Manga Drawing Exercises: Timed Gesture and Line-Control Drills

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

Draw three 30-second gesture skeletons of a walking figure, each with a different stride length. Mark baseline and midline on each. Circle the pose with the clearest action line.

Answer: A valid answer shows three distinct strides, each with a marked baseline and midline, and one circled pose with a brief reason such as 'clearest spine curve' or 'strongest arm swing'.

Reason: The drill trains quick capture of action and consistent proportion markers. Different strides test whether the action line remains readable as the pose changes.

Check: Verify that each pose has a baseline and midline, that the three strides are visibly different, and that the circled pose has a written reason. No single pose is universally correct.

Task 2

Mark two points 10 centimeters apart (hypothetical example; measure your own distance). Draw five straight lines between them in one motion each. Check each line with a ruler against a one-millimeter band (hypothetical example). Record how many lines stay within the band.

Answer: A valid answer records the number of lines within the band and notes any that left it. The count depends on your measured band and pencil width.

Reason: This drill builds steady straight-line control and teaches self-checking with a measurable criterion.

Check: Use a ruler to confirm the distance between points and to check each line against your chosen band. The recorded count should match the visual check.

Task 3

Draw a row of hatching lines at a consistent spacing. Check that the gaps are within one pencil width of each other. Then draw a second row with gaps twice as wide and compare.

Answer: A valid answer shows two rows with visibly different spacing and a note comparing consistency. The first row should have gaps within one pencil width; the second row should have wider gaps.

Reason: Hatching control supports manga shading and texture. Comparing two spacings trains deliberate variation rather than accidental inconsistency.

Check: Measure several gaps in each row with a ruler. Confirm that the first row's gaps are within one pencil width and that the second row's gaps are consistently wider.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

Draw a 45-second gesture of a seated figure (hypothetical example). Without erasing, refine only the outer contour with slow, controlled lines. Check that the contour stays within one pencil width of the gesture's main shapes. Write one note about where control improved or slipped.

Answer: A valid answer shows a visible gesture under a refined contour, a check against the pencil-width band, and a specific note such as 'the back curve stayed close to the gesture' or 'the arm line drifted outward'.

Reason: Combining timed gesture with controlled contour tests whether speed and precision can work together. The note builds self-assessment.

Check: Confirm that the gesture is still visible, that the contour was checked against a measured band, and that the note refers to a specific part of the drawing.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Gesture captures a clear action line within the time limit.
- [ ] Baseline and midline are marked and consistent across poses in a set.
- [ ] Controlled lines stay within the chosen checkable band (measured on your own paper).
- [ ] Hatching spacing is consistent within one pencil width.
- [ ] Self-check note identifies one specific improvement.

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