

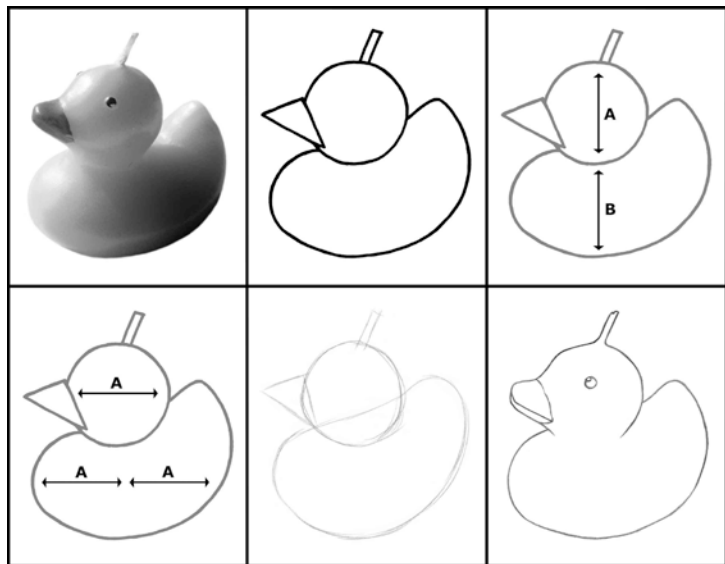
# SEE AND DRAW THE SHAPES OF A DUCK

Brenda Hoddinott







## B01 BEGINNER: LEARN TO SEE

Seeing and sketching accurate proportions is the foundation of drawing.

This lesson takes you step-by-step, through the entire process of drawing a cute little candle-shaped duck, from initially looking at the shapes and proportions to completing a contour drawing.



This project is divided into the following six sections:

-  **Introduction**
-  **Visually Identify Shapes**
-  **Visually Measure Shapes and Proportions**
-  **Sketch Proportions**
-  **Check Proportions and Add Final Details**
-  **Challenge**

**Suggested supplies include: paper, HB pencil, kneaded and vinyl erasers, and a pencil sharpener.**

*This project is recommended for artists from age 10 to adult, as well as students of home schooling, academic, and recreational fine art educators.*

**7 PAGES – 17 ILLUSTRATIONS**



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## INTRODUCTION

Learning to draw is learning to see! The process of drawing becomes less intimidating when you can see through the eyes of an artist. With lots of practice, you can learn this skill so well that the process becomes automatic.

In this lesson, you use a photo to accurately create a contour drawing of an adorable duck-shaped candle. To draw each part of the duck in its correct place, you visually:

- ✓ Break the whole object down into simple shapes.
- ✓ Measure various distances within shapes and spaces.
- ✓ Sketch proportions accurately.

I have changed the photo to grayscale (Figure 201) so you can better concentrate on the independent shapes.

Figure 201



### ART SPEAK

**Shape** refers to the outward outline of a form. Basic shapes include circles, squares and triangles.

**Proportion** refers to the relationship in size of one part of a drawing to another or others.

**Positive space** is the space in a drawing that is occupied by an object.

**Negative space** is the background around an object.

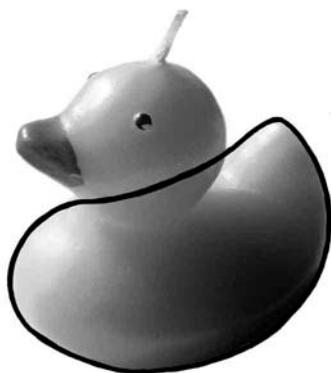
**Contour drawing** is comprised of lines that follow the contours of the edges of various components of a drawing subject and define the outlines of its forms.

## VISUALLY IDENTIFY SHAPES

In this section, photos demonstrate the importance of a thorough visual examination of a drawing subject. You follow along with five photos (Figures 202 to 206) to see how individual shapes come together to create a duck-shaped candle.

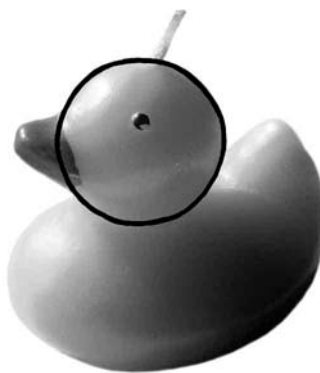
You can use positive and negative spaces to see the overall shape of the duck in lesson *B01 Drawing with Spaces*.

Figure 202



The duck's body is shaped like a kidney (or kidney bean).

Figure 203



A simple circle defines the basic shape of the head.

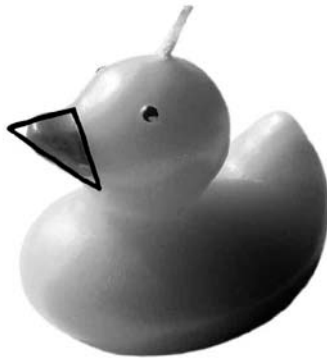
Figure 204



The candle wick is a long thin rectangle.

Figure 205

The beak is defined as a simple triangular shape.



## ART SPEAK

**Overlapping** is a technique used to create the illusion of depth by drawing a subject (or a part of a subject) so it visually appears to be in front of another (or others).

Each of the shapes, the kidney, circle, rectangle, and triangle come together like pieces of a puzzle to complete an outline of the overall shape of the duck (Figure 206).

A couple of unnecessary lines are deleted where the head overlaps the body, and where the beak overlaps the head (Figure 207).

## VISUALLY MEASURE SHAPES AND PROPORTIONS

To draw accurate proportions, you need to visually measure the vertical and horizontal distances of each part of your subject.

Compare each distance to others and look for similarities and differences.

For example, as I examine the photo of the duck (Figure 208), I immediately notice similar vertical distances inside the shapes of the head and body.

As you can see in Figure 209, the length of the head (marked A) is almost exactly the same as the distance from the bottom of the head to the bottom of the body (marked B).

I again search the photo (Figure 210) for more clues to seeing the duck's proportions by comparing the horizontal distances inside the shapes.

Figure 206

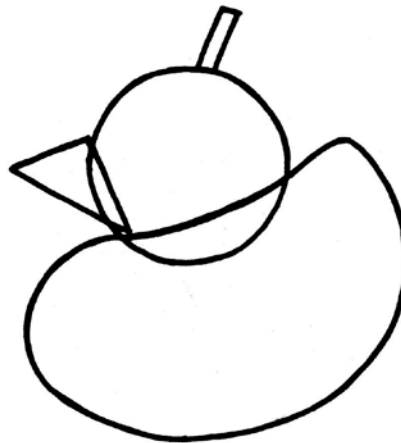


Figure 207

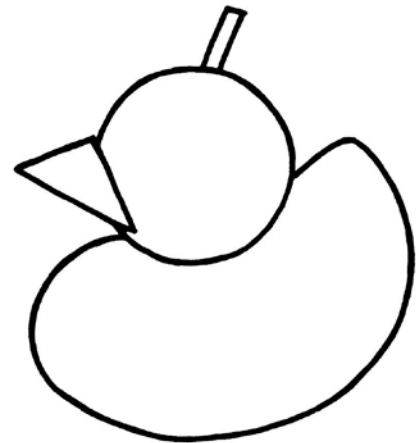
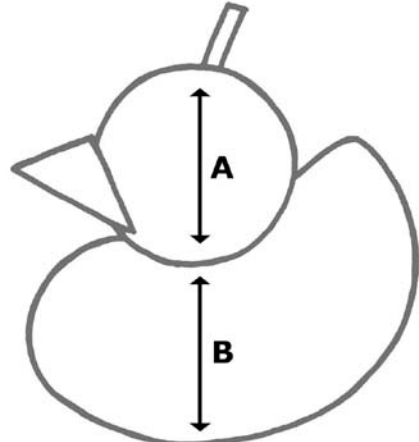


Figure 208



Figure 209



I focus on the horizontal width of the body.

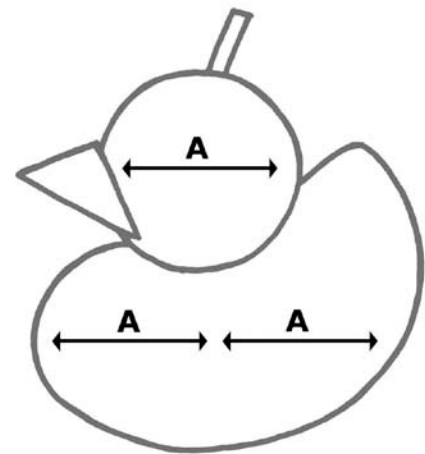
I discover that this section of the body is almost twice as wide as the width of the head (Figure 211).

The seeing part of drawing is now over, and it's time to gather your drawing supplies!

Figure 210



Figure 211



## SKETCH PROPORTIONS

Time to put your new visual skills into action and draw! As you sketch, visually break down each part into its simple shape, measure proportions, and constantly check the relationships of lines and spaces to one another. If you're not happy with some of the lines you draw, simply erase that section, redraw the lines, and keep on going.

Keep in mind that you can turn your sketchbook around as you draw, especially when sketching a circle. You can also rotate your paper and look at your drawing from different perspectives to find problem areas.

- 1) **Draw a kidney shape in the lower section of your drawing space as the duck's body (Figure 212).**

Observe that the section on the left is much larger than the tail section. Keep your lines very light by pressing very gently with your HB pencil.

- 2) **Add a circular shape as the head (Figure 213).**

The circle does not sit on top of the kidney shape.

Rather, the lower section of the circle extends into the upper section of the kidney shape.

Figure 212

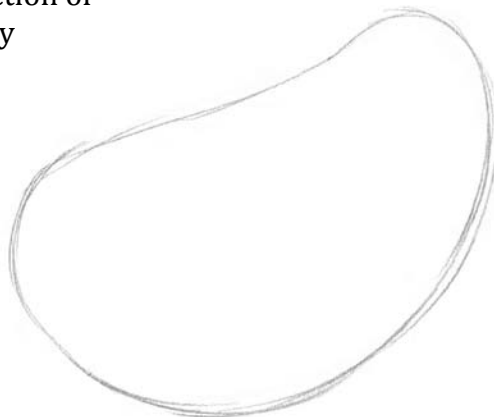


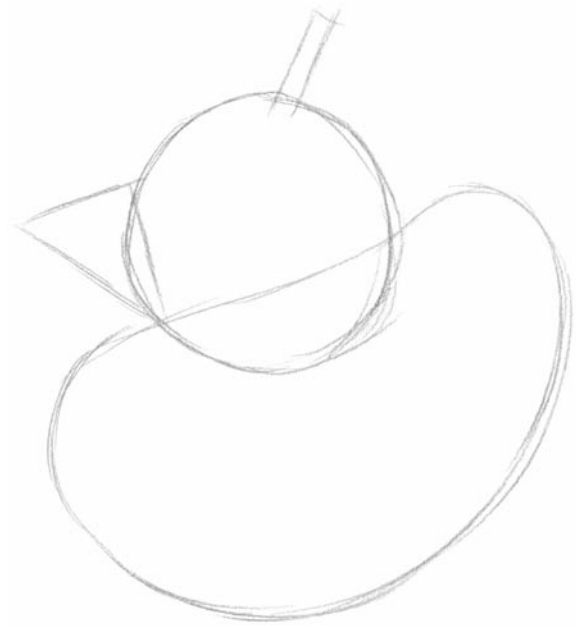
Figure 213



- 3) **Add a triangular shape as the beak and a thin rectangular shape as the wick (Figure 214).**

Observe that each of the lines used to sketch the beak and wick are at an angle rather than horizontal or vertical.

Figure 214



## CHECK PROPORTIONS AND ADD FINAL DETAILS

In this section, you complete your drawing.

Keep in mind that each shape represents an independent form. Hence, you need to constantly compare my drawings to the reference photo to understand why the lines need to curve around these forms.

In addition, you need to pay close attention to the lengths of the various lines and the directions in which they curve.

As you complete this contour drawing, continuously check whether the sizes and proportions of each section are correct, and adjust as needed. Keep the following in mind:

- ✓ Don't press too hard with your pencils! No matter how careful you are, accidents do happen, and you may need to erase sections with which you aren't happy.
- ✓ Draw slowly! Accuracy is more important than speed. Your speed will automatically improve the more you practice.
- ✓ Keep your pencils sharpened so your lines stay neat and thin. Try using a piece of fine sandpaper or a sandpaper block to keep your pencil points nice and sharp. Pencil sharpeners tend to wear down pencils very quickly.

### WARNING!

**Do not draw directly over your sketch lines!**

Instead, visually re-measure spaces to confirm that the proportions are correct as you outline the duck with a new set of thin neat lines.

- 4) **Use your kneaded eraser to pat your entire sketch until the lines are very faint.**
- 5) **With a freshly sharpened HB pencil outline the perimeters of the duck's beak and the wick (Figure 215).**

Round off the outer section of the beak and add rounded corners to the triangular shape.

Don't outline the lower section of the wick, because it needs to look like it's attached to the top of the head.

**6) Outline the duck's head on either side of the beak and the wick.**

Don't outline the lower section of the head or the part where the wick meets the top of the head. The head needs to look like it's joined to the body.

**7) Outline the duck's body.**

**8) Outline the eye and the tiny circular shape inside it (Figure 216).**

Take note of the distance the eye is from various points on the outline of the head, such as the top and sides.

**9) Draw a line as the opening of the bill.**

Examine the length of the line and the sections that are straight and curved.

**10) Erase any remaining fingerprints, smudges, and sketch lines (Figure 217).**

Figure 215

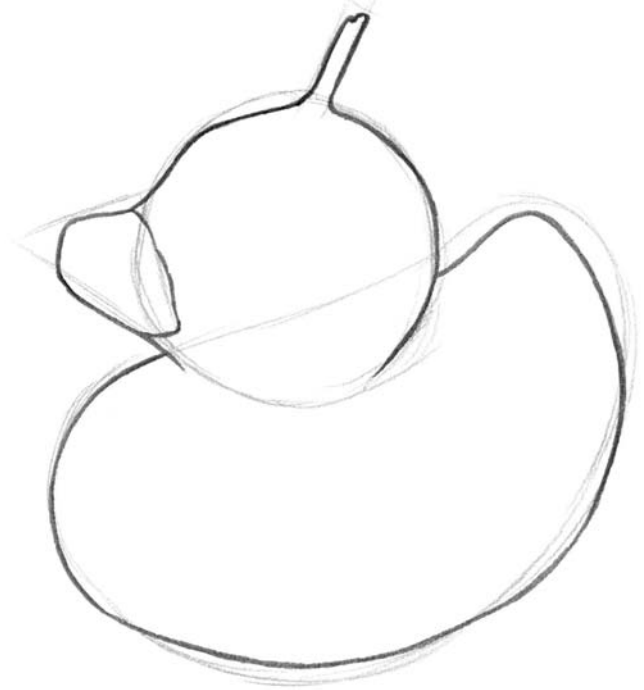
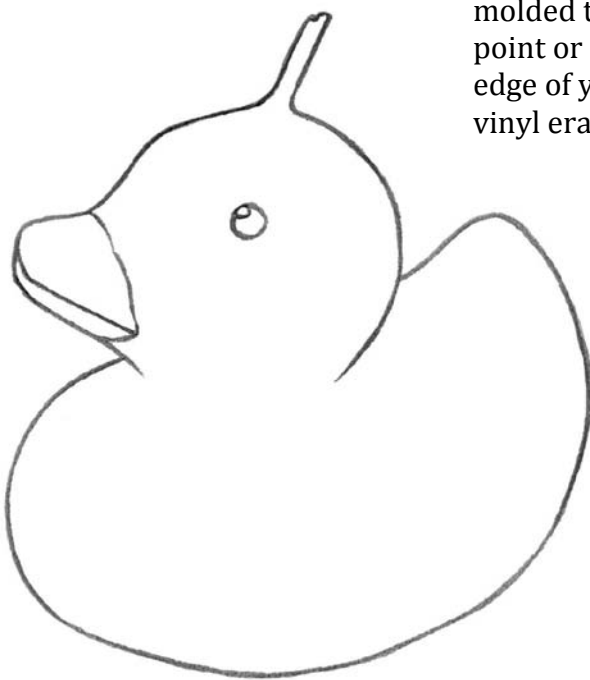


Figure 216



Figure 217



Use your kneaded eraser molded to a point or a sharp edge of your vinyl eraser.

**Sign your name and put today's date on the back of your drawing.**



## CHALLENGE

**Find a simple object (such as mug, vase, or piece of fruit) and create a contour drawing from life.**

Take your time and use the skills presented in this lesson.

Remember to always examine the object you are drawing very closely, and take note of whether its shapes (or parts of its shapes) are in front of or behind others.



### BRENDA HODDINOTT

As a self-educated teacher, visual artist, portraitist, forensic artist (retired), and illustrator, Brenda Hoddinott utilizes diverse art media including her favorites: graphite and paint.

Brenda is the author of *Drawing for Dummies* (Wiley Publishing, Inc., New York, NY) and *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Drawing People* (Winner of the Alpha-Penguin Book of the Year Award 2004, Alpha - Pearson Education - Macmillan, Indianapolis, IN). She is currently writing two books on classical drawing.

*My philosophy on teaching art is to focus primarily on the enjoyment aspects while gently introducing the technical and academic. Hence, in creating a passion for the subject matter, the quest for knowledge also becomes enjoyable.*

>Brenda Hoddinott<

Born in St. John's, Newfoundland, Brenda grew up in the small town of Corner Brook. She developed strong drawing and painting skills through self-directed learning.

During her twenty-five year career as a self-educated civilian forensic artist, various criminal investigation departments have employed Brenda's skills, including the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. In 1992, Brenda was honored with a commendation from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and in 1994, she was awarded a Certificate of Membership from "Forensic Artists International".

In 2003, Brenda retired from her careers as a forensic artist and teacher to work full time writing books and developing her website (Drawspace.com). This site is respected as a resource for fine art educators, home schooling programs, and educational facilities throughout the world.