

Perceptual skills of drawing and strategies to force a cognitive shift:

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- 1) The perception of edges (the “shared” edges of contour drawing)
- 2) The perception of space (in drawing called “negative spaces”)
- 3) The perception of relationships (known as perspective and proportion)
- 4) The perception of light and shadows (often called “shading”)
- 5) The perception of the whole (the gestalt, the “thingness” of the thing)

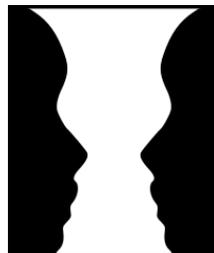
The perception of edges:

In drawing, the term *edge* has a different meaning from an ordinary definition.

In drawing, an edge is where two things come together and the line that depicts the shared edge is called a *contour line*.

(conceptually illustrated in the Vase/Faces image)

Rubin's vase is a famous set of ambiguous or by-stable two-dimensional forms
Developed around 1915 by the Danish psychologist Edgar Rubin.



imagine that you are touching the edge of a form as you draw it – thus activating the sense of touch along with the sense of sight. (This will help you to enhance your focus on a the particular edge and distract you from symbolic drawing.)

Drawing without looking. You will probably at first not enjoy this exercise, but for reasons that are still unclear, Drawing without looking or also known as **Pure Contour Drawing** is one of the key exercises in learning to draw. (It has been proven that students who do persevere with this exercise do progress much faster)

The perception of space:

Two terms traditionally used in art *negative space* and *positive forms*.
In drawing, *negative spaces* are real.

The edges of the *positive forms* share edges with the *negative space*.
(Analogy: imagine that you are watching a Bugs Bunny cartoon. Imagine that Bugs Bunny is running at top speed down a long hallway, at the end of the hallway is a closed door. He smashes through the door, leaving a Bugs Bunny – shape in the door. What is left of the door is a negative space. The hole in the door is-was-the positive form (Bugs Bunny) now gone. The point of the analogy is that negative spaces in drawing are as important and just as solid as the positive forms) For the person learning to draw, they are perhaps more important, because negative spaces make drawing difficult things easy.

The perception of relationships:

Formal perspective: key concepts:

A) Point of view:

The *point of view* is fixed, i.e. ideally with one eye intermittently closed the artist does not lean to one side or the other.

B) The picture plane:

Closing one eye and looking through transparent plane the artist sees the scene flattened.

C) The horizon Line:

The thing to remember is: *Horizon lines are always at your eye level.*

D) Vanishing Point:

The Vanishing point, is the *artist's Point of View fixed on the Horizon Line.*

E) Converging Linens:

For a *One point perspective drawing*, with a single Vanishing Point on the Horizon Line – parallel edges that are parallel to the ground appear to converge at that point on the Horizon Line.

Sighting proportions:

Use pencil as a sighting devise.

Raise your arm and extend it at full arm's length , with your elbow locked.

The perception of light and shadows:

In pencil drawing, the lightest possible light is the white of the paper.

Notice the intensity, shape and patterns of shadows.

Try shading into continuous tone.

The perception of the whole:

In drawing, always believe what you see!