

Famous Artists Cartoon Course

Westport, Connecticut

Pretty girls

Lesson



Rube Goldberg

Milton Caniff

Al Capp

Harry Haenigsen

Willard Mullin

Gurney Williams

Dick Cavalli

Whitney Darrow, Jr.

Virgil Partch

Barney Tobey



Joe King

Pretty girls

by Joe King, outstanding advertising cartoonist



Although cartooning and illustration are miles apart in most of the elements that go to make up a picture, there is one meeting point at which they join hands in the good old fraternity grip — the pretty girl.

The pretty girl, the dame, the frail, the tomato, the cookie, the cutie is always welcome in a cartoon no matter how grotesque the rest of the characters may be. She comes down to us right through the ages from the first lady of the world — Mother Eve. Cleopatra, the Queen of Sheba, Salome, Madame Du Barry, Josephine, Sadie Thompson — all of them stand out in the pages of literature like a headlight in a tunnel. The pretty girl is here to stay, and the cartoonist must include her in his repertoire. As Oscar Hammerstein sang in his great musical piece, "South Pacific:" "There is nothing like a dame,

Nothing in the world —"

In drawing a pretty girl, whether a society dame, farmerette, waif or shop girl, don't be too skimpy with the bust or the thigh line. These can be accentuated without giving the drawing any suggestion of vulgarity. The beauteous charms must all be there without pointing them up in the text or balloons. The girl may be very proper, but the appeal of her graceful curves is never unwelcome. Al Capp's hillbilly types and Milton Caniff's Oriental vampires are entirely different characters, but both have plenty of sex appeal and give the reader very satisfactory eye exercise as he follows the story.

The sexy female figure may be divided into four central parts. First comes the head and hair. A pretty face must be crowned with appropriate hair. Above all the hair style must fit the times. An 1890 hair style on a modern bathing beauty would never get past the reader. Women readers especially are critical of the way a cartoonist draws the hair on any female characters. Second come the breasts. It is here that beginners and sometimes even professionals go off the beam by over-exaggeration. The width of a single pen or brush line can make the difference between a pleasing shape and a vulgar or crude lump of fat. Don't lay sex on with a trowel. Be subtle about it. True, the breasts are drawn

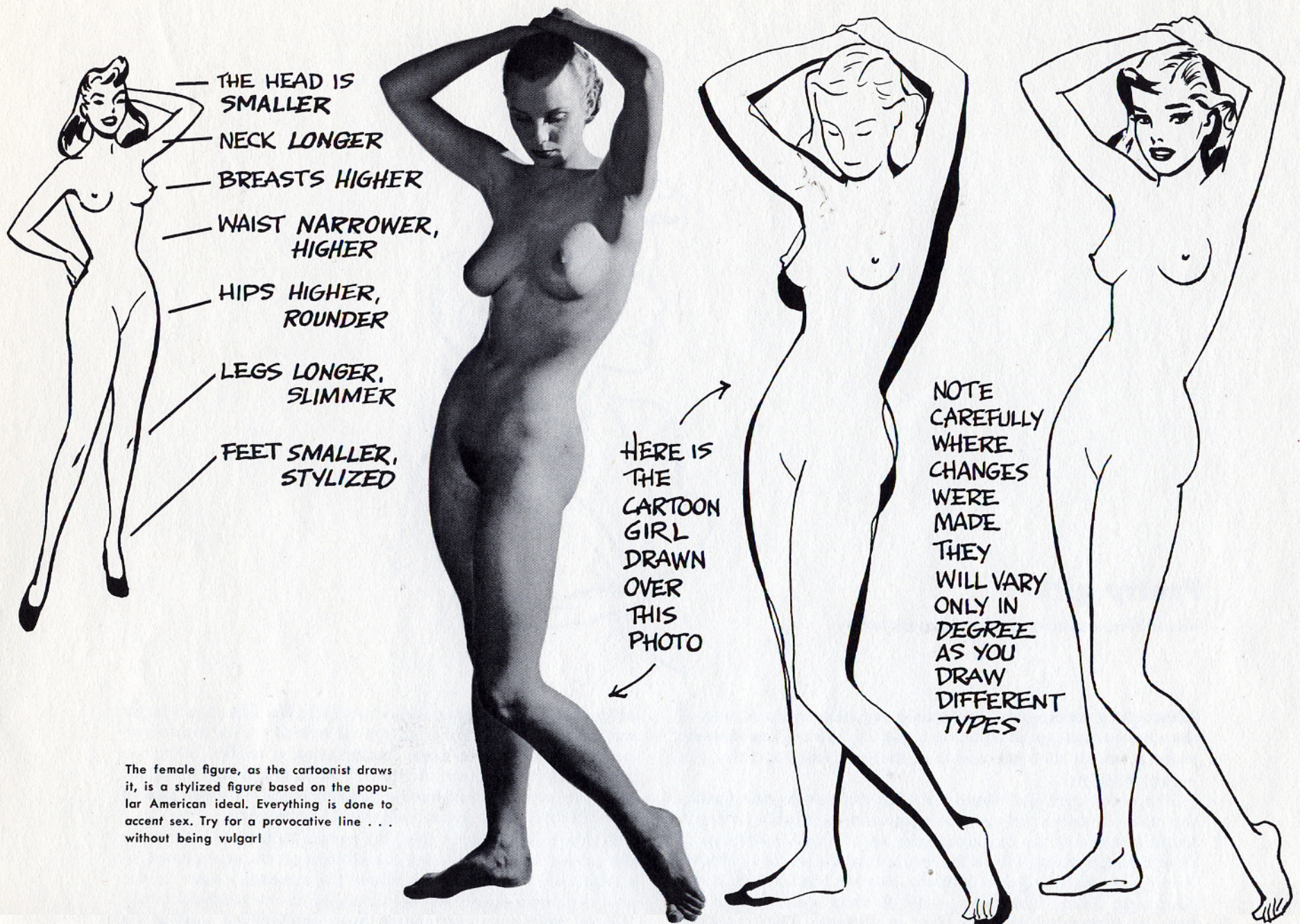
larger and a little higher than in real life, but how much larger and higher depends upon the over-all style of the individual cartoonist. Third are the hips. Exaggeration is needed here, too, but again one must not overdo it. Fourth and finally come the legs. The sexy gal must have *long* shapely legs. A short, dumpy figure has not much appeal and should be avoided.

When drawing pretty girls, the particular job will determine the amount of exaggeration. A sexy babe on the menu cover for a local men's club banquet allows the cartoonist more leeway than the female figure for a comic magazine or a newspaper strip.

Most professional cartoonists have developed a method for drawing pretty girls, and the beginner should work with that in mind. When you are practicing and find that you have drawn a girl's figure that appeals to you, analyze why it is appealing. Redraw it several times until the pose and figure construction are firmly established in your mind. Above all, try to establish how you drew it and try redrawing it again and again using the same method. One well known cartoonist who always said he couldn't draw sexy or pretty girls became one of the top girl artists in the business simply by drawing one complete figure from pencil to ink each day for one year. He stuck to his schedule and at the end of the year's time he had so systematized his method of procedure that pretty girls were easier for him to draw than fence posts or rocks.

When drawing a pretty girl, don't pencil and ink a pretty face and then hook a body to it. Draw the whole figure in pencil and be sure it is what you want before you ink it. Master the female figure as a whole. The prettiest and best drawn female face in the world wouldn't be worth a can of beans if the artist hooked it to an ill-proportioned body.

Your ability to draw pretty girls will have a lot to do with your success in the cartoon business. We repeat — you learn to draw by drawing, and that is particularly true with pretty girls. Devote a good proportion of your working and practice day to drawing pretty girls. Always keep your eye peeled for beauty — most men do!



The female figure, as the cartoonist draws it, is a stylized figure based on the popular American ideal. Everything is done to accent sex. Try for a provocative line . . . without being vulgar!

The cartoon girl based on life

As you see here, the cartoon girl, although she is *based* on real life, has changed. The best description of this process is *idealization*. Over the years of drawing for reproduction, successful cartoonists have found that slight variations from real life have paid off in reader-interest. There has emerged an "ideal" figure that the readers seem to like.

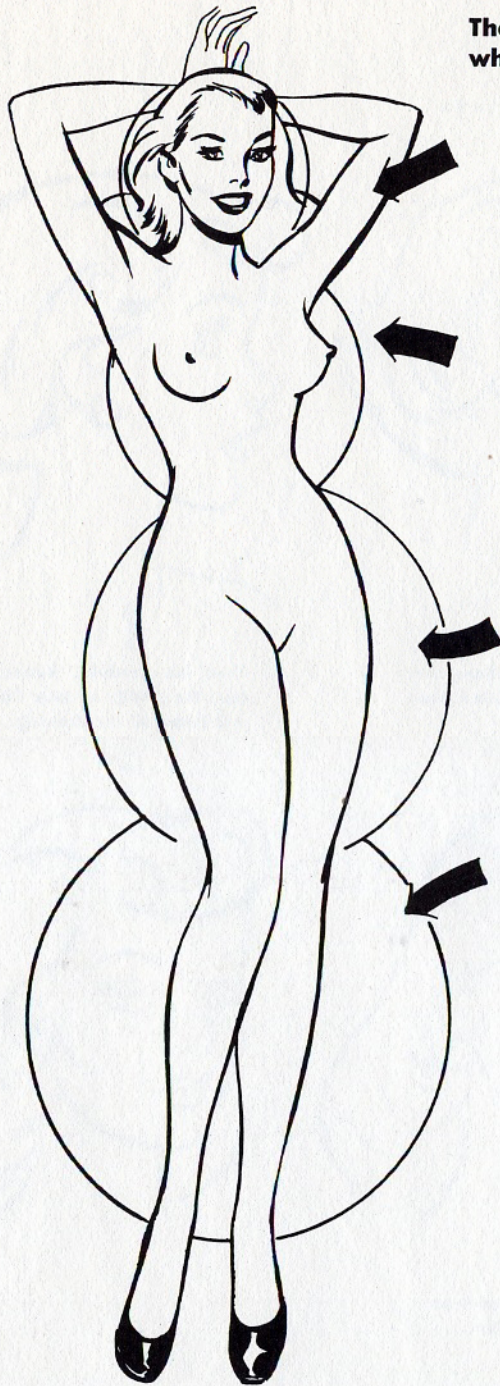
This is like the fashion business — there are tricks to glamorizing the female figure. Fashions, however, are just the ever-changing frosting on the cake. Except for hairdos, the ideal American girl's figure doesn't change too much from year to year. Your job right now is to learn to construct this ideal figure.

As you draw and practice, you will find that you are adding or subtracting details to suit your own style and taste. We strongly advise you not to branch off and experiment with drawing pretty girls until you honestly feel that you understand the four parts of the girl's figure — and can draw them from any

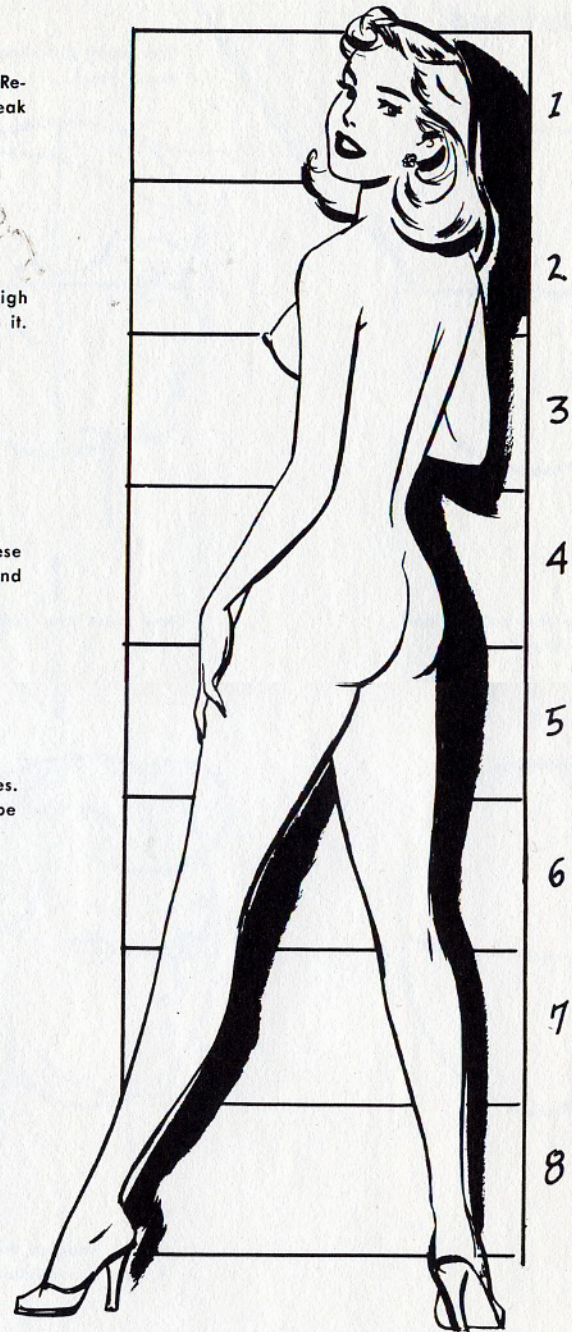
angle. In no other subject does a slight variation of an eyebrow or lip line change the picture so much. Don't worry about getting individuality into your girls — unless you are a mechanical copier you can't help developing your own types. As we said before, don't concentrate on just one part of the pretty girl's form. A carefully drawn head will be sunk if you attach it to a carelessly constructed body and vice versa. The parts have to fit together into an appealing, feminine figure.

Every successful cartoonist *must* be able to draw a pretty girl. Even in the wildest comic gags, the girl is an essential foil for the goofs. When you get into an advertising job, the client is going to demand them. Like everything else in cartooning, the only way to learn to draw your type of pretty girls is to apply the seat of your pants to your chair and *draw* them. Those flowing lines don't come from anything but practice.

There are four essential parts to a sexy girl which make her what she is



- 1** A pretty or cute face, plus hair. Remember — hair can make or break a girl drawing
- 2** The breasts. They are drawn high and full shaped. Don't over-do it. Size isn't the important thing
- 3** The hips... when well drawn, these lines give your figure movement and action unmistakably FEMININE
- 4** The legs are long with slim ankles. Legs, ankles and feet should be drawn well but SIMPLY



Pencil in the figure

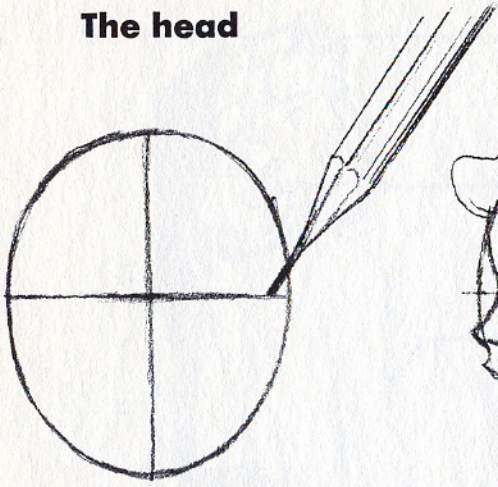
Fortunately for our peace of mind, pretty girls are very seldom seen running around without their clothes. However, to draw them in their civilized state, a cartoonist must have a thorough knowledge of their construction.

The most successful method for drawing appealing babes is to pencil in the complete figure in the desired pose before attempting to clothe it. The clothes take their shape and move according to the frame they are hung upon. That frame has to be *right*. Study the proportions of these figures and practice until you learn to draw girls easily in natural poses. Clothes won't hide a poor drawing of the figure underneath them.

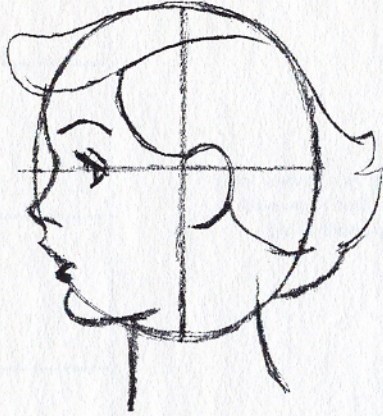
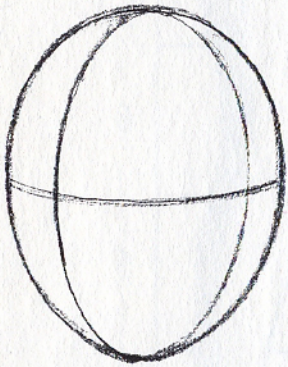


The head

The pretty girl head is drawn by the same system you used to draw the comic head . . .



First draw the balloon and place the bisecting lines



Now draw the features in . . . so



Remove the guide lines and add hair for a finished pencil drawing



Then ink carefully. Remember, the width of one line will throw off the drawing...



If you imagine the balloon as an egg with these three lines drawn on it, you can rotate this shape and draw the head in any position . . .



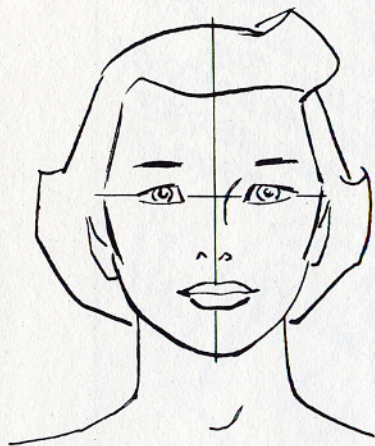
By tilting the egg with the bisecting lines, you should be able to draw heads with variety of interest and action . . .

Three types

The pretty girl in comics, on television or in Hollywood does not permit much variation . . . Learn to draw these three basic heads and you can create recognizable types for any cartoon situation . . . Hairdos and accessories will complete the character . . .

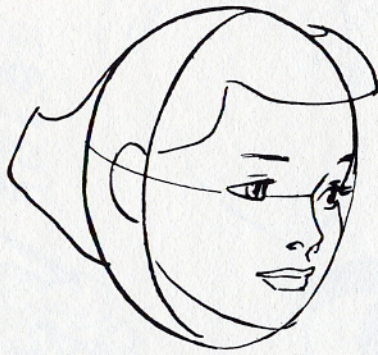


The same simple egg shape is used to draw three basic types of pretty girls . . .

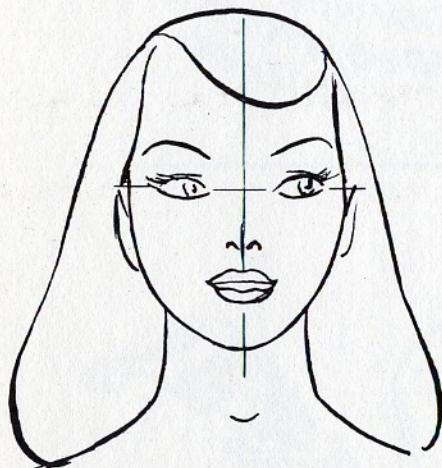
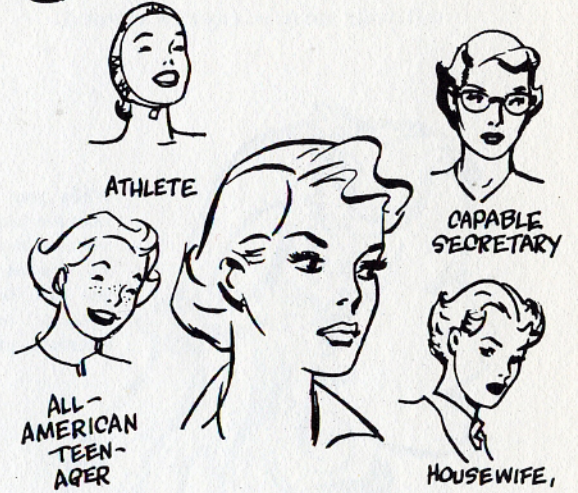


1 Average

Eyebrows are short, straight . . . the eye is a simple triangle . . . mouth wide . . . shoulders square



Keep these forms angular, crisp

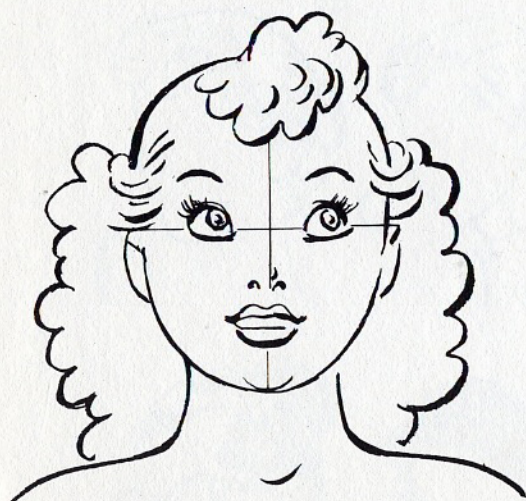


2 Long Oval

Eyebrows are long, arched . . . eyes are ovals . . . mouth is full, not so wide . . . make the face a long oval . . . slope shoulders



Keep her lines long, flowing

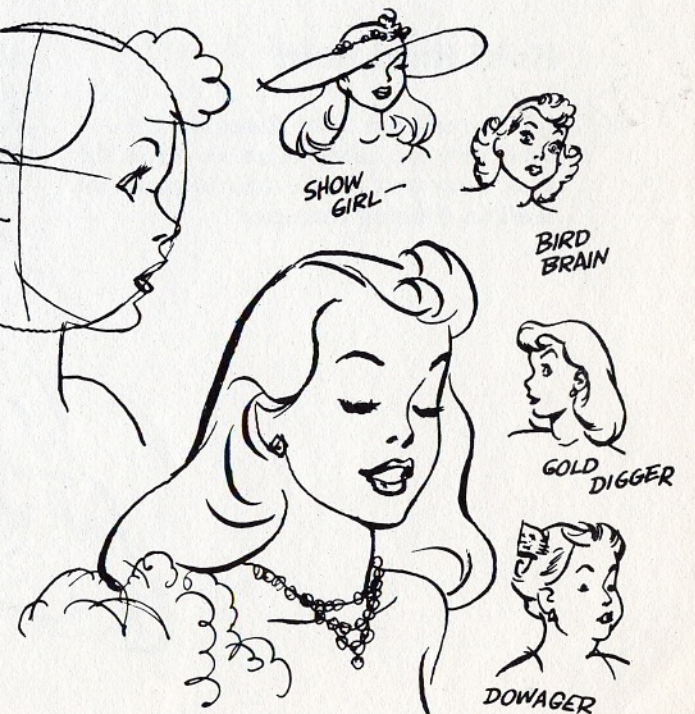


3 Round

Close hair on forehead . . . eye is more circular . . . tiny nose . . . mouth is smaller . . . round chin . . . shoulders rounded



Keep her going in circles!



The pretty girl hairdo

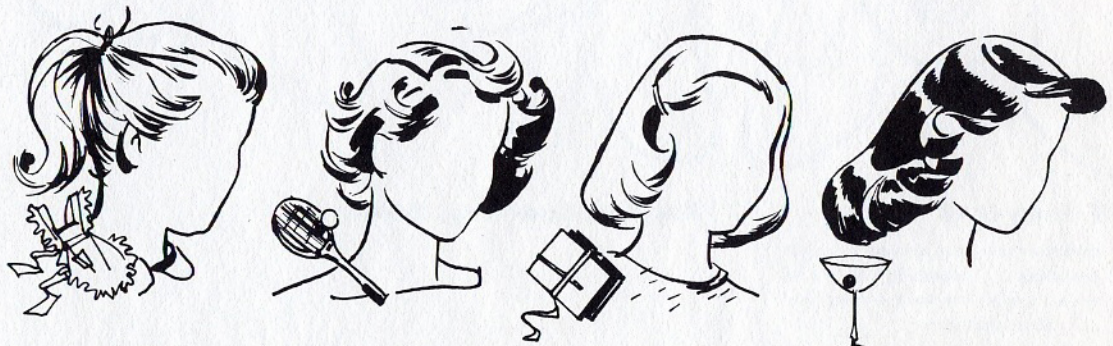
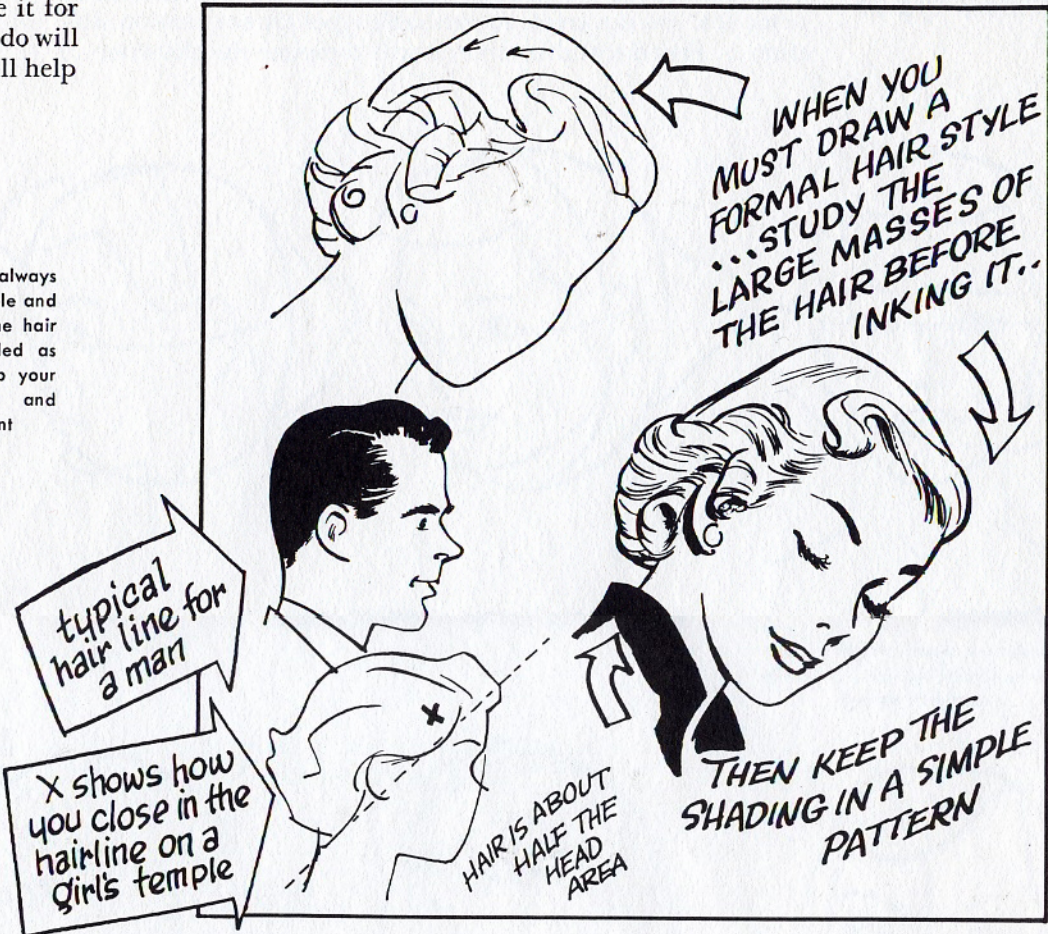
Hair is your one decorative element — use it for color, for strong design effect. Type of hairdo will define character — and how you draw it will help tell your story or express a mood.



While you must always keep the face simple and without shading, the hair may be as detailed as you like. But keep your lighting, textures and technique consistent



A general rule is to give the sexy girl long hair... but your smart cartoon girls should wear the latest styles

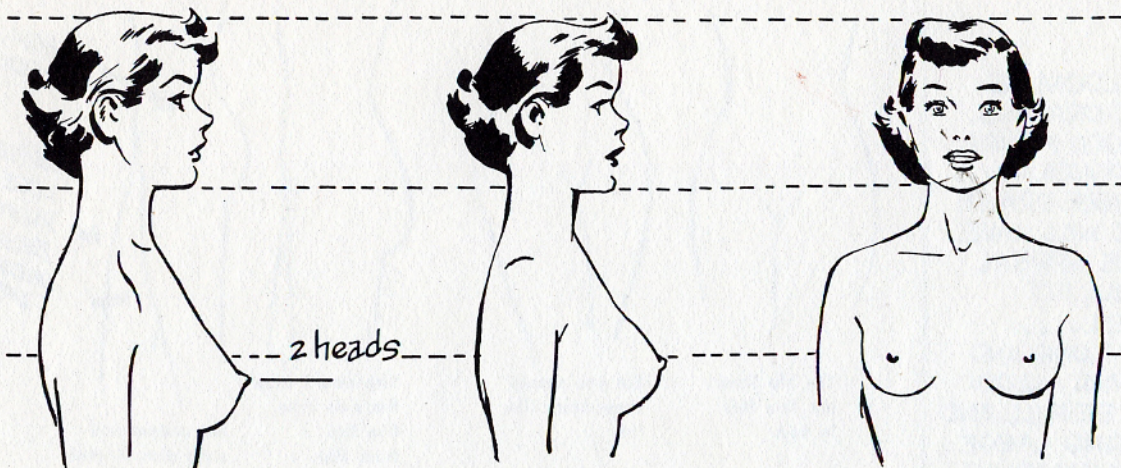


Hair! Hair! Hair!

It helps tell *who* your characters are . . . *what* they are doing. Here we throw the faces away and let the hairdo speak for itself in defining character.



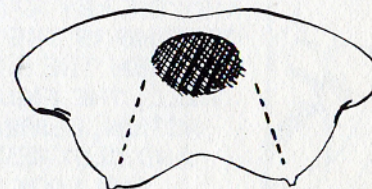
The breasts and torso



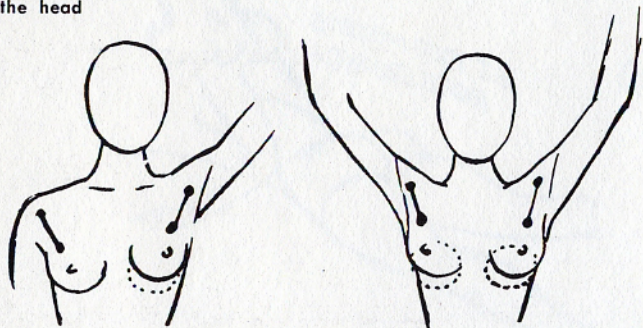
Here's the true proportion of the breast to the figure. The nipples are a little more than two heads below the top of the head

For cartoon girls, raise the nipples up to two heads

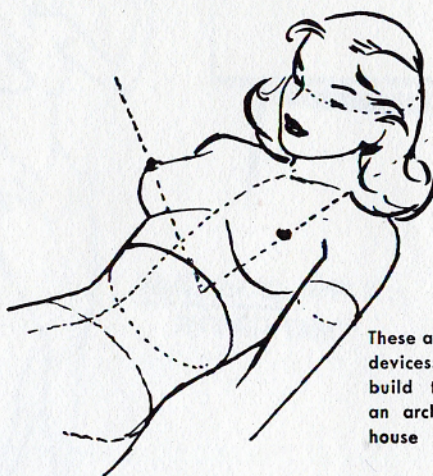
From a front view, the breasts are seen to lie on side planes of the chest



And point slightly away from each other

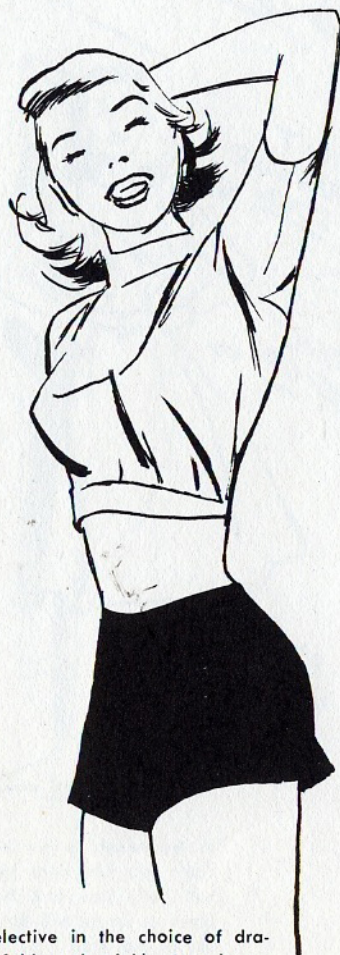
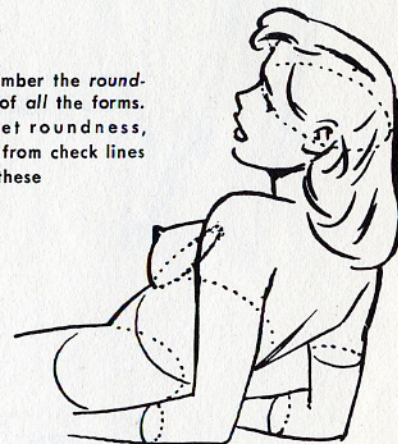


Think of the breasts as being attached to the shoulder cap, as above. Raising the arms lifts the breasts up and to the side



These are construction devices. You must build the forms as an architect plans a house

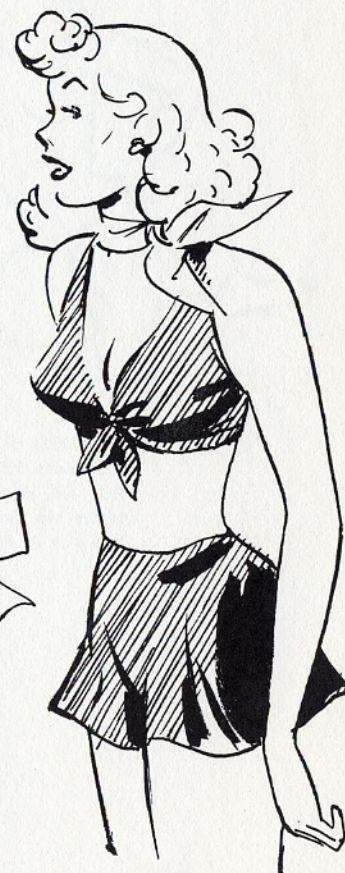
Remember the roundness of all the forms. To get roundness, work from check lines like these



Be selective in the choice of drape, folds and wrinkles to enhance the breast form



Use pattern carefully to show shape of the forms



If your girl is wearing middle tones, use juicy blacks to define form

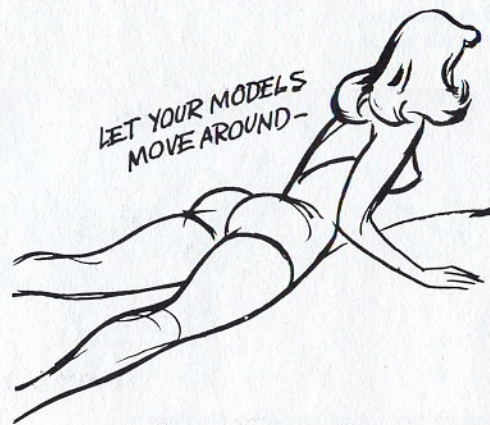
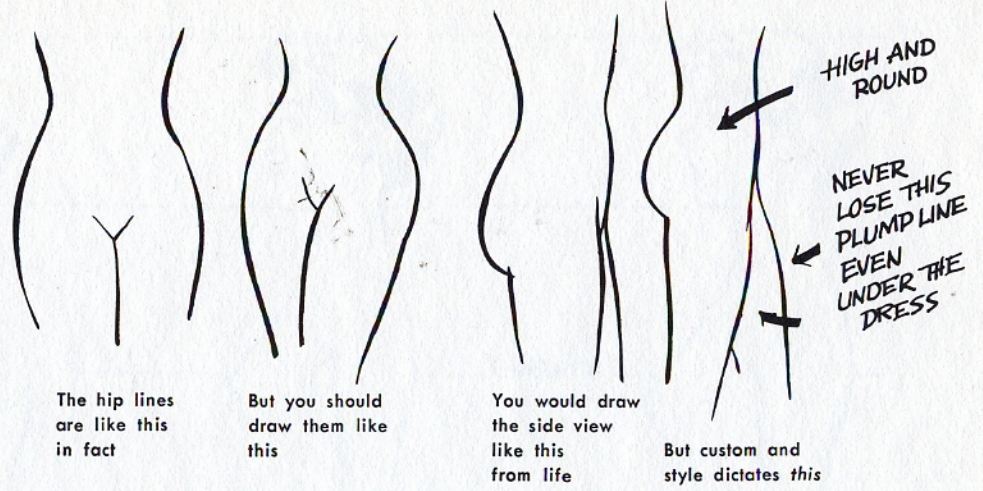


Hip, hip . . .

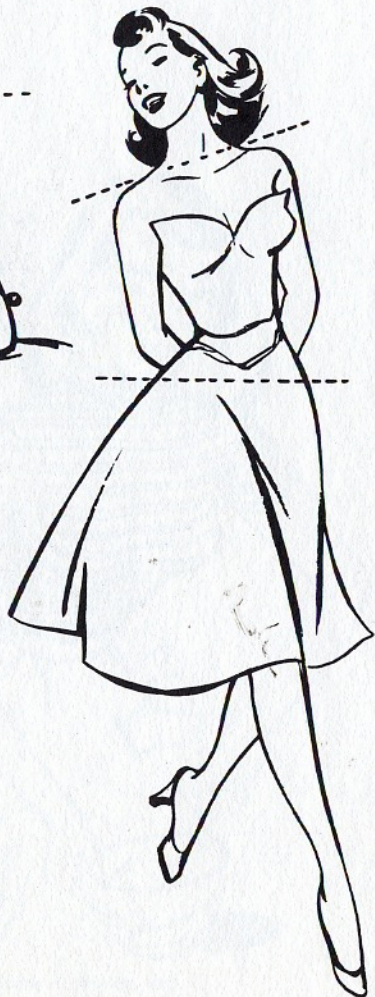
CLOTHES CAN SELDOM BE USED TO COVER BAD DRAWING. AND THE KEY TO A GOOD FIGURE DRAWING IS THE HIP AREA WHEN THE HIPS ARE DRAWN WELL, THE FIGURE WILL HAVE ACTION, FEMININE APPEAL AND CLOTHES WILL FIT AND LOOK WELL

KEEP THE WAIST LONG AND NARROW . . . THIS WILL ALLOW THE BUTTOCKS TO BE FULL AND ROUND WITHOUT BEING LARGE .

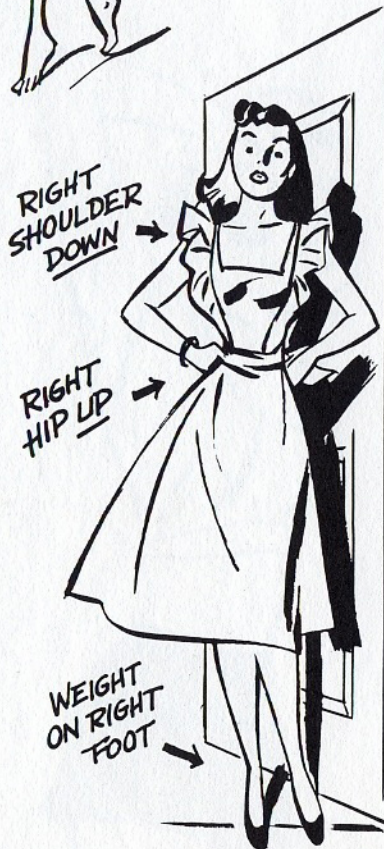
NOTE HOW THE EXAMPLES OF THIS RULE GIVE THE THIGH LINE A LONGER AND MORE GRACEFUL SWEEP



IT'S THE OBSERVING THAT COUNTS



Opposition of forms . . . this means that the shoulders will slant opposite to the hip line when the figure is in balance



If the weight is on the right foot, the right hip will be higher and the dress or apron will flare out on that side

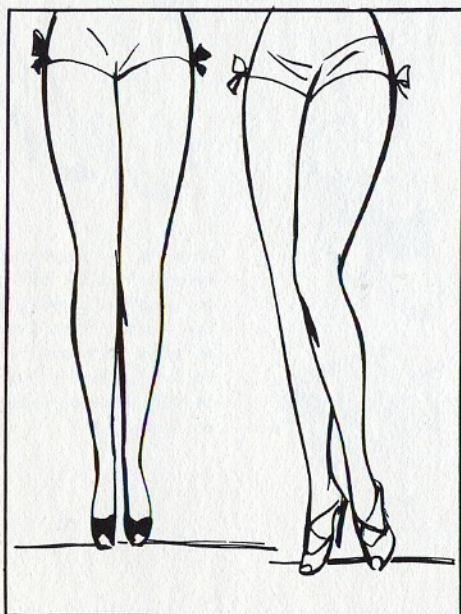
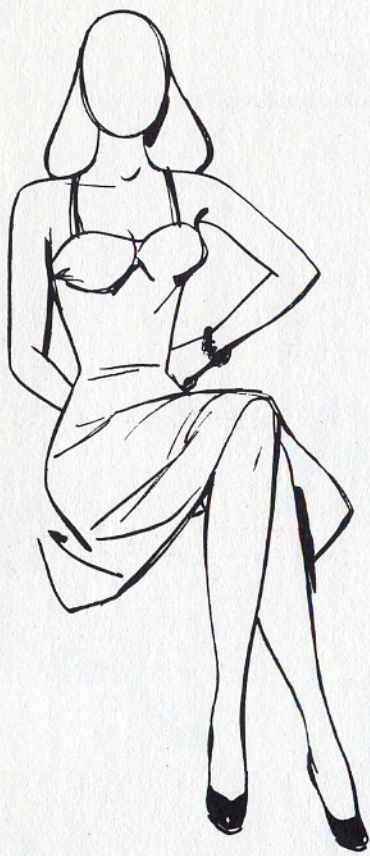


The man on the street will never know how much lies behind your simple girl drawing

Legs

Here we have illustrated a good system for placing the ankles on extended legs. A line extending from the rear of the thigh will give you the front instep line. A crossing line from the front of the thigh gives you the other side of the ankle. With the legs in a bent position, you'll have to pencil in a false thigh to check from, but the effort is worthwhile. Just remember that this and other formulas can be helpful, but formulas are no substitute for accurate observation. Observing a pretty girl's legs is no chore — this is one spot where you can combine business with pleasure and come out with a profit.

As you practice drawing the pretty girl's legs, work for long, smooth, flowing lines. The leg lines *must* sweep down cleanly and surely. This is no place to experiment with cross-hatched kneecaps.



Throw the weight on one leg for greater interest



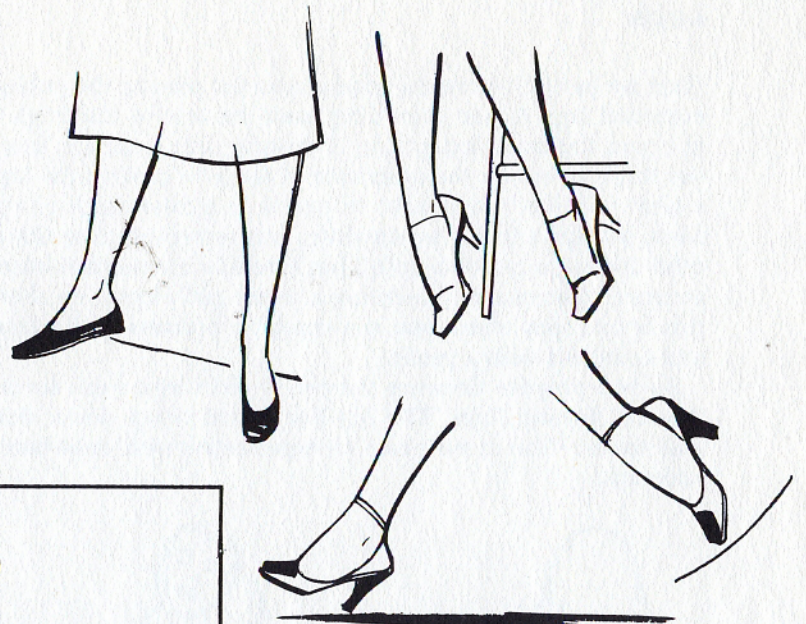
To suggest strong lighting, use a thick and thin line . . . (don't use shading)



Tricks with feet and shoes

The first step in drawing the pretty girl's feet with simple style is to study the construction of the actual foot. Our chart contains facts about feet that you should learn by heart and think about every time you pencil and ink a girl's foot.

Shoes can be complicated affairs. Your girl's shoes should be simplified and stylized down to a point where they are graceful and neat — and do not draw attention away from the rest of the figure. Remember that girls' shoes change with the seasons of the year. Follow the ads in your local paper for changing styles.



Use shadows to define action

THE INSIDE ANKLE BONE IS HIGHER

OUTSIDE ANKLE IS LOWER

INSIDE OF FOOT IS ARCHED

OUTSIDE OF FOOT IS LEVEL...

NOW, IN THE LOAFER, DRAW THE INSTEP SLIGHTLY HIGHER

THE INSTEP GOES UP

THE TOE RECEDES

AS THE HEEL GOES HIGHER

HEEL HIGH AND OUT

INSTEP ALMOST VERTICAL

TOE SHORT!

SO, THE CARTOON FOOT!

TOE SLIGHTLY SHORTER -

By shifting weight to one leg, you can avoid drawing two front views

Front view — you must construct the ankle . . . this association will help you remember the ankle slant . . . it is always higher (warmer) on the inside, lower (colder) on the outside

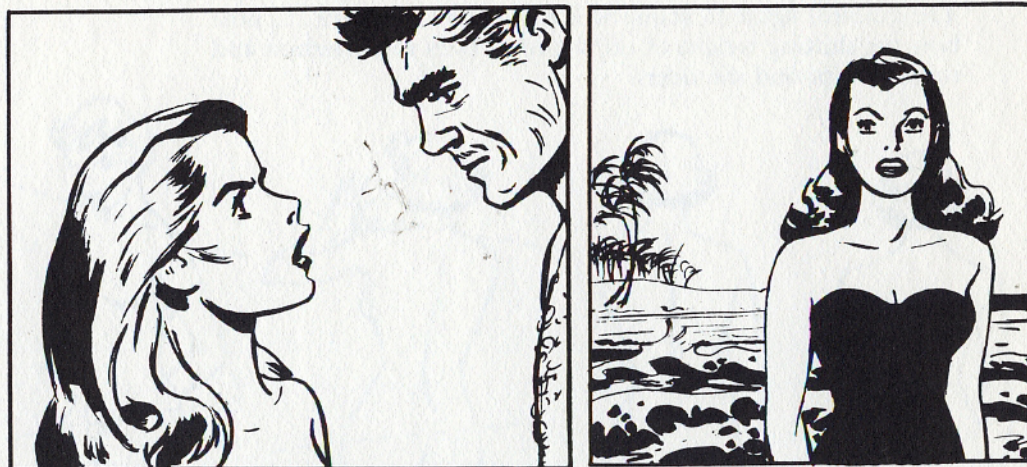


Here is a progression from the realistic foot to the simplified drawing of the cartoon foot. Draw all types of shoes from life and simplify them like this example—shoes are important

DRAW THE FIGURE FROM MEMORY IF YOU WILL... BUT POSE SISTER'S SHOES...

The pretty girl in action

The EXPRESSIVE attitude is *all-important*. Work with simple tracing paper roughs until the figure in action seems to say *exactly* what you want it to say.



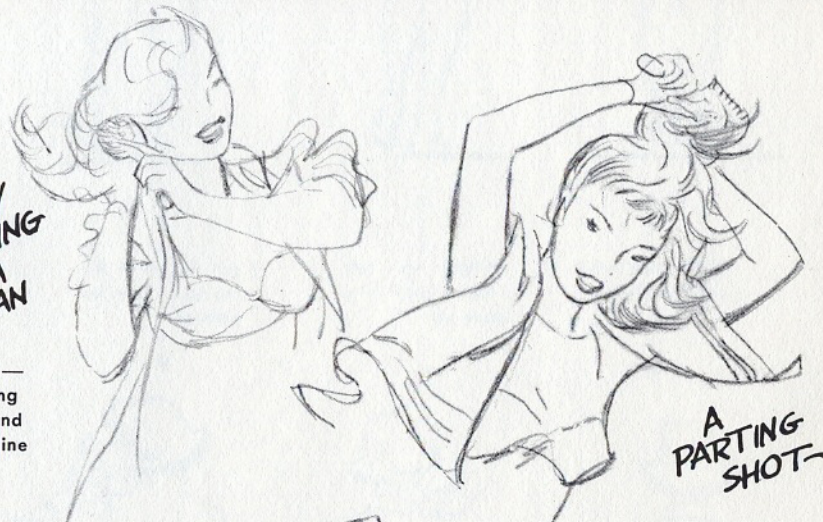
Often in a strip panel the figure without action or the head without tilt is more eloquent. Action, here, would interrupt story



Use hands whenever you can to give your idea more punch

OBVIOUSLY TALKING TO A MAN

For example — a girl is fixing her hair — and speaking a line



A PARTING SHOT

THE EXACT GESTURE WILL BE IMPORTANT



Turn your tracing paper often — and draw from both sides. This gives you a fresh look

SO WHAT



MUSING



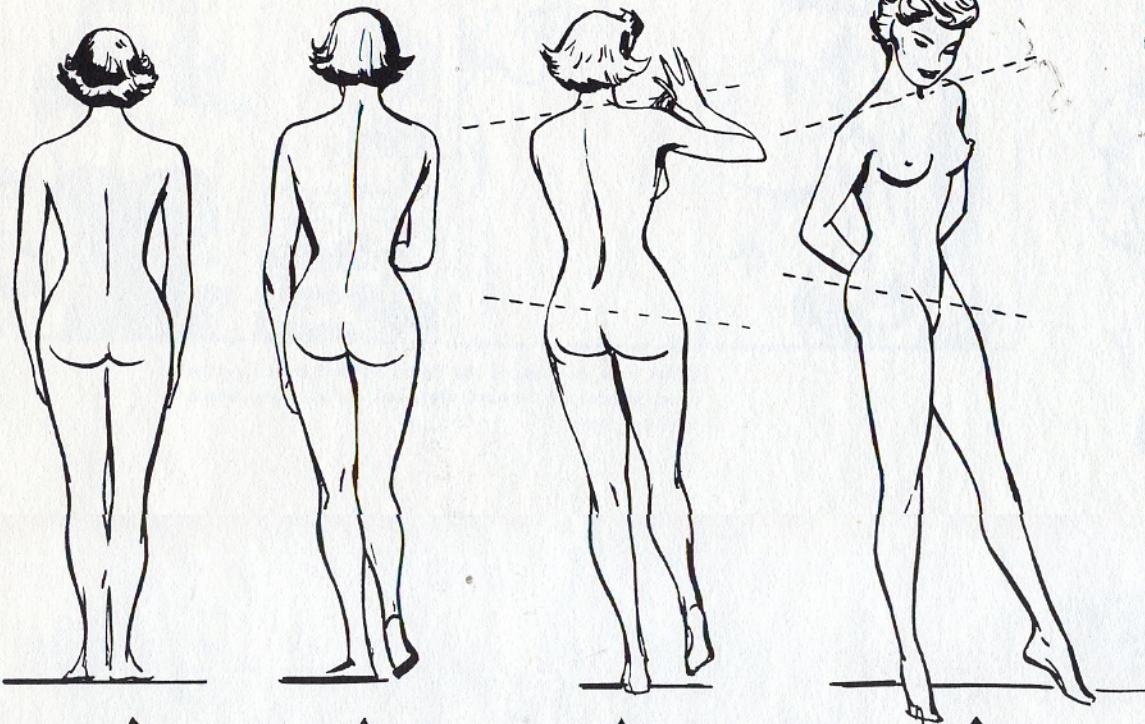
TRY POSING YOURSELF BEFORE A MIRROR



— IF YOU CAN "FEEL" THE ACTION YOU CAN DRAW IT.

More on action

The graceful figure in action will always be in balance . . . note how the shifting weight of the figure dictates the direction and turns of hips and shoulders.

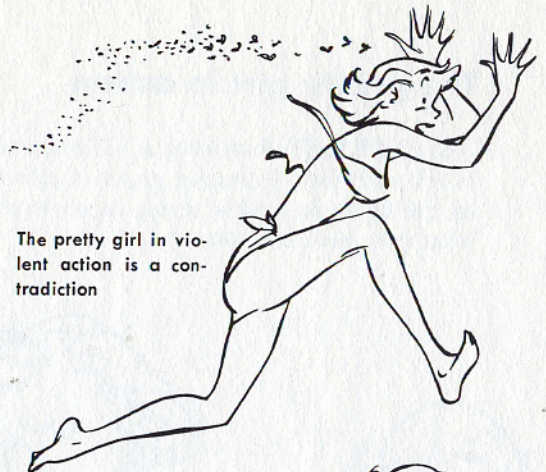


Static pose—balance is obvious

Weight on left foot. Left hip goes up

Left hip up—left shoulder down for balance

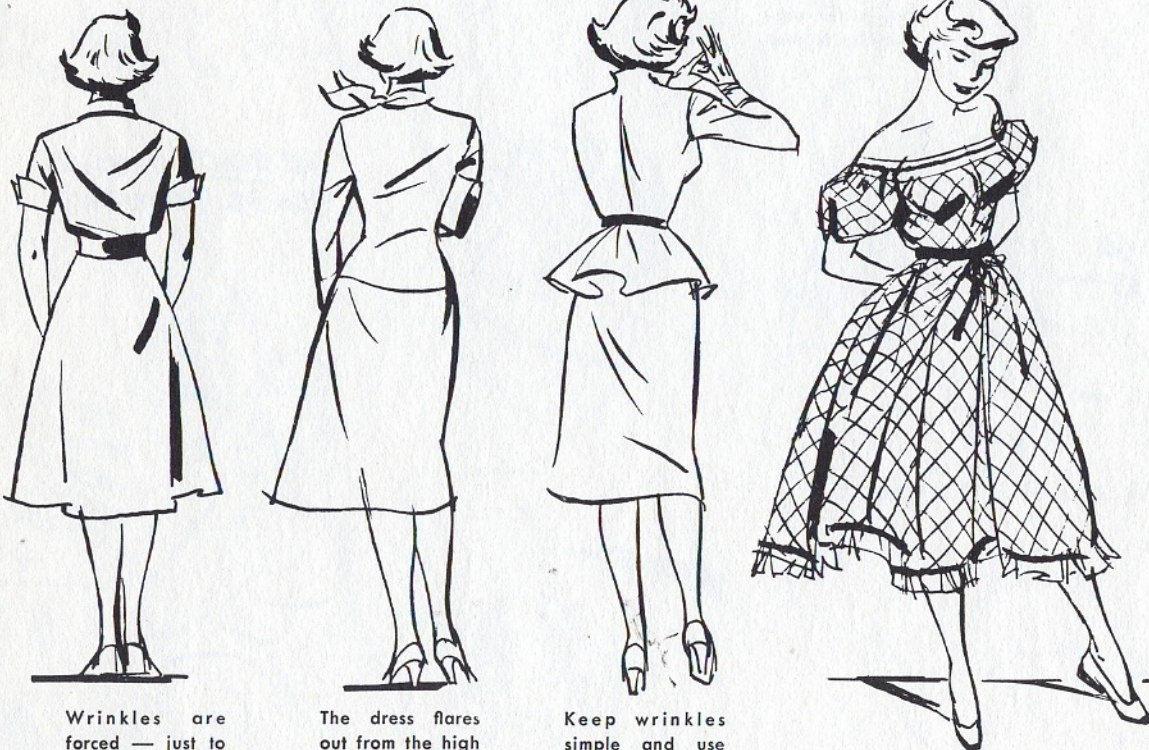
Drop a line from head center to right foot. The girl would not be in balance without extended left leg



The pretty girl in violent action is a contradiction



To keep her sexy in action make her very leggy—and follow the rules of balance and rhythmic opposition of forms



Wrinkles are forced—just to add some interest

The dress flares out from the high hip

Keep wrinkles simple and use them to accent the action



Use lively dress lines, flying scarfs, accessories darting off at angles, to give action to your figures



FAMOUS ARTISTS CARTOON COURSE
Student Work
Lesson 7

To study and practice

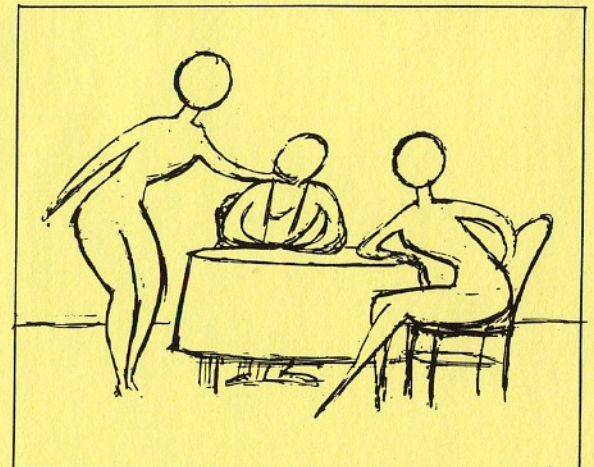
The text and examples in this lesson make up a complete and clear method for drawing pretty girls. Readers enjoy seeing pretty girls in drawings and editors know it. A lot of cartoon jobs, especially in advertising, depend on your ability to draw them.

Copy and experiment with the examples in the text. For practice, put tracing paper over photos of girls in magazines and apply the lesson's teaching by simplifying the poses down into line drawings. Keep trying for long, flowing lines that are smooth and uncluttered. Interesting little wrinkles may help the character of male cartoon figures, but they will ruin your girls. Draw your girls active and attractive. Sketching at the beach or elsewhere is good practice, so make it a habit.

We will grade this assignment on the basis of how well you draw the figures -- and how successful you are in making them glamorous and alluring.

The assignment you are to mail to the School for criticism

On a sheet of 11 x 14-inch Bristol board, rule and ink a panel 8 inches high and 10 inches wide. In it draw the following scene: A pretty girl in a close-fitting evening gown and her escort are seated in a night club. A chorus girl in very brief costume is tickling the chin of the escort, to the dismay of the first girl. Follow the little sketch at the right for composition or dream up your own. Be sure the entire figure of each girl is shown. Use either pen or brush for inking your cartoon.



Present your assignment in the same clean, professional manner you would use if you were submitting it to the cartoon buyer of a publication. Letter your name, address and student number carefully in the lower left-hand corner of the page. In the lower right corner, place the Lesson Number. Mail to:

FAMOUS ARTISTS CARTOON COURSE
Westport, Connecticut