

Drawing With Shapes

? What are we covering today?

Yesterday, we learned that drawing loosely can improve our accuracy in a drawing. This concept is central to your success with drawing.

Today, we'll explore another important concept to your drawing success and it deals with shapes.

Like line, shape is one of the seven elements of art. In terms of art, shape is defined as a closed contour. If we take a line and enclose it - we create a shape.

Types of Shapes

Although there are an infinite number of shapes possible, all shapes fall into one of two categories.

Shapes are either geometric or organic.

Geometric shapes are shapes that are typically man-made. These shapes usually have names and are the ones that we are most familiar with us.

Circles, squares, rectangles, and triangles are all examples of geometric shapes.

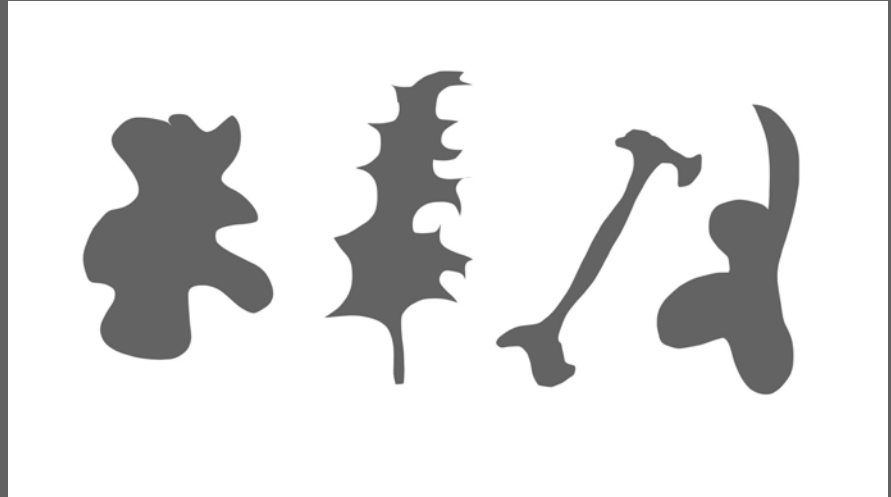
Geometric Shapes



? What are we covering today?

The second type of shapes are organic. These shapes are also called freeform shapes. **Organic shapes** usually don't have names and seem to follow no rules. Here are a few examples of organic shapes.

Organic Shapes



! Today's Mindset

We have already learned that when we draw, we should be looking at the object. When we look at an object, we can easily recognize the lines. Often, this is where many of us begin the drawing process.

But by starting a drawing with the lines, our accuracy is sometimes sacrificed and the process of drawing is much slower.

But, if we look for basic simple shapes on our object and draw them instead, we set ourselves up for greater accuracy. Even the most complex subjects can be broken down into basic shapes that anyone can draw.

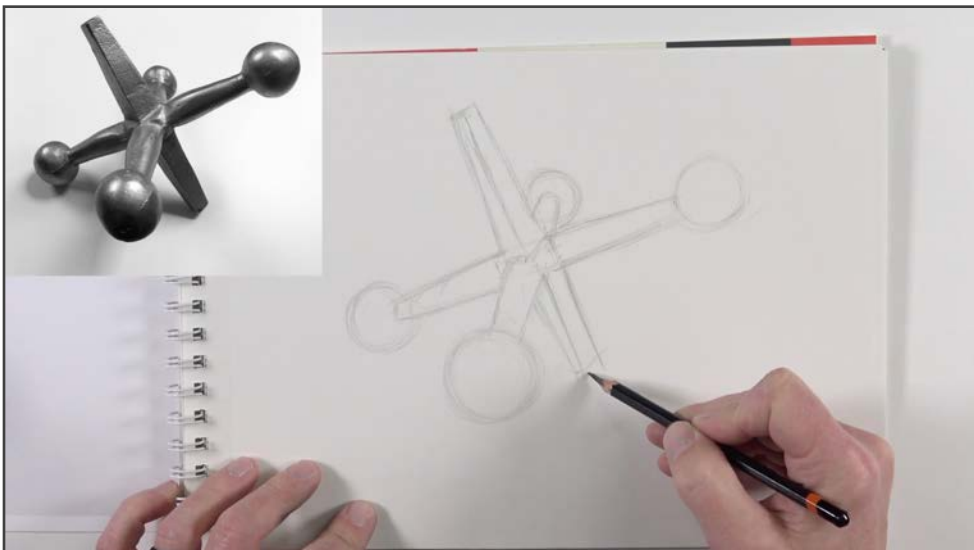
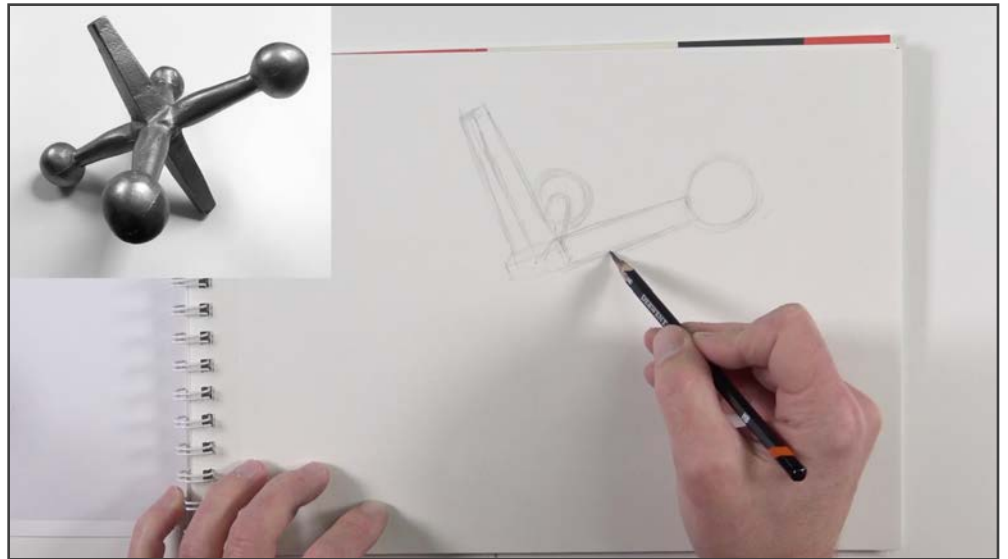
If we draw these basic shapes first, using looser mark-making, we can then go back and define the contour lines, worrying less about accuracy.

And that's today's mindset... "Drawing with shapes increases speed and improves accuracy."

Today's Drawing Exercise

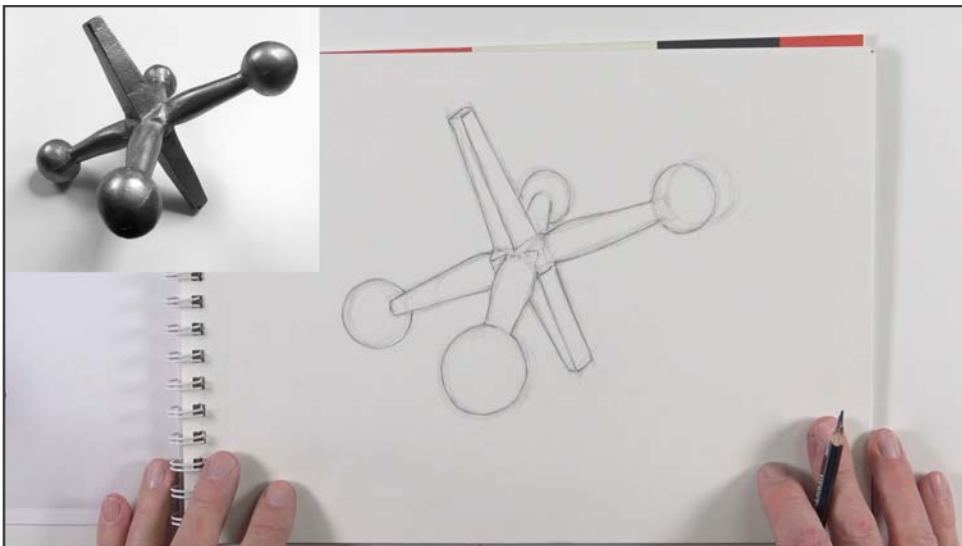
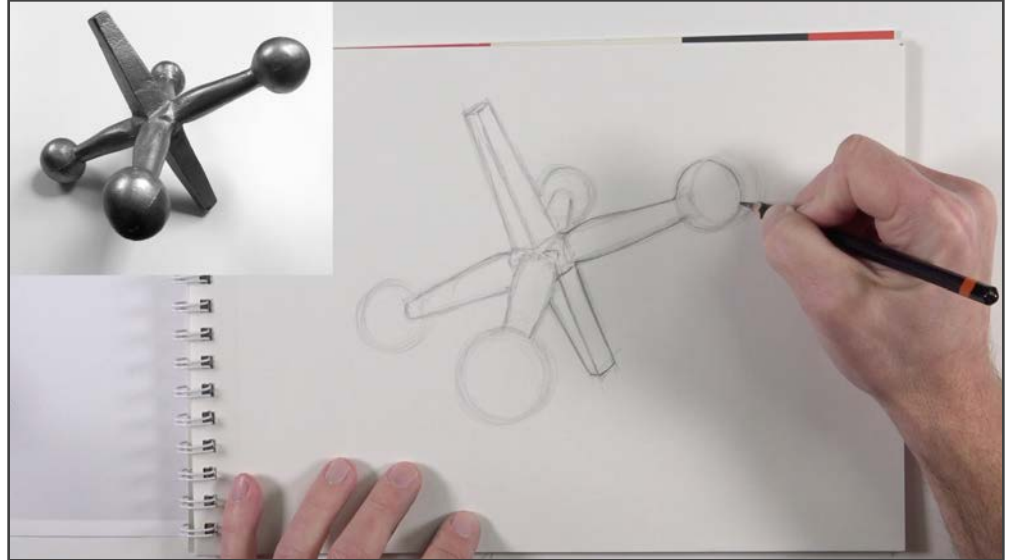
Now, let's apply this concept of basic shapes to a drawing. We'll look for basic shapes and draw them initially. Once the basic shapes are defined, we can go back and add the contour lines.

We'll first analyze the subject and look for basic shapes. This particular subject has easily recognizable shapes. We'll draw loosely as we define them on the drawing surface with a light touch.



As we develop each shape, we'll pay special attention to proportional relationships and the negative spaces around them. Even though we are laying out the subject with loose basic shapes, we are still drawing directly from observation. We should continue our practice of observing the subject at least 50% of the time, making adjustments as necessary.

With our shapes defined, we can now go back and define the contour lines. We can apply slightly heavier pressure on the pencil as we define these lines since we now have confidence that we are placing them in the correct location.



The basic shapes that we defined first serve as guidelines for developing the contour lines. This approach leads to greater accuracy and faster development of a drawing.

Today we learned that shape is fundamental to creating accurate drawings and that piecing geometric and organic shapes together, we can draw anything - even complex objects.

We also learned that approaching a drawing in this manner increases our speed and helps to ensure accuracy.

Tomorrow, we'll go back to exploring line further. **Hold on to the drawing that you completed today - we'll be using it again tomorrow.**