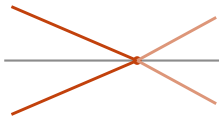


Space, Depth, and Proportion

AP Drawing ■ Topic 3

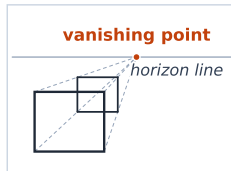
AP Drawing



What we will cover

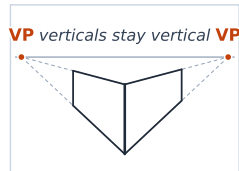
- 1 Measuring & sighting
- 2 One-point perspective
- 3 Two- & three-point
- 4 Foreshortening
- 5 Atmospheric perspective
- 6 Composition
- 7 Figure & portrait

One-point perspective



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

Two-point perspective





Measuring and sighting

Sighting measures the subject with your pencil at arm's length – the **survival skill** of observational drawing.

- locked elbow, one eye closed: the pencil is a **ruler and a protractor**
- pick **one unit** (a head, a cup) and measure everything in it – **comparative measurement**
- a **plumb line** shows which landmarks sit exactly above each other

Draw the **envelope** first – the big simple shape containing the whole subject – then **divide** it.

Check angles by rotating the pencil to match an edge, then carrying that angle to the paper.

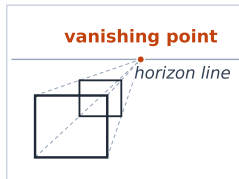


Linear perspective – the picture as a window

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

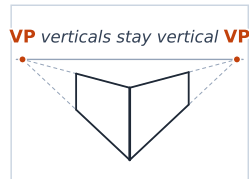
Lines parallel to the picture surface **stay true**; lines going **into** the scene converge to a **vanishing point**.

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



Composition and the picture plane

Composition is a **named** drawing skill – and the **first thing a scorer sees**.

- what you **crop out** is as expressive as what you keep
- the **rule of thirds** beats dead centre
- design the **negative space** : the empty shapes are shapes you **drew**
- keep the **figure-ground** relationship **readable**

Test crops with a **viewfinder** (or a phone) **before** committing to the page.

Change the **viewpoint** : eye level is neutral – low or high angles make ordinary subjects **fresh**.

Drawing the figure and portrait

The figure combines **every** drawing skill at once: **proportion** , gesture, form and likeness.

The adult figure is about **7.5 heads** tall, and the body's halfway point is near the **hip**, not the waist.

Drawing the figure, and the head

start with gesture

and the **big masses** – ribcage, pelvis, skull

features come later

features and fingers come last, once the masses are placed and in proportion

why that order

a beautifully drawn eye in the wrong place cannot be rescued; a well-placed mass can always be refined

checking likeness

use **landmark distances**, not memorised rules alone – **every face bends the average**

hands and feet

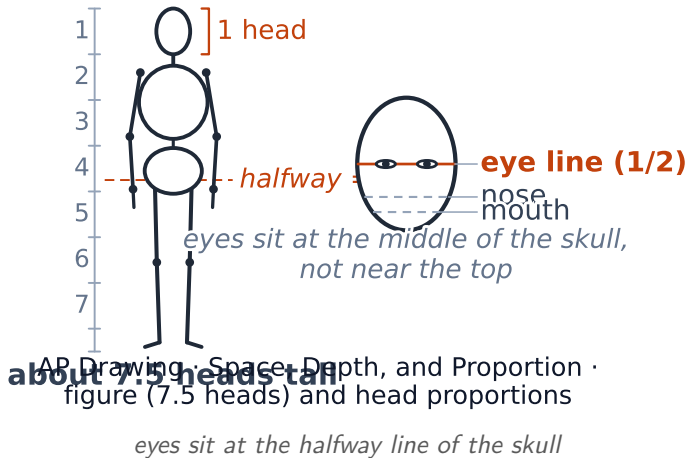
draw them as **simple geometric mittens and wedges first**, then divide into parts

the same logic

large shape first, subdivision second – exactly as with the box in perspective

“Big to small” is one habit applied everywhere in this unit: masses before features, mittens before fingers, boxes before objects.

Drawing the figure and portrait, in detail



The figure combines **every** drawing skill at once: **proportion**, gesture, form and likeness.

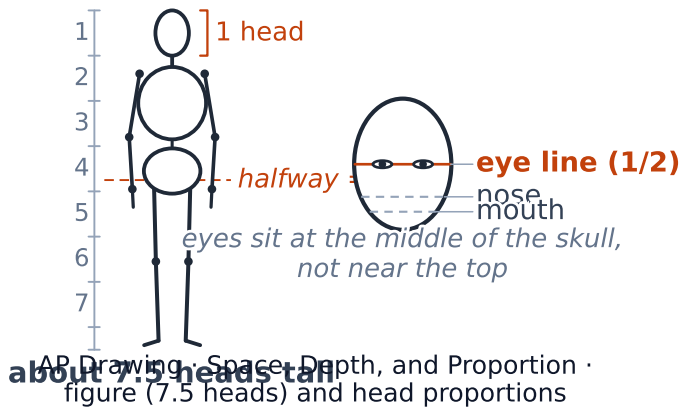
Worked example – checking a perspective drawing

Before you render, run this check

Every depth line must actually **aim at its vanishing point**. Lay a ruler along each one and follow it to the horizon. Perspective errors are the **easiest** mistakes for a scorer to spot – and the cheapest to fix, **before** you spend three hours shading.

Include one strong **observational space** – an interior, a stairwell, a street. It demonstrates the *space* skill **unmistakably**.

Check yourself, in detail



The classic adult figure is about 7.5 heads tall; in the head, the eyes sit at the halfway line

Exam tips

- **Perspective errors are the easiest mistakes for a scorer to spot** – check every depth line actually aims at its vanishing point before you render.
- **Include one strong observational space** (an interior, a stairwell, a street) in the portfolio: it demonstrates the *space* skill the rubric names, unmistakably.
- **Foreshortening is high-value evidence.** One convincing foreshortened limb or object tells scorers you draw what you see, not what you remember.
- **Crop like a designer.** Before starting, test three viewfinder crops and pick the one with the strongest negative space – composition is judged at first glance.
- **Use atmospheric perspective in graphite too**, not just paint: softening far edges with a kneaded eraser is quick and reads as skill.



Topic 3 – key takeaways

1

Sight it

one unit, comparative
measurement, envelope first

2

Perspective

horizon is eye level; every depth
line aims at its point

3

Foreshorten

draw the apparent shape, not the
length you know

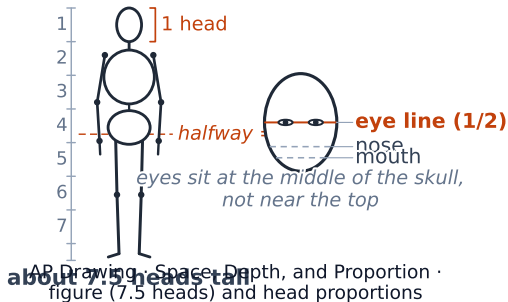
4

Compose

crop like a designer; design the
negative space

Check yourself

- 1 What does the horizon line represent?
- 2 Roughly how many heads tall is the adult figure?
- 3 Where do the eyes sit on the skull?
- 4 Name two ways distance changes a shape's appearance.



Answers 1. the viewer's eye level
4. paler/cooler, softer edges, less detail

2. about 7.5

3. at the halfway line