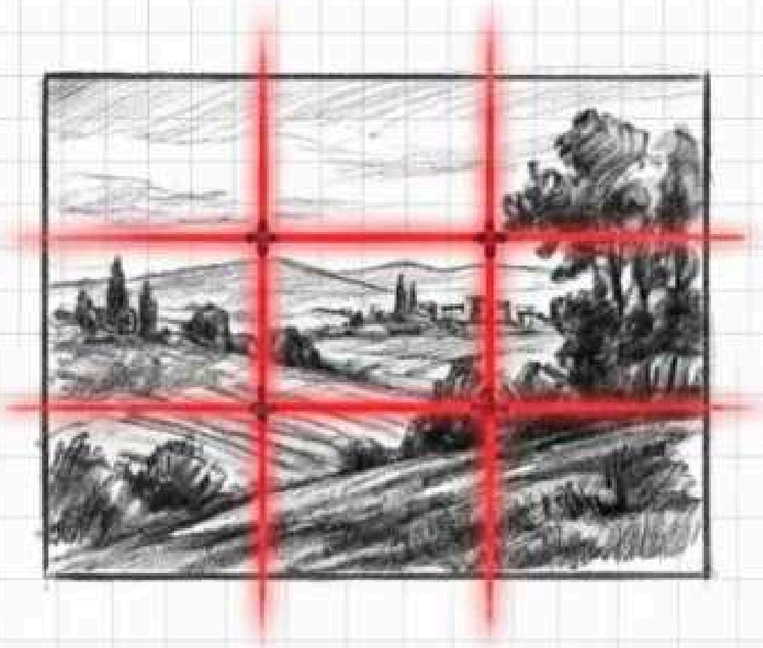
Step 2
Measured Drawing
(Focus on ONE constraint—e.g., ellipses or cast shadows. Set a timer)

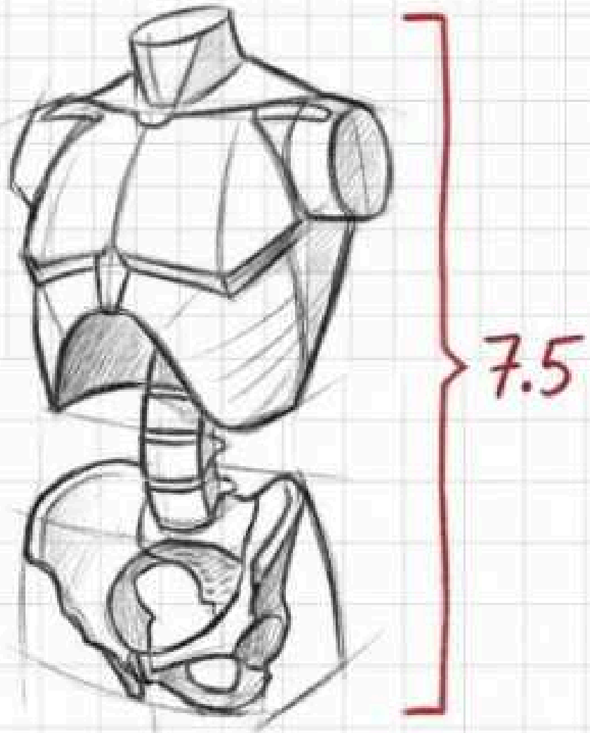
Step 3
Reflection
(Write down 1 win, 1 fix)

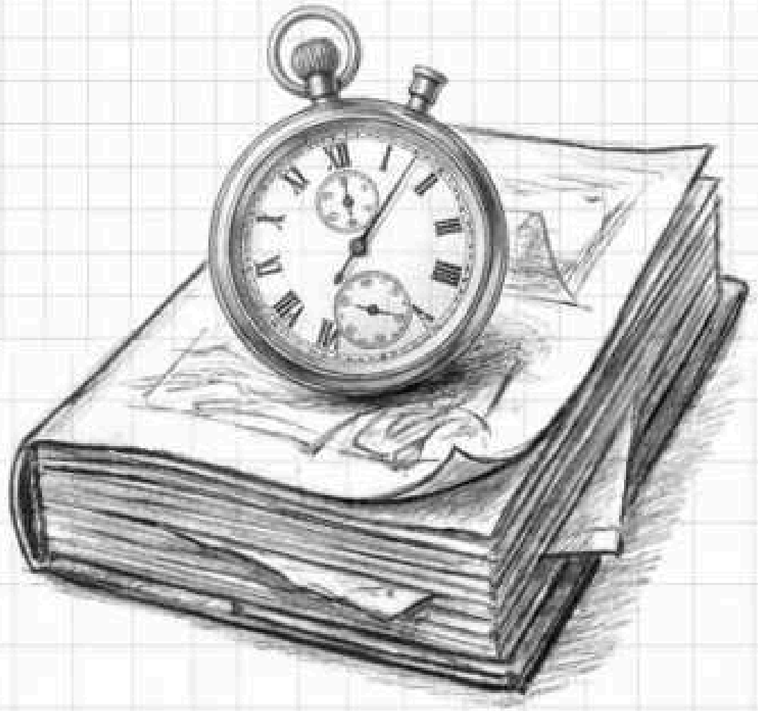
Keep the sketchbook: Over months, it becomes the clearest physical evidence of your progress.

Lecture 6 Synthesis

¶ 6.17







Plan the Format.

- Organize with value.

Construct the Form.

- Use solids for anatomy.

Practice Deliberately.

- Judge yourself only against your earlier work.

Completion & Next Steps

¶ 6.18



Drawing Fundamentals Complete.

You now know how to see, measure, shade, build form, and place it in space.

Call to Action:
Take the quizzes, exam, and tripos.
Draw every day.

Questions or feedback: garyanderson@mail.grokbot.com | X: @garyanderson