

Blocking In

Art & Design

The straight-line envelope that settles proportion before any curve.

Straight lines are easier to judge than curves. That is the whole method.

1

Find the extremes

Top, bottom, left, right. Four marks that contain the whole subject.

2

Draw the envelope

Join the extremes with long straight lines. No curves yet.

3

Divide the big shape

Halves and thirds. Where does the halfway line actually fall?

4

Cut in the angles

Replace long straights with shorter ones nearer the true edge.

5

Curve last

Only once the straight construction is right does the line soften.

The envelope is a scaffold, not a drawing. Keep it light enough that it disappears under the finished line.