Drawing Eyes in Perspective: Foreshortened Lids and Iris Ellipses

Topic reference / ordinary illustration



Ordinary topic reference. Hypothetical dimensions in the four tasks are supplied in their own text; this illustration is not their measured answer.

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Worked example / complete source key

A head is turned three-quarter to the viewer's left. The near eye is on the left side of the face. Draw the eye line, place the near eye, foreshorten the upper lid, and draw the iris as an ellipse. Use a hypothetical iris width of 60 percent of its front-view width and label it as a hypothetical example.

Answer: Draw a curved midline turning left. Draw the eye line tilting slightly down to the left. Place the near eye left of the midline and the far eye closer to the midline. Draw the eyeball as a circle on the eye line. Draw the upper lid as an arc whose peak shifts left toward the near side. Draw the iris as an ellipse with a hypothetical horizontal width of 60 percent of the front-view width, centered on the eyeball front axis. Draw the pupil as a smaller ellipse with the same orientation. Annotate the brow angle so it agrees with the head turn. Check that the far eye is compressed and that the iris ellipse is narrower than at front view.