

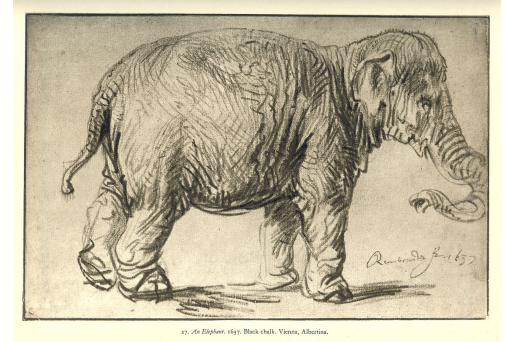


In *Sunflower II*, 2004 (left) by Ellsworth Kelly, simple contour lines describe the leaves of a plant.

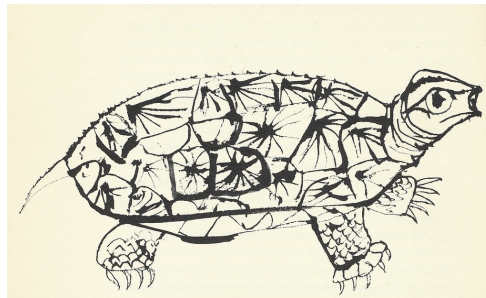
“Drawing is putting a line around an idea.”

Henri Matisse

Line is one of the most basic elements of drawing and also one of the most versatile.



Rembrandt's sketch of an elephant uses a variety of lines to describe the animal's form and its unique surface.



This drawing from Ben Shahn's *The Sorrows of Priapus*, 1957, shows how a bolder thicker line can suggest the nature of materials, like the strength of this tortoise's shell.



Alberto Giacometti uses outlined planes (flat surfaces) to render form in this figure drawing.

“Drawing is not what one sees but what one can make others see.”

Edgar Degas



Lines exhibit a wide variety of characteristics. The rapid and angular quality of the lines in Egon Schiele's self portrait are expressionistic.

**contour line** - the outline of an object in a single continuous line

**blind contour** - drawing without looking at the paper

**positive/negative space** - the object itself and the empty space in and around it

**cross-contour line** - lines which describe the 3-dimensional surface of an object

**drawing through** - imagining the lines which surround an object and give it dimension

**gesture** - A line that moves freely within forms and records the rapid movement of the eyes.



In “*St. Albans, October*”, 1852 (above) by Sir George Clausen lines describe both generalities and specifics.



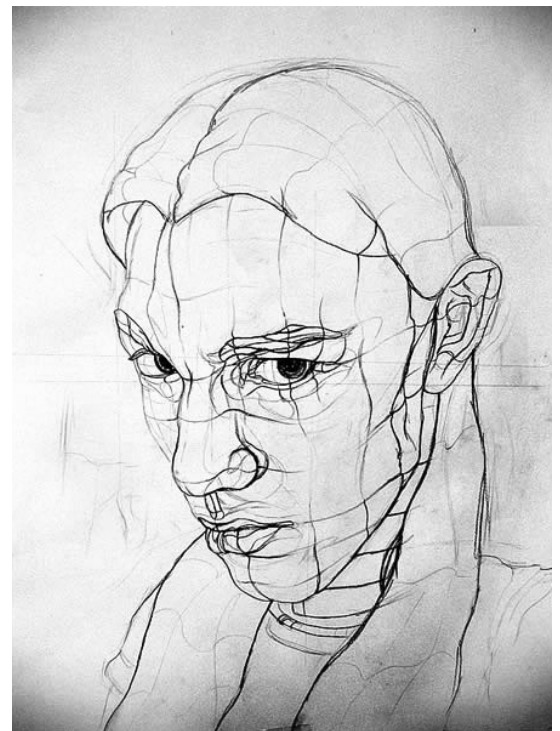
David Hockney’s lines describe enough details to maintain visual interest without overwhelming the viewer with information.

“One must keep right on drawing; draw with your eyes when you cannot draw with a pencil.”

*Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres*



This drawing by Honore Daumier captures the gesture of horse and rider with multiple fluid lines.



This student drawing is an excellent use of cross-contour lines of varying thickness.