

The Head

Part 2: Planes

Planes of the head

The most important part of learning the planes of the head is to start simple. Think of things cubically as much as possible (side plane, front plane, top plane, etc.) As your command of the information improves, add new planes. That being said I like to begin thinking of the head as a spherical form that I then plane off by adding an elongated front plane and carving off the sides to create a somewhat cubic form. I like to then break the elongated front plane into three bevels, softening the turn from the frontal face/forehead plane into the side plane, with a cheek/temple plane. Through the lower part of the face this plane runs from the side of the chin, outer third of the eye socket to the circular side plane of the head. The upper plane of the head runs from the inner third of the eye socket to the side plane. With the exception of the ear the features are contained mostly in the front plane of the head. The eyes are a boxy concavity that is carved roughly 1/3 of the way down the front plane, the nose is a boxy convexity that spans the middle third of the front plane, and the mouth is simplified into a semi-cylinder (I have simplified it further into three planes) which fills the gap between the nose and chin. From here you will begin to delve into sub-planes which tend to be more unique to the individual you are drawing. By the time that this becomes important you will have developed a keen eye for planar analysis. I have rendered one possible set of sub-planes in ex. 6, notice the way there are a greater proliferation of planes in the areas the transition from subcutaneous bone to fleshy areas.

Invention

When working from your imagination, as in invention or character design, manipulation of the proportions of the head as well as the relationship and emphasis of the planes will help to maintain a uniqueness as well as a continuity to your characters from one angle to the next.

