

Exercise walk-through

3.5

# Atmospheric Perspective

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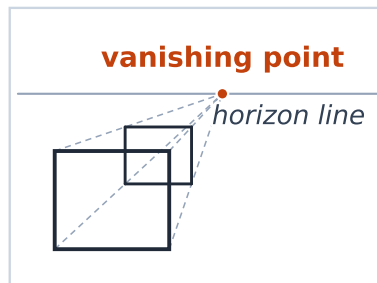
AP Drawing

# Linear perspective – the picture as a window

The **horizon line** is the viewer's **eye level**: we look **down** on everything below it and **up** at everything above it.

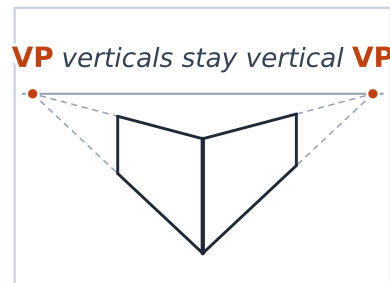
Lines parallel to the picture surface **stay true**; lines going **into** the scene converge to a **vanishing point**.

**One-point perspective**



one-point: receding parallels meet at a VP · verticals stay vertical

**Two-point perspective**



*one-point (left) and two-point (right)*

Perspective **plus overlap** is depth doubled: near edges cover far edges.

## One, two, and three points

- **One-point** – rooms and streets **straight-on**
- **Two-point perspective** – subject **turned**; left and right points
- **Three-point perspective** – adds a **vertical** point (tower from below)

Keep two points **far apart** – too close creates a fisheye. Boxes scaffold everything.



*One-point perspective: depth lines aim at one vanishing point*

# Foreshortening

**Foreshortening** is perspective applied to a single form pointing **toward you** – lengths compress dramatically.

- a pointing arm may appear **one-third** of its true length
- draw the **apparent** shape, not the length you **know**
- **overlap** is the key signal: hand over forearm, forearm over upper arm
- think in **cross-sections** – rings around the form

Memory lies, observation tells the truth – measure foreshortened lengths by sighting.

The classic practice piece: a figure lying down, drawn **feet-first**, like Mantegna's *Dead Christ*. One convincing foreshortened limb tells scorers you draw what you **see**.

# Perspective as scaffolding, and depth without lines

## dividing receding space

equal spaces look smaller as they recede – use diagonals to divide them evenly

## the box

boxes drawn in perspective become scaffolding for everything: buildings, books, vehicles, even heads

## shadows and reflections

obey the same perspective system as the objects that cast them

## atmospheric perspective

distant things lose contrast, warm colour and edge definition

## detail density

a depth cue by itself – render the near leaf, suggest the far tree

## overlap

the strongest depth cue of all, and the cheapest

Build the box first and draw the object inside it. Almost every foreshortening problem is easier once the enclosing box is correct.

## Atmospheric perspective – depth without lines

Air scatters light, so contrast **fades with distance**. The far mountain is a pale, flat shape. **Foreground**: darkest darks, **sharpest** edges.

**Background**: a **narrow** value range, soft edges.

Save full black and white for the **foreground** – distance lives in middle greys.



*Atmospheric haze: contrast and detail fade with distance*

## Exercises 2.1·2.2

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**2.1** With distance, forms appear lighter, softer, and

[1]

☐

**A** more detailed

**B** less detailed

**C** darker

**D** sharper

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**2.2** Where should full black and full white be saved, and why?

[2]

## Exercises 2.1·2.2

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**2.1** With distance, forms appear lighter, softer, and

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**A** more detailed

**B** less detailed

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**2.1 B**

- air scatters light and eats detail

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**2.2** Where should full black and full white be saved, and why?

[2]

**2.2**

- the foreground; reserving strongest contrast for the front pushes it forward and keeps distance pale

## Exercise 2.3

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**2.3** How does detail density work as a depth cue?

[1]

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### 3 Studio & portfolio tasks

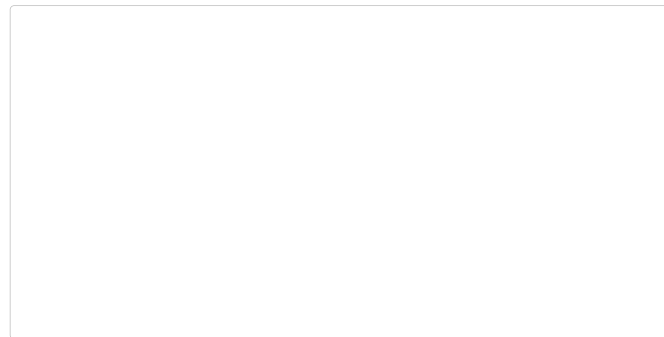
**3.1** Make a **landscape depth study** using atmospheric perspective.

(a) Organise the scene into foreground, middle, and background bands.

[3]

(b) Fade contrast, edges, and detail with distance.

[2]



**3.2**

(i) Combine atmospheric with **linear** perspective in one small sketch.

[2]

## Exercise 2.3

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2.3 How does detail density work as a depth cue?

[1]

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### 3 Studio & portfolio tasks

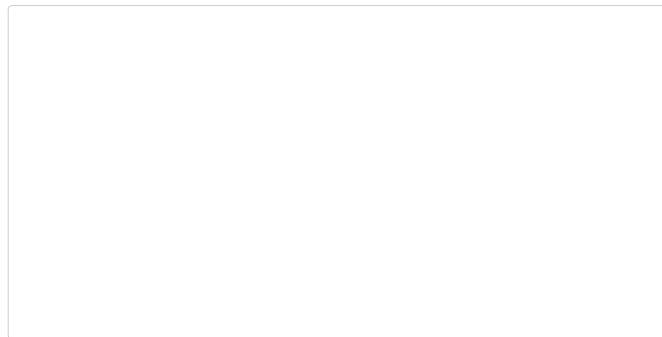
3.1 Make a **landscape depth study** using atmospheric perspective.

(a) Organise the scene into foreground, middle, and background bands.

[3]

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[2]



3.2

() Combine atmospheric with **linear** perspective in one small sketch.

[2]

2.3

- more detail reads as nearer, less detail as further away

3.1

- three readable depth bands; foreground darkest/sharpest; background pale and soft;

Full solution on next slide

## Full solution 2.3

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### 2.3

- more detail reads as nearer, less detail as further away

### 3.1

- three readable depth bands; foreground darkest/sharpest; background pale and soft; a strong sense of deep space

### 3.2

- converging lines set the space; value/edge fading deepens it