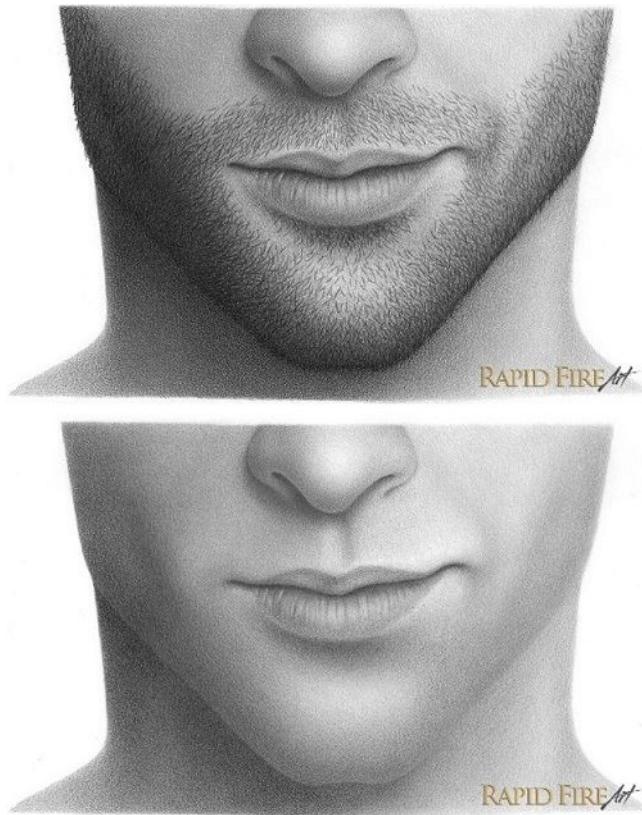


How to Draw Stubble

By Darlene Nguyen - January 3, 2017



In this tutorial on drawing stubble, I will cover: stroke quality, stroke curvature, stroke direction/ hair flow, root placement, teach you how to draw white and blonde stubble and finally walk you through a full step by step tutorial on how to draw short stubble on the face.

By the end of this tutorial, you should be able to draw realistic and well placed stubble on the face.

Tools I Used ([You can find all my recommended tools here](#)):

- Canson Bristol Paper
- Kneaded Eraser
- HB, 2B, 4B, 6B pencils
- Blending Stump
- Sewing Needle

Stroke Quality

Let's get into why stubble looks the way it does. The definition of stubble is hair that has been shaved and grown back after a few days. The keywords here are "**has been shaved**". When you draw stubble, make sure you do not lift your pencil up swiftly after the end of each stroke. You want each hair to end bluntly as though it has been **cut**.



Stubble Hair Close-Up

Stroke Curvature

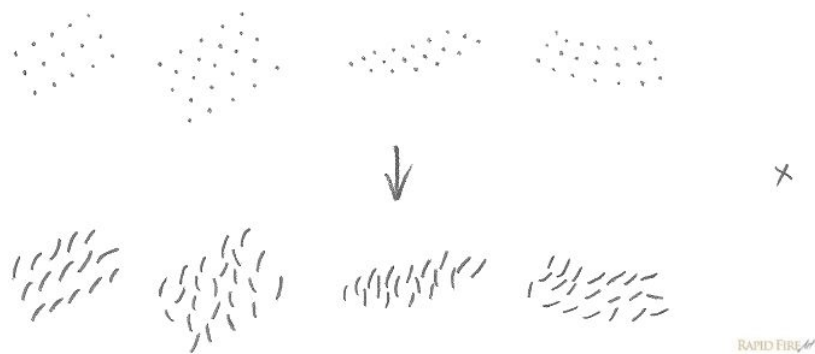


If you go to google images and search for "stubble closeup", you'll find that a single face can have a mix of curved and straight stubble hairs. Try to incorporate a variety of randomly shaped hairs into your drawing to make it look more realistic, instead of drawing all pin-straight hairs.

Root Placement

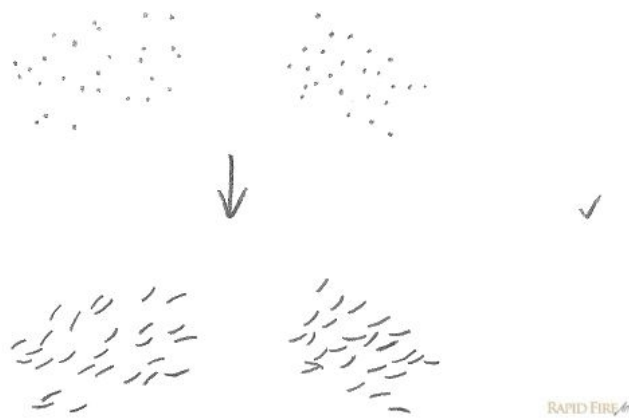
When you're drawing stubble, be aware of where you're starting each of your strokes. Carefully plan out the placement of each root so you can avoid drawing stubble that looks unnatural.

Example of Unnatural Placement



Are you subconsciously creating a pattern? Such obvious patterns will look very unnatural, especially in large patches.

Example of Natural Placement

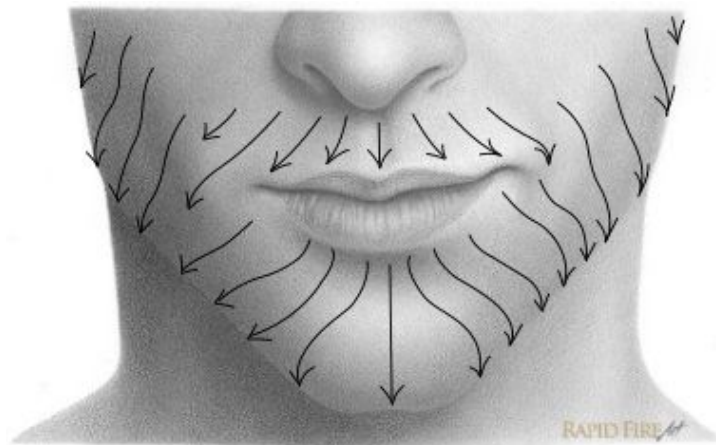


It's okay if there are some patterns that appear here and there, just avoid creating large areas with continuous patterns. Group some hairs together and don't be afraid to space some of them far apart.

If you have trouble breaking free from patterns when you're drawing stubble, try planning out your roots ahead of time, before you draw any hairs at all. What you can do is draw small dots (like the images above) and then later, draw your stubble according to the markings. Make sure the dots are light and small enough so that you can still see them. If your dots are too large and dark, your stubble can turn out looking like hairy moles or freckles.

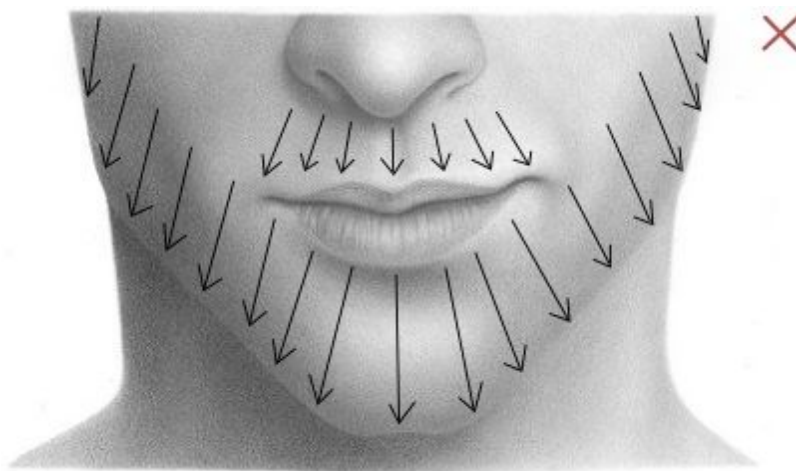


Stroke Direction

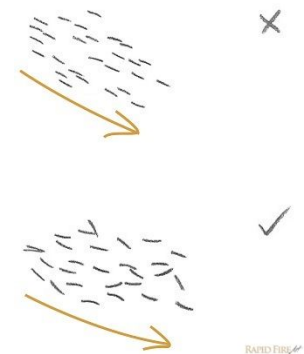


Facial hair grows in a general outward direction from the center of the face, instead of just plain downward. Keep in mind that the contours of the face will affect how the general flow will look at different viewing angles.

If you want to draw arrows on a reference image so you can better picture the flow of hair, don't forget to wrap the arrow tails along the contours of the face such as cheek hollows and chin creases.



When it's time to draw the actual stubble, avoid the mistake of drawing hairs that all point in the same boring direction. Below, I have two examples. In the first image, the hairs look boring because they're all pointing in the same direction. In the second image, they're flowing in the **same general direction** which looks a lot more natural.



White and Blonde Stubble

To draw white or light colored stubble, first make sure you're using a fairly thick piece of paper like Canson Bristol Paper. The methods below require a sewing

needle, so thin paper cannot be used, as there is a high chance the needle will puncture the paper.

Drawing White Hairs:

Step 1: After you've drawn the face and before you do any shading, use a needle to carefully draw invisible hairs onto your paper. Since it's hard to see what you're doing, take it slow and be extra careful not to lose consistency. Press hard for thick, prominent hairs.

Step 2: Then shade your drawing, making sure not to use any pencils that are too soft, just in case the graphite bits fill the cavities you just created with the needle. When using this method, avoid blending your graphite or else the hairs will disappear. If you want smooth shading, sharpen your pencil and fill in the tiny white dots that appear across your drawing.

Drawing Blonde or Light Hairs:

Step 1: After you've drawn the face, shade a light layer of graphite over your drawing. The value should be the exact value you want the hairs to be when your drawing is complete. Blend your graphite out because this will be the only chance you get!

Step 2: Then use a needle to draw invisible hairs on your paper.

Step 3: After that, shade your drawing while making sure not to fill the indentations you made with the needle. Also, avoid blending/smearing the graphite.

Drawing a Mix of White and Blonde Hairs:

To get a mix of white and blonde hair, you'll need to combine the 2 methods above.

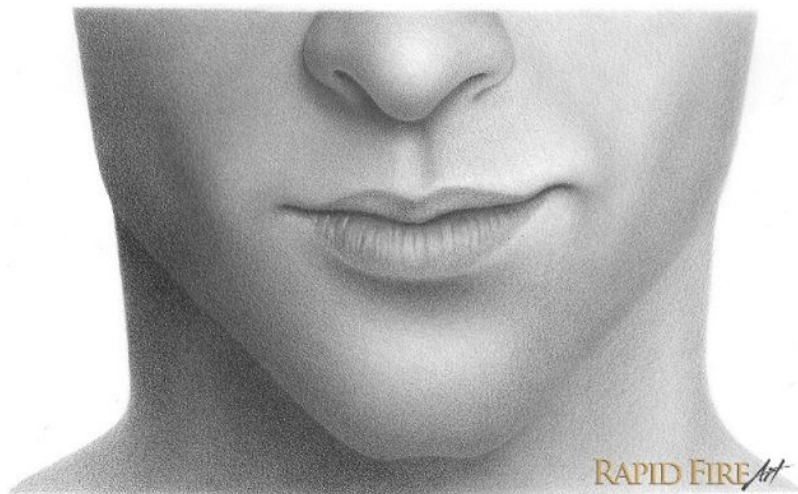
Step 1: Draw invisible hairs with your needle before any shading is done.

Step 2: Then shade a light layer of graphite over your drawing and add more invisible hairs where needed.

Step 3: When that's done, go over your drawing with a final layer of shading.

How to Draw Short Stubble Step by Step

Let's start by drawing a face and shading it. Stubble won't cover up sloppy shading, so make sure you spend some extra time here. It doesn't have to be absolutely perfect though.

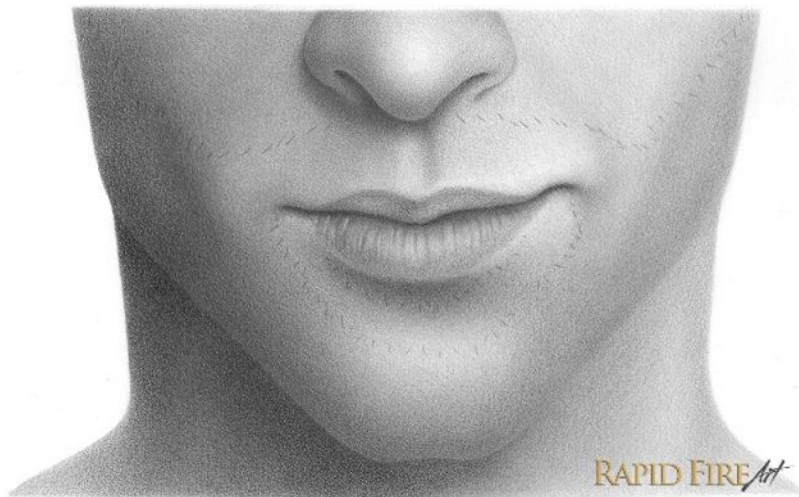


Step 1:

This step is optional. If you're not very good at spacing out hairs and avoiding obvious patterns when drawing stubble directly onto the face, try applying this step first.

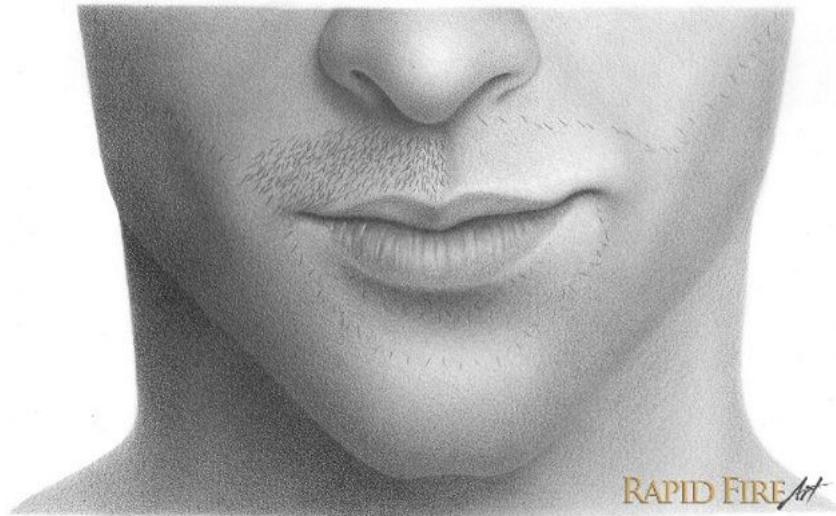
Plan out the placement of each hair from the root by **drawing small dots** where you want the stubble to appear on your drawing. In deep areas of the face like deep wrinkles, cheek hollows, chin creases etc, condense your dots. In areas that protrude like the chin, and ridges of the philtrum, draw less dots. Another area to draw less dots would be the natural boundary where the hair stops growing.

Step 2:



Decide on the length of hair you want to draw and then use a fairly light pencil to outline the boundaries of the facial hair. The boundary lines should blend in with the stubble you will draw later on.

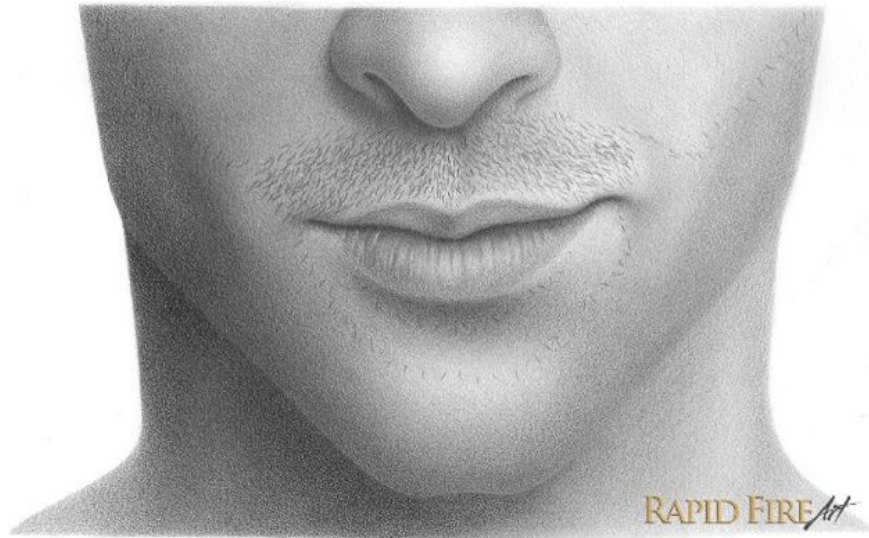
Step 3:



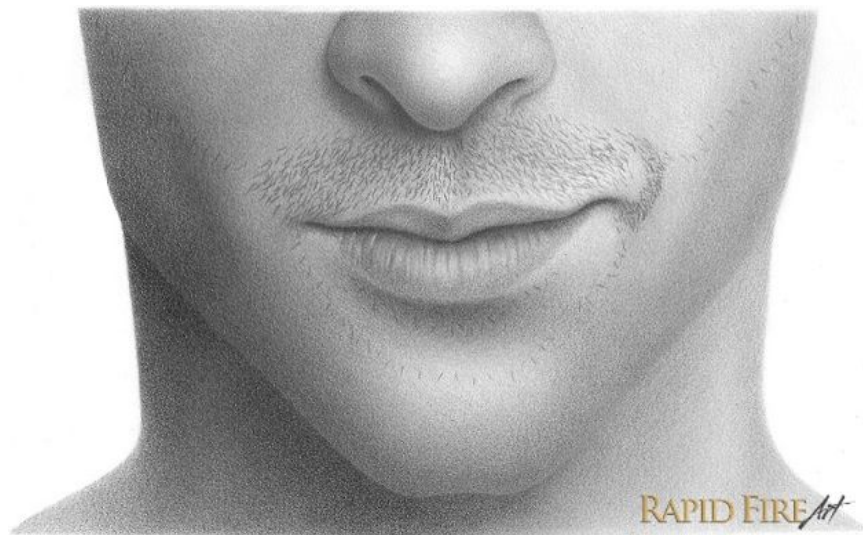
I'm using a sharp 2B and 4B pencil for the following steps. The pencil you use will depend on how dark you want the hairs to appear.

Work in sections to draw stubble that follows the general flow of hair on the face (like the example image under the section on '**Stroke Direction**'). Make sure to wrap your way around contours of the face.

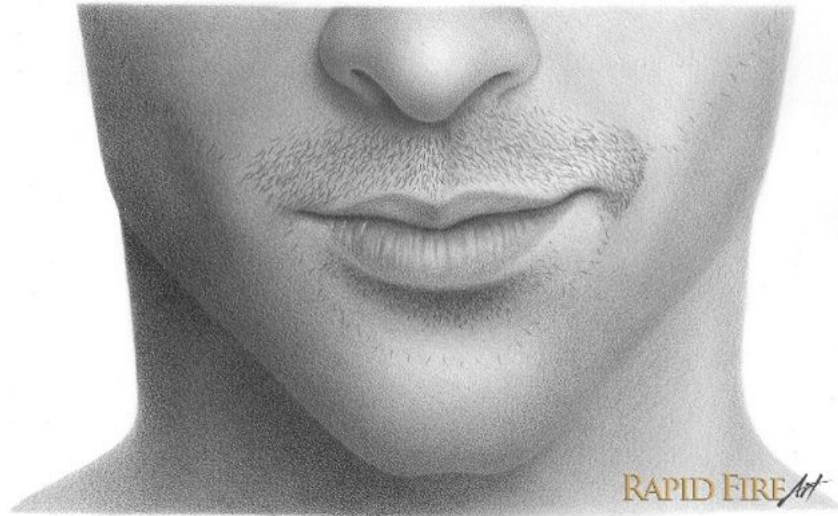
Step 4:



Don't be afraid to draw groups of hair. If some areas become too clumpy looking, use your kneaded eraser to dab those hairs away one at a time.



When drawing stubble on areas of the face such as smile lines, bring the hairs closer together. See how the hairs look more dense and dark?

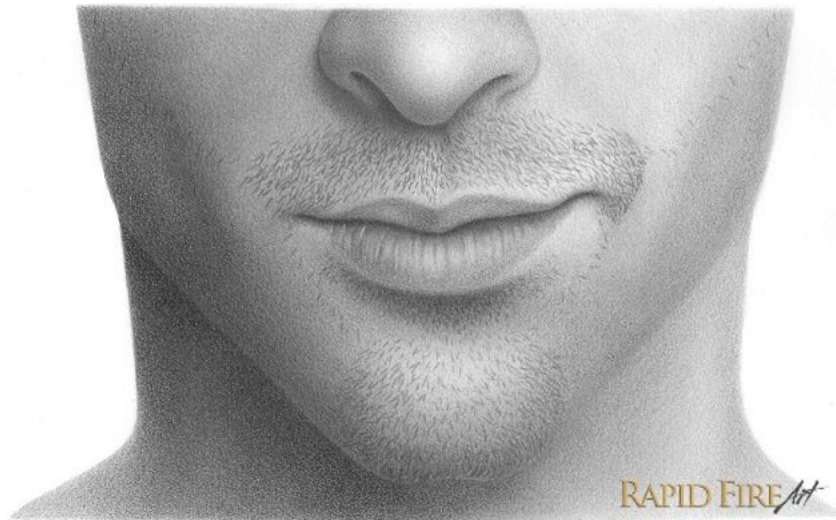
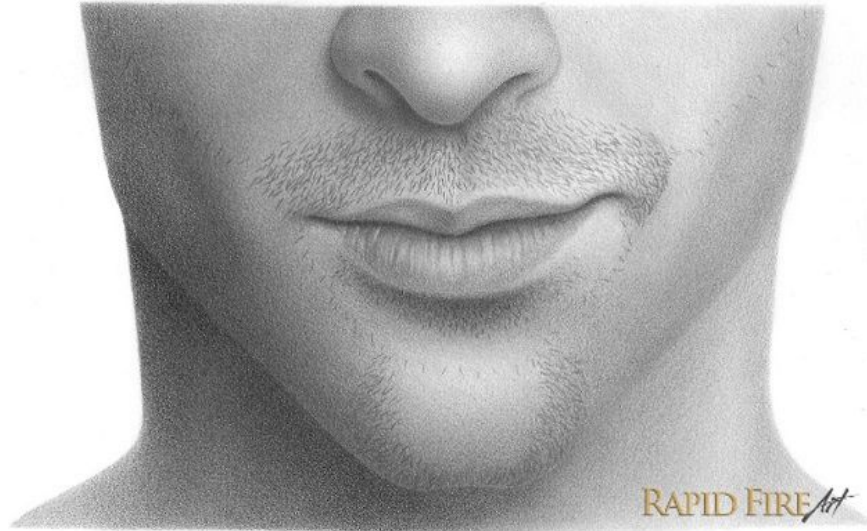


When you're transitioning from a concave area to a flat or convex surface, gradually space the hairs further apart so you get a smooth transition from dark to light.

Step 5:

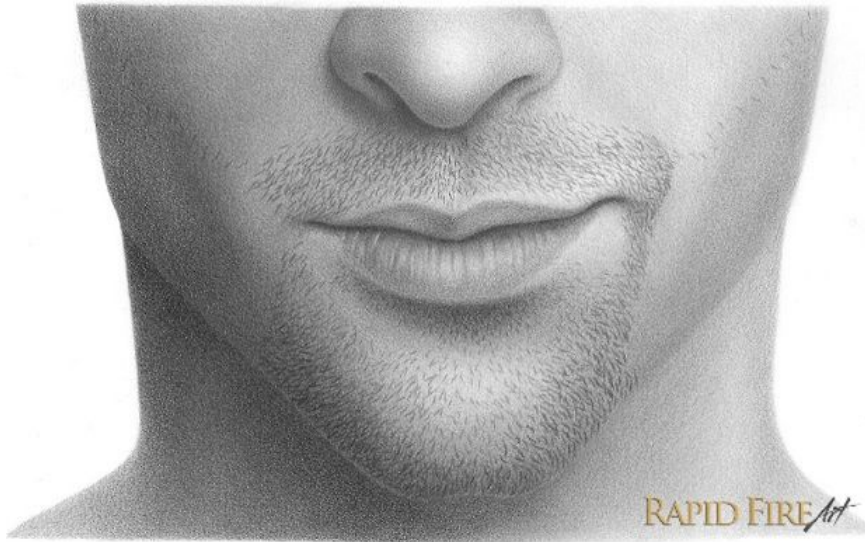
For areas like the chin that protrude from the face, space the hairs further apart. If you're drawing a face with a flat chin, there's no need to space the hairs too far apart, unless that happens to be where the natural hairline stops.

Gradually spacing the hair far apart, will make the chin look more shapely. However, please make sure that you shape the chin similar to how to shaded it.



If you're drawing a bottom lip with a deep crease or curve, condense the hairs. If the shadows are dark, you may want to add some light hairs by pinching the end of your kneaded eraser into a hair-like shape and pressing it onto the area.

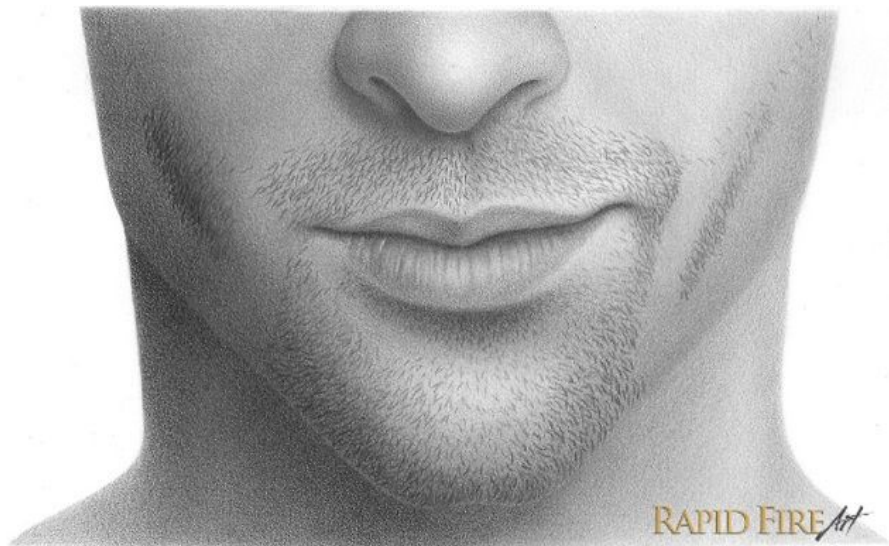
Step 6:



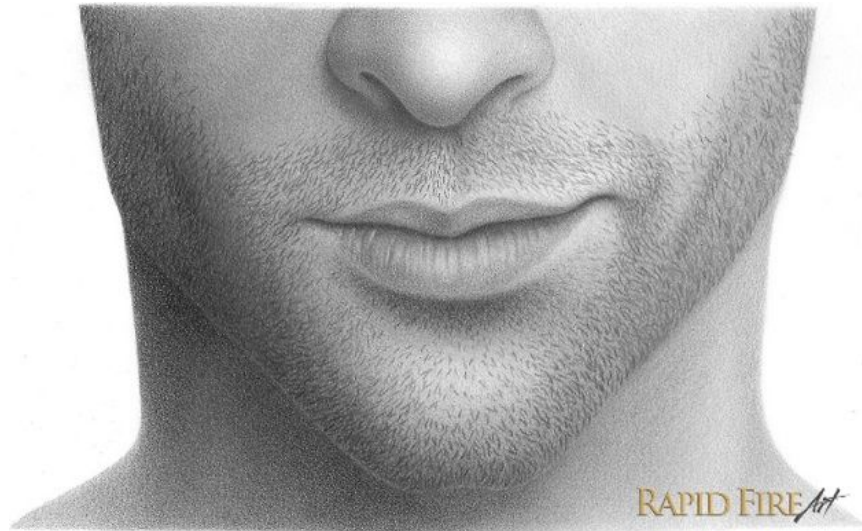
When drawing stubble along areas of the face that recede such as around the jawline, condense the hairs and draw them slightly darker. Make sure the change is gradual.

Step 7:

Along cheek hollows, condense the hairs. The more condensed they are, the deeper the hollows will look. Remember to space hairs out as the surface of the face flattens out.



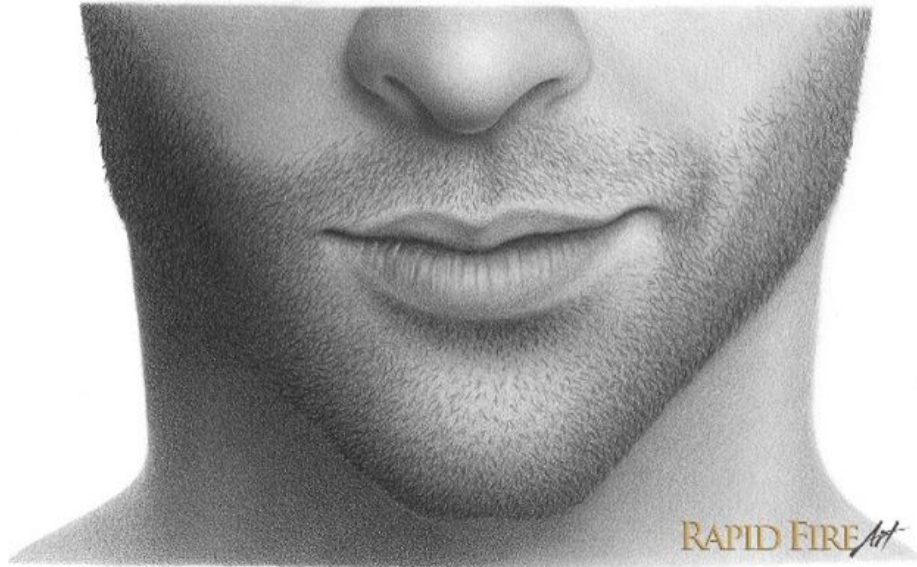
Step 8:



Draw the rest of the stubble. Increase your spacing along the top boundary of the facial hair. If you're drawing a face where one side is in shadow, you might want to darken the stubble a little bit in order for it to stick out or else it will blend in with your shading.

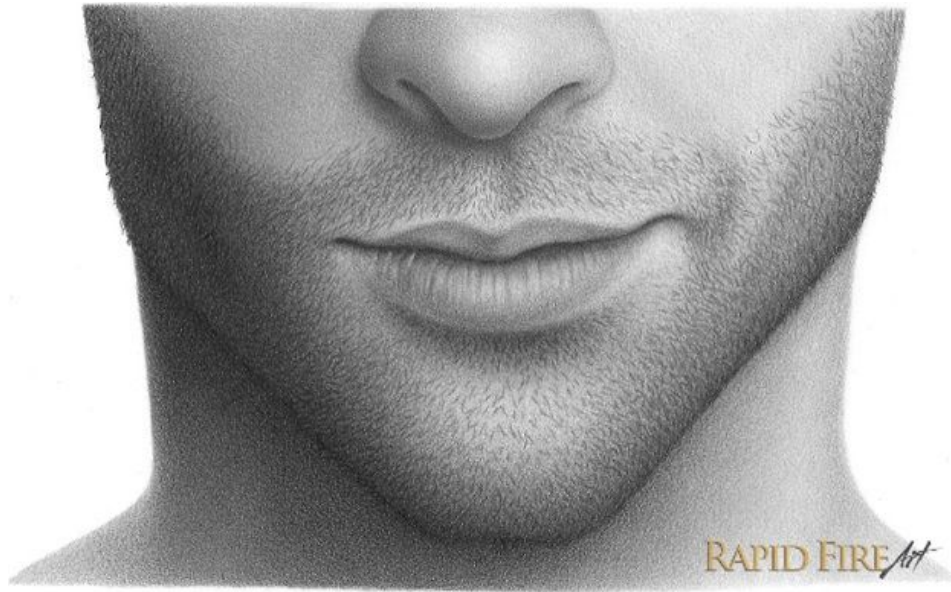
If you're happy with the level of shading you're at right now, skip step 9 and go straight to step 10.

Step 9:



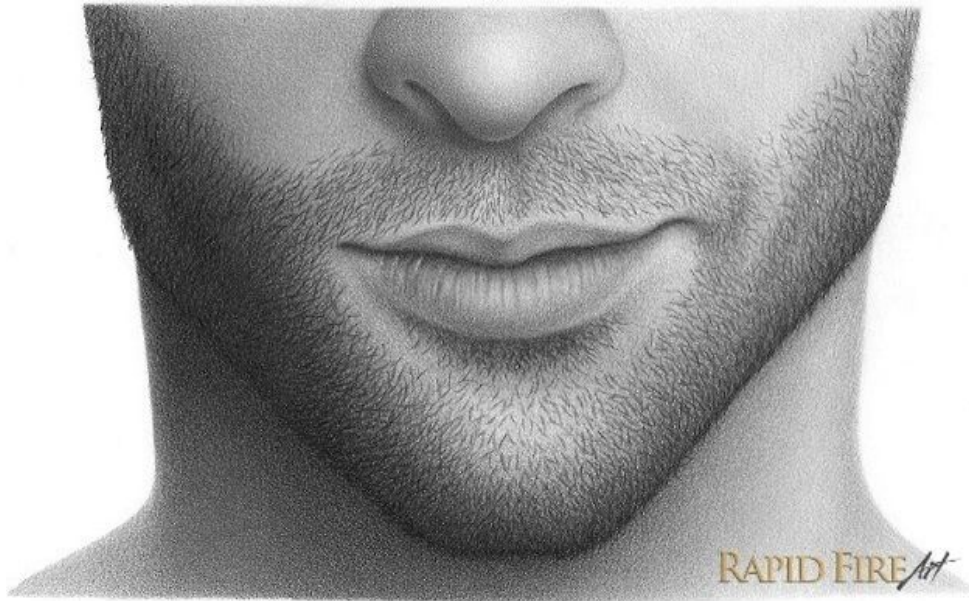
This step is optional. I added some more shading across the entire face to fill in those pesky white dots and added some more shape to the face. If your stubble is lightly drawn, avoid shading over your drawing or else the stubble could disappear.

Step 10:



This step is really fun! Sharpen a soft pencil that's a few grades softer than the one you were just using. Draw dark stubble along the edge of the jawline where the neck is. If you go too dark, it might come off as a dark outline.

Step 11:



Inspect your overall drawing to see if there is anything you need to fix or add. Are there any patterns you want to break up? Are the hairs uniform in length and overall value?

If you want to make the stubble longer, that's easy! Just add length to each hair and work in sections. You might not need to do this for dark areas of the face, since it probably won't make much of a difference.

If you enjoyed this tutorial, please leave a short review/comment in the comments below. Thank you!