Foreshortened Hand Drawing: Overlap, Palm Depth, and Perspective

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

Using the convention palm facing viewer, fingers toward viewer, thumb on left, and a hypothetical x-height of 10 mm, draw a bounding box 30 mm by 40 mm. Mark the perspective axis and palm oval. Draw the middle finger at 1.4 x-heights (14 mm) and compare it with the flat example of 2.2 x-heights (22 mm). Record the length in x-heights.

Answer: A bounding box 30 mm by 40 mm with a center axis and a palm oval about 20 mm by 25 mm. Middle finger drawn at 1.4 x-heights (14 mm), which is shorter than the flat 2.2 x-heights (22 mm) example. Length recorded in x-heights.

Reason: Foreshortening shortens apparent length along the viewing axis. The 14 mm value is a hypothetical example chosen to show compression.

Check: Measure the drawn middle finger with a ruler. Confirm it is about 14 mm, which equals 1.4 x-heights at the chosen 10 mm x-height, and less than the flat 22 mm (2.2 x-heights) example. Confirm the axis runs from wrist center to middle fingertip.

Task 2

Draw two overlapping fingers: index nearer, middle farther. The index should cross in front. State which finger's edge is continuous. Use any x-height you choose and label it.

Answer: The index finger is drawn fully and its edge is continuous. The middle finger stops at the index finger's edge. The chosen x-height is labeled.

Reason: Overlap order is a depth cue: the nearer finger occludes the farther one.

Check: Trace from wrist to tip. Confirm the continuous edge belongs to the index finger and the middle finger stops at that edge.

Task 3

Add palm depth cues to a palm oval: a heel curve, a knuckle ridge, and one side plane on the thumb side. Count the visible planes and record the count.

Answer: Three cues added: heel curve, knuckle ridge, thumb-side plane. Visible plane count recorded as three.

Reason: Palm depth is communicated by multiple plane cues, not a single outline.

Check: Point to each cue and count. Confirm at least two are present; three is stronger.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

Draw a foreshortened hand with at least two overlap edges and three palm depth cues. Record each drawn finger length in x-heights. Use a hypothetical x-height of 10 mm and label all numbers as hypothetical.

Answer: A hand drawing with two overlap edges, three depth cues, and recorded lengths such as middle 1.4, index 1.2, ring 1.2, little 0.9 x-heights. All numbers labeled hypothetical.

Reason: Recording lengths makes foreshortening checkable and separates chosen examples from measured equipment.

Check: Measure each finger, divide by the chosen x-height, and compare with recorded values. Confirm overlap order and depth cue count.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Convention stated clearly and followed consistently.
- [ ] Bounding box and perspective axis present.
- [ ] At least two overlap edges with correct nearer-finger order.
- [ ] Fingers shortened along the perspective axis; lengths recorded in x-heights.
- [ ] Palm depth shows at least two of three cues: heel curve, knuckle ridge, side plane.
- [ ] Valid alternatives allowed: thumb side, finger lengths, and x-height may vary if consistent.
- [ ] Construction lines light and overlap edges clean.

Reflection: What did you check, what did you change, and what will you try next?