

Head Drawing Do's & Don'ts

8 guidelines for drawing heads (and figures!)

1 Slow Down

- ✓ Let each decision earn its place and place lines with intention.
- ✗ Race to finish. Speed hides mistakes until it's too late to fix them.

2 Step Back Often

- ✓ Walk away from the easel every few minutes.
- ✗ Stay super close. Up close, every error looks fine.

3 Form Before Features

- ✓ Build the structure first: the planes, the masses, the big light and shadow.
- ✗ Start with the eyes, nose, or mouth. Without form, the features will look flat.

4 Measure and Compare

- ✓ Check every angle against the ones around it.
- ✗ Trust your assumption on how big or where something "should" be.

5 Establish the Big Shapes First

- ✓ Squint, find the major shadow shape, and keep it unified before rendering.
- ✗ Chase small details while the big value pattern is still unresolved.

6 Work General to Specific

- ✓ Block in the whole before refining any one part.
- ✗ Finish one area to 100% while the rest is blank.

7 Use Lines to Locate Features

- ✓ Extend your edges and angles out into space to check alignment.
- ✗ Eyeball placement and hope it's right.

8 Less is More

- ✓ Capture the impression of what you see. Say more with less.
- ✗ Copy every pore, hair, and detail. You don't need to make a photocopy.