

ART ASSIGNMENT #24

Figure Drawing- Simple Standing Poses

Edgas Degas, *Dancer*, ca.1880.

- Throughout the past classes, we've been talking about how to draw different parts of the human body, focusing mostly on the head/face and hands.
- I've been emphasizing the importance of *simplification, starting with a base "construction"* and being able to acknowledge the different parts of the body as *3D forms*, as opposed to flat shapes.

In the *Intro to Drawing the Human Figure* (Class #14) I explained about:

- **Basic body proportions**
- **What *armatures* are and why they're important**
- **Main differences between male and female figures**
- **The 3 main phases of drawing *anything* (including the human figure)**
- **Why it's essential to understand form/perspective when drawing the human figure**
- **Why it's important to start from the inside out (understanding underlying structures- skeleton)**
- **I offered a step-by-step path that will help you start developing your skills/knowledge on this very challenging subject incrementally and with less overwhelm.**



- **In this class, we'll be focusing on simpler standing poses (forwards-facing/profile/ 3/4's).**

In the next classes, we'll move on to:

- **Drawing dynamic standing poses**
- **Drawing sitting poses**

Parts are overlapped by others, there's more movement and/or there's lots of foreshortening going on.

- **Basic shading**

A simple approach to creating a believable illusion of light and shadow in figures.

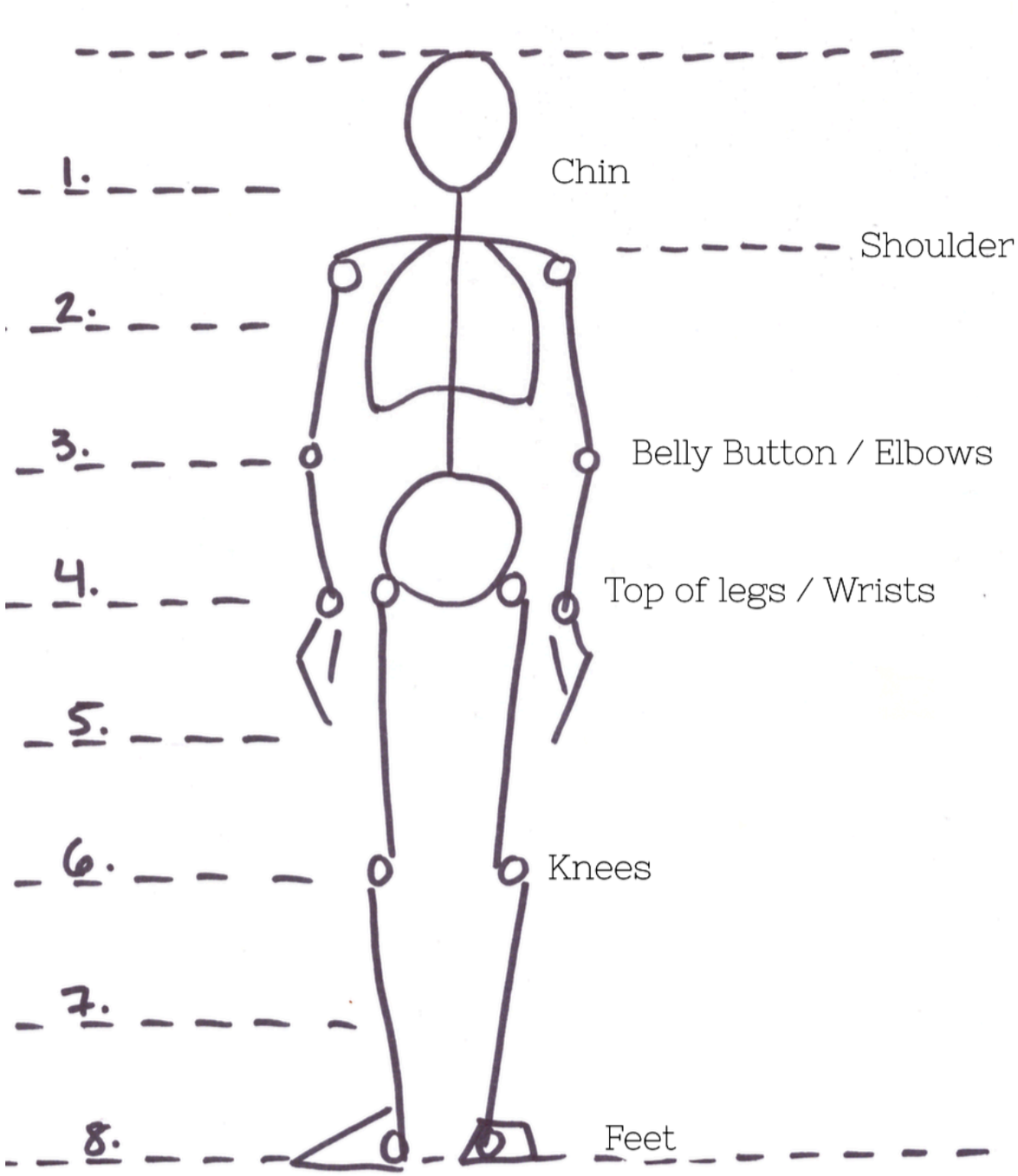
- **Gesture drawing**

Not looking for precision, but looking to express movement and flow through dynamic sketching.



BASIC BODY PROPORTIONS REVIEW- FORWARDS

- **A lot of artists use the "8 heads tall" guide, in which the length of one head (from top of the cranium to the tip of the chin), is considered the measuring unit. However, this is considered *ideal*, and 7-7.5 would be more real-life proportions for female and male adults.**



Key things to note:

- **Shoulders are halfway between the first and second line**
- **Crotch= 1/2 point between top of head and bottom of feet**
- **Wrists align with crotch**
- **Belly button aligns with elbows**
- **Bottom of knees= 1/2 point between crotch and bottom of feet**
- **Tips of fingers end halfway down thighs**

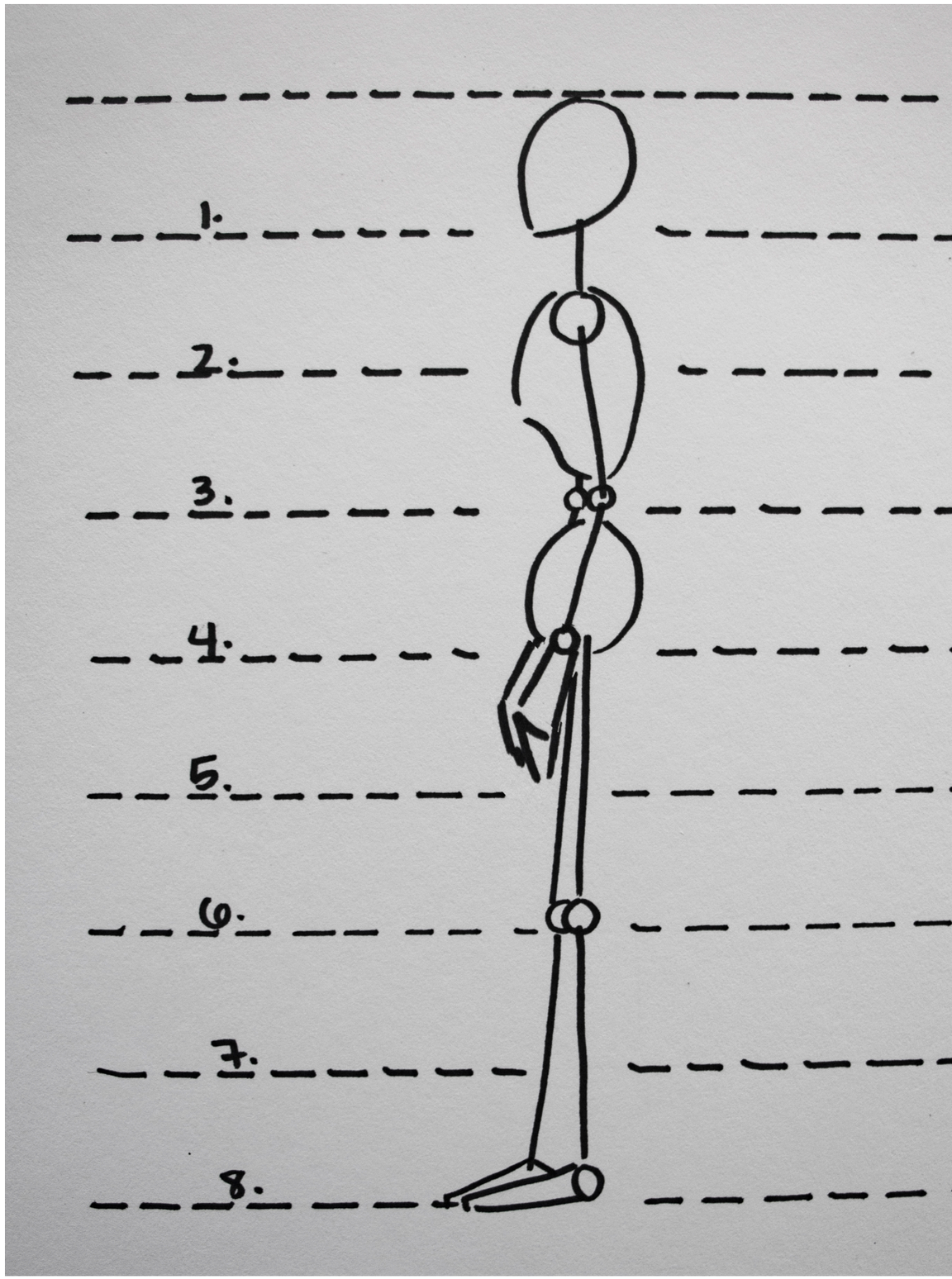
BASIC BODY PROPORTIONS REVIEW- PROFILE

- **It's important to understand proportions in the forwards facing body *before* moving on to anything else, just like when we were learning about drawing the head.**

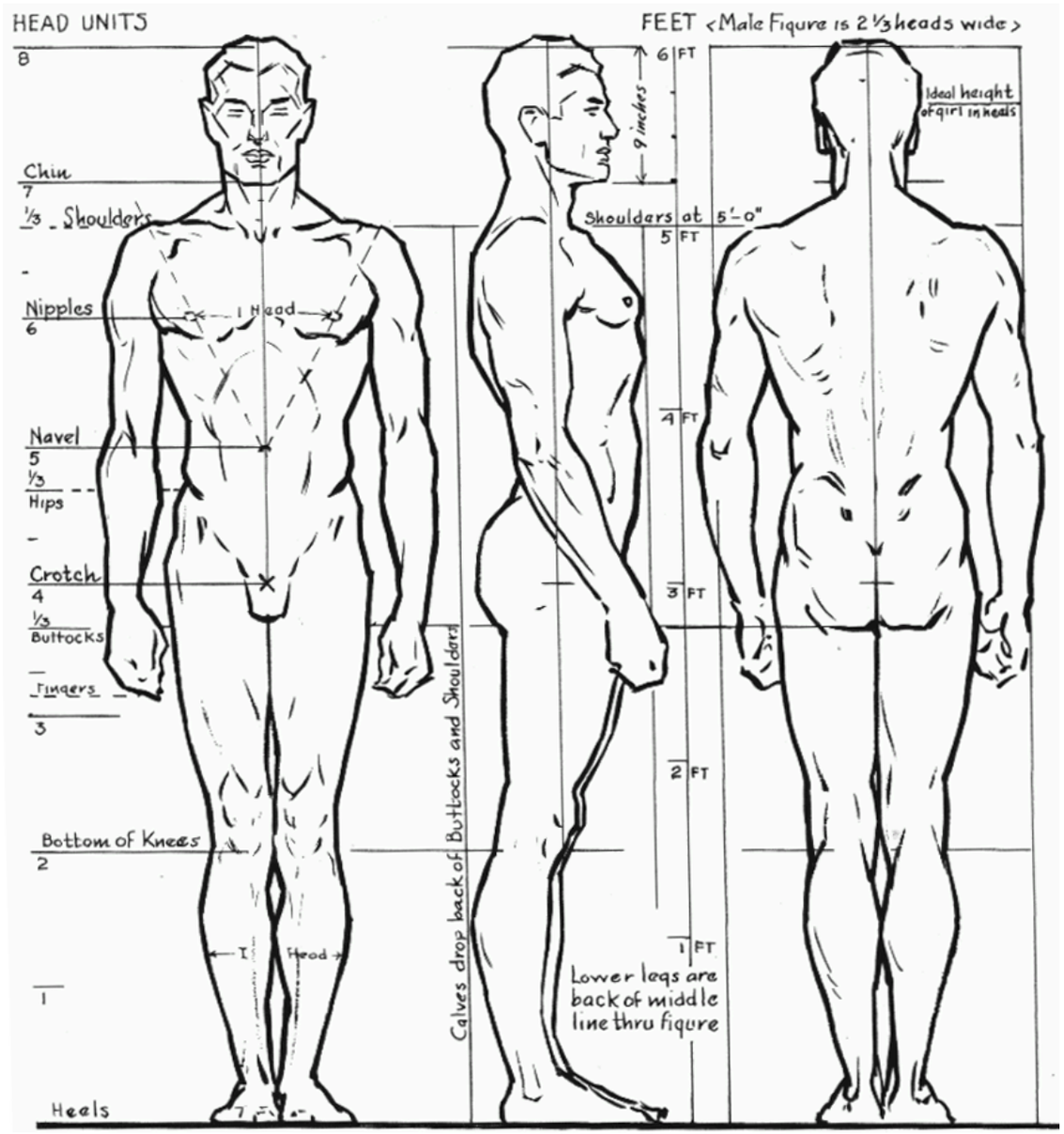
- **This is because we're able to understand basic proportions *a lot* more easily as the entire body is laid out completely. We're actually able to see the entire length of parts and limbs. We're able to understand the relationships between them in terms of how different lengths/widths compare, where they're located in relation to each other, etc.**

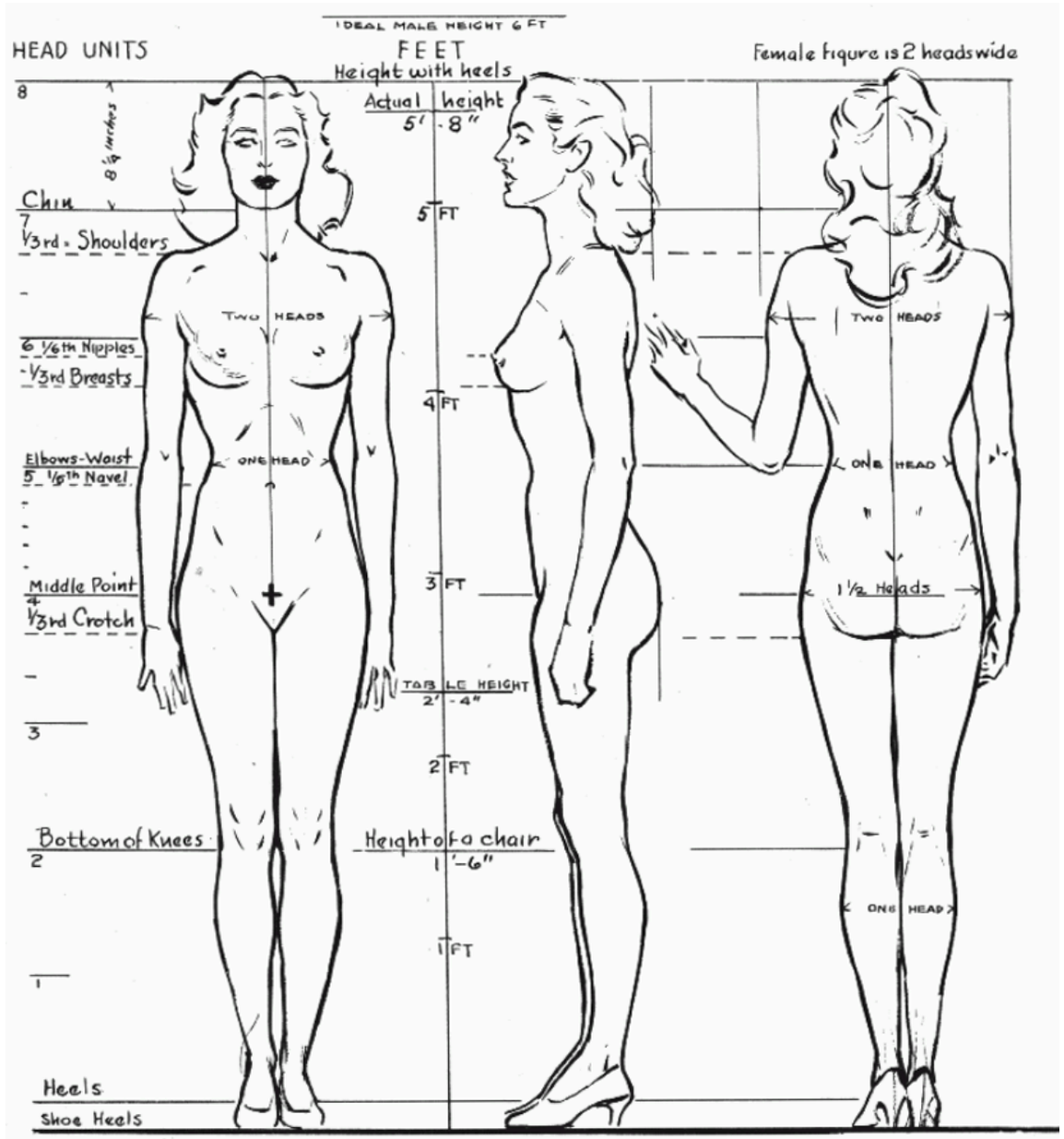
- **Once foreshortening, sitting positions and more dynamic poses come into play, the relationships between the different body parts change. Sizes are distorted, and certain parts are covered because they overlap.**

- When compared to the head, which only has the jaw that moves, the human body has *a lot* of different joints and parts to it that can all move in a wide variety of different ways.



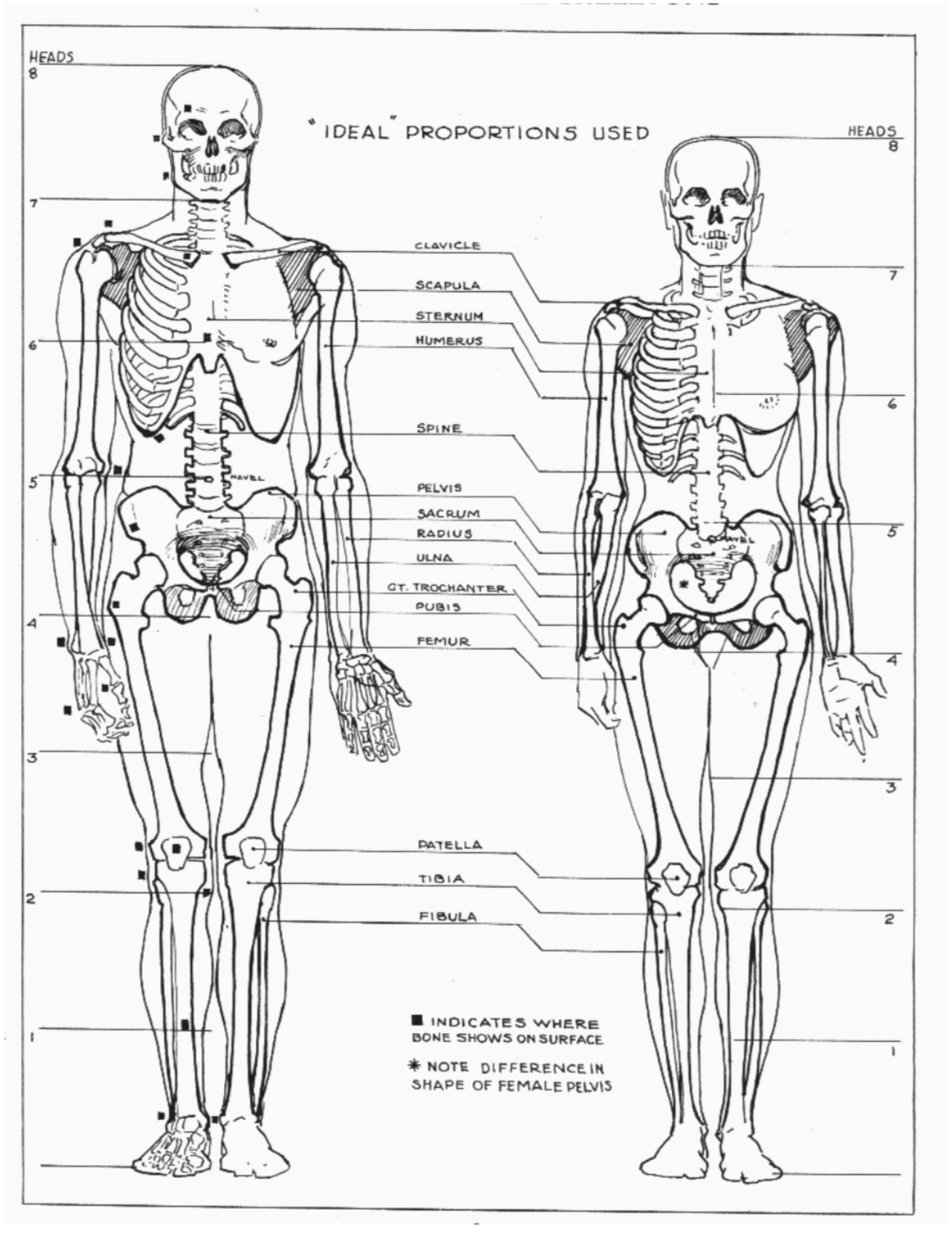
MALE AND FEMALE LOOMIS DIAGRAMS





- **Adult male and female diagrams from Andrew Loomis's book *Figure Drawing for All It's Worth showing the 8 heads height (front, profile and back view).***

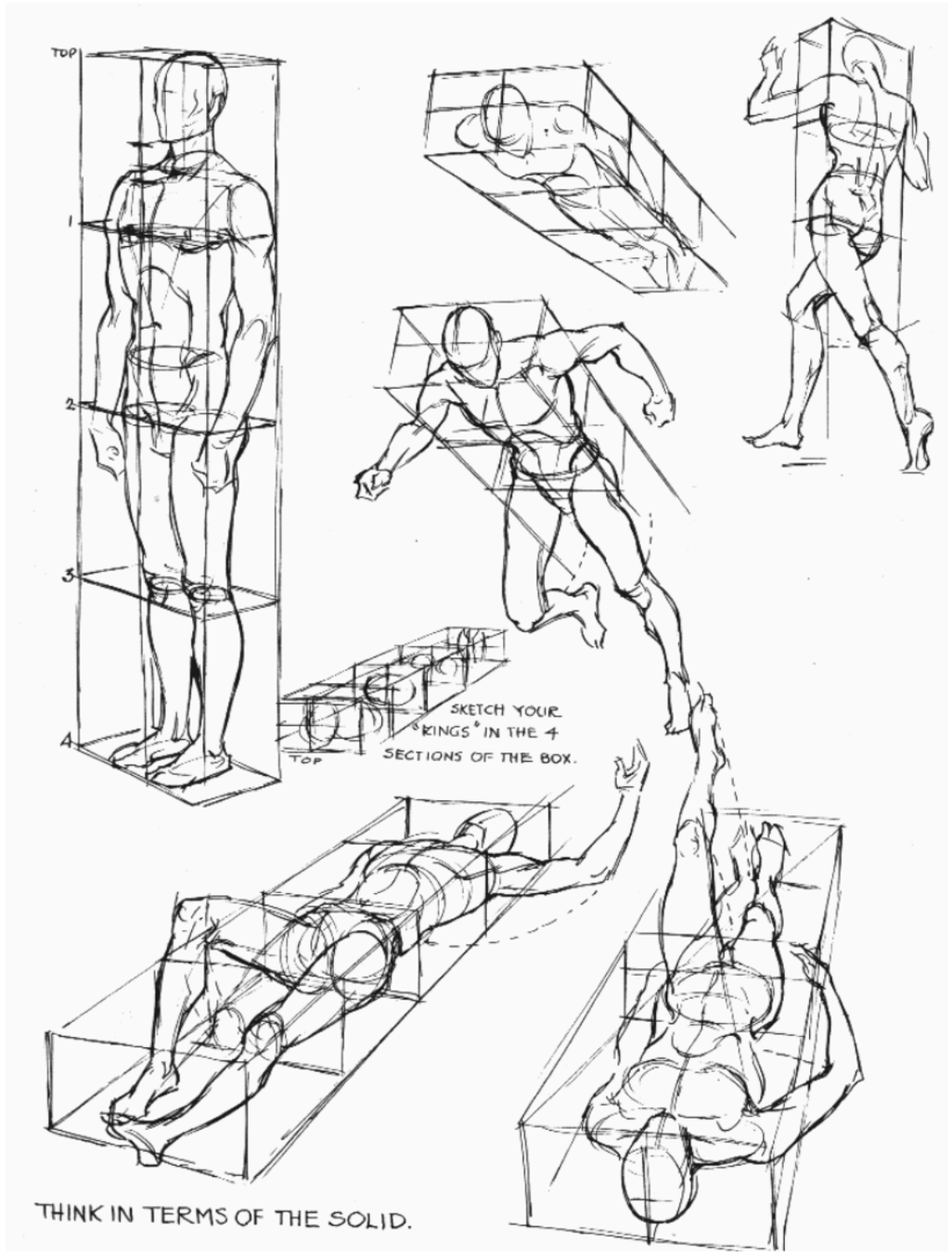
MALE AND FEMALE LOOMIS DIAGRAMS- SKELETONS



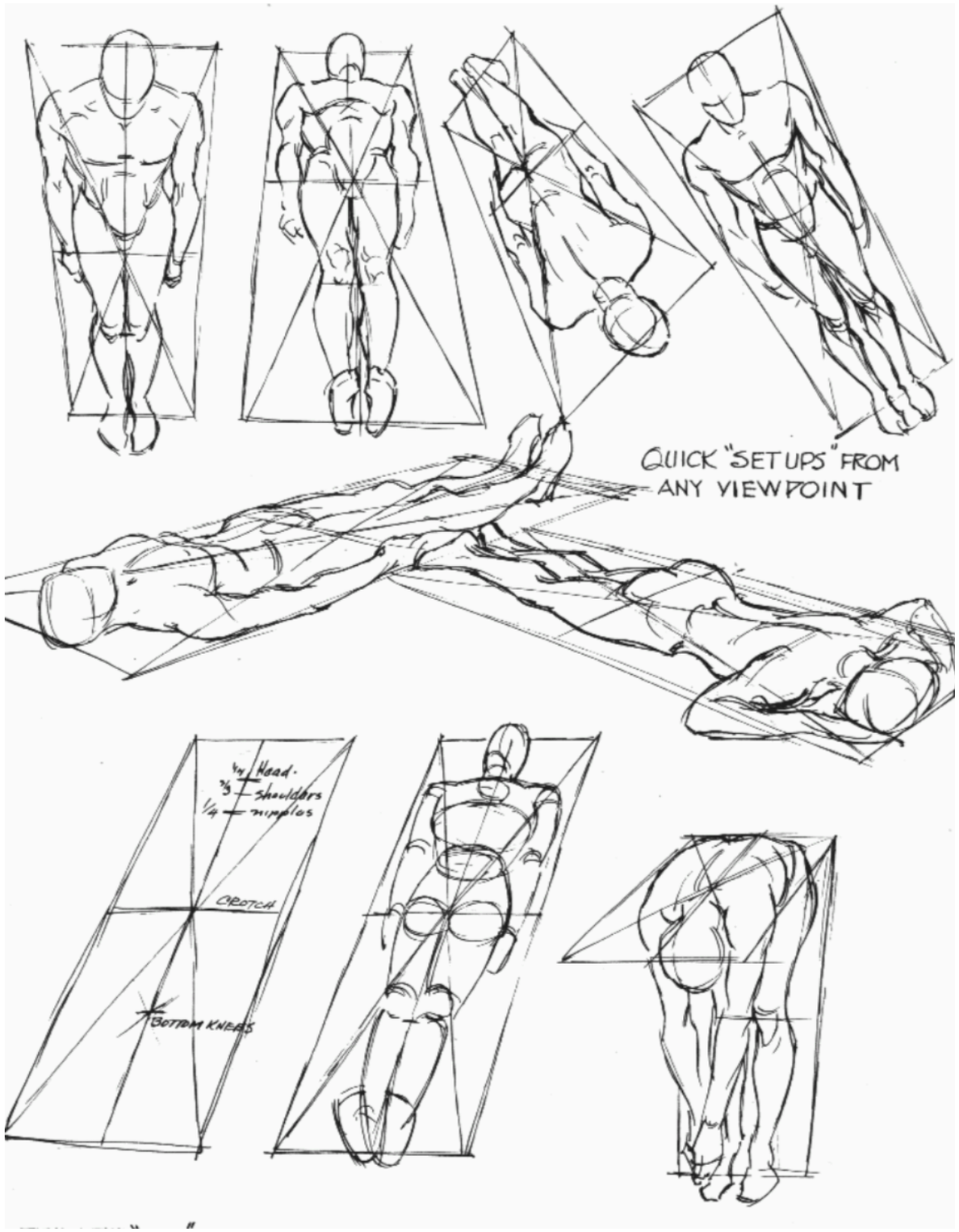
- **Adult male and female diagrams from Andrew Loomis's book *Figure Drawing for All It's Worth showing the 8 heads height (skeletons).***

PERSPECTIVE AND FORESHORTENING

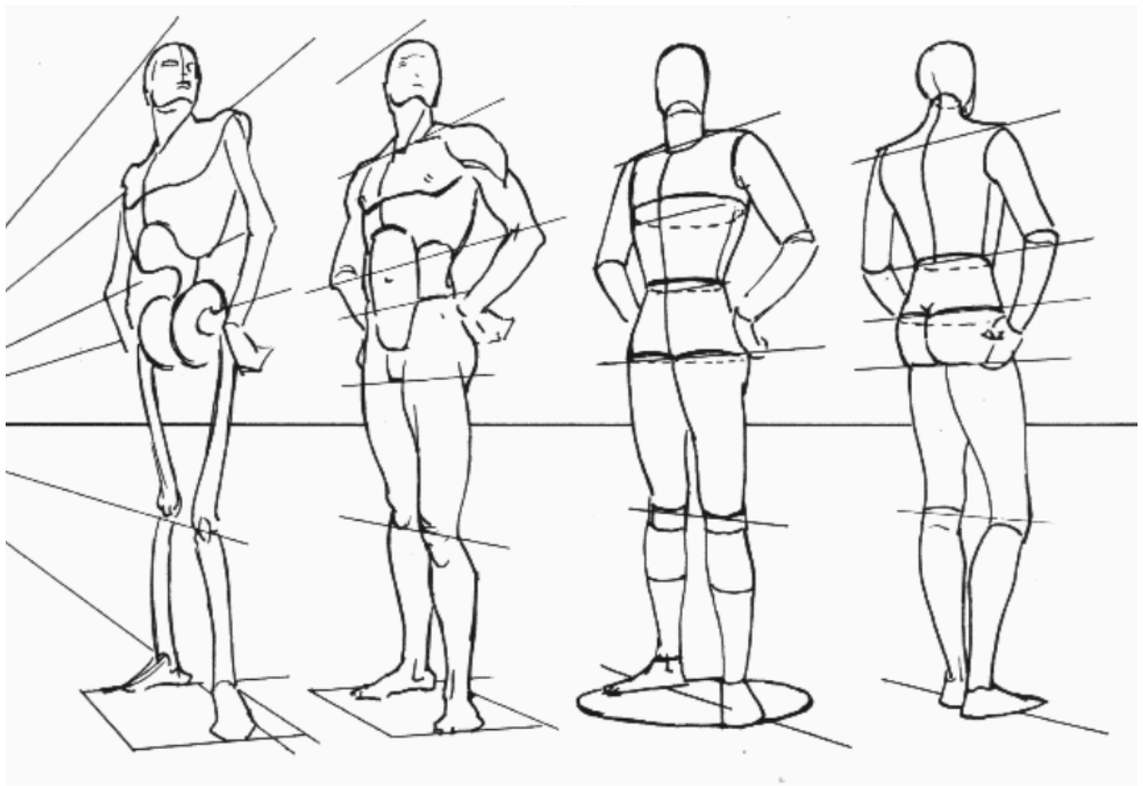
- **When we're striving for any degree of realism in a drawing, it's essential to be able to visualize our subject as a combo of 3D forms sitting in space that can be seen from a variety of different angles and perspectives.**
- 3D form and perspective go hand-in-hand, and not understanding how to draw simple forms such as rectangular prisms, cylinders, cubes, etc., as well as drawing simple objects *before* jumping into the human figure is often where beginners go wrong.
- **It's important to think about form and mass as we're creating that base construction, not flat shapes.**



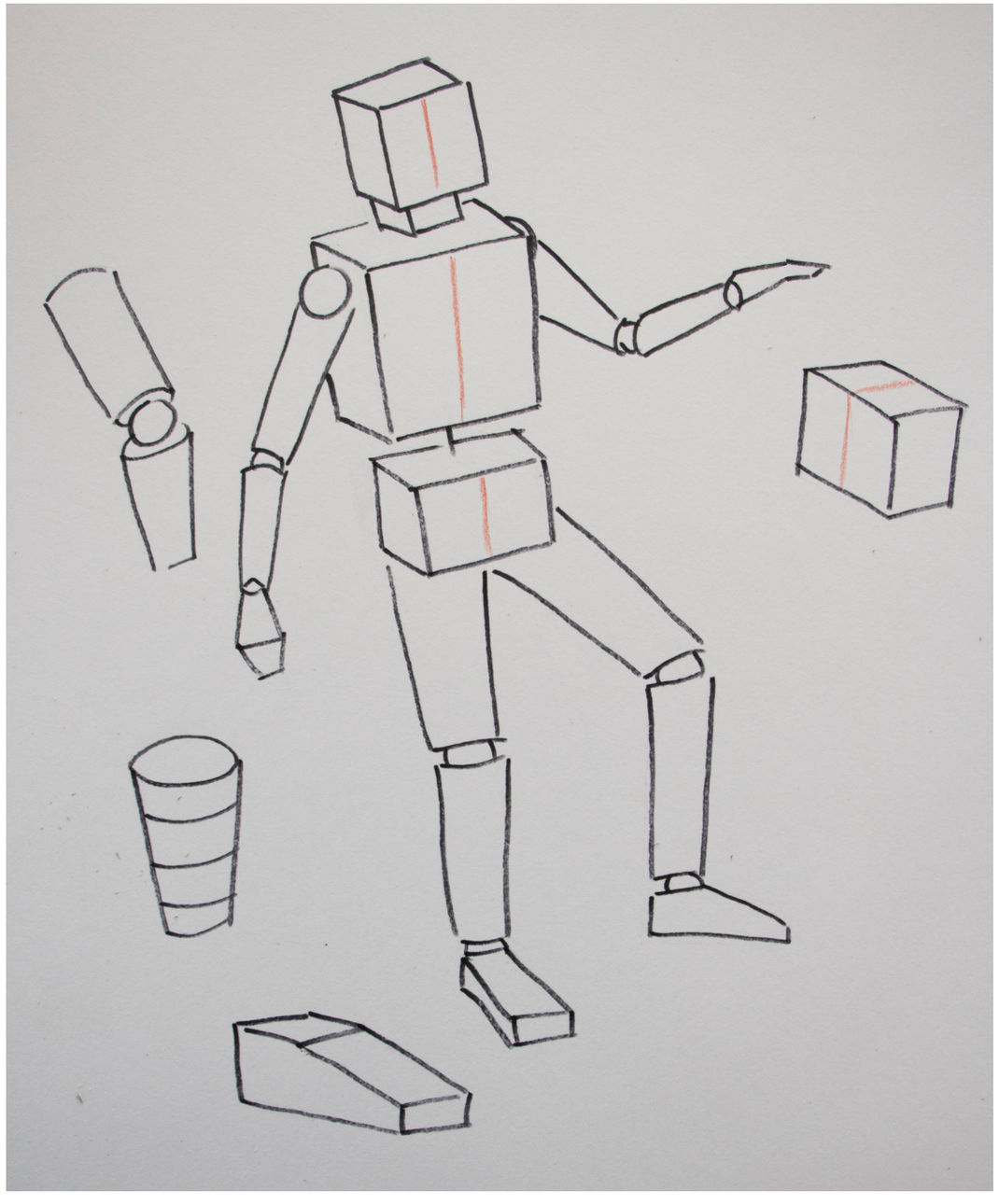
PERSPECTIVE AND FORESHORTENING



- It's also imperative to know how to draw at least simple objects from *direct observation*, as opposed to always from photos, as this practice helps us break that 2D barrier.



THE BODY AS BOXES



- **When we're just getting started with learning about perspective, it can be *incredibly* helpful to visualize the human body as a combo of boxes and simple forms such as spheres and cylinders.**
- Remember the vertical guideline we placed right down the bridge of the nose when we were drawing faces, which was added right at the start of our drawing process? This axis is important to decipher, too, when we're drawing the entire human figure. You can imagine this axis as being right in the middle of the torso (the largest body mass). Placing this guideline helps us understand if the body is rotated slightly to one side or the other, or how the form is turning in space.
- **Visualizing the body as boxes helps us tell front planes from side planes a lot more easily.**

WHY USING REFERENCES IS IMPORTANT

- **When we're just getting started with understanding essential Art Fundamentals such as perspective, form, light behavior, etc., or are simply trying to increase the realism in our work, learning to observe and studying references (whether photos or using *direct observation)* is essential.**
- If we're not using references, we'll be making things up and drawing things how we *think* they look like and not what they *actually* look like.
- **By combining our ability to observe and taking that visual information in through references, with our knowledge of at least basic anatomy, our drawings will be *much* more successful. *It's a combo of both.***



WHY USING REFERENCES IS IMPORTANT

- **As I've previously shared, knowing basic anatomy is important, as you'll know what to look for in your references and/or you'll be better able to make up for the information you're lacking in your references (such as when parts are cropped out, covered up or when foreshortening is present).You'll make more informed decisions when drawing.**
- By stemming from references, you'll later be able to draw figures from imagination *much* more successfully, if this is your goal.
- **Study *all* kinds of references including photos, videos, scientific illustrations and practice sketching from direct observation. Don't limit yourself to only one thing!**



LET'S DRAW FIGURES!

- Next, I'll be sharing, step by step, how I would get started with drawing human figures ensuring believable proportions and shapes, stemming from a simple armature and moving forward onto fleshing out shapes.

  Here are the main steps (applied to standing poses):

1) **Draw simplified head shape**
2) **Measure + count 6 to 7 heads downwards for total body height**
3) **Mark the crotch at the halfway point**
4) **Place guideline for shoulders**
5) **Draw the neck + pit of the neck (V shape)**
6) **Notice primary flow line (spine) + Notice supporting leg, if any**
7) **Add in simplified largest body masses (upper torso and lower torso)**
8) **Add in joint landmarks (shoulders, elbows, wrists, knees, ankles)**
9) **Flesh out shapes, noticing overlapping forms**

LET'S DRAW SOME FIGURES!



- Forwards-facing



- Profile



- 3/4's

ART ASSIGNMENT #24:

- **Using reference photos, sketch three different (standing) figures, making sure that you're starting with armatures that show effective proportions and locations of main body parts.**

  Links to my own reference photos will be left along with this class but you can also look for full body photos of people (preferably with tight fitting clothes which will allow you to see the form of their bodies).

  Here are some helpful resources with tons of poses:

- **line-of-action.com**
- **unsplash.com, pixabay.com, pixels.com**
- **Pinterest (look for "gesture photo pose", "references for figure drawing", etc. boards)**
- **New Master's Academy YouTube channel**