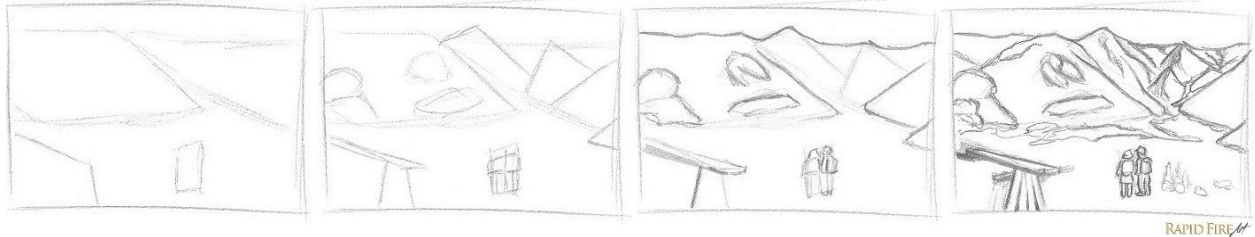


# Lesson 2: Learn to See Things Differently

By Darlene Nguyen - April 13, 2017



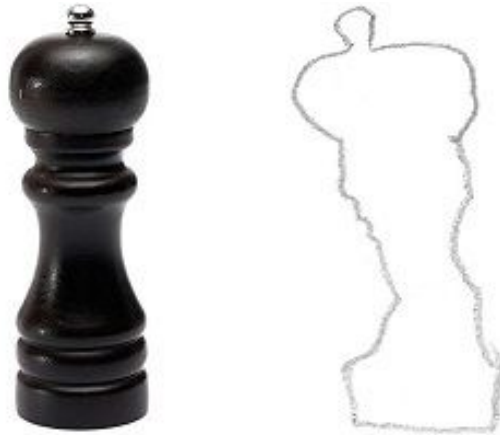
Firstly, I'd like to thank everyone who left feedback and commented on the course so far. Thank you for your support! I really appreciate your feedback and look forward to working with all of you toward your goals!

If you're committing to this course, I hope you share your progress with me – it's the most rewarding part of what I do :) If you check out my [Facebook page](#), you'll notice that I've posted my homework assignment for [lesson #1](#) already. You can also see other readers' artwork posted there as well.

## **In this lesson, you will learn several things:**

- How to draw faster! (individual objects and entire scenes)
- How to make your drawing look closer to reality
- How to draw objects and people that are more structurally sound

Do your drawings look similar to the one below?



This is an example of how I used to draw when I first started out. I would trace the object with my eyes while translating what I saw to the paper immediately without really thinking about the rest of the object. It's even more exaggerated when drawing complicated subjects.

If you're like me, the reason why our drawings are so distorted is because we're so focused on a single area instead of looking at the **big picture**. This is called tunnel vision.

This tutorial takes you a step back, shifting your focus away from the details, allowing you to see the world differently, which will change the way you draw for the better.

## Breaking the World Down into Simple Shapes

Everything we see around us can be broken down into a series of simple shapes.



Whether it be an individual object or an entire scene, you can break it down in your mind with a little concentration.

### Let's hop into a quick example!

What are the shapes that make up this pepper mill? For me, it's 1 circle, 2 ovals, 2 rectangles and a trapezoid. It might be different for you.



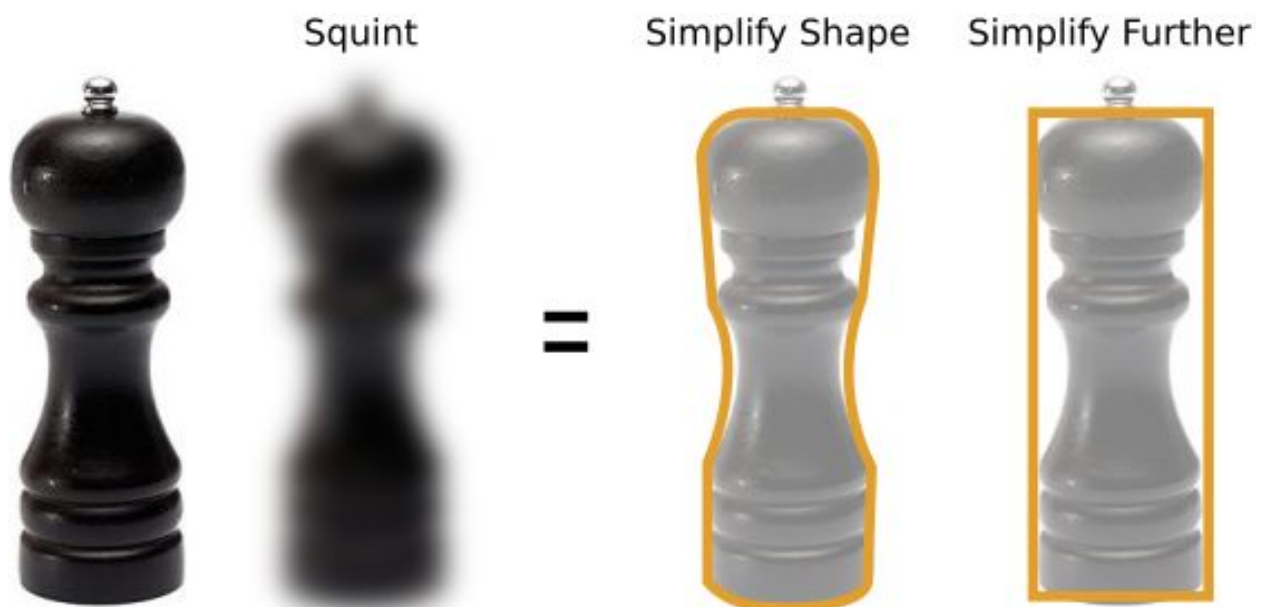
Let's arrange these shapes into a pepper mill resembling the one above:



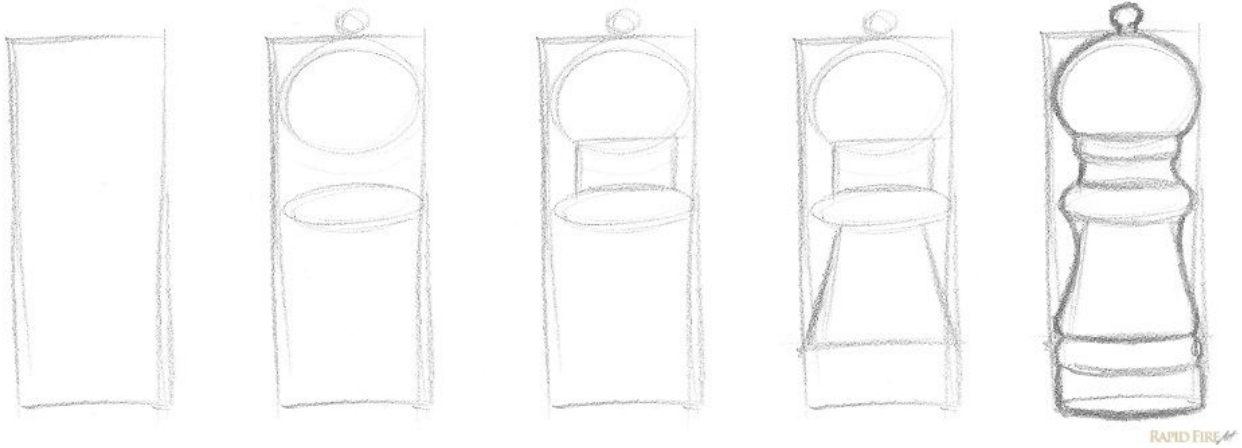
Wait, that doesn't look right does it?

That's because I skipped over a very important step! The **overall shape** of the object!

Take a step back, squint your eyes until the details fade away and tell me the one shape you see that could represent the **pepper mill's** general form.



For me, it's a rectangle. Let's try drawing the pepper mill again:



That's much better! The first rectangle provides a container for the rest of the shapes to fall into, allowing you to create 1 solid object. Pretty neat, eh?

So, do people actually draw like this?

Yes, a lot of artists do, but most of them do it in their minds. That means they can do all of this without planning it out on paper first. That's a valuable skill that will come with lots of practice!

Let's recap! The entire process can be broken down into 3 simple stages:

## **Stage 1: Sketch the Overall Structure**

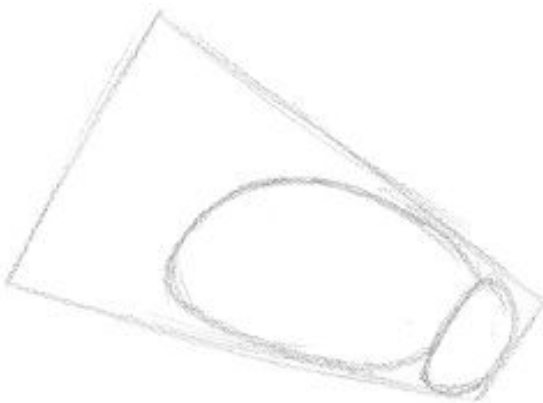
This is where you look at your subject's form and sketch a simple shape that represents the overall structure. The more simple it is, the better! If you can't decide on one shape, that's fine! Sometimes it's easier to sketch several shapes instead of just one.



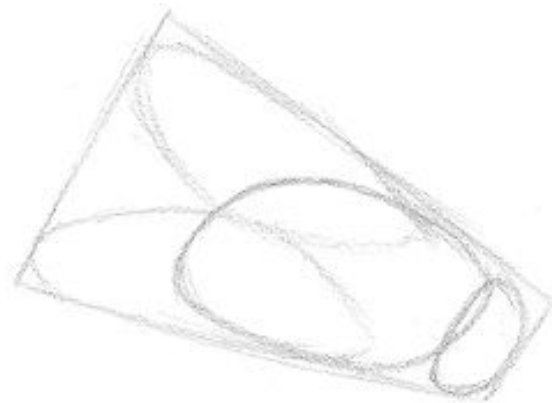
Creating a boundary or outline of your object allows you to think about the object as a whole instead of focusing on one specific spot at a time.

If you pay close attention, you'll see that I only outlined the head, body and wings of the fly and not the legs. It's okay to leave portions of your subject out to make it easier for you to visualize a solid shape.

## Stage 2: Identify Secondary Shapes

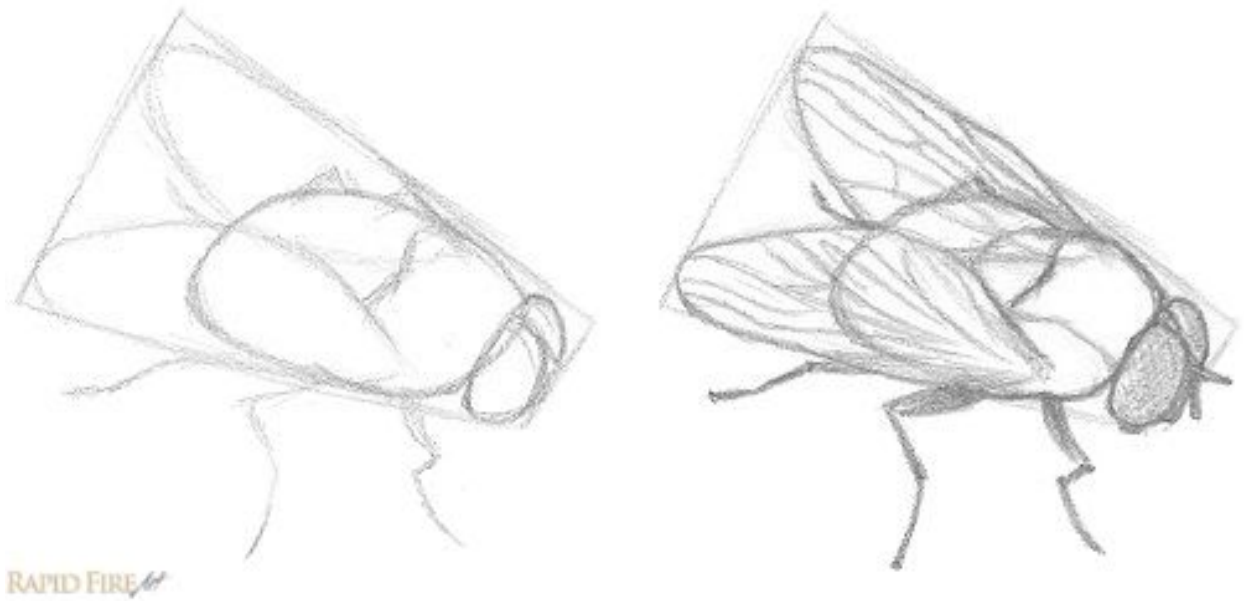


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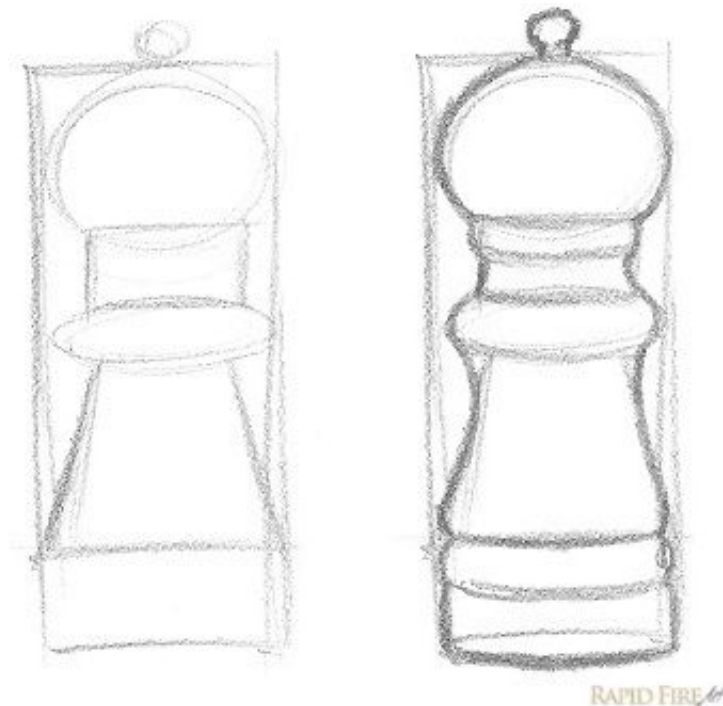


These are the general shapes that make up the fly. In this example, I've used 4 ovals. If you find that you made a mistake in stage 1, it's okay to revise it as you continue to work on the drawing.

## Stage 3: Define the Subject



Continue sketching until you join all the shapes together into one solid object, insect, person, etc. When you finish your drawing, the shapes you drew in stage 1-2 shouldn't be so obvious anymore.



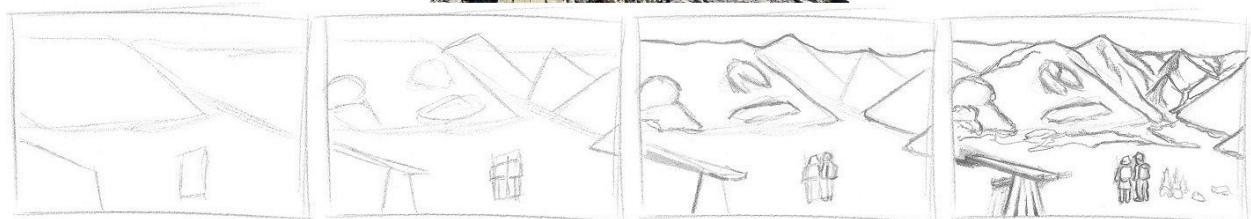
*Here's a better example of joining shapes into one object*

This may be a simple exercise, but it shouldn't be overlooked. If you've ever struggled with a drawing before, revisit it using this technique and see how it works for you.

## Let's Apply this to a Scene

No matter how complicated a scene is, this technique can help you plan out your entire drawing in just a few short minutes. It also helps when you're drawing from life because you can draw a lot faster when you see the world in shapes.

Blocking out areas of your drawing allows you to make sure all the elements are in the right place before you commit to drawing the entire scene in detail. You can also very easily gauge the size of each element in your drawing and revise it in the first stages. Nothing is set in stone! We have erasers for a reason :)



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For this example, I could have drawn a bunch of triangles for stage 1, but it would look very messy and confusing to start.

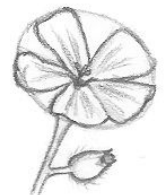
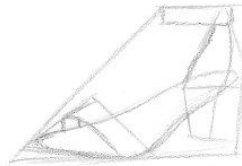
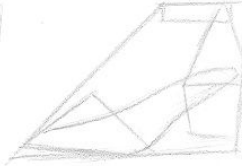
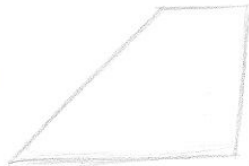
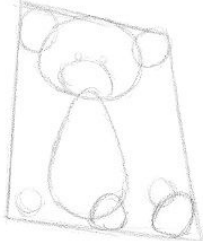
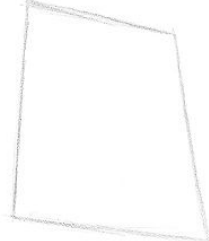
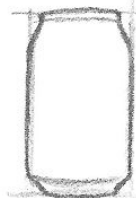
Since it's a mountain range, it's easy to find other shapes that make up such a huge mass. You can divide areas of the mountain up by grouping certain sections together by difference in overall value, distance, etc.

The couple standing side by side fit perfectly into a rectangle, so I drew a rough one and eventually split it in half.

The entire process can be as quick or as well thought out as you want it to be. Generally speaking, the more time you spend, the more precise your drawing will be, but you're minimizing the amount of practice you get.

## **More Examples**

I was a slow learner in school and really appreciated when teachers took time to give different examples because I learned a lot better that way. If you're like me, this section is for you!



Once you get the hang of it, you'll start to see shapes everywhere you look!

Nadia, that flower example is for you. Hope it helps :)

## Your Homework Assignment for the Week

Pack up your sketchbook and go for a little walk. Find a place to sit, relax and draw what you see in front of you. Don't be afraid of drawing moving

things and people. The more practice you get, the faster you'll be able to draw.

Try limiting the amount of space you have to draw and see if you draw faster that way. Experiment with different ways to draw a single scene or subject to challenge yourself even further.

If you want to draw from pictures to get the hang of it first, visit sites like Flickr or Pinterest to get some ideas on things to draw. You can search for "nature scenes", "home interiors" or pictures of "food". Get creative and draw a huge variety of things so you can train your brain to look at the bigger picture, shifting your focus off the details.

My challenge to you is to draw 3 scenes and 5 individual subjects using what you've learned in this lesson. Take a picture or scan your work and post it on my [Facebook page](#) under the post for Lesson 2. I'll feature your artwork here if you can complete the challenge!

If you simply want to share your homework and don't want to participate in the challenge, you're very welcome to!

You can expect to see my left handed homework assignment posted to Facebook sometime this week.

[Click here for lesson 3](#)

Have any questions? Leave them in the comments section!

Read more:

<http://rapidfireart.com/2017/04/13/lesson-2-learn-to-see-things-differently/>