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Beginner watercolor drawing

Figure drawing is a fundamental skill for artists, but one of the hardest to truly master. In this article, I explain my personal process and offer some advice to help you improve your figure drawings.On this page we'll walk through how to draw a female figure. Jump to page 2 for a step by step guide to drawing male figures, or page 3 for a closer look at gesture drawing.Although having knowledge of the proportions of a human figure is important, bear in mind that these are only a guide. Trying to shoehorn every person you draw into an eight-head-high ideal is a shortcut to uninspiring figure drawing.To achieve style we need to work with gesture, the spirit of the pose, the fluid nature in line. If we take gesture too far, though, our drawing will look wobbly. To counter that we need to also work with a solid structure, but too much structure can make for a stiff drawing. Therein lies the great balancing act of figure drawing that we will explore here.For a more basic guide, see how to draw a person. Above you can watch one of my-depth video tutorials where I explore how to get the most from references. For step-by-step written instructions on how to draw a female figure, read the tutorial below.After more drawing tips? Take a look at our guide to how to draw pretty much anything, or check out our essential advice on foreshortening in art. Alternatively, get yourself kitted out with the best pencils around.With that out of the way, let's get started on how to draw the female figure...Click the icon in the top right of each image to enlarge it.01. Start with simple shapesFirst establish your basic proportions Start with your attention level set to high. I use a small, two-finger wide piece of charcoal for my initial sketch. Draw the basic proportions, making any adjustments required – especially if you're working from a photo.02. Add more sophisticated linesUse a gestural grip for this stage Starting your figure drawing with basic shapes makes it easier to draw more sophisticated lines on top. Here, I've drawn the face using small shapes inside a big shape. This is two of my disciplines in action at once: big to small; and simple to sophisticated.Note the gestural grip in action. Drawing with our gestural hand enables us to use the rhythm of our arm rather than our stiff wrist to make our marks. It gives us the freedom to draw long fluid lines on the paper (for more advice, see this article on how to hold a pencil correctly).03. Exaggerate the curvesYou don't need to copy exactly what you see I'm constantly analysing the photo reference. On closer inspection, what appears to be a foot is actually the ankle twisting. I decide to draw the classic shape of a foot to make the drawing more clear. I'm improving what I observe in the photo in terms of artistic mark-making. Note how many times I exaggerate the curves to make the drawing more lively.04. Lay in broad tones in charcoalTime to add some depth At this stage I step back from the art to check the drawing has solid structure. I lay in broad tones with my charcoal. Remember, our goal here is to interpret the reference. If we gauge success on how close we copy, we'll end up with a stiff drawing that looks like a distorted photo.05. Blend tone into formBlending the drawing means you can adjust anything you want to Up until now I've juggled gesture with structure. It's an okay drawing, but nothing stylish. This is the journeyman stage, from which we can stamp our own style. Using tissue, I blend tone into form, this also fades the drawing and gives me a second chance to draw better on top.06. Add more tonal gesturesMake some final tweaks to your figure drawing Here I'm making small structural adjustments and adding more tonal gestures. This second time around goes quickly – just a matter of minutes, which is a small investment for an hour-long drawing. From this point onwards, my quest is to further explore style in the drawing.07. Remember, if it looks wrong, it is wrong!Sometimes parts that are anatomically accurate will look incorrect I use shadows to push the gesture, but omit the shadow of the xiphoid process (the small bone under the pointed arch of the ribcage). It looks odd here. Even though it's correct, it violates one of my art laws: If it looks wrong, it's wrong, even if it's right!08. Use a paper stump for adjustmentsPush charcoal around rather than adding more Using a paper stump, I push around the charcoal that's already on the paper rather than lay more charcoal down. This keeps the drawing light and fresh. I'm also mindful to always be drawing even when blending. I use a sheet of paper to prevent me smudging the drawing.Struggling with to make the medium work for you? Check out our ten expert tips for charcoal drawing.09. Create highlights with an eraserThink of the eraser as another drawing tool I 'draw' highlights with a kneadable eraser. I think of the eraser as a drawing tool rather than a correction tool. Slowly does it, especially in the early stages. Drawing fast is a false economy – if we rush a drawing then we inevitably spend most of our time fixing mistakes.10. Take a breakTaking a break means you'll spot inaccuracies more easily I take a short coffee break away from the drawing and come back with a fresh eye. A break helps me see the bugbears more clearly when I return. I see the breasts are too close in shape while the lower rib cage is too smooth. I make minor changes to both bugbears and am ready for the big finish.11. Add in a backgroundA chamois leather is useful for creating abstract marks I lay down a large swath of charcoal, then smudge it with a chamois leather cloth, playing with textures as I go. I learned of the chamois from Glenn Vilppu a few years back and it's been part of my drawing arsenal ever since. Here I use it for abstract marks to ground the figure and add style.12. Introduce the elements of fantasyThe figure here is reimagined as a vampire For my image, I imagined a vampire in a bloodlust trance. With large charcoal sticks I draw abstract shapes then pencil in the breast plates and jewellery using hard erasers for highlights.Next page: How to draw a male figure Instructables is a community for people who like to make things. Come explore, share, and make your next project with us!Instructables is a community for people who like to make things. Come explore, share, and make your next project with us!Instructables is a community for people who like to make things. Come explore, share, and make your next project with us!Whether you are learning to draw by yourself or guiding beginner students through art lessons, the strategies are similar. It's important to balance fun, creative activities with technique-building exercises while avoiding boredom so that skills can develop. Learning something new is both rewarding and frustrating. All too often, though, students try to run before they can walk. Traditionally, teaching art emphasized self-expression and avoided skill building for fear of cramping creativity. However, basic skills can be enjoyable to work on, and having strong skills allows students to more fully express their original ideas. Have you ever been told that you're holding your pencil the wrong way? Or that there is only one right way to hold a pencil for drawing? Chances are that this well-intentioned advice wasn't quite right. There is no single right way to hold a pencil, and whatever works for you is probably the best choice. Try experimenting with various grips, as different methods will produce different effects and you may find some more comfortable than others. miijanajovic/Getty Images Whether you've never drawn before or have just bought a new pencil or pen, the way to find out what each drawing instrument can do is to simply begin making marks on paper. This is known as mark-making. Call it scribbling, doodling, or whatever you want—the point of this exercise is to explore your new medium. Practice without the pressure of creating a finished drawing and it's an excellent way to gain confidence and get to know your materials. Creating abstract shapes with a simple piece of wire is a great exercise for beginners of all ages. There is no pressure of having to make it look like something. Instead, this is a simple practice in following a line in space and drawing it on paper. The exercise also teaches hand-eye coordination. You will need about 15 to 30 minutes, a piece of wire—such as an old coat hanger—and pliers, sketch paper, and a pen or pencil. First, bend the wire into any random, three-dimensional shape you like. Include spirals, odd curves, and irregular squiggles. Turn the wire around and look at it from different angles, then decide which one you want to draw. Don't try to make your drawing look realistic. Just think of it as a line in space. Your drawing can be completely flat, with no perspective. You can also use line weight to create a sense of depth, by pressing harder to get a stronger line as the wire comes toward you. Don't worry about shadows or highlights. All you are interested in is the shape of the wire. Keep your line continuous and relaxed. Don't use short, uncertain strokes. A flowing line that isn't perfect is better than many perfectly placed but tentative lines. Remember, this is an exercise, so it doesn't matter what the final result looks like. Take your time and observe carefully. You are training your mind and hand to work together. Blind contour drawing, where you can't look at the paper while drawing, is a classic exercise that develops your eye-hand connection. Advanced students can also improve their observation skills by doing blind contour drawing as a warmup. pseudodaemon/Getty Images A pure contour drawing is basically an outline drawing. This is the simplest form of drawing, as the line describes the visible edges of an object. Many artists enjoy using a pure line in their drawings, and clean contour drawing is an essential skill for cartoonists. In drawing, a cross contour is a line that runs across the form of a shape, something like the contours on a map. Sometimes these lines are drawn directly, but more often an artist will use the idea of a cross contour to guide their shading and hatching. The contour is implied by the direction of shading and makes hatching meaningful rather than random. Ultimately, this helps the viewer see an image as three-dimensional rather than flat. beginner watercolor drawing scenery easy. easy beginner watercolor drawings. beginner watercolor pencil drawings

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