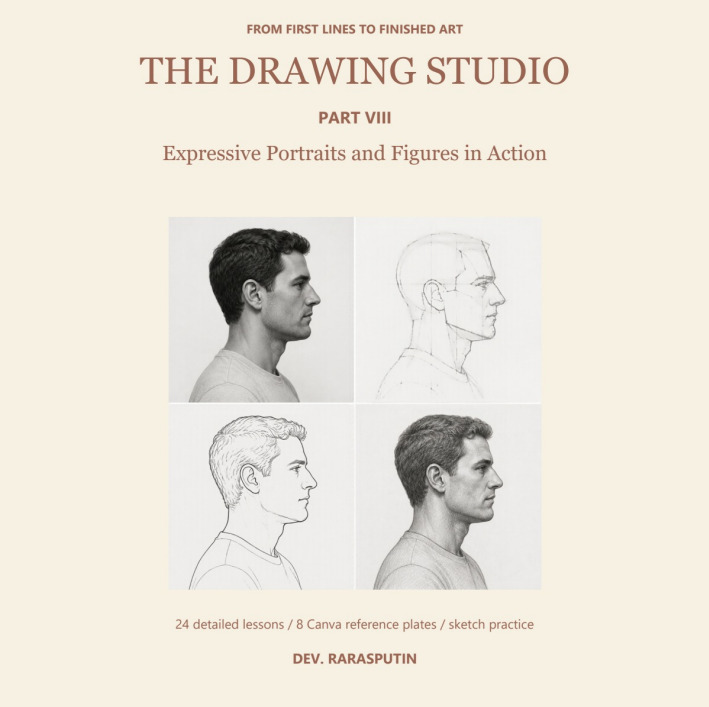
FROM FIRST LINES TO FINISHED ART

The Drawing Studio

Part VIII / Expressive Portraits and Figures in Action



200-page pencil-and-paper tutorial and sketch-practice workbook.
24 detailed lessons / eight new Canva-generated reference plates / original simplified teaching diagrams.

Continuation edition / 2026

USING THIS CONTINUATION

A more deliberate studio practice

Parts VI-X build on light construction, basic values and the habit of comparing visible relationships. You can return to the earlier volumes whenever a project reveals a specific gap. Each volume here contains 24 lessons organized around eight reference subjects. Three lessons revisit each subject with a different purpose.

Each lesson moves through explanation, a specific drawing sequence, a reference plate, worked analysis and correction, focused drills, project planning, review and a final comparison study. Read the written steps before copying a surface effect. The same reference returns so that changes in skill can be compared without constantly changing the subject.

The 200 pages include substantial printable drawing and reflection space. This is an illustrated tutorial-workbook, not 200 pages of continuous prose, a video course or an interactive fillable form. Draw on selected printed pages or in a separate sketchbook.

Use comfortable practice periods and take breaks when needed. Advanced subjects are opportunities to practice; completion does not guarantee professional competence or income.

My current experience and one visible skill to develop

AI IMAGES AND OBSERVATION

Read the reference critically

The eight four-panel plates were generated using Canva AI for this workbook. They compare a grayscale reference, a construction treatment, a contour treatment and a developed value treatment. They are original illustrative practice images, not photographs documenting real subjects or perfectly measured demonstrations.

Details, anatomy, geometry and lighting can vary between panels. A construction treatment may simplify or omit a guide that the written lesson asks you to make. Use the lesson text and original diagrams to test the principle; do not treat a generated stage as exact evidence. Compare the same visible landmark consistently rather than measuring different generated panels as if they were one photograph.

Verify uncertain structure with an available real object, your own photograph, a suitable reference used with permission, or a consenting adult sitter. For people and animals, do not copy malformed joints, extra digits or unsupported anatomy. For buildings and objects, do not present these plates as technical construction advice.

Record sources honestly. Label studies from these plates as AI-reference studies, and note any real reference used for verification. A redesigned composition is a design variation, not direct observation from life.

A reference uncertainty I will verify before copying

SUBJECT MAP

Eight reference studies

01. a clearly adult person wearing a plain shirt, head in exact profile, neutral expression / lessons 1-3

02. a clearly adult older person with short hair, head in three-quarter view, soft smile / lessons 4-6

03. a clearly adult person with curly hair and round glasses, head and shoulders in three-quarter view / lessons 7-9

04. a clearly adult person seated, fully clothed, tying one shoelace with plausible hands / lessons 10-12

05. a clearly adult person fully clothed reaching to place a plain book on a shelf, full body visible / lessons 13-15

06. a clearly adult person fully clothed seated at a table drawing in a sketchbook, both hands visible / lessons 16-18

07. two clearly adult people fully clothed conversing while standing in a plain room, full bodies visible / lessons 19-21

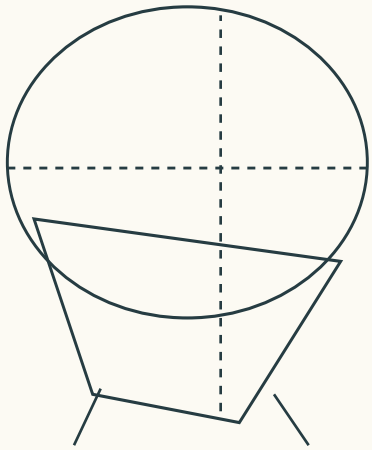
08. a clearly adult person fully clothed walking carrying one simple tote bag, full body visible / lessons 22-24

Use each subject across three lessons, then transfer the principle to another suitable subject. The eight reference images are also supplied separately in the companion ZIP. Original simplified diagrams are explanatory constructions, not tracings of the AI plates.

LESSON 01 / UNDERSTAND

Place a profile as a complete head mass

A profile is more than the familiar outline of forehead, nose, lips and chin. Begin with the full skull mass, including the back of the head, then relate the face to it. Compare the ear, neck and jaw as part of the same arrangement. A common beginner shortcut makes the face large while leaving too little space behind the ear. Use the actual adult reference rather than a universal head ratio. Hair can obscure the skull contour, so keep the construction provisional and distinguish the hair envelope from the underlying mass.



Original simplified teaching diagram. Use its principle to test the actual view; it is not a measured tracing of the generated reference.

The visible question

Is there enough observed mass behind the face and ear?

LESSON 01 / DEMONSTRATION

Work through the drawing sequence

Stage 1

Mark the head's highest, lowest, frontmost and backmost points within the page.

Stage 2

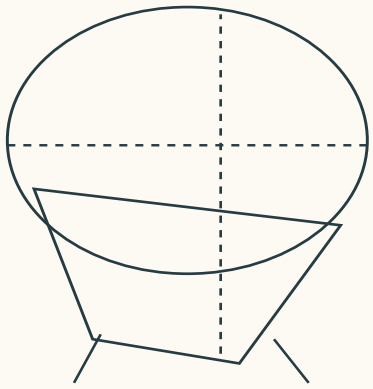
Place a light cranial mass and indicate the face's general direction.

Stage 3

Compare the ear and jaw positions with the back of the head.

Stage 4

Connect the neck to the head while checking the overall silhouette.

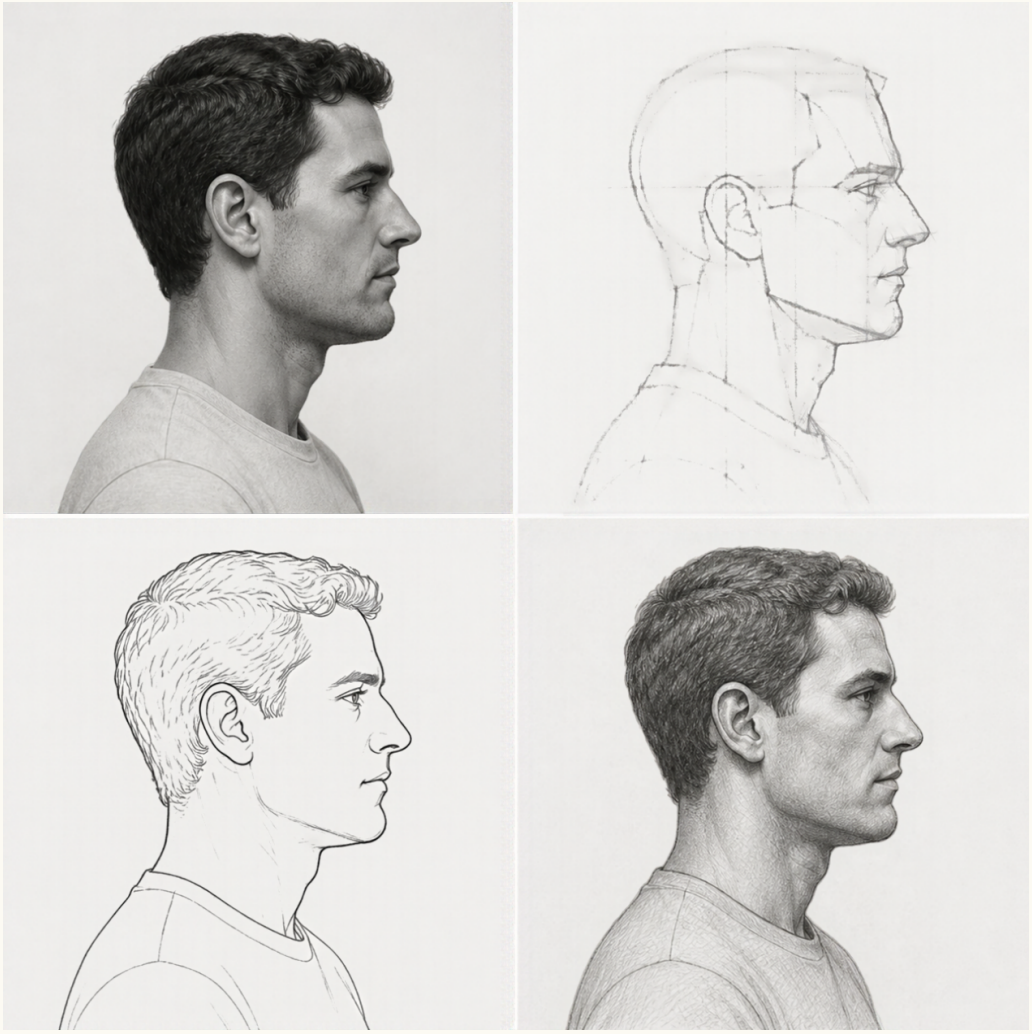


Checkpoint: compare the whole subject after each stage. Keep early guides light. If the next stage exposes a larger conflict, return to the earliest relationship that needs correction rather than hiding it with detail.

LESSON 01 / REFERENCE

Compare the reference treatments

Reference 1 / a clearly adult person wearing a plain shirt, head in exact profile, neutral expression



Canva AI illustration: reference / construction / contour / value. Stage details may differ. Apply the written steps and verify uncertain structure through real observation.

Use this lesson focus

Is there enough observed mass behind the face and ear?

LESSON 01 / WORKED DIAGNOSIS

Analyze before adding more marks

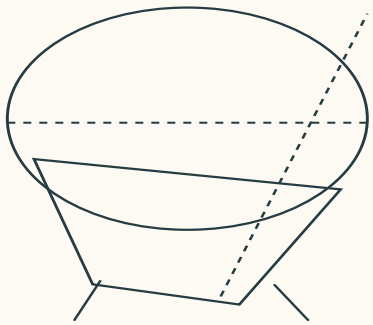
Cover the facial features and see whether the remaining head still has believable volume. If it collapses into a narrow strip, the cranial mass may be undersized. Check a clear photograph or consenting sitter when the AI plate is ambiguous. Do not treat the simplified construction as a clinical anatomical diagram.

Common problem

Drawing a long face with almost no back-of-head mass distorts the profile.

Correction sequence

Lighten the feature outline and restore the full head envelope before replacing the ear and jaw landmarks.



The schematic is a comparison aid. Diagnose the actual study rather than assuming it contains this exact error.

Evidence I can point to / correction I will test

LESSON 01 / GUIDED PRACTICE

Repeat one specific skill

Make three profile envelopes with no features, comparing the face-to-cranium relationship each time.

Keep the source and viewpoint steady for the comparison. Use one frame for the first attempt, another for a deliberate adjustment, and the others for the comparisons named in the exercise. Add a short note identifying what changed.

Observe / first attempt

Compare / evidence

Adjust / one change

Repeat / check

The relationship that improved, or the uncertainty that remains

LESSON 01 / PROJECT

Plan a small application

Draw a profile head that remains coherent when the nose, lips and eye are covered.

Plan before rendering

Choose your subject and record its source. State which part of this lesson you are testing. If you change the crop, arrangement or viewpoint, name that as a design variation and use a suitable reference for any newly visible structure.

Thumbnail A / placement

Thumbnail B / comparison

Chosen plan and two observable completion checks

LESSON 01 / TRANSFER AND CRITIQUE

Review with useful evidence

Lesson check

Is there enough observed mass behind the face and ear?

Transfer the skill

Choose an available object or an appropriate verified reference that allows the same comparison. Keep the exercise specific. For people, use a suitable reference or a consenting adult sitter; do not copy uncertain generated anatomy as a rule.

Transfer study / new subject and reference source

One strength / one structural correction / one next exercise

LESSON 01 / FINISHED PRACTICE

Keep a final comparison study

Subject and source: _____ Date: _____

Focus: Place a profile as a complete head mass

Final study / use a separate sheet if preferred

What visibly changed from the first attempt, and what remains unresolved?