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## How to draw cartoon hands

In this tutorial, I'll show you how to draw two styles of cartoon hands. There's the highly stylized Cartoon Hands, and the less simple and less stylized Comic Book Hands. In my previous hands lessons, I went over the anatomy of hands, a bunch of detail for realistic hands, like fingernails, skin creases, fat pads, veins and I gave you guys a general process for drawing and inventing hands from imagination. Watching those will definitely help you fully understand how to draw hands, even cartoon hands. Cartoons are just exaggerations of reality. To exaggerate the hand, it helps to know the hand. Let me remind you of the procedure and the forms of the hand we already learned. We start with the box of the palm. Add the gesture and cylinders of the fingers. The triangular base of the thumb. The rest of the thumb. And then any details. This process will be the same no matter what style you're drawing in. Cartoon Hands What separates a cartoon hand from a real hand is that the characteristics and expression are drawn in a humorously exaggerated way. Exaggeration is the key word here. Not all cartoon characters have the 3 fingered glove. Many are more complex, and highly stylized. For example there's the brilliant Glen Keane with movies like Tarzan, Tangled, and Beauty and the Beast. To draw these types of cartoon hands, anatomy becomes a little more important because the exaggerations are designed based on the anatomy. Out of the two styles I'm showing in this tutorial, I think this one is the hardest, and personally I think it looks the best. It's hardest because you have the most artistic freedom to push things how you like. You have to really feel the gesture and make exaggeration decisions that help support the story. With cartoon-style hands, the shapes are more complex and are designed to express a specific pose. Masterful exaggeration in the right areas is what makes these cartoon hands look so dynamic and awesome. The forms and proportions can be changed a lot to fit the character. For beefy hands, think of meatballs instead of sausages. For slender hands, think of worms, or pencils or... I dunno anything skinny. Look at hands from your favorite cartoons. They're a goldmine of reference. Pause the movie and study the way the artist drew that hand. Why did they push the exaggeration this way? How did they change the forms to make the hand fit the character? Alright, let's draw a cartoon hand! I'll work from a photo so that you guys can see what I'm basing my exaggerations from. I'm gonna start with a square shaped palm. But I'm not drawing a perfect square. I want it to be moving. I'm using subtle curves and tapering the square thinner at the bottom. It's a square, but a more interesting square. I really like how I can see that step down to the hand at the wrist. So, I'll exaggerate the way those forms lock together. The thumb is already pretty dynamic in the photo, but I want to take it 10 steps further. Go as far as I can with a crazy dynamic shape without breaking the form. It should still look like a thumb. With cartoons, you can go pretty far though. I'm designing these shapes based on my knowledge of anatomy though. There's the thenar eminence muscle mass peeking out here. Then a strong straight through the metacarpal bone, a fold in the skin to exaggerate the bend, and the big trowel shaped top of the thumb. Don't be afraid to push and pull the shapes. Experiment and try out various options. If you're too timid and stick to the reference too much, it'll probably end up boring. Try to design dynamic and interesting shapes. Have fun! For the fingers, I'm going with a design that's skinny at the base and fat at the tips. And large squared nails. In this pose, the tendons on the back of the hand are important to show the tension. A few strokes is enough to show that. I'll also add some width at the knuckles to make the finger shapes more interesting. Ok, the sketch is done. Next I ink over my blue sketch using my favorite pen tool. Comic Hands And then there's the comic books. Marvel, DC, and Japanese Manga hands don't usually take much liberty with exaggeration. The proportions and forms are very close to what you'd see in real hands. So, all you guys that want to learn how to draw really awesome Anime or Comic Book hands, you're just gonna have to learn how to draw hands. And I taught that already. So, check out my previous hand lessons. Since, anime hands are pretty much just real hands as silhouettes with flat shading, I'm gonna take one of my previous hand drawings and make it into an anime style. The details are usually removed, so imagine drawing one of those mannequins at the mall. Realistic proportions without details. I got the silhouette, now I'll fill the background with a color and fill the hand with another color. If I want to be fancy I can give it a subtle gradation and rim light. Let's be even more fancy and give the rim light a glow. Change the color of the outline in that area and the glow feels stronger. Yay! Anime hands. Of course there's a wide variety of comic book and anime styles. Not all are simple silhouettes with flat shading. Some are highly rendered, especially the cover art. What I showed here is just a typical anime style hand. Other Videos in this Series Check out the rest of the lessons in this series to learn more about drawing the bones and muscles of the hand to make your hand drawings realistic. Draw Expressive Hand Poses from Imagination! Proko is a resource for artists to get good art instruction videos. In addition to free resources, it also offers premium courses designed to give artists a detailed understanding of a specific subject. Premium courses are downloadable and include extended videos, assignment demos and examples, e-books, critique videos, and 3D models. Interested in character art & design or what it takes to become a character designer? Check out the link below! In this tutorial, I'll show you how to draw two styles of cartoon hands. There's the highly stylized Cartoon Hands, and the less simple and less stylized Comic Book Hands. In my previous hands lessons, I went over the anatomy of hands, a bunch of detail for realistic hands, like fingernails, skin creases, fat pads, veins and I gave you guys a general process for drawing and inventing hands from imagination. Watching those will definitely help you fully understand how to draw hands, even cartoon hands. Cartoons are just exaggerations of reality. To exaggerate the hand, it helps to know the hand. Let me remind you of the procedure and the forms of the hand we already learned. We start with the box of the palm. 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In addition to free resources, it also offers premium courses designed to give artists a detailed understanding of a specific subject. Premium courses are downloadable and include extended videos, assignment demos and examples, e-books, critique videos, and 3D models. Interested in character art & design or what it takes to become a character designer? Check out the link below! Drawing cartoon faces can be very easy, and in this step by step for beginners, I'm going to give you some basic pointers on how to draw cartoon faces of your own. Grab yourself a pencil and some paper and let's get started on your character design! Drawing a basic cartoon face Begin your cartoon face with a simple circle or sphere. Then draw two lines halfway along the circle, one down the middle and another across the centre. We now have a basic map upon which to add our features. If you change where the lines cross, you can alter the direction your character is looking! Adding Eyes Let's add in some eyes first. These sit on the vertical line. Draw a small circle with a dot in the middle for one eye and repeat for the second. The eyes can be touching or you can leave a gap between them. You can have lots of fun when drawing eyes. They help with the characters emotion so don't be afraid to try out different shapes! Add angular eyes for an angry expression or wide eyes to show someone is surprised! Draw a cartoon nose Next, add in your nose. This usually sits just below our horizontal line.Noses can be as simple or as complicated as you wish. Try some round noses, pointed noses or even square noses! The one here is a simple semi-circle.Feel free to add nostrils either side too! Add a Mouth Draw a mouth by adding a small, curved line underneath the nose. The mouth is usually about the same width as the eyes, but this all depends on your character. By changing the shape of the mouth, we can allow for a greater range of expressions. For example, we can add a smile by tilting the line to one side. Or unhappy by turning the line upside-down. Or even show them shouting by adding a large oval. How to draw cartoon ears The ears usually sit between the middle of the eyes and the tip of the nose. Start at the top of the ear and curve downwards, forming a letter "C" on the side of the head. Repeat on the other side. Add another smaller letter "C" inside the ones you've just drawn for detail. Try out big ears, small ears and maybe even pointy goblin ears! Drawing cartoon heads Once you've mastered the faces and expressions, you can give your cartoon characters some different head shapes (because no-one has a completely round head, right?). One easy way to completely change to look of your character is to change the shape of their jaw. You might want an angular jaw for a superhero or a rounded chin for a chubby baby. Add a simple shape to the bottom of your original circle. You could try an oval or more of an angular head, or even try layering up some different sized circles and ovals. This one way, you can join them all together into a single head shape. Adding some hair Don't forget to add some hair to your cartoon face. This will add extra character to your cartoon. It also makes them recognisable if shown as only a shape or shadow. Start by drawing the overall shape of the hair first. It might be long, short or everything in between. Then add in some basic lines to show the direction of the hair. Once you've mastered drawing cartoon faces and heads, why not follow up by reading my posts on how to draw cartoon hands and drawing cartoon feet? You're well on your way to drawing a complete character design! If you've any ideas for a new character or mascot design, please don't hesitate to contact me! contact me Today we thought we would give you some tips on many artists' worst nightmare - drawing hands! Hands are notorious in the art community for being one of the most difficult parts of the human body to draw. This is because they are made of many small joints and ligaments that allow them to make countless complex poses. Just like anything else, when it comes to drawing hands, a huge part of improving is practice! If you want to learn all about drawing the human body, we recommend checking out this course, 'Fundamentals of Drawing', by Maria Lia Malandrino. To give you an idea of what you can expect in her course, here are a few tips and tricks for you that can make drawing hands so much easier! The first thing you need to do when learning how to draw hands is to get a basic understanding of their anatomy. In human anatomy, hands are made up of a total of 27 bones (this is including the wrist). Lots of different muscles, ligaments and tendons can also be found within the hand. The muscles are the structures that can contract, allowing movement of the bones in the hand. Ligaments are the tissues that help bind together the joints in the hand. The tendons connect muscles in the hand to the bone to allow movement. In addition to these components, there are also arteries, veins and nerves within the hand that provide blood flow and sensation. Diagram by: Hand Surgery, Micro Surgery and Rehabilitation Group, Istanbul Due to the overall complexity of hands' anatomy, it can be helpful to study medical diagrams of hands to get a better understanding of their overall bone structure and how they move. Another important thing to note is that the skin on the palms of our hands will often be a slightly different colour to the rest of our skin. In people with fair skin, this can often result in a pinkish tone, whereas people with darker skin may have lighter coloured palms compared to their overall complexion. A great way to learn how to draw hands is by using the Loomis method, which as shown below, uses rectangles to break up the different proportions of the hand. Maria Lia Malandrino does an amazing job of explaining this method in her course, 'Fundamentals of Drawing.' I recommend checking it out if you are looking for an awesome, in-depth look into drawing hands! @art.bymemo Finding reference images should always be one of your first steps when it comes to drawing something new. Try to find yourself hand photos with varying angles and poses. This will ensure you get a well-rounded knowledge of how hands look. After some practice drawing, you will be able to illustrate them in any pose you want! You can find great hand references on sites such as Sketch Daily and Pinterest—or even take photos of your own hand. @rheatibbey On average, male hands are much larger and more squared than female hands. When illustrating a human hand, the middle finger should be the longest. Index and ring fingers should be similar lengths, and the pinkie finger should be the shortest. Looking at your reference, evaluate the order in which the fingers are layered. This can help a lot when drawing hands from complex angles. Once you understand the layering of the fingers in the image, you can then move to plot out where the tips of the fingers and joints will be. If this is your first time drawing a hand from this perspective, you can always lower the opacity of your reference and draw directly over it to create a guide for yourself. When you have the joints mapped out, you can then start drawing in the basic forms of the hand using simple block shapes. By doing this, you ensure the hand maintains a three-dimensional appearance. Add your final outlines, making sure to really smooth out the shapes and create more curved lines. It can help to use your own hand as reference to check any details you are unsure about! @art.bymemo Hands will have different finger lengths and details depending on the age of your character. Babies have short and rounded fingers whilst the elderly have long fingers with more prominent ligaments and knuckles. @art.bymemo Do you want to know how to draw hands without any reference images? This simple method might be just what you need to get started! Think of the basic shape of the palm as a square or rectangular block. This will act as the basis of your hand drawing. Try to make it look 3D in your sketch as this will help you better visualise the basic shapes of the hand. Now that you have your rectangular shape, start sketching in the fingers radiating out from a point near to the wrist. Sketch in some soft block shapes for the tips of the fingers. These will act as a guide for drawing in the rest of the fingers. The thumb should then come off from a circular joint on the palm. Sketch in another soft block shape for the tip of the thumb. Now that you have created this simple hand shape, you can start adding more detailed linework over the top. It can help to think of the fingers as individual cylinders during this part of the process. Add in your colouring and shading and voila! You are done! Just remember what was mentioned earlier about the skin colour of the palms and fingertips. @rheatibbey Now that you have learnt how to draw hands through these simple techniques, you can start illustrating a range of different hand gestures for your characters! Looking for more awesome tutorials to help you develop your hand drawing skills? Check out 'Fundamentals of Drawing' by the amazing artist, Maria Lia Malandrino! Drawing cartoon hands, as well as feet, presents a unique challenge yet is crucial for bringing cartoon characters to life. These elements are vital for showcasing expressions, gestures, and the ability to manipulate objects, thus playing a significant role in storytelling through illustration. Cartoon hands are instrumental in mirroring a character's emotions, complementing facial expressions to set the tone of the scene. For instance, a joyous character may be depicted with arms wide open and palms exposed, while an irate figure might be shown with fists clenched tightly, arms at their sides. The physical attributes of hands can also suggest gender differences, with male hands appearing more robust and female hands being depicted as more delicate and slender. This method begins with a basic oblong or cup-shaped figure to represent the palm. Subsequently, elongated oval shapes, resembling sausages, are added to outline the fingers, with an additional shape for the thumb. A small rectangle can serve as the wrist. An alternative approach involves starting with an oval shape for the palm, followed by sketching in lines to delineate the fingers and thumb. This framework is then fleshed out to form the complete hand, suitable for characters with unusually long or distinct fingers. Begin with the Palm: Sketch a small oblong shape; Add the Fingers: Attach elongated shapes to the top edge for fingers, including one for the thumb; Outline the Hand: Draw around the combined shapes to define the hand; Add Detail: Insert a line next to the thumb for added depth. Palm Foundation: Start with an oval shape for the palm; Sketch the Fingers: Draw small lines to form the fingers and thumb; Complete the Outline: Enclose these elements in a comprehensive outline; Adapt for Creativity: This method is particularly effective for drawing hands of fantastical beings. FeatureOblong Palm ApproachOval Palm TechniqueStarting ShapeOblong or cup-shaped for the palmOval shape for the palmFinger FormationElongated ovals (sausages) for fingers and thumbSmall lines for fingers and thumbComplexitySimple and straightforward, ideal for beginnersSlightly more complex, suitable for varied charactersVersatilityBest for human characters with standard hand shapesExcellent for fantastical or exaggerated charactersDetailingMinimal detailing, focusing on overall hand shapeAllows for additional detailing and unique featuresTime EfficiencyQuick to draw, suitable for animationsRequires more time, but offers creative flexibilityThe choice between the oblong palm approach and the oval palm technique can be influenced by the character's nature and the story's context. For instance, the oblong palm approach, with its simplicity and efficiency, is particularly suited to animated characters that require rapid, repetitive drawing. Conversely, the oval palm technique, allowing for a greater range of motion and expression, is ideal for characters that demand more detailed and nuanced hand gestures. Hand gestures are a powerful tool in visual storytelling, capable of conveying a wide range of emotions and actions without the need for text. An open hand can signify peace or an offering, while a clenched fist might indicate anger or determination. By carefully choosing the hand posture and expression, illustrators can add depth to their characters' personalities and enhance the narrative without overt exposition. Developing a unique style for drawing cartoon hands involves experimentation and consistent practice. Begin by mastering the basic techniques outlined above, then gradually introduce variations and details to distinguish your characters. Observing real-life hand gestures and how they convey emotion can also provide valuable insights. Over time, you will develop a repertoire of hand gestures and styles that breathe life into your illustrations, making your characters more relatable and your storytelling more impactful. Mastering cartoon hand illustrations enriches character design and expression, offering endless creative possibilities. Whether depicting human characters or imaginative creatures, the key is to utilize simple shapes and lines for a solid foundation. Experimentation and practice are crucial in developing a style that brings your cartoon characters to life with expressive and dynamic hands.