Negative Space Ballerina: Draw the Gaps, Not the Girl

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 posed ballerina stands with one arm curved above the head and the other hand near the waist. Between the upper arm and the side of the torso there is a thin crescent gap. Between the forearm and the waist there is a small wedge gap. Between the legs, one knee bends forward, creating a rounded triangular gap. Shade these three enclosed gaps first, then draw the figure from their edges. Describe the order and one check.

Answer: Shade the thin crescent between upper arm and torso first, then the small wedge between forearm and waist, then the rounded triangle between the legs. Draw the torso side from the crescent's inner edge, the waist from the wedge's edge, and the bent leg from the triangle's edge. Check by covering the figure: the three shaded shapes should still suggest the pose. If the crescent is too wide, the arm will look detached; narrow it and redraw that arm edge.