



Drawing with grids

Most people think of the Visual Arts as being spontaneous and expressive. They think of tracing as cheating, because they think the sign of a good artist is to be able to draw what they see. If you need to trace you can't draw it. Right?

The truth is that there is no right or wrong way to do art. Many artists trace for a variety of reasons. For some this is a type of faking it until you make it, and for others tracing has definite strategic benefits. Two of the most obvious benefits are saving time and ensuring replication is dead accurate. To understand why the rules about assisted drawing are so fuzzy read *The Medium is the Message*. Tools as extensions to Thinking.

Below there is a list of different ways artists use guidelines and versions of guidelines.

Grid	<p>The grid method is a bit too mechanical for most artists. It is an interesting method to try and some students seem to like it. The black and white copy of the desired image is ruled into a grid. Another larger blank piece of paper is ruled up with exactly the same grid but in a larger ratio. The image is transferred from the smaller piece of paper to the larger piece of paper one square at a time. Especially if the page is turned upside down this can be a beneficial drawing exercise in seeing tonality.</p> <p>In Global Citizen the Symmetry Exercise is a good place to start with drawing and copying in the upside down mode.</p>
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Projection	<p>Projection can be done simply and quickly by setting up a projector on the computer and projecting the image on to the paper or canvas.</p> <p>The benefits are that the drawing can be projected up to a very large size and this ensures the images for murals are painted accurately.</p> <p>Another method is to use an overhead projector but this is not as easily manipulated and it can be hard to get the projector far enough back from the image to create the large size needed. Most artists rough the image onto the wall using the projector and then ad lib and abstract from there.</p>
Proportion	<p>This is the most preferred method as it is natural and increases the skill of the artist to judge proportion every time it is used. Brenda Hodinott is one of the best proponents of this method. Check out her website for free guideline drawing sheets on just about any topic. Her guidelines for the proportions of the face are excellent. These are the sheets we use for the Wanted Posters in Global Citizens Art. <u>How to Draw Portraits</u></p> <p>Indeed browse Draw Space and you will find whatever you need in the way of guidelines to get you started. <u>Draw Space Lessons</u>.</p>

Whisper Lines	<p>To draw a composition in proportion requires a work around. Most artists work in a circular clockwork direction. They usually start drawing using very soft whisper lines because as they judge proportions against each other they will need to change some lines if the drawing is very soft and faint they can simply change the lines and there will be little need to erase the old ones as they will disappear into the drawing as the lines are firmed up and the tonal shading commences. All guidelines are meant to be only drawn softly and then removed by disappearing into the drawing and erased as the needs be.</p>
Firming Up Lines	<p>Working in a circular fashion, the artist trades lines until when happy becoming firmer and more definite. Polished drawings will have a combination of softly drawn lines, firm lines and some spaces where the artist has lifted off the paper so as to achieve only a suggested line.</p>
Contour	<p>Contour lines trace form in a structured manner. These lines are often quite imaginary. So what they are doing is giving form to imaginary lines which capture bulk and form. The most complex lines will be found in the grids on the skin of models for animation.</p>

Sizing Against a Pencil	Many people use a pencil to size up proportion and to measure it onto the page. This involves holding out the pencil and measuring by placing the thumb at the right spot and then measuring this onto the page.
Tracing	There are as many ways to trace as reasons to trace when planning a composition. Tools can consist of tracing paper, paper held up to the window so that the light travels through both pages, and the use of a light box.
Light Box	A light box is a simple box that has a light inside which shines through a sheet of glass or Perspex. The glass or Perspex will be white so that the light does not dazzle the eyes of the artist as he or she traces.
Templates	Templates are plastic or can be cut by the artist from cardboard.
Wacom	If the artist has a Wacom, he or she can trace directly by placing the drawing on the screen and tracing. This will bring the image into the computer drawing space.