

Introduction

Welcome to the Drawing Course. I have been teaching drawing, painting and illustration for many years, from beginners to degree level and have learned many, many things from my students. Firstly, everyone genuinely wishes to be better at what they do, creatively.

And that the desire to produce good quality artwork is real and valid. And I have seen, through trial and error, that the quickest way to reach your own personal goals is to start at the beginning. It is not painful, it is not a punishment, and it is joyful and possibly even something of a relief. So when you use the word Beginner, don't think of it as 'dunce' (which too many students do!), think of it as I do, as meaning, Beginning. So (and this is so exciting!), welcome to the Beginning of your Drawing Course.

There is a lot to read, and lots of suggestions to guide you in your thinking, there are exercises to practice and more to send to me for critique. Let your attitude be open. Let your mind be a clean slate.

What you will discover is that drawing may not be what you think, that there is more to it than just the objects in front of you (there is also composition, placement, light and shade, angle, contrasts, and on and on), you will learn to consider for more than you expect at this stage, and feel in a much surer position to continue your learning into painting. I always recommend that students choose a broad path, before specializing in a particular subject – the more you know about all aspects, the better your skills will be, before you go down one particular path over another.

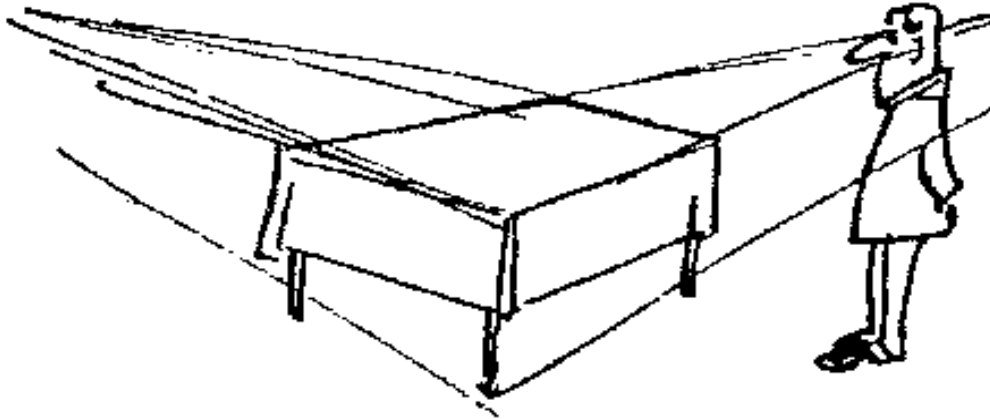
For example, I know of one student who wanted to draw dogs. She became wonderful at drawing dogs, but couldn't do anything else - and was so good at dogs that she was afraid to try anything else. This is a shame, and so easily avoided, by trying dogs and cats and buildings and faces and landscapes and flowers and birds and....everything. Because at some point, she may wish to paint a dog sitting next to a cat and a man, in a garden with a house in the background and a hint of landscape over the fence...

I am delighted to be your tutor and am happy to share this beginning to your journey, enjoy the exercises, ask me lots of questions, please look on the college forum to share your work and see the work of other students - it is so good to share in this way, and students can talk to each other, ask questions and contribute answers, providing you with a network of like-minded people who struggle and strive and achieve - just like you will.

Remember too, the more drawing you do - a little bit every day is perfect - the better your progress. Expect a lot from yourself, don't be unkind but don't be too soft either. Strive. And remember too that the secret to great paintings is the great drawing underneath. Observing all things around you, from the rain drop on the window to the curve of a leaf, really looking and enjoying shapes, will contribute more to your abilities than copying anything ever will. Please work from life, rather than photographs, unless the exercise asks you otherwise. Draw freehand - trust your eye. (I trust your eye!) And finally, remember you are learning, and I don't expect every artwork to be a masterpiece - yet!

Try to imagine where the vanishing points would be and let your lines go out to them in **theory**.

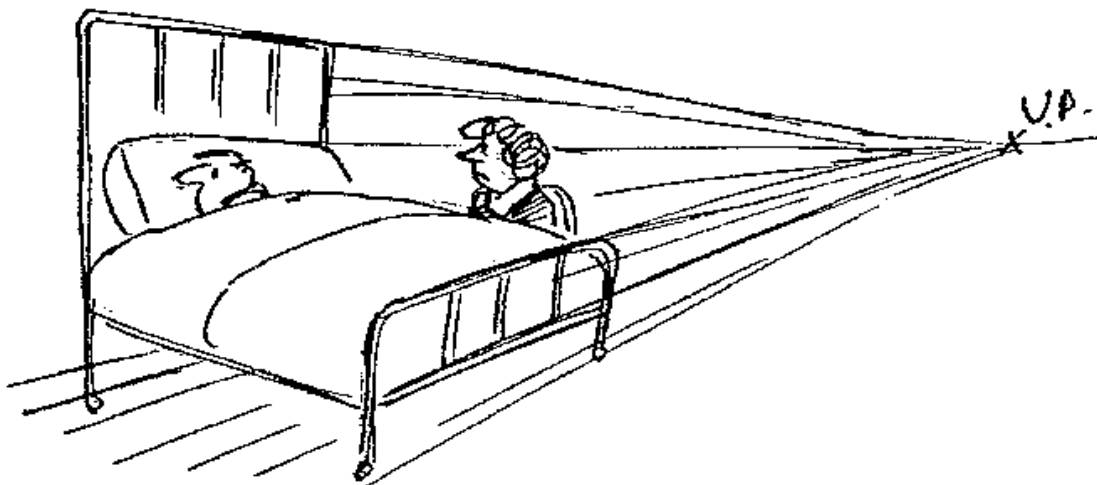
The small cartoon below illustrates this.



Notice the man and his eye level. The vanishing points must be well out of sight.

Are you feeling a little bemused? Do not let it worry you. Try a few exercises imagining a cardboard box above and below your eye level. You will soon get the hang of it.

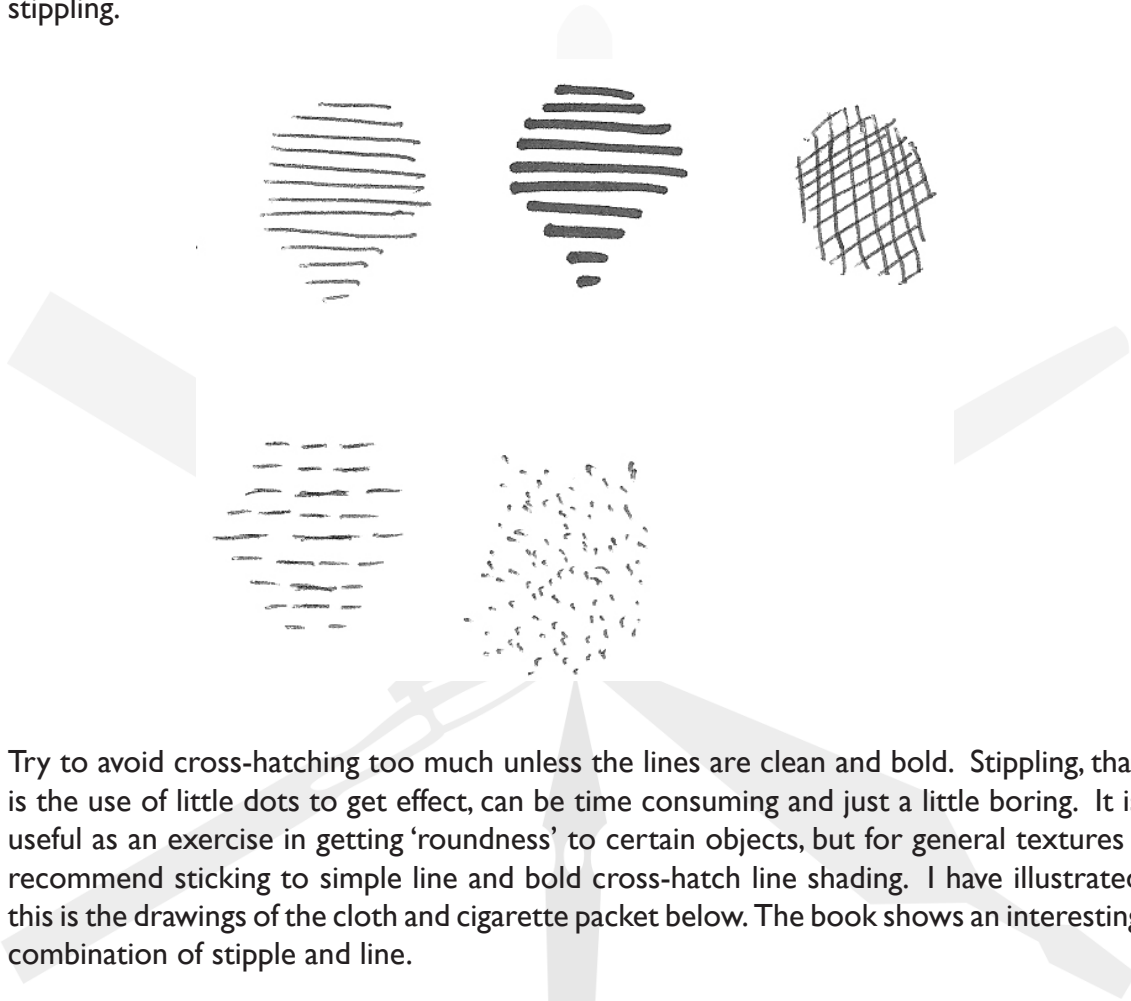
The drawing below shows how the theory of perspective is put into practical use for drawing and painting. The lines of perspective are not of course drawn but are visualised in the mind's eye.



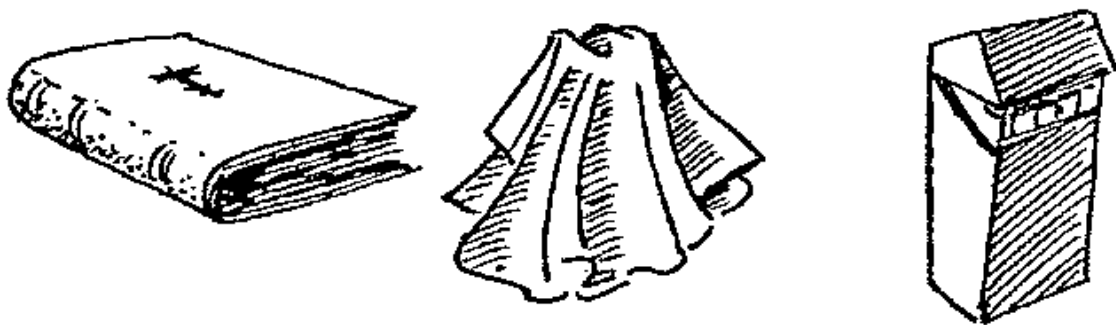
Texture in Line

There are often times when it is necessary to indicate some sort of material texture such as cloth or leather or wood. To do this in drawing it is important to keep such texture as simple as possible.

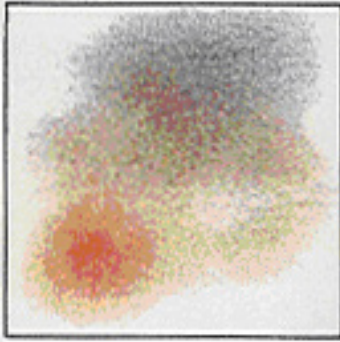
Below I have drawn the main basic 'texture lines' you will need. Straightforward shading lines, first delicate than strong, followed by the use of cross-hatching, broken lines and stippling.



Try to avoid cross-hatching too much unless the lines are clean and bold. Stippling, that is the use of little dots to get effect, can be time consuming and just a little boring. It is useful as an exercise in getting 'roundness' to certain objects, but for general textures I recommend sticking to simple line and bold cross-hatch line shading. I have illustrated this in the drawings of the cloth and cigarette packet below. The book shows an interesting combination of stipple and line.



Now that we have some idea of the way that perspective and texture works we want you to start drawing and painting.



This subtly varied effect is a result of blending different colours of crayon dust



Carbon paper can also be used to create a strongly coloured and textured mark.



Crayon tones can be gradated to show the texture of the paper.



Coloured paper can be used to good effect. Here a 4B pencil has been applied to red paper.



White pencil can be used effectively for highlighting.