Pencil Realistic Dog Sketch: Fur Direction and Tonal Layering

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

A reference dog has head length 5 cm and torso length 8 cm. Your drawing head is 4 cm. Calculate the torso length that preserves the ratio.

Answer: 6.4 cm.

Reason: Torso ratio is 8 divided by 5, equal to 1.6. Multiply the drawing head length 4 cm by 1.6 to get 6.4 cm.

Check: Divide 6.4 by 4 and confirm the result is 1.6, matching 8 divided by 5.

Task 2

A dog zone has fur flowing from the shoulder toward the paw. Describe the stroke direction and where you would place the medium tone if light comes from above.

Answer: Strokes run downward from shoulder toward paw; medium tone goes on the underside and inner side of the leg.

Reason: Fur flow follows the visible direction from shoulder to paw. With light from above, planes turning away from the light are the underside and inner leg, so they receive the medium layer.

Check: Confirm the arrows point shoulder-to-paw and that medium tone appears only on the shadow-side planes, not on the lit top of the leg.

Task 3

You define light pressure as 1, medium as 3, and dark as 5 on scrap paper. A drawing shows the chest at 3 and the under-chin at 3. What tonal problem exists and how do you fix it?

Answer: The under-chin should be darker than the chest; raise the under-chin to 5 and keep the chest at 3.

Reason: Deep shadow under the chin needs the darkest accent to separate the head from the chest. Equal values flatten the form.

Check: Compare the two areas side by side and confirm the under-chin reads darker while the chest remains mid-tone.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

A reference has leg length 9 cm and body depth 6 cm. Your drawing leg is 7.5 cm. Calculate the body depth that preserves the ratio and state one fur-stroke adjustment for the paw.

Answer: 5 cm body depth; use shorter tapered strokes on the paw.

Reason: Leg-to-depth ratio is 9 divided by 6, equal to 1.5. Drawing depth is 7.5 divided by 1.5, equal to 5 cm. Paws need short strokes to suggest fine fur.

Check: Divide 7.5 by 5 and confirm 1.5, matching 9 divided by 6; check that paw strokes are visibly shorter than torso strokes.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Proportion ratios for head, torso, and leg are recorded and compared using consistent units.
- [ ] Fur-flow arrows are marked per zone and strokes generally follow them.
- [ ] Tone is built in at least three distinguishable layers from light to dark.
- [ ] Dark accents are limited to deep shadow areas and contrast is readable.
- [ ] Edges show some soft fur breaks while the overall silhouette remains clear.
- [ ] Valid alternative stroke directions are accepted when they match the reference's visible fur flow.

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