

Understanding Portrait and Figure Drawing

Chapter 4: Portrait and Figure Drawing · Topic 1

Key Concept

A common guideline for the face is that the eyes are roughly in the middle of the head (not near the top), and the head is generally about one-seventh to one-eighth of an adult's total body height.

Practising basic body poses using simple stick figures or geometric shapes (ovals for the head, rectangles for the torso and limbs) before adding details helps us capture proportion and movement correctly.

Quick Revision Notes

- The eyes are roughly in the middle of the head, not near the top.
- An adult's head is about one-seventh to one-eighth of their total height.
- Stick figures or simple shapes help plan a figure's pose.
- Adding details comes after the basic proportion is set.

Practice Questions

- 1 Practice sketching a face, marking the eye line in the middle of the head.
- 2 Draw a simple stick-figure pose before adding body details.
- 3 Draw a self-portrait using proportion guidelines.
- 4 Compare your first sketch with your final detailed drawing.