



Drawing Figures and Faces with Correct Proportions

KS2 ART & DESIGN

Ages 10-14 ⌚ 4 min read

What Are Proportions?

Proportions are the size relationships between different parts of something. In art, getting proportions right means drawing body parts that match each other in realistic ways. An adult's head should be smaller than their torso, and their arms should reach roughly to their hips. When proportions are wrong, a drawing looks strange or unbalanced, even if everything else is perfect.

Think of it like building with bricks: if the foundation is tiny but the walls are huge, the whole building looks silly. The same happens when you draw a tiny head on a huge body!

The Head as Your Measuring Tool

Artists use the **head** as a basic unit of measurement. An adult human is typically about **7 to 8 head heights tall**. This means if you draw one head, you can stack copies of that size down the body to check if everything matches up correctly. The head sits at the very top, then shoulders, torso, hips, and legs follow in measured spaces.

Key Measurements for Faces

Drawing a face gets easier when you know the basic rules. The face is roughly **oval-shaped**, and you can divide it into three equal sections: forehead, nose, and chin. Eyes sit in the middle of the head horizontally, not near the top as many people think. Between the two eyes fits exactly one more eye-width of space. The nose sits halfway between the eyes and chin, and ears roughly line up with the eyebrows and the bottom of the nose.

Think of it like a treasure map: if you follow the landmarks (eyes, nose, mouth), you'll find the right spots for everything else!

Bodies and Limbs

For the **body**, the shoulders are widest part, roughly **two to three head-widths** across. Arms hang down to about hip level when relaxed. Hands are about the same size as the face. Legs make up nearly half the total body height. The body bends at the waist, hips, knees, and ankles, so remember to show these natural curves and joints.

Practice Makes Perfect

The best way to master proportions is to draw lots of sketches, measure carefully, and compare your drawings with real people, photographs, or other artists' work. Don't be discouraged if your first attempts look wrong—even professional artists use measuring techniques every single day. With practice, your brain will start to understand these rules automatically.