

WEEKLY SKILL BUILDER #6

Basic perspective

We are going to create a very simple version of a "spider" - a single point perspective grid for creating quick sketches.

Some basic terms:

Picture plane = the paper. Using a spider allows you to decide how big the sketch will be. We will draw a frame and the drawing is created within that frame. (the space within that frame will represent the picture plane.

Horizon line = the height of the viewer's eye. All objects drawn (that are not parallel to the picture plane), recede, or diminish towards the horizon line.

Centerline = the center of the viewer's vision. Generally speaking a cone of vision is about 30 degrees either side of the center of vision.

Diagonal point = a point on the horizon line, outside the picture plane. The distance from centerline represents the viewer's eye distance from the picture plane.

On a piece of paper, draw a vertical line. This will be the centerline. Now, draw a horizontal line across the center of your page. This will be the horizon line. Where the centerline and horizon line intersect, is a magical place called the central vanishing point.

Now, draw a box, 6" X 9" centered on your existing lines. On the edge of the box, make a mark every 1/2 inch beginning at the center line for the top and bottom and the horizon line from the vertical sides.

Measure 12" from the centerline, along the horizon line. This will be our measuring point which represents the viewer's distance from the picture plane. Draw a line from the measuring point to the bottom corner of your box on the opposite side. This is your measuring line.

Now, draw a line with a straight edge, from the central vanishing point to each of your 1/2 inch marks on the side of your box. We will call these rays.

Using the parallel bar, draw a horizontal line at each intersection of a ray with the measuring line.

This is a perspective grid called a spider. It allows you to be able to draw things in the correct measurements in perspective.