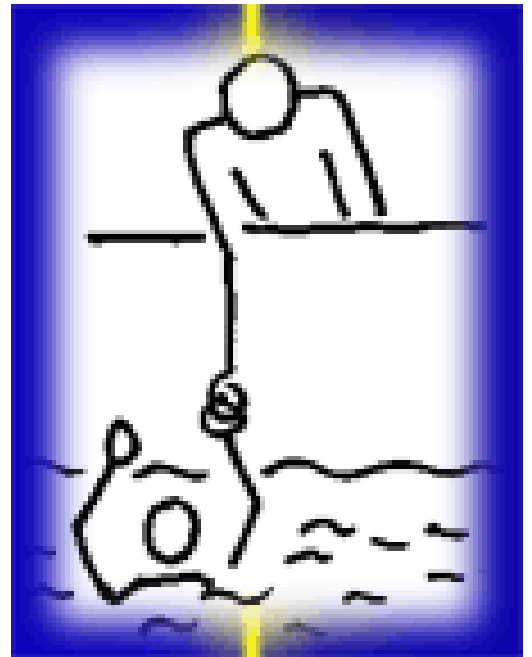


You can draw!



By Ed Rothfusz

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Why are pictograms so important?

Every conversation has a pattern: new subjects, trying to agree upon subjects, rest, next topic, to go through subjects, agreeing, etc.

The most important parts of this conversation is what we normally try to put on paper. What would happen if we could summarize subjects with pictures? What would happen to our notes?

It is quite possible to summarize very effectively. But it is very important that the picture is telling what you want it to tell. The picture is supposed to assist the right hemisphere of your brain, but you must not forget your left side at the same time. The picture must assist the words that accompany the picture. The picture is helping the words and visa versa. We want to integrate both sides of the brain.

The moment you try to connect the words with an image, you need to assure that the connection is as vivid as possible; your brain will love this.

In an ideal situation one would see a film in front of your mind's eye.

Suppose you can make a strong connection with the words and the picture and you can add some imagination (see <http://get-your.free-mind-map-training.com/smashin-scope.html>), you are sure that this combination will give the right and special meaning to it. Especially if you put this kind of connections in a mind map.

Especially a mind map is a tool where this kind of drawing has special effects and will dramatically increase your recalling capabilities.

As this specific meaning of one single phrase combined with a specific drawing will have it's specific meaning in this single mind map. It has become a vital part of that specific mind map.

Get connected with what you have made.

This means that the real meaning will eventually evolve from the whole story, event or adventure. This is precisely why I am not a big advocate of the many mind map software packages. You simply are not connected to the images or the way the mind map is build by the software. This is the same reason why software produced mind maps all look similar.

Drawing as an art is very handy, but it is also very important to help recalling information. It really enhances our memory capabilities.

Therefore it is vital to improve your qualities to get into contact with the context of the subject you want to make a drawing off. It's is very important to be able to disconnect from your personal feelings and interpretations with what is really going on.

I can already hear you. But.....YOU CANNOT DRAW AT ALL (that's what you think!).

It is very important to be able to make drawings that can only mean one thing. This doesn't mean that you HAVE to be able to draw beautifully. Simplicity rules!. But it is important that the pictogram has the visual characters of the overall idea.



An example:



These are examples of bicycles as we know them. Although they differ, they do have in common that most people will identify these images as bicycles, because it has the character of bicycles.



This 'bicycle' only differs a little bit. This drawing is not more beautiful, has more or less lines or anything. Basically this image is the same. But the visual character has been morphed. From a technical point of view this bicycle would not even be able to ride, as the frame of the bicycle would touch the floor. The tyres are smaller than the frame and the shape of the frame differs totally from what we perceive as normal.

On the other hand; if you don't alter the visual character of the image, you can still vary a lot although everybody would still be able to recognize the image as a bicycle immediately.

See for yourself:

Try to identify the following images:

1. The new bicycle
2. Bicycle maintainance
3. Bicycle repair man
4. Bicycle accident
5. Holiday by bicycle
6. Bicycle club



As long as you don't alter the visual character of the images or symbols, it's very easy to produce variables which clearly mean something different. And the beauty of this all: you don't need to be a drawing master like Rembrandt or van Gogh. And as soon as you master this art, this will benefit every mind map you'll make. You only need to be able to have a sharp view in your surroundings and look for the typical shapes that make what it is you're looking at. Combine this with other pictograms and you'll have a new meaning. Don't expect to be able to this at once, as you'll need to practise. I'll get back to this subject later.

As a drawing artist, what do I need to do?

The moment you want to make a drawing of something, the icon has to be directly related to the subject you want to make an icon of; it must have the characteristics of the subject.

Here are some groundrules:

1. You cannot draw what you cannot see

Think of abstract matters, like happy, make a choice, be independent, to argue, to be angry. If you encounter this kind of meanings, look for the meaning of these matters. Let me give you an example.

Suppose you encounter this and you want to make an icon out of it: When I go to the supermarket this early and I have to chose between detergent X and Y, that is a tough cookie to crack.

In a situation like this I immediately see the situation in my minds eye. But makeing a choice is something that confuses my mind's eye's view. I don't get a CLEAR picture in my minds eye.

Therefore it is very important to be able to see the image in your minds eye, as

2. The image should evolve from the concrete story

You should be able to see part of the film or image of the whole in your minds eye; you should be able to see it 'actually' happening. Be sure to always recheck this image with what is really presented. If this is right, start drawing.

3. And focus your drawing on the things you CAN draw.

Every shape can be brought back to very simple lines; circles, squares, ovals, etc. These are the basic shapes and these shapes are doable for everybody. And this is what this manual is all about.

Basics for this kind of drawing

We use basic shapes/forms which will result in a symbol. This means we start with one of the basic shapes. From there we start adding other basic shapes in order to form a symbol.

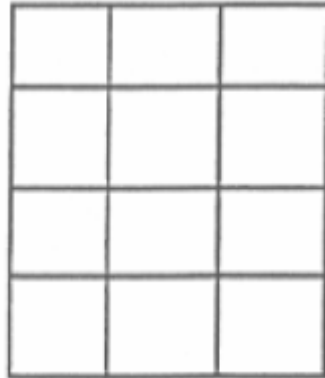


Let's take the bicycle as an example again:

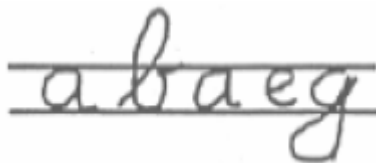


In order to master this kind of technique, we need a template to practise with.

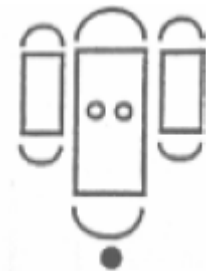
Practising



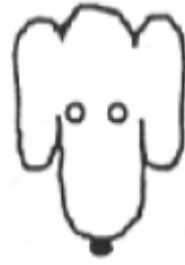
We all know this kind of paper: squared paper. This is probably the most ideal kind of paper to start this exercise with. Almost the same way we started learning how to write.



The same applies to this kind of drawing. We use the lines to be more aware of where other lines will appear on the paper. In this example we use the following basic shapes.



At first you see the various different shapes. It still resembles a lot with the way we learned how to write, isn't it. First the different individual letters, which we started to combine later on. The same applies to shapes which form an icon later.



And here are also a few simple but very important, actually vital, rules. You need to practise this!. Try to do this as much as possible. It's almost like the more you practise the more likely it is that you hand will 'remember' this shape as being the 'normal' shape. Always be very critical!.



Good:

Although the line is not perfectly straight, the overall drawing seems to be right.



Wrong:

When looking at one of these lines, they all seem to be very hesitant. Your eye needs to do a lot of work in order to identify 4 individual straight lines. Than the eye and your brain needs to do more work in order to see that these lines form another shape; a square. This means, more chances for your brain to misinterpret, more brainpower is needed to identify, more time is consumed to identify and it is not pleasant to look at it.

Tip for drawing lines: Get a large piece of paper and put 4 large square on it. Be sure that the lines are very straight!.

Closing



Good:

It is very important that the various shapes are 'closed' or finished. Don't leave parts open. In this way you enable your brain to be able to merge the various shapes into one shape.



Wrong:

When the various shapes are not closed, a lot of effort is needed for the eyes to identify the final shape. This takes effort and time and it increases the chance to make misinterpretations.

Tip: The eye is a specialist in identifying the following: A dot, A line and a Shape. If these are not right, the eye gets confused.

To Aim



Good:

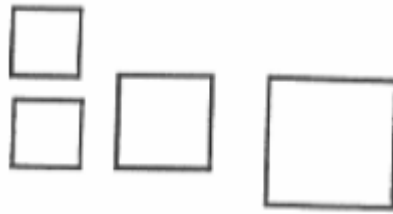
If the shapes are well-balanced, a peaceful shape evolves.



Wrong:

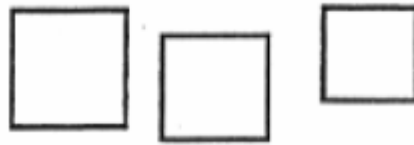
The eye immediately starts questioning: Is this image straight or not? Is that intentional or not? This is asking for trouble as there is immediate tension here.

Scaling



Good:

Be clear. The eye can immediately identify which of the squares is equally big or not equal to each other.



Wrong:

The brains starts to doubt when the individual shapes are not clearly different.



Good:

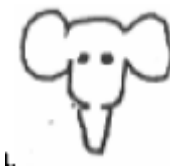
This drawing is symmetrical. The eyes and ears are of the same size. The ears are smaller than the head of the dog.



Wrong:

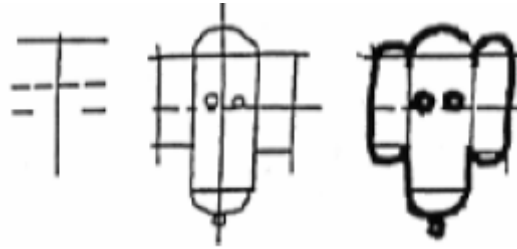
There is no balance here. The brain starts to question about the image; are the ears right? Which is bigger: the ears or the head? Is it a dog?

The scaling is THE key for the characteristics of a symbol. If you start to use it wrongly it can very easily happen that this same dog can be seen as an elephant.



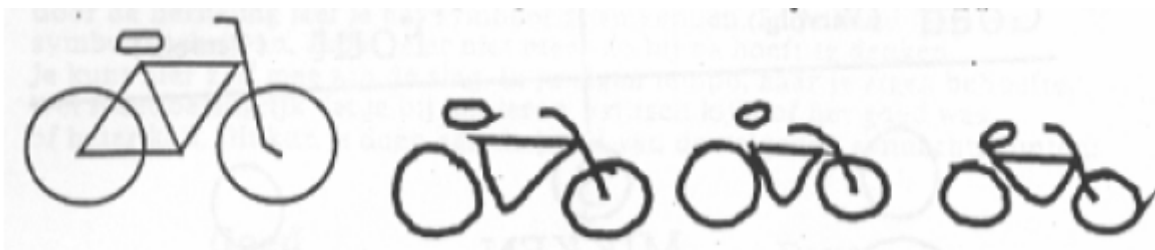
L.

Tip: Start drawing with a pencil. Start with the axes of the actual shape. Then apply the scale, then put in the basic shapes and then start to merge the various shapes. Only then you can start applying ink.



Your own style

As with writing you'll develop your own specific style over time. That's good. The original bicycle will eventually transform into your own kind of bicycle. And this again is one of the basic rules of mind mapping as well.

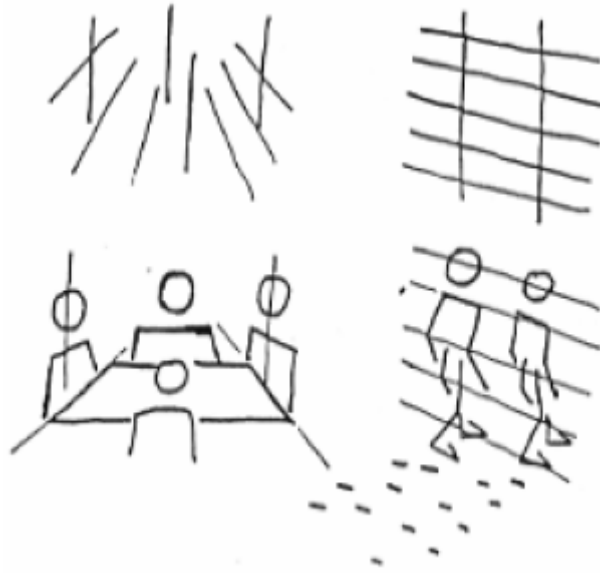


You need to develop your own mind map style. This is the best way to get the most out of mind mapping if you do this.

You only need to alter your style the moment you discover that the characteristics of the shape are undermined. At moments like these you need to go back to the original shape of this item; the characteristic shape.

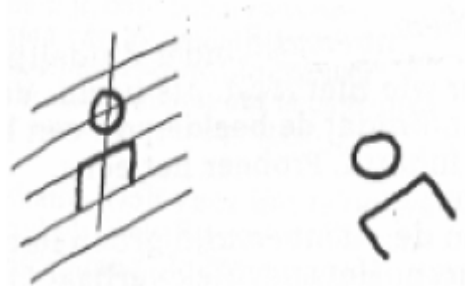
I will now cover many different standard shapes that you will be able to use in combination with a mind map.

Please remember this. The aim of a drawing is not to draw as beautiful as possible. Think very practical: You need to be able to bring alive the information which is hiding in the image.



Oh, one other difficult aspect of drawing; drawing aslope

It happens that you have lines which are aslope. These can be difficult to apply. Especially if you combine these with straight lines. When practising you should always start with the lines only. When this is done successfully, you can apply the shapes soon enough.



The use of colors

Try to make it easy for yourself. Why not use your own colorscheme.

A newspaper or bus has no expressional power on itself. But suppose that from the story it becomes very clear that the bus is not a suitable way of transportation. How can we put this information in the drawing? At moments like these, we are glad to use colors. Please remember; the image doesn't need to be an actual representation of reality!. The sole purpose of an image is to remind you of the actual meaning of the image.

In this scenario one could color the bus in red.

When you agree upon the meaning of the various colors to use, you can put a lot of different and extra meanings within an image.

The colorschemes I suggest you to use:

Red: Not funny, atrocious, gloomy, tiresome (red hearts are excepted)

Green: Funny, interesting, good, new energy

Purple: Wishes, dreams, wishes

Black/blue, brown: Neutrual (this is the inkcolor you draw with)

Orange/yellow/pink: Light, joyful, feast, bright

There are many more options you can come up with if you wish.

How to draw

a bus:

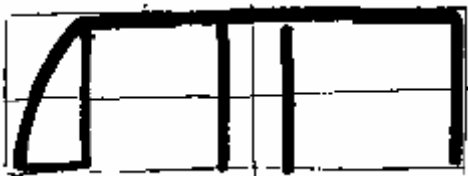
Step 1:



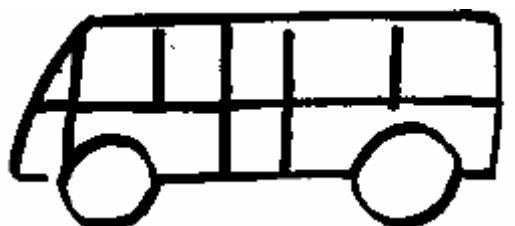
Step 2:



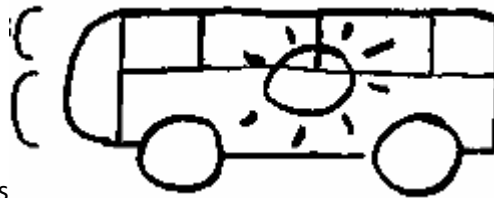
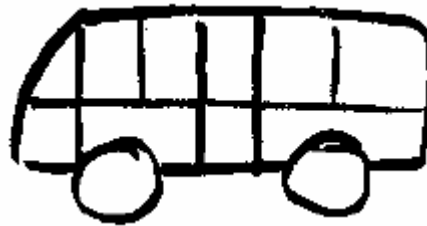
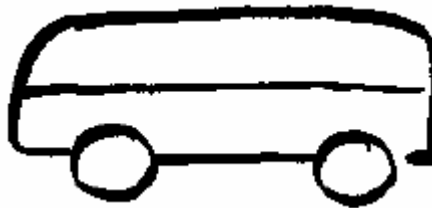
Step 3:



Step 4:



A bus has pretty big tyres in contrast to a mini van.

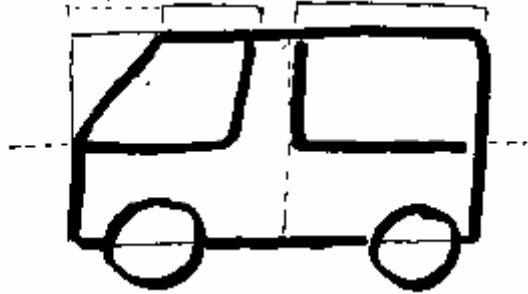
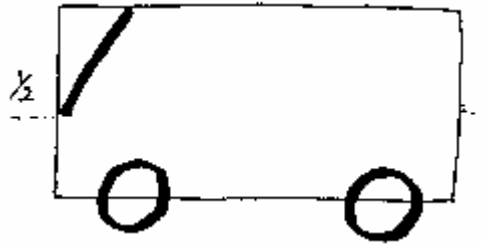


Relative small windows

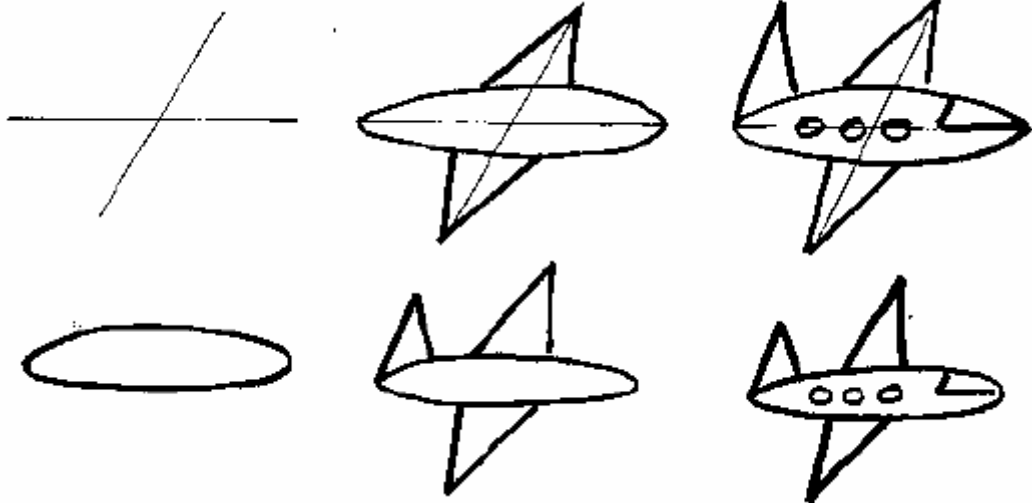
holiday bus

Minivan

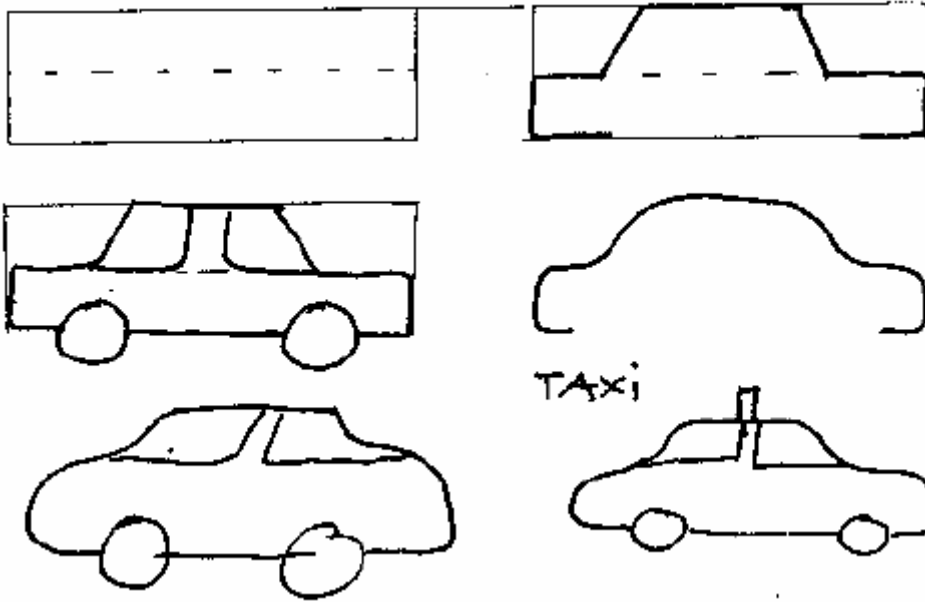




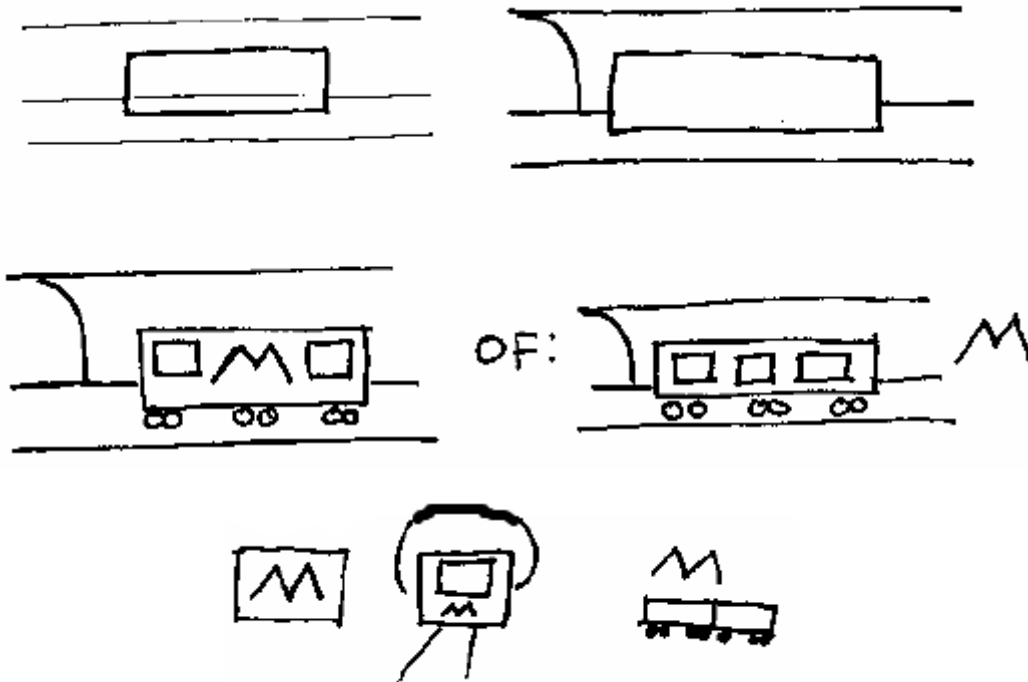
An airplane



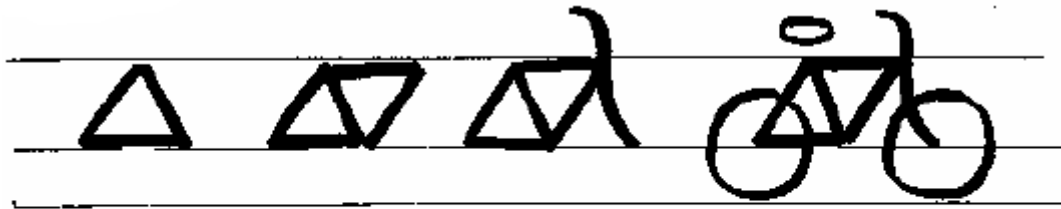
A car



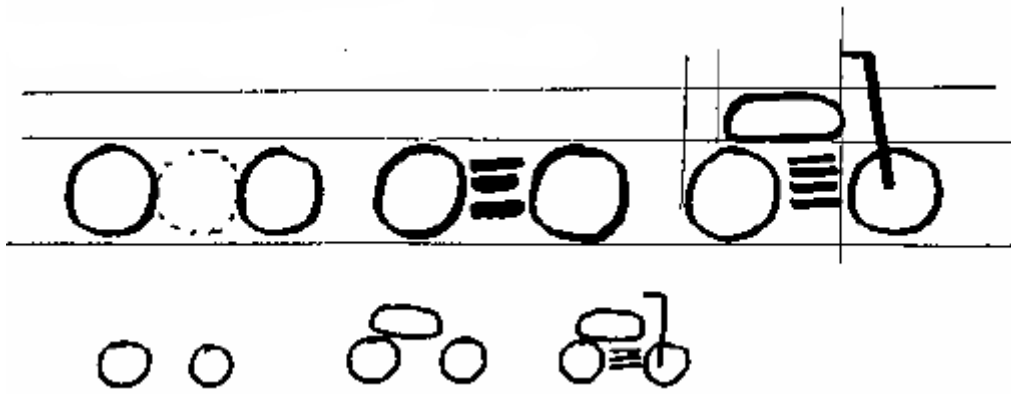
Subway or train:



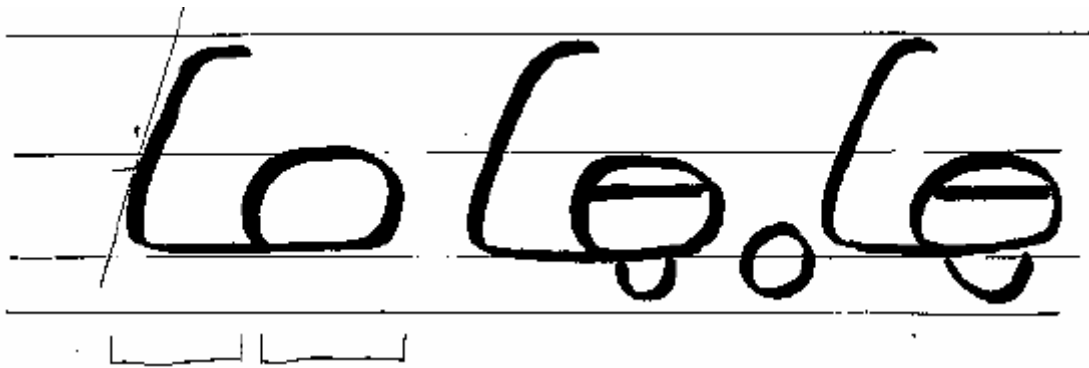
Bicycle



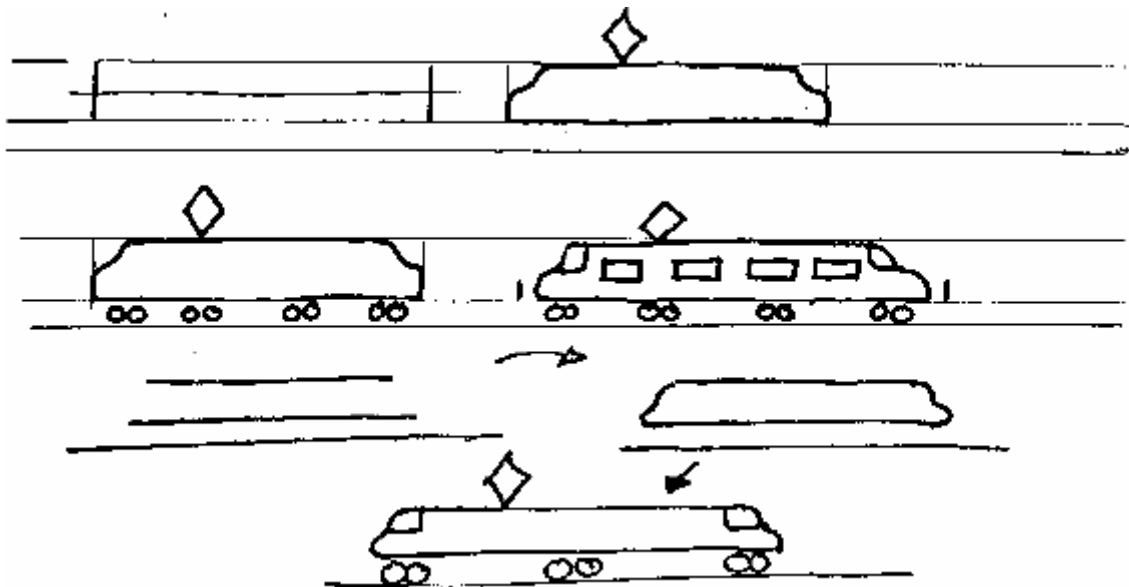
Moped



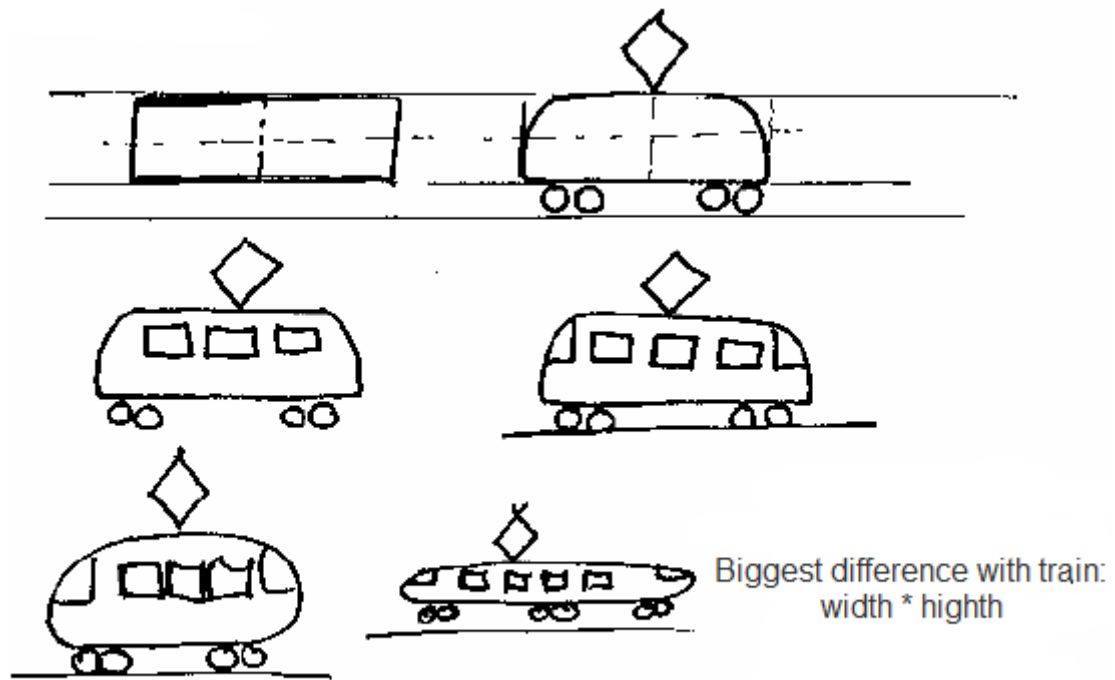
Scooter



Train



Tram



Your options with drawing people

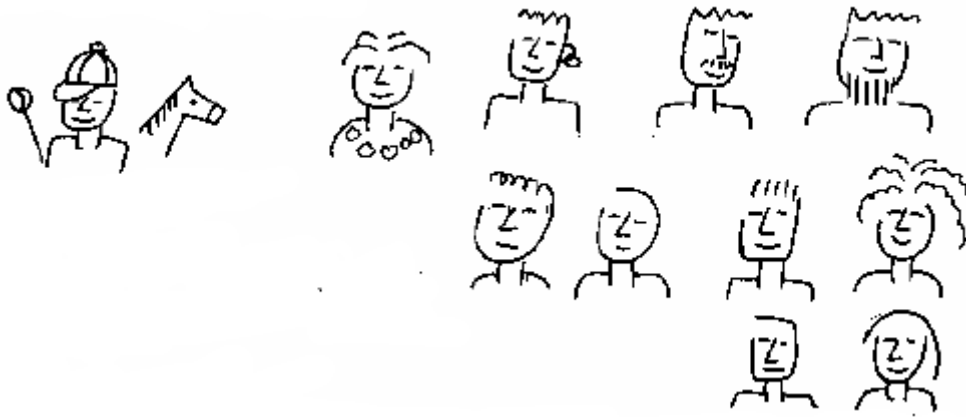
* Basics

Well, we have the basic shape of people. When we add the names of persons to it, it is possible to make an overview of which people are in somebody's life or community.

In this scenario you use the most basic shape; the cone shape.



* How to find the main character in this kind of drawings?



After making many different figures, it's important to be able to find back the main character. You do this by adding a typical sign to this main character. It can be anything; something the person is wearing, for example a necklace, earring. But it can also be a quality of that specific person or a fact from somebodys life where this person is very proud of. The usage of a quality is a very effective choice. In this case the main character him/herself will be able to find him/herself back easily between the many other characters on this piece of paper.

If this is not possible, you can use another strategy; the main character is the only one with hair, the rest has no hair at all.

How to draw typical situations?

When you want to draw specific situations or feelings, it's best to draw very basic, almost symbolical. There is no need for nuances. They make the drawing unnecessary difficult. What you try to achieve is to 'catch' the basic feeling. For example: I don't belong to this group.



It is easy; where you place the figures determines the expression. This is a very simple but powerful way of expressing the essence of the situation. If you are capable of drawing these strong but simple drawings, they form the basis of adding nuances as well again.



How to draw emotions?

It might be important to draw the emotions on paper as well. Emotions, combined with how the people are related to each other and the rest of the drawing, complete the image.

Although the style is very simplistic, the images start to become very expressive. You also need to be aware that this is a danger as well. I mean, if you recognize easily who is who in a drawing and you add facial expressions, you might stigmatize this person too much with the way you draw this image. It becomes very easy to say that somebody is an angry person.



It might be a better idea to use an extra attribute or symbol next to the person. In this way it becomes way less personal.



In general there are as many good as negative persons in somebody's life. People with negative sides should be 'equipped' with extra symbols or icons which show that negative side of that person. The facial expression of these persons is neutral. Also be careful with facial expressions with persons you have an emotional or family band with. In case you draw this relative in a negative way, can lead to a loyalty conflict if you don't watch this carefully. Here are some examples of icons which gradually become worse.



* Usage of colors when drawing persons

The red color is to be used when experiencing negative things and experiences. You can draw the main character in red if he/she is only experiencing negative feelings or memories. Or you can draw the attribute in red. You can also embrace the item with which negative emotions are felt in red.

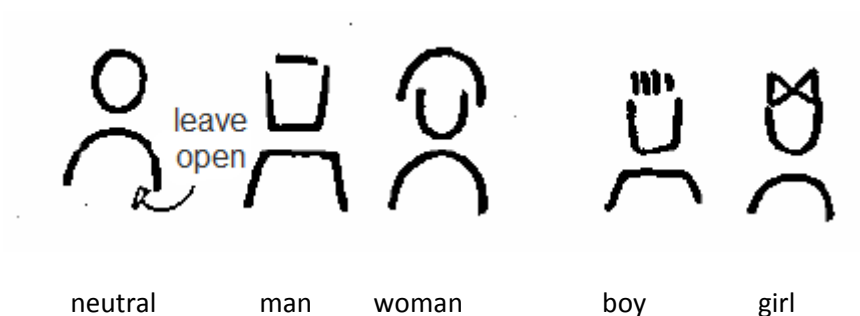


As you are drawing/telling about other people's life, it is wise to be very respectful and carefully in the way you draw what you want to say. Whether or not it is true what you draw is less important. What you should consider when expressing emotions: Is the person capable of accepting this expression about his life?

On the next pages I will explain further and various other styles.

The human being, simplistic symbol

Ideal for the usage of drawing groups of persons

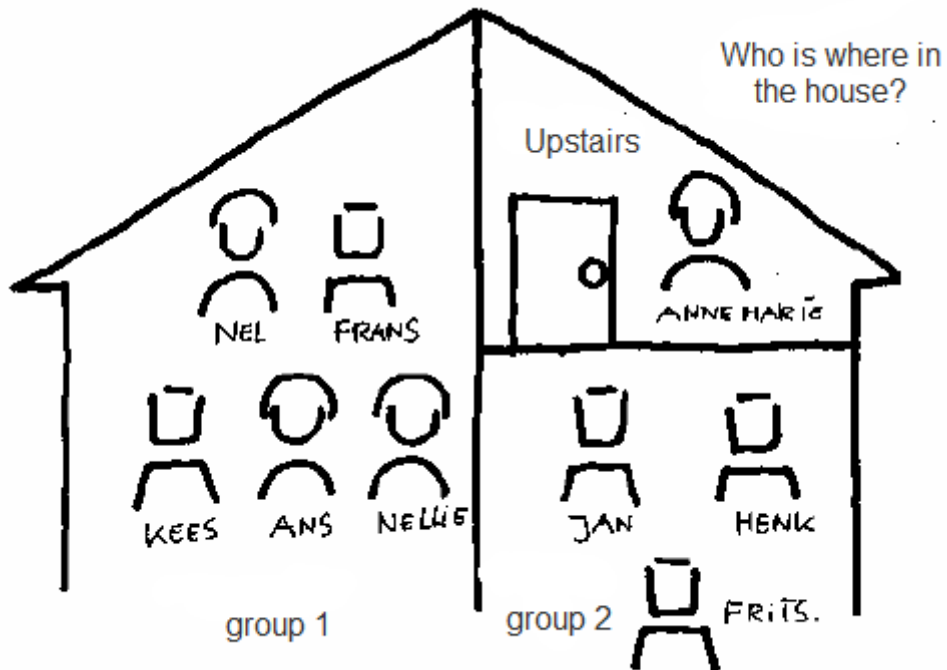


A family, for example



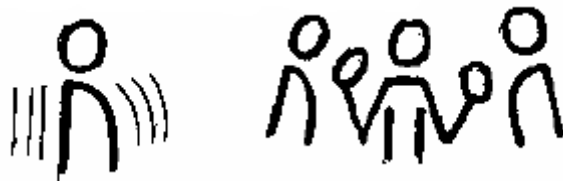
This is also a way of seeing immediately what the role of the main person within the family is.

Of who lives where in the house



The wireframe human

The wireframe human is a little more complex. As we draw the whole body, it becomes possible to express activities and bodylanguage. While practising beware of the details.

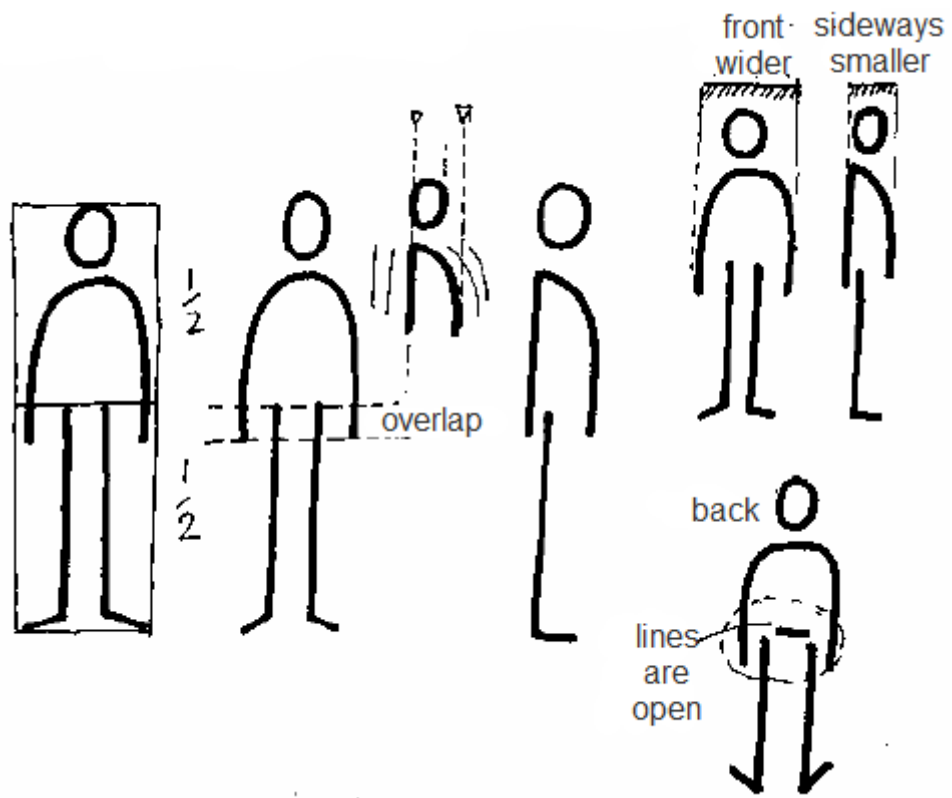


For example: The difference of curved and straight lines can accentuate the difference between the front and the back of a person. In this way you can show which way somebody is watching.

The elements from the bodylanguage are also very visual:

An open posture or a closed posture.

Somebody is pretending to be bigger or smaller than he is.

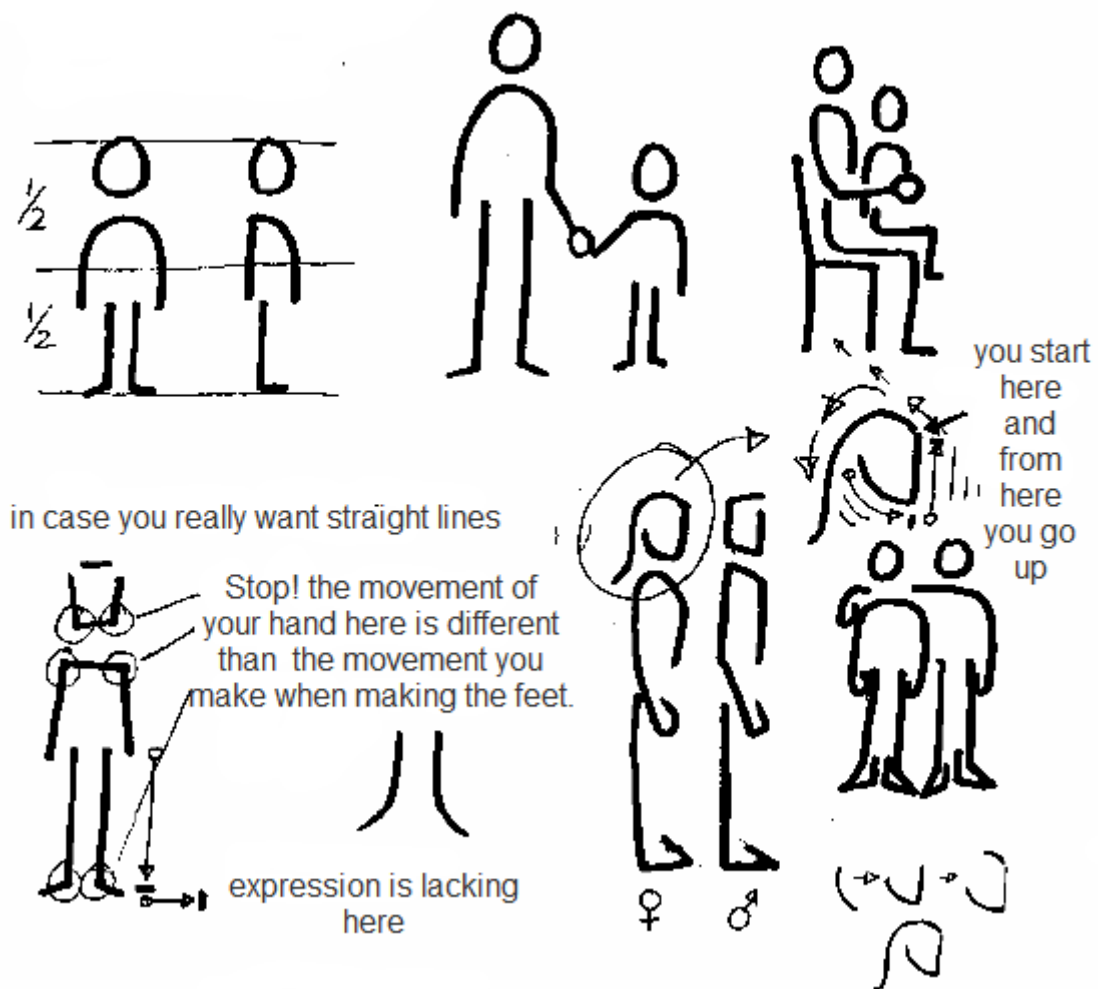


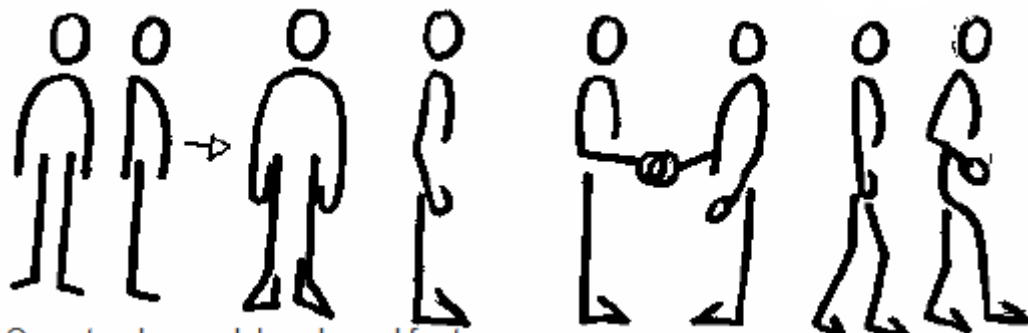
In relation to multiple people:

The posture is open or rejecting.

People are close or not close.

we also use the direction in which the person is looking and later we'll use the emotions in his face as well. The moment you want the elements in the drawing to repeat, you have to be able to draw the whole body of a person. You must be able to distinguish between the front and the back of the person. That seems complicated but due to the fact that the lines remain simple, it shouldn't be hard to make these drawings. Please take good care of the dimensions.





One step beyond: hands and feet

In case of straight forms/shapes

Add an element in order to express something. A profession or hobby for example.

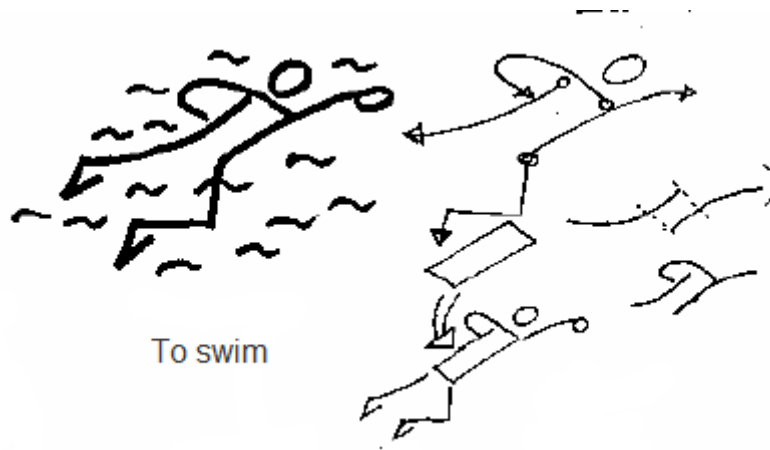


party



Play computergame





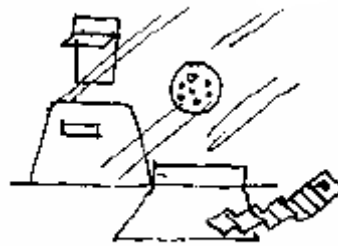
To swim



Jogging



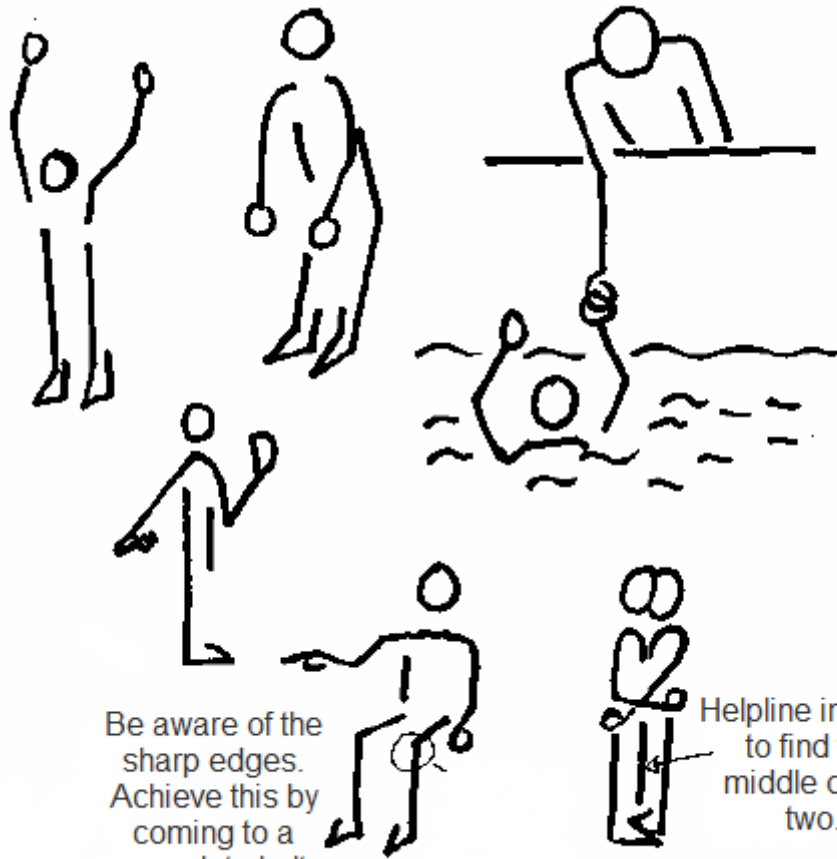
Doctor



Selling tickets

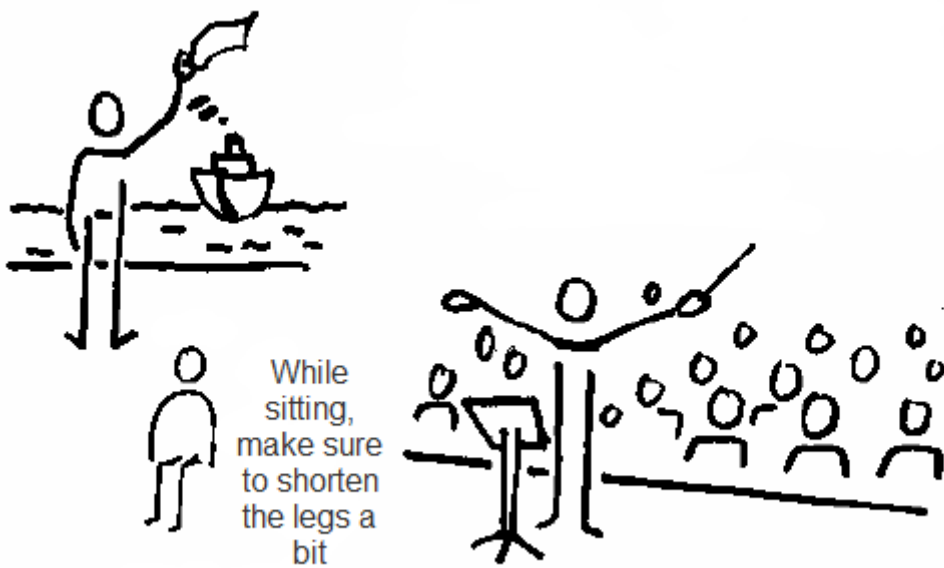


The open parts of the figure/person suggest thickness. That space don't require to be drawn. In case they become too open, place a line to assist you, or you add length to the legs.



Be aware of the sharp edges. Achieve this by coming to a complete halt while drawing

Helpline in order to find the middle of the two.



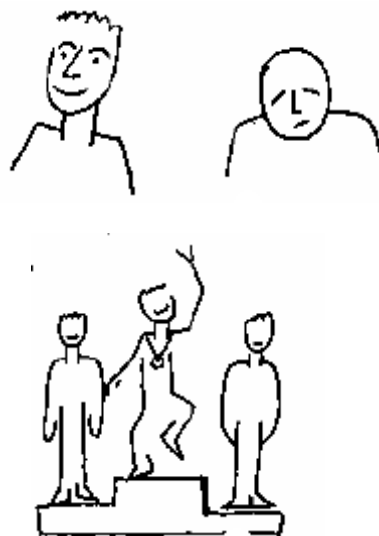
While sitting, make sure to shorten the legs a bit

How to add emotions

The drawings become even more expressive the moment you add emotions to the face. In order to guide the eyes even more in which direction the figure is watching, these images get even a neck and eyes.



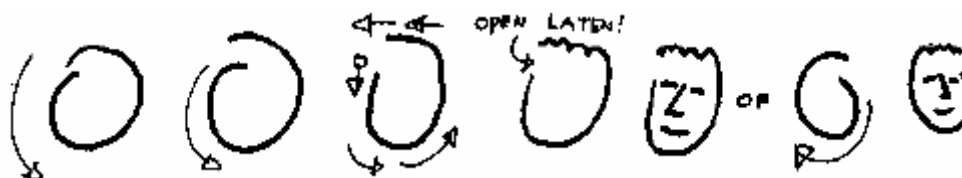
It is ok to use only the upper part of the body. But you can use the whole body as well if the bodylanguage is adding to the overall image.



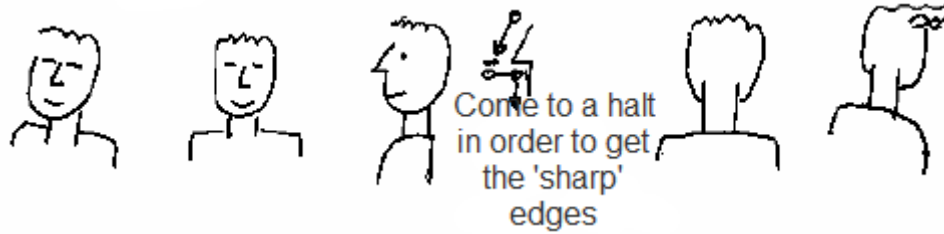
How to draw a head



This is how a head is supposed to be on the shoulders. Especially when the shoulders are aligned aslope will make the figure appear to be aslope.



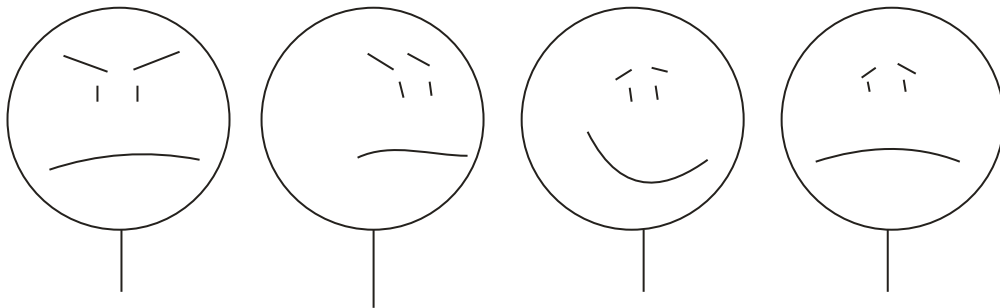
The head is to be drawn by drawing just one line. Practise drawing a good head from at first the simple form to later the more complex form.



One head can have many different facial expressions.

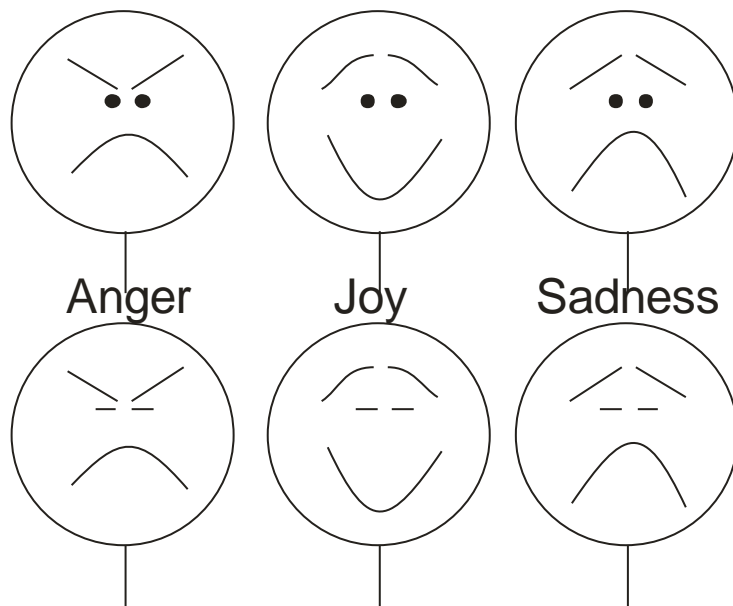
Facial expressions

The moment we draw circles and we put a few extra lines and dots in there in order to put eyes, noses and mouth in there, we immediately get a facial expression. Without too much effort we get a face which looks to be angry, or happy or lost. This mainly happens because of the eyes, eyebrows and the mouth.



These simple images already prove that these simple lines have a huge impact on the level of recognition of facial expressions. The 3 main facial expressions are anger, joy and sadness. Pay attention to the way the eyebrows correlate with the way the mouth is drawn.

In case of anger the eyebrows are very closely above the eyes. They are tilted downwards towards the eyes. The same applies to the sides of the mouth.

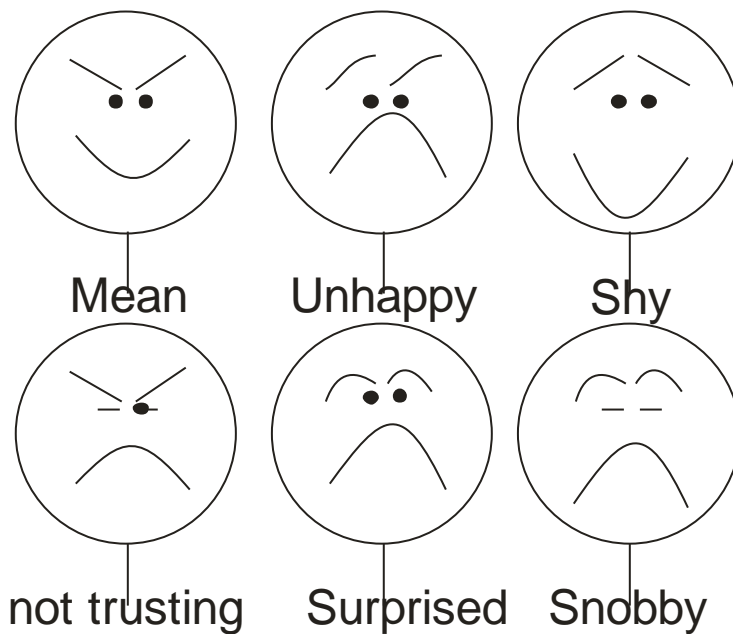


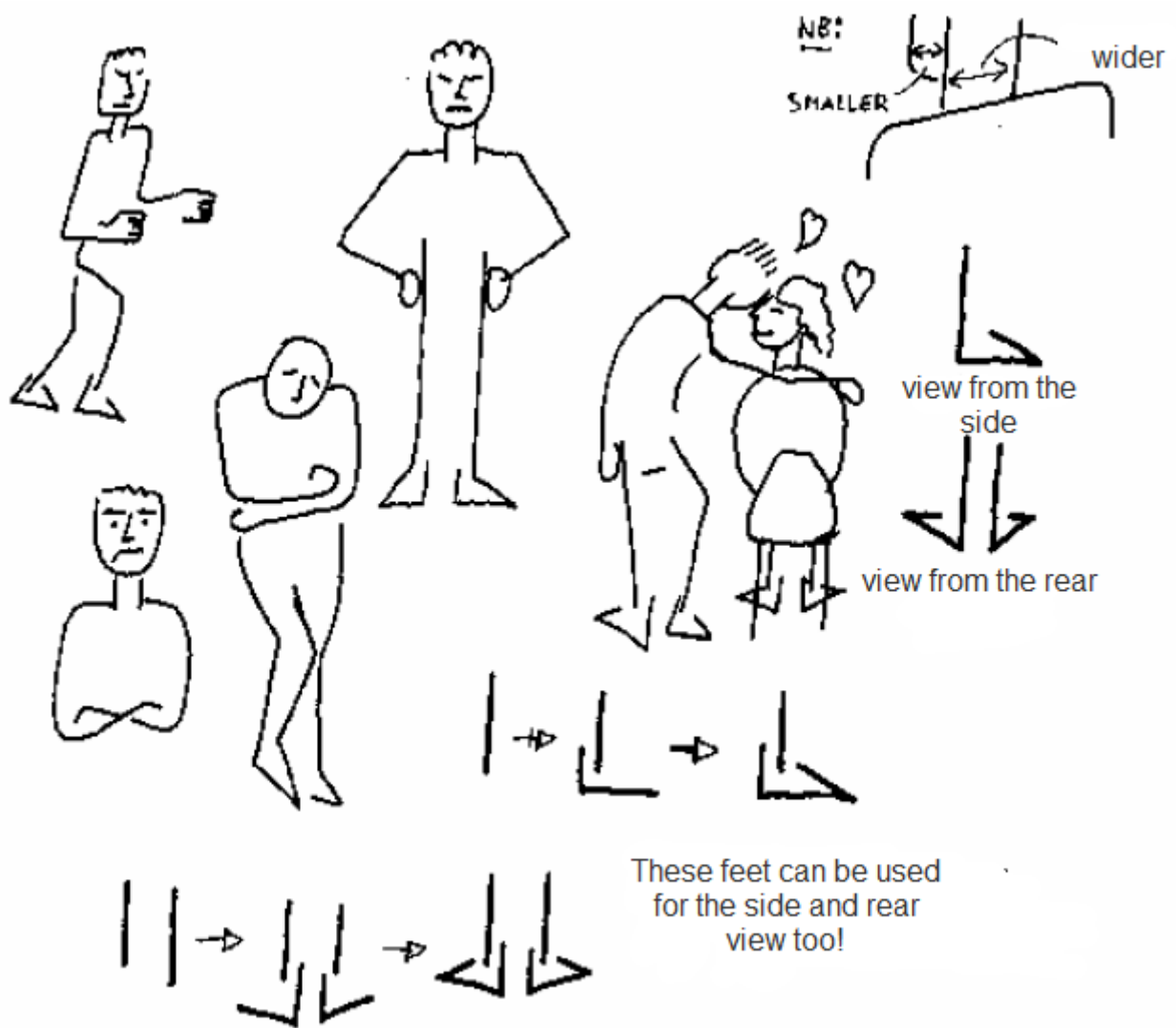
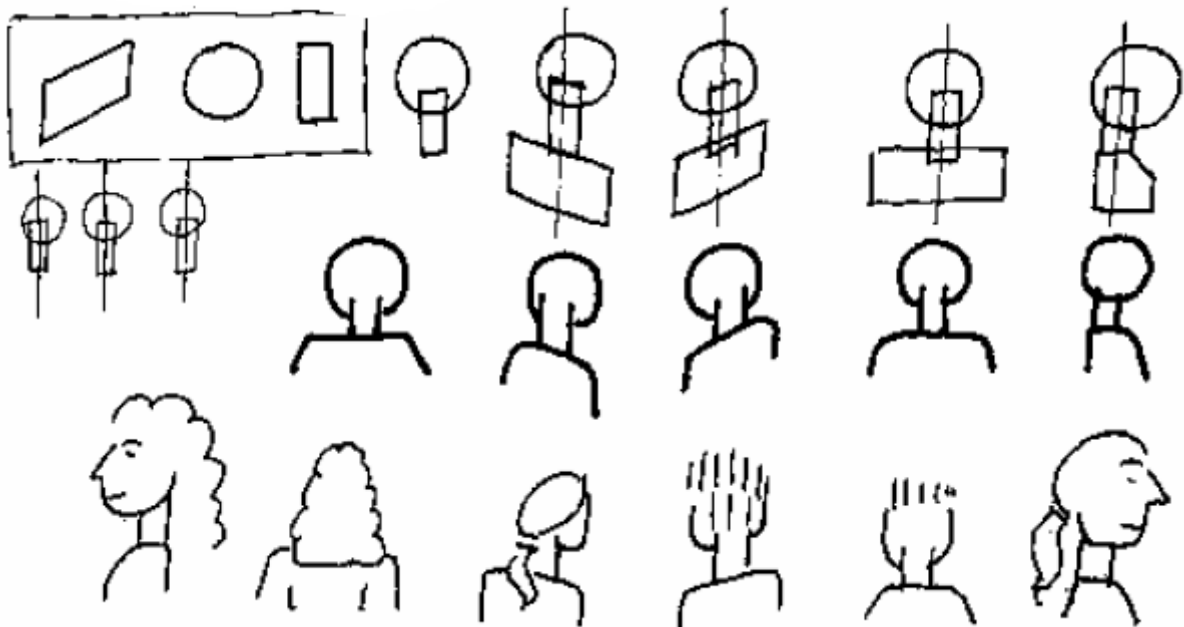
In case of joy, the eyebrows are way above the eyes. The corners of the mouth are tilted upwards.

In case of sadness the eyebrows are closer to the eyes again. Now the outside of the eyebrows are tilted downwards. The edges of the mouth are tilted downwards.

All faces down below are extracted from the 3 models above. The place of the eyes, eyebrows and the mouth are mixed throughout these faces. As you can see, the mean face has the mouth of joy and the eyebrows of anger. The dissatisfied face has the mouth and eyebrows of anger.

These last faces are very specific expressions. In some cases you can even leave out the dots of the eyes without losing too much of the facial expression.



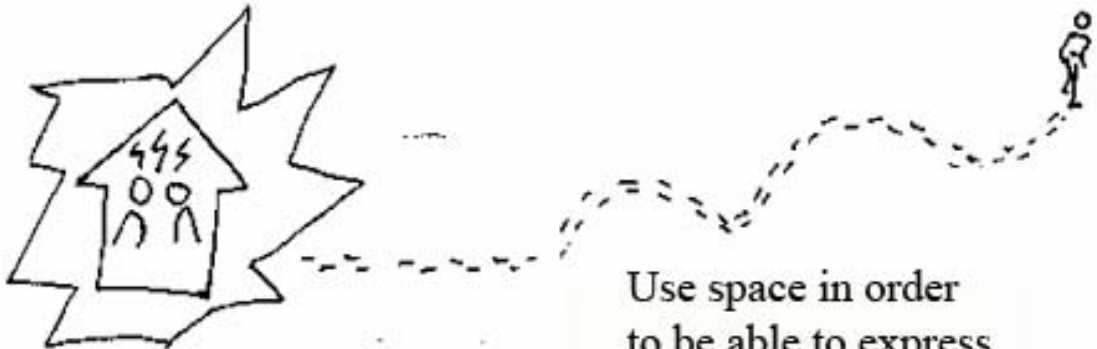
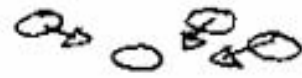
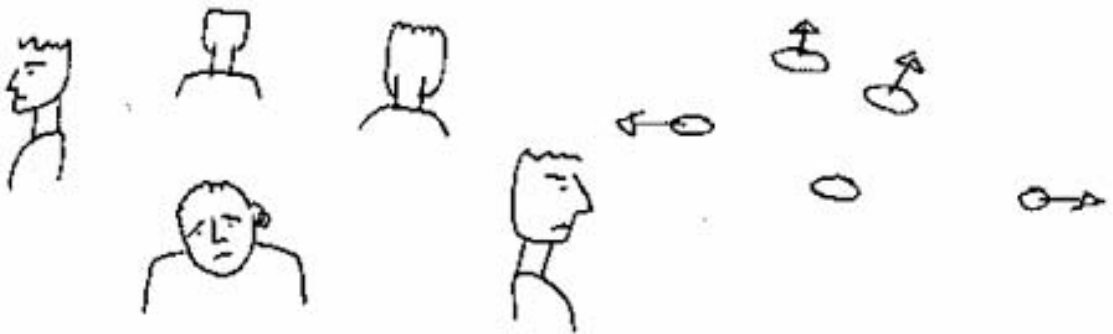


These feet can be used for the side and rear view too!

Emotions can determine the impression you get from an image.



The same applies to the differences in space and direction.



Use space in order
to be able to express
'walking away'.

More internal thoughts and feelings

* Think of...

When the eyes are shut this implies that the person is more concerned with internal thoughts than the outer world.

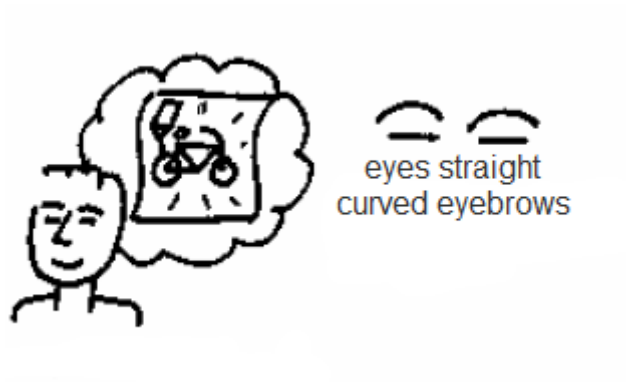
Think of



Remember: a list of items in your head.



or an image



Forgotten: 'empty paper'



Idea!



Idea!

both images with high curved eyebrows and dots as eyes.

* Moods

You could use this general distinction:

Thoughts and emotions you have, are still easy to manage and control.

Until now we've drawn these in clouds and balloons. Moods are circumstances where you are more involved in. They 'poses' you. You can visualize this by drawing the main character in the center of it.



If you draw somebody in something, you'll need more space/room

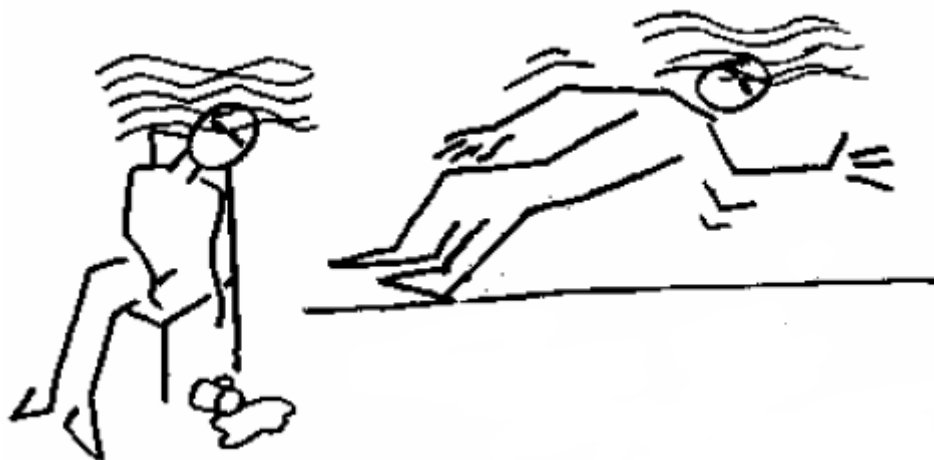




Don't know what to do.....you're bored (crossing your arms).

*Agreed expressions

Not every icon is as obvious as you might want it to be. In these cases you have to agree on the meaning of the drawing. Here are several examples of icons which are made and have meaning because they have been agreed upon.



Epilepsy



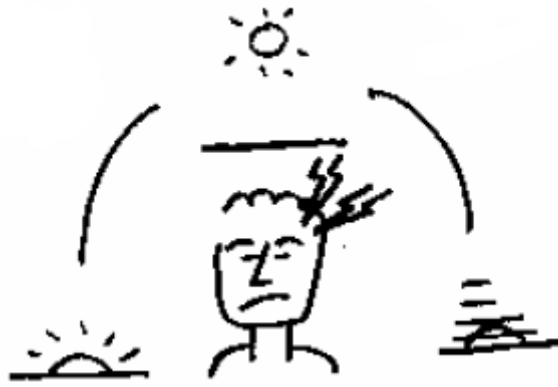
Carefully listening



To marry/ engage



Myalgia



Migraine (the whole day long)



Self supporting



Self



With aid



Employee with nametag



Chief, boss "with stripes"



The only worker who keeps on going to work (rectangle to express the empty place next to the worker).

*Hands and expression

A specific form of agreed expressions is the use of hands. The hands are to be used in order to express an idea.

- to point is almost the same as to chose, to decide, to address



- to hold, stop, this is not necessary for me, you have to stop.



- to write, to make notes, to remember.





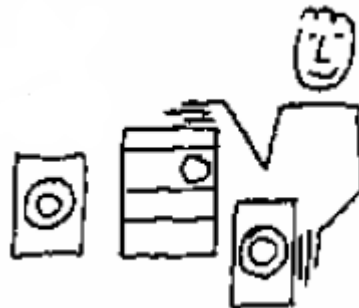
- to hit, to irritate, to tease, to maltreat



- fist, to fight

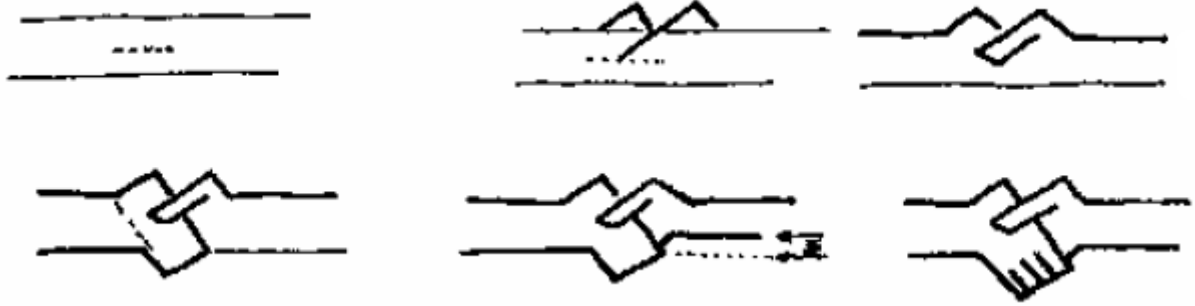


- to put your hands on it, it belongs to me, it's mine

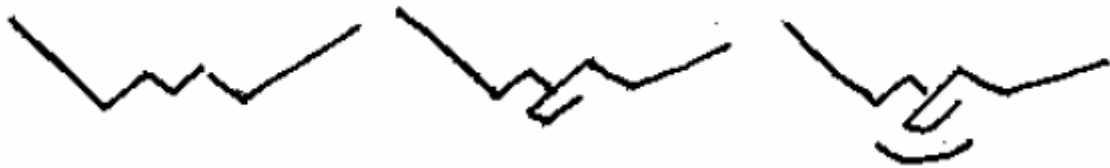


* the number of fingers is not important.

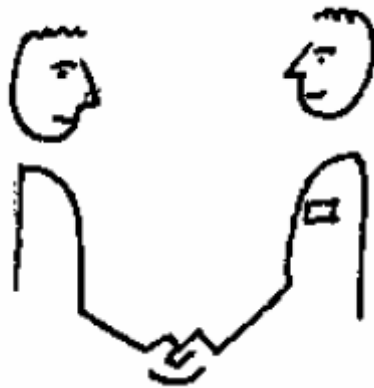
* to shake hands , appointment, agreement, to agree



or even more simplified



This symbol is a little harder to make. If the approach of the conversation was respectful, than chosing will lead to a equivalent agreement. The symbol agreement, deal or to agree is referring to the other person in the icon as being equal. Agreement can refer to having 'respect'.



Examples of hands and expressions



I choose

Worker chooses



Employer works

In many cases a simple circle for the hands will be sufficient . You only draw 'real' hands if the expression has to be real.



In some cases two simple lines are sufficient in order to say what you want to tell.



It is important to keep a hand as simple as possible. You normally don't need to do this, but in case you do, here is a scheme that will show you how to produce good hands.

Drawing hands is not easy. But the scheme below can be used as an example. As you can see there is a huge difference between the inside and outside of a hand. Due to two simple lines you can clearly see the difference. Even if you draw a fist, picking something up or when you grab something, you still need these two lines.



Schematical



inside with 5 fingers



inside with 4 fingers



outside 5



fingers outside 4 fingers



open hand



fist inside



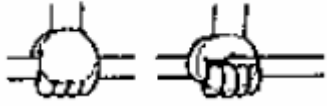
fist outside



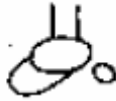
Pointing inside



Pointing outside



Holding on to something



Leaning on hand scheme



Leaning

Individual examples / People



Argue aboutdoing the dishes (in this particular case)

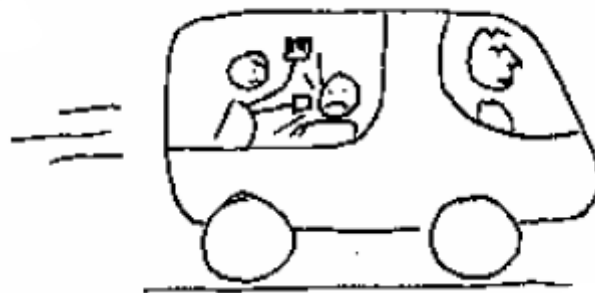
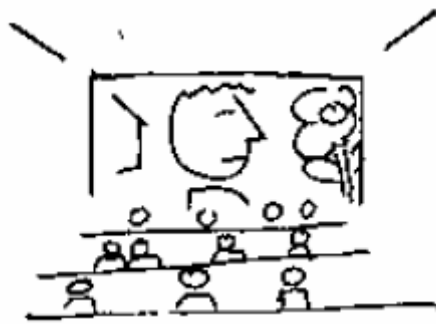
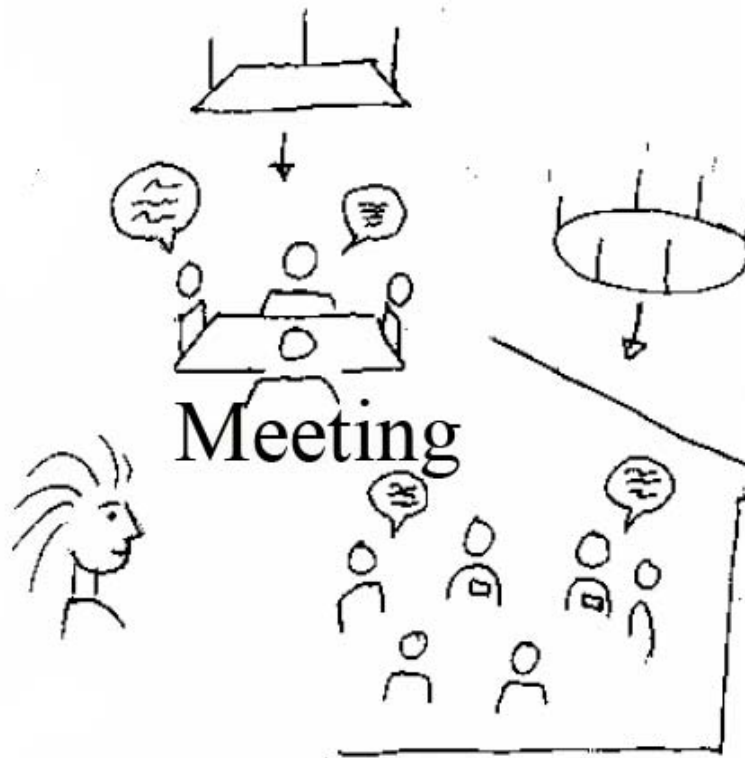


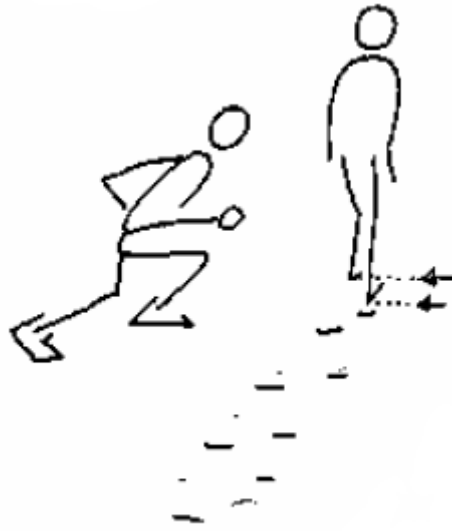


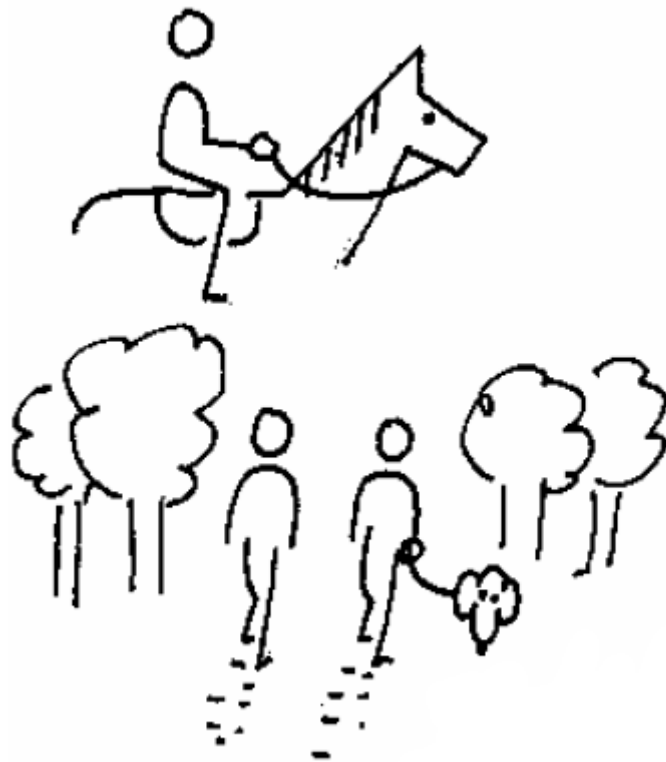
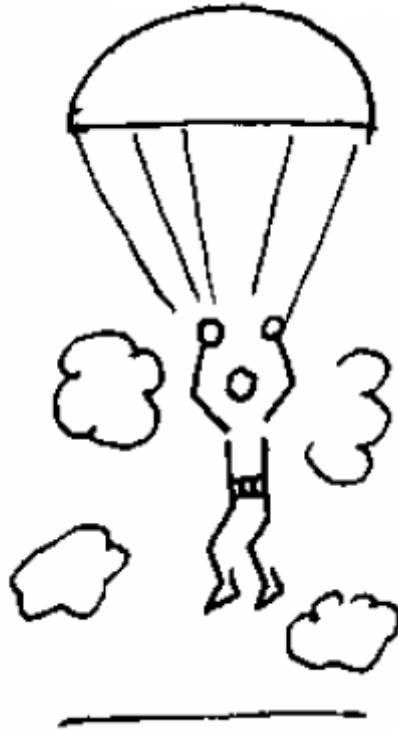
Leaving angry



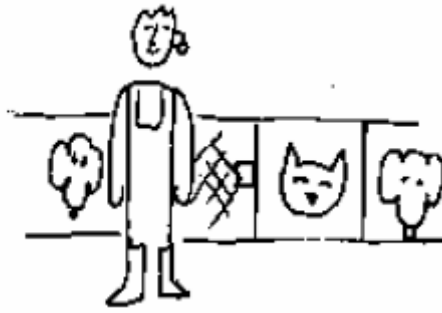
Meeting







Don't worry about perspective. Keep it simple, just use the icon for a dog.

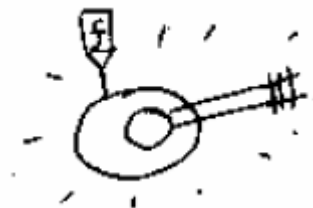


To work at an asylum

How to draw a guitar? That is not the right question. You just want to draw a specific situation and you try to draw something that assembles, or sounds like, or makes you think of a guitar.



And the same as with a bike. With the bike we used the simple pictogram as the basis for many variations.



New guitar



Guitar lesson



simplified

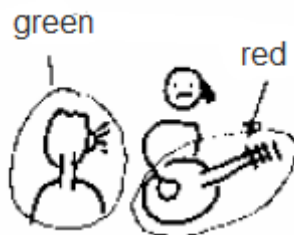


Or even more simplified for an agenda

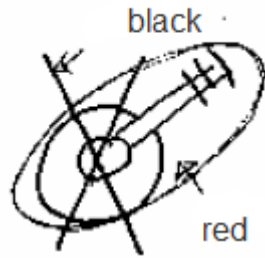
The meaning of the varying colors makes your work easier. Here is an example:



I was dreaming of a guitar



The teacher is nice. Practising is not nice.



I actually don't want to learn to play the guitar.

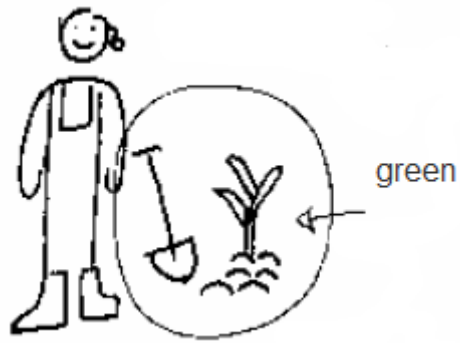


He is so nice (I've been taken lessons for so long, I do not dare to tell him I want to stop!). Will he be mad or sad?

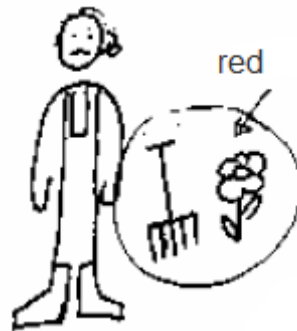


Petra will accompany me when I will cancel my guitarlessons.

Even if you use colors, it's better if you keep the images simple.



I love gardening







I don't like gardening

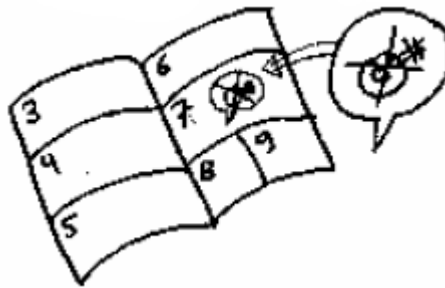


Simplified

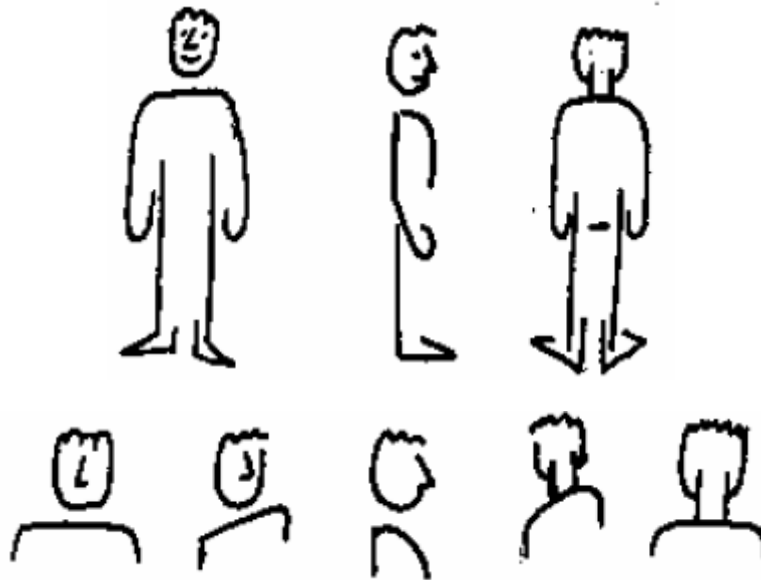
Or in a scheme:

 works	 doesn't work
 <p>green</p>	 <p>red</p>

In an agenda a simple pictogram that goes along with the agreement.



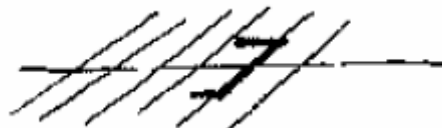
A good and average style of drawing:

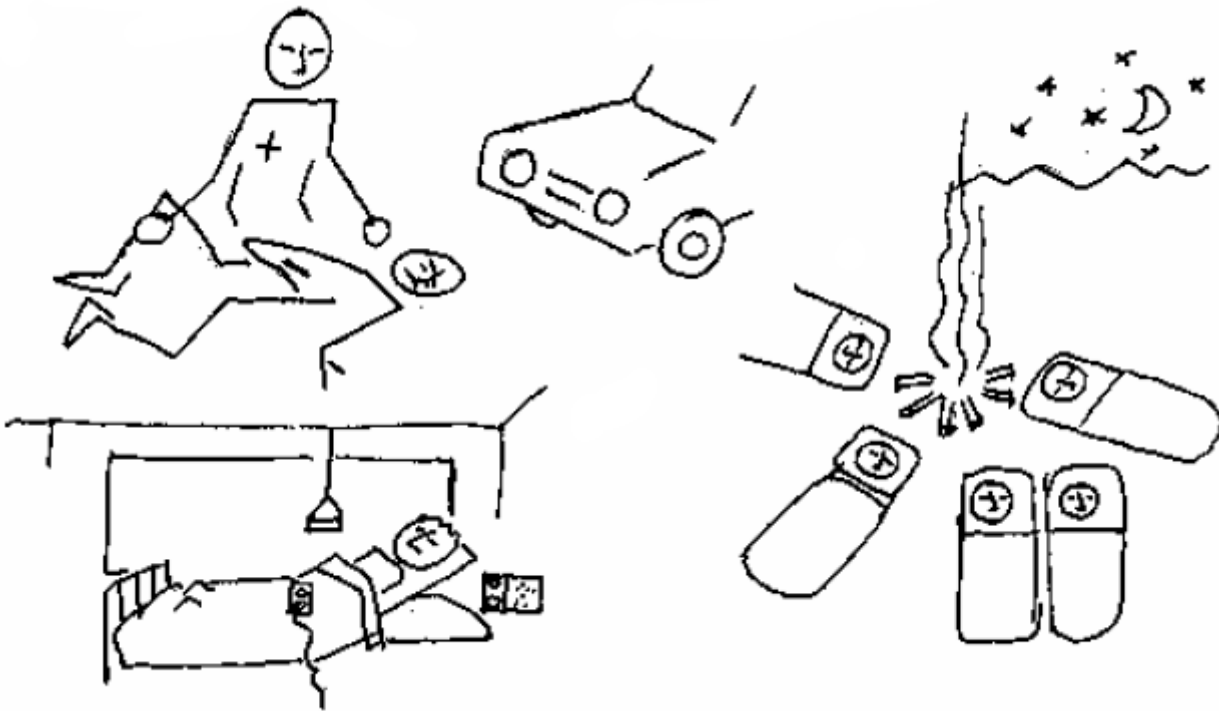
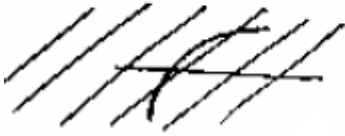
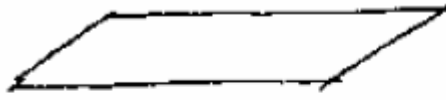


In case there is no specific emotion, just add a smiling face.

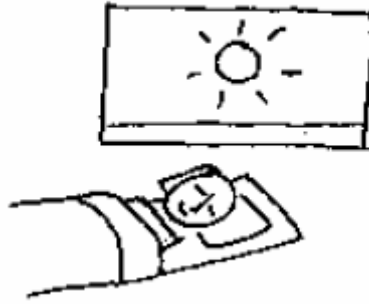
To give an image an aslope posture, simply put the shoulder line aslope. This line should be on the back of you neck.

To lay down, to sleep. Is totally depending on the way the image/figure is posted. It is better to give an image aslope lines in order to fully be able to express sleeping.





variation to sleeping longer than usual.



* **How many details do you need?** How much extra expression do you need? Which style do you need?

The simplest wirefigure consists of 4 lines. But you probably noticed that you can add a lot of extra elements. These will increase your possibilities of expression as well again. But when do you want to go the extra mile?

Just keep it simple!

It simply is not possible to keep on drawing constantly. (I assume you are not very skilled [yet]), It simple takes too much effort and time. It is better to focus on the content of the images you want to produce. Try to maintain simplicity as long as possible.

* How to come up with pictograms filled with emotions or emotional situations?

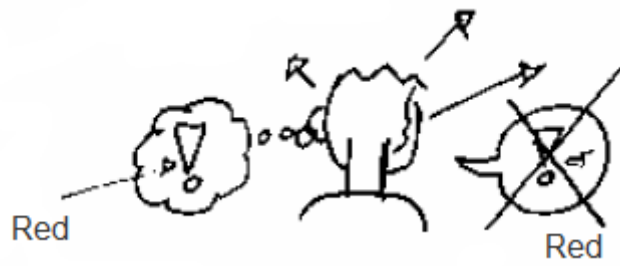
In these cases try to imagine the situation. See it as vividly as possible in your mind's eye. At these moments you'll need empathy.

Sometimes these emotions are not easily to be captured. At these moments it is important to look at the rest of your mental image. Look for characteristics that make the situation as it is. These can be drawn!. Look at the posture of the body (bodylanguage) and expression.

Rob is not picking up the laundry although it is his turn



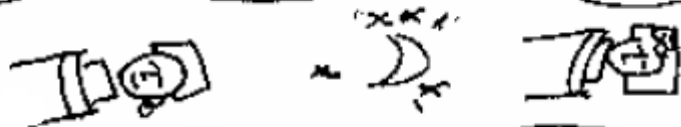
I see it all happening, but I won't mention it

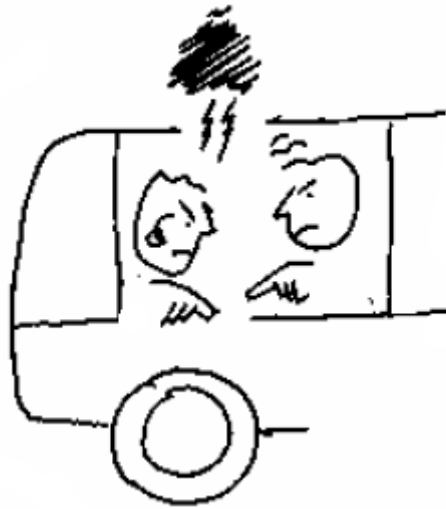
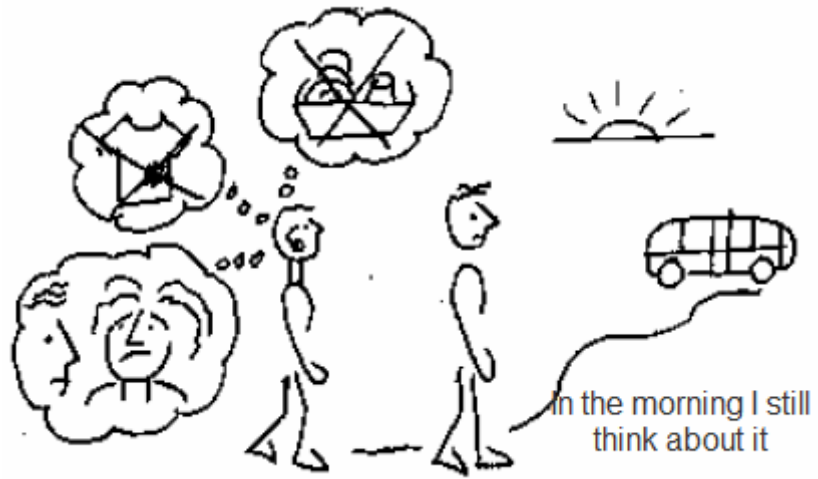


Rob is not doing nice to here



Everybody will sleep
until the next
morning



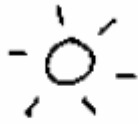


* How to capture time?

We have 4 parts of the day:



The morning



Daytime



Evening



The night



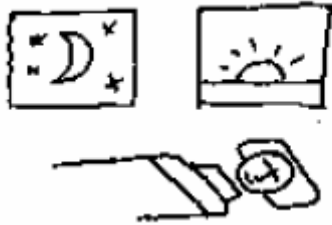
You can also use the standard image of a clock.

A good example of combining several images in order to express what you want to tell:

Nightshift



Sleeping in the morning



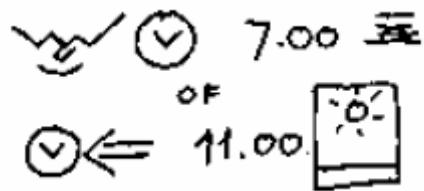
Waking up at noon



to go to bed

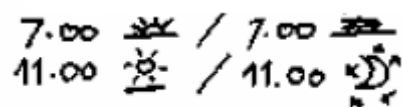


The time agreed upon



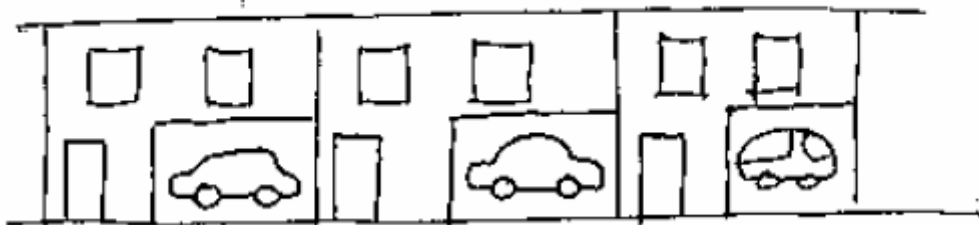
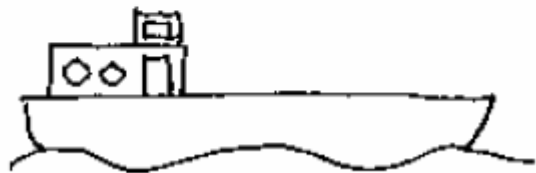
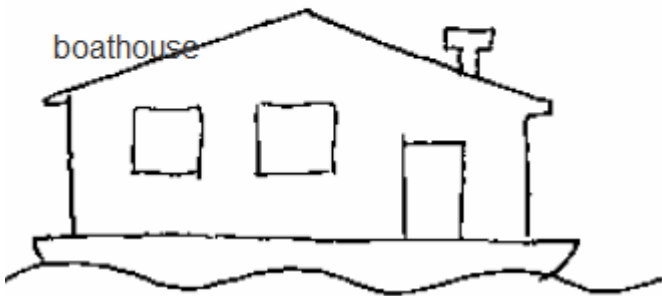
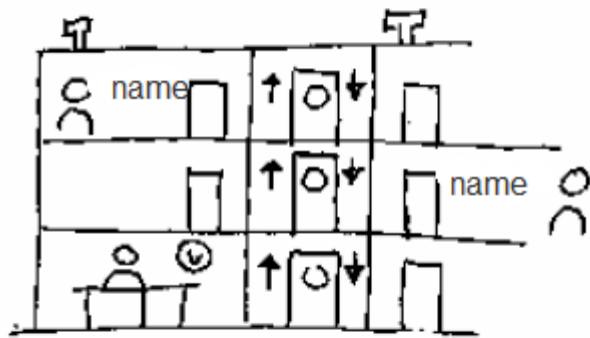
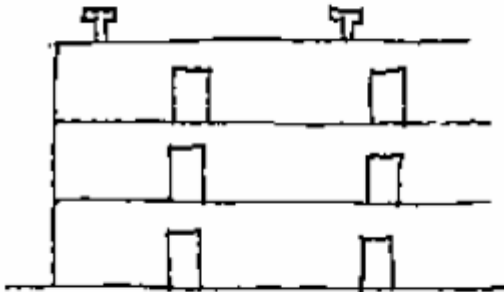
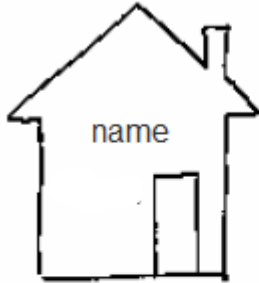
or

how to draw it down in an agenda:



* Locations:

Never try to imitate a building. You need patience to do that. But you can use different kind of shapes. Here are a few examples. Try to draw these small. Put a name underneath them. Draw it bigger if you want to include persons or names.

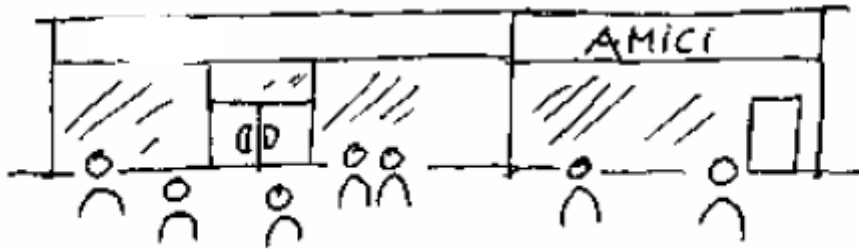




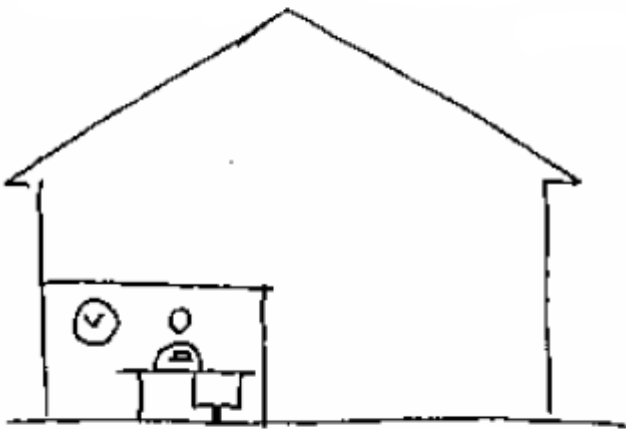
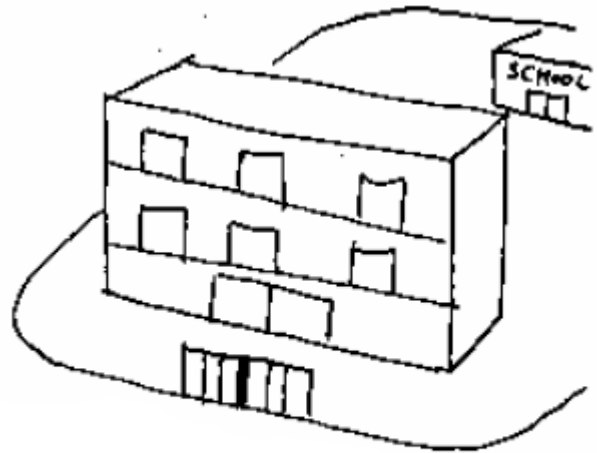
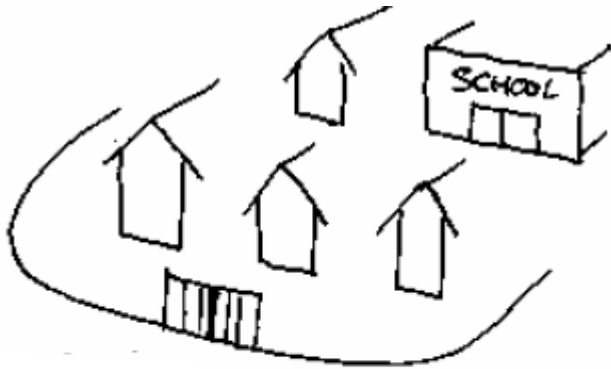
SNACK BAR

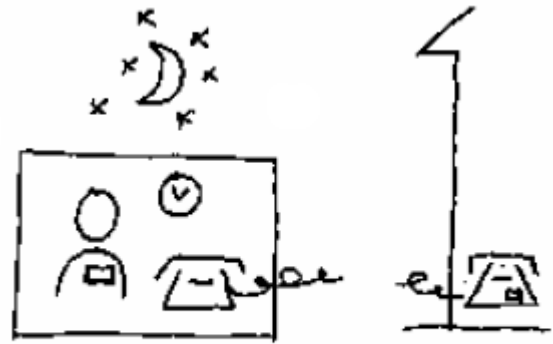


clothing shop



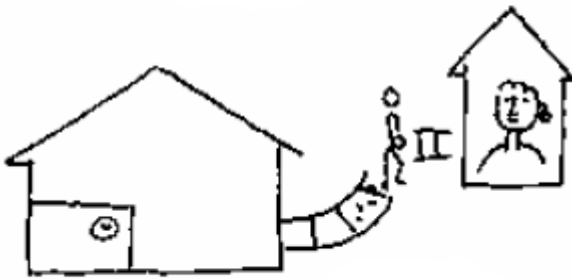
shopping mall



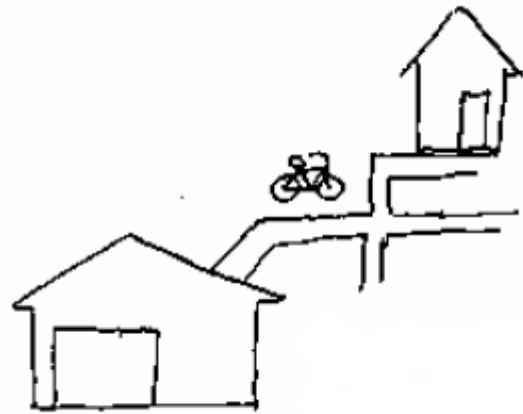


Available by phone at night

How close are you?



Very close; you can walk it



One block away; doable by bike

