

Famous Artists Cartoon Course
Westport, Connecticut

Form

Lesson

12

Rube Goldberg

Milton Caniff

Al Capp

Harry Haenigsen

Willard Mullin

Gurney Williams

Dick Cavalli

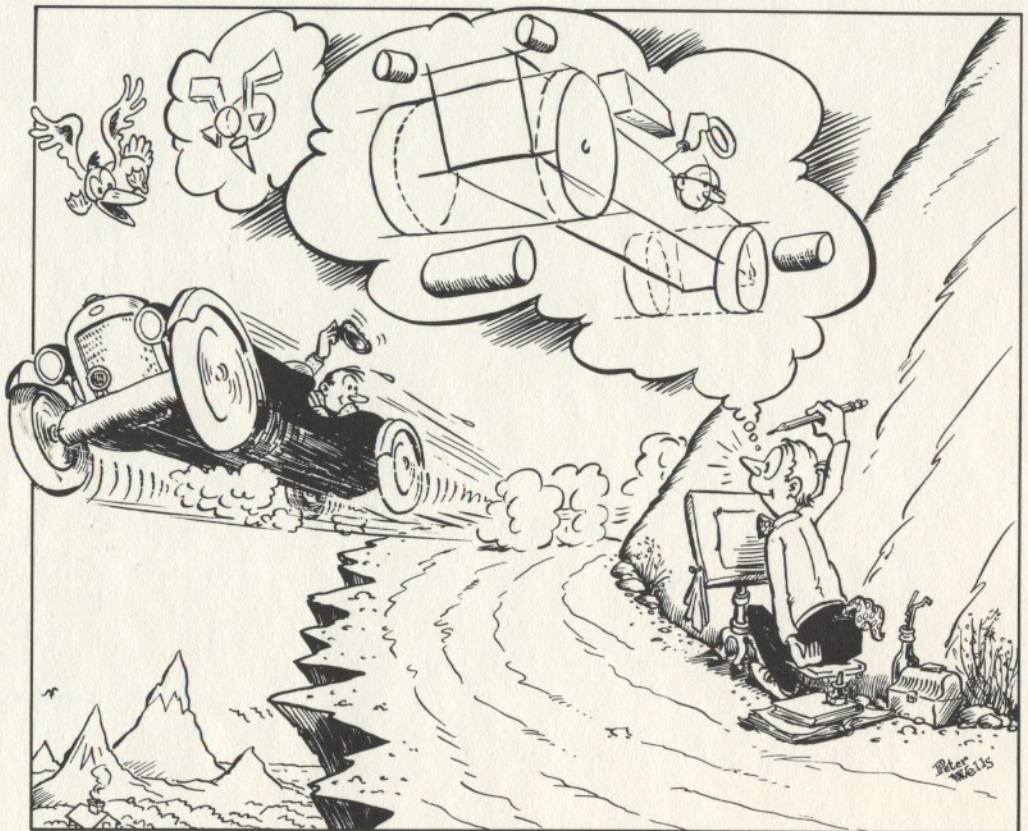
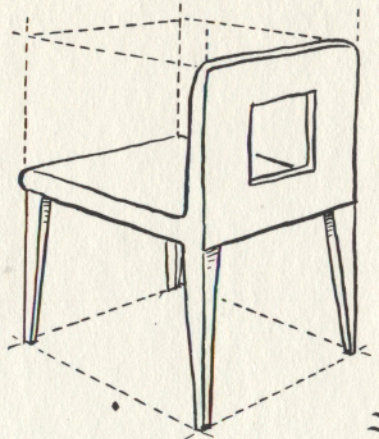
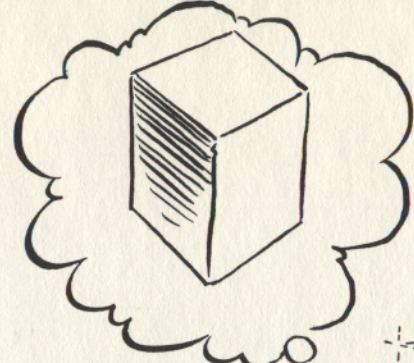
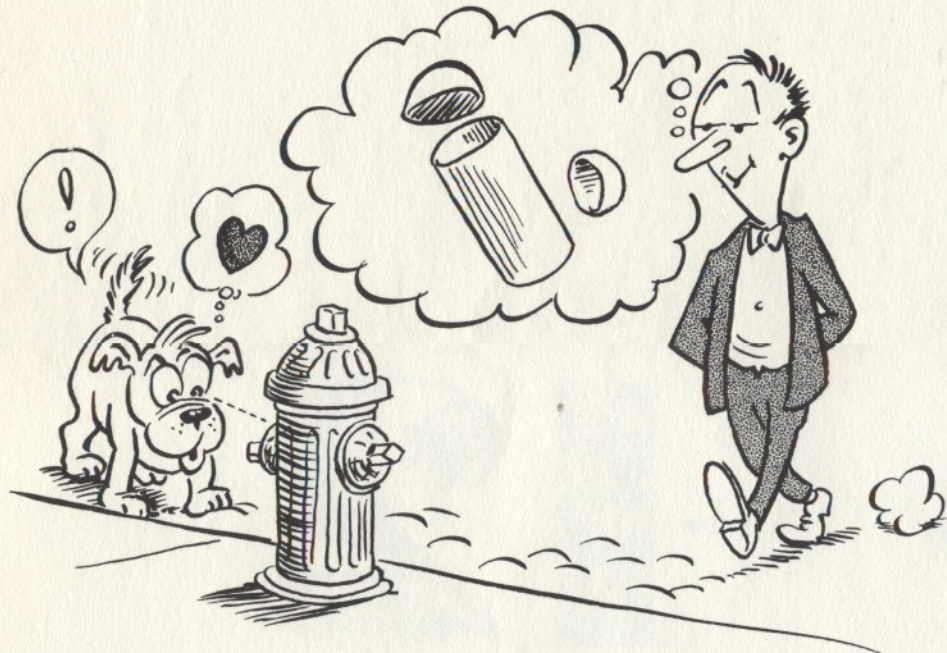
Whitney Darrow, Jr.

Virgil Partch

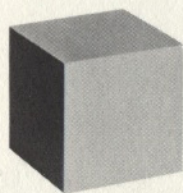
Barney Tobey

Learning to see

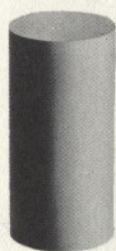
As a cartoonist, you must train your eye to see more than an object's general shape and details. Your eye must penetrate to the **BASIC STRUCTURAL FORMS**. Your eye must *see*; your brain must *understand*. Once you know what the basic forms in an object are, it isn't hard to draw that object. *See, understand, and remember* basic forms.



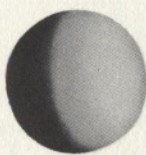
Every time you open your eyes it gives you a chance to practice seeing basic forms. Start looking for basic forms now



Cube



Cylinder



Sphere



Cone

Form

Everything, from the world we stand on to the latest model automobile, is made up of one or more of the four basic forms; the cube, sphere, cylinder and cone. Because there are only four, it makes the job of learning to draw very simple. It is easy to see that if you can draw a cube, you can draw a box; and if you can draw a cylinder, you can draw a top hat or a hunk of sewer pipe.

The most important thing in learning to draw is learning to *see*. The average person looks at a house and sees it as a white or red house, with or without a nice yard. In other words, they are seeing it only from the outside. They are not concerned with the basic form of it. The cartoonist, looking at the same house, and planning to draw it, must see below the surface to the basic form. He sees not a pretty little cottage, but a large cube with a small cube coming out of the side. If it has a peaked roof, he knows that the roof is a cone, cut in half and placed on top of other cubes. The color, grass, trees and windows are details that he will take care of after he has the basic form of the building well established on his drawing paper.

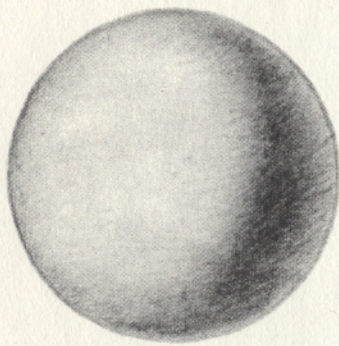
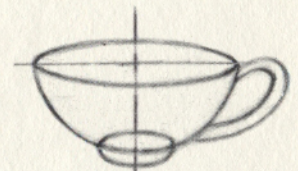
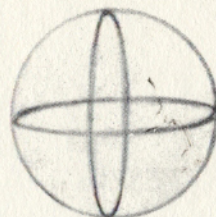
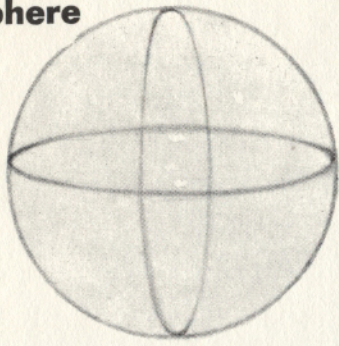
There are only four basic forms and none of them is hard to draw. A child can learn to draw all of them in a short time. Of course, there are very few objects that are made up of only one of the basic forms. Most of the things we see around us are made up of two, three or all of the four forms combined into one object. When looking at an object you are going to draw, it is important first to pick out the basic forms, and then to determine their relation to each other in respect to size and direction. Once you have established these points and have transferred them to your paper, you can go ahead with the detail, confident that your drawing is structurally sound. Thinking in the basic

form helps you to work for simplicity, and simplicity is one of the basic requirements of cartooning. If you can develop the habit of thinking in basic forms, you will have conquered not only the structural method of drawing, but you will also have helped yourself along the road to successful cartooning.

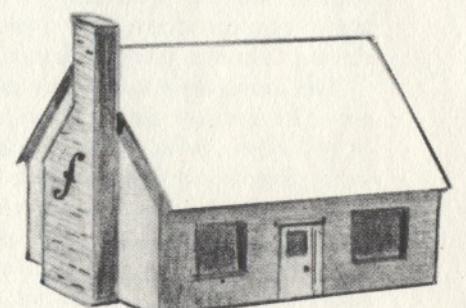
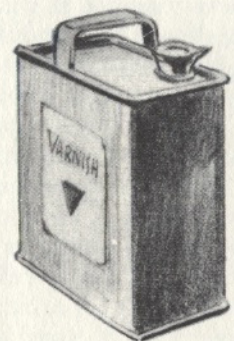
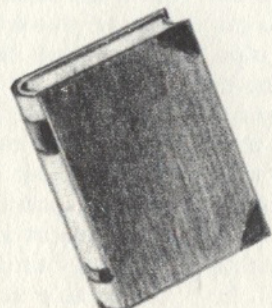
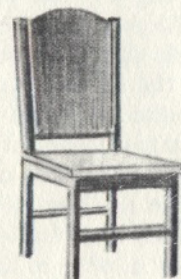
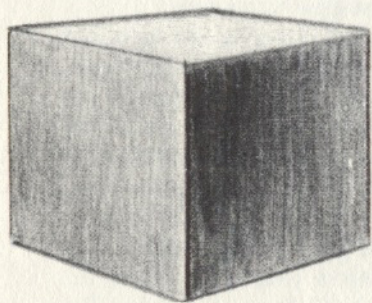
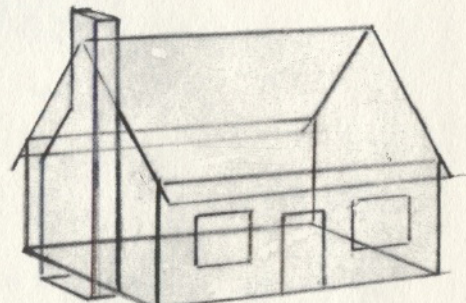
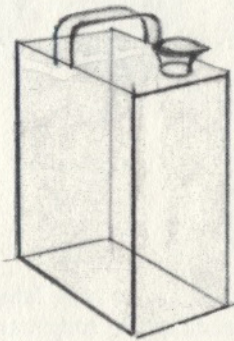
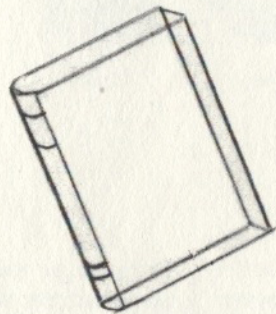
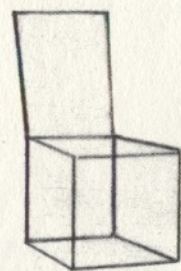
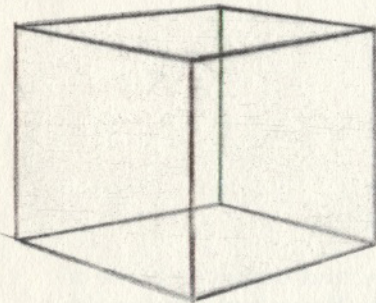
Too many beginners in cartooning start out with the idea that all they have to do is learn how to cartoon the human form. They forget that the human form must be surrounded by objects, which must also be drawn. It is very true that some of the work you see in national magazines and newspapers looks as if the cartoonist just threw a few careless lines in the background to represent a table or chair. Simplicity is a great part of cartooning, but don't let the simplicity of the professional fool you. To be able to draw a table or any object with a few lines, the artist had to be doubly sure that his basic form was right. The fewer lines you use to draw a form, the more correct those lines must be.

When you go out for a walk or a ride, be sure to carry that sketch pad with you. Form the habit of making quick, small sketches of objects. Break them down to their basic form; don't try to finish them off in detail. Draw everything — the fireplug on the corner and the box full of broken bottles out in back of Mrs. Murphy's house. If you limit yourself to only a few moments for each sketch, you will automatically simplify — and to simplify you *must* use basic forms. If you don't feel like going for a walk or a ride, stick around the house. In your own living room are tables, chairs, lamps, television sets, pots and pans — all of the many things that you as a cartoonist must be able to draw.

Sphere



Cube



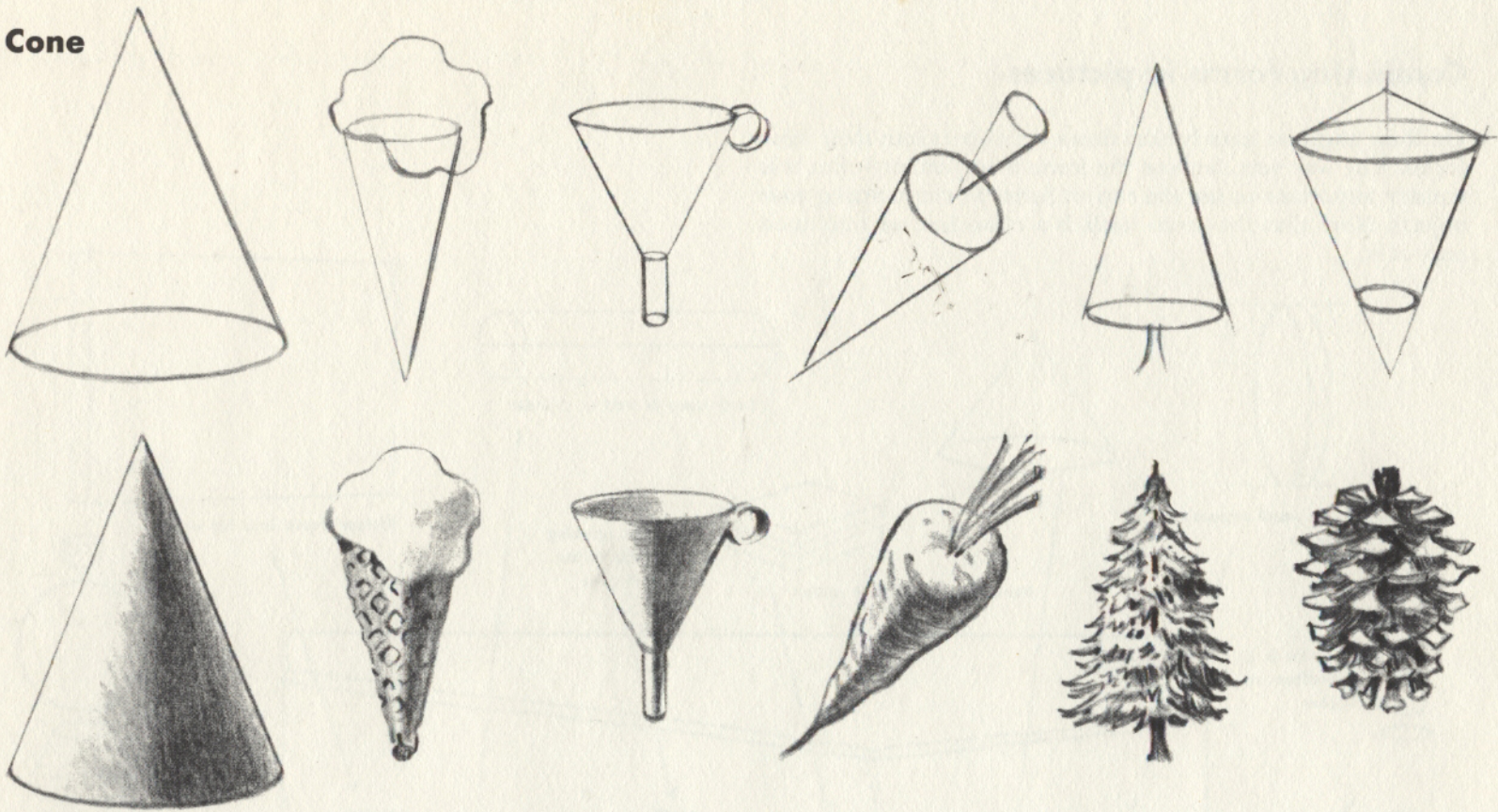
Every object in existence can be reduced either to a sphere, a cube, a cone, a cylinder — or some combination of these basic forms. If you remember this fact constantly, and approach your subject matter from this point of view, you will have no difficulty in drawing any object you can see or imagine.

These pages contain paired rows of drawings. In each pair the lower, finished drawing, complete with detail and tone, shows you *what your eye sees* when you look at the actual object in nature. Immediately above this finished drawing is a "con-

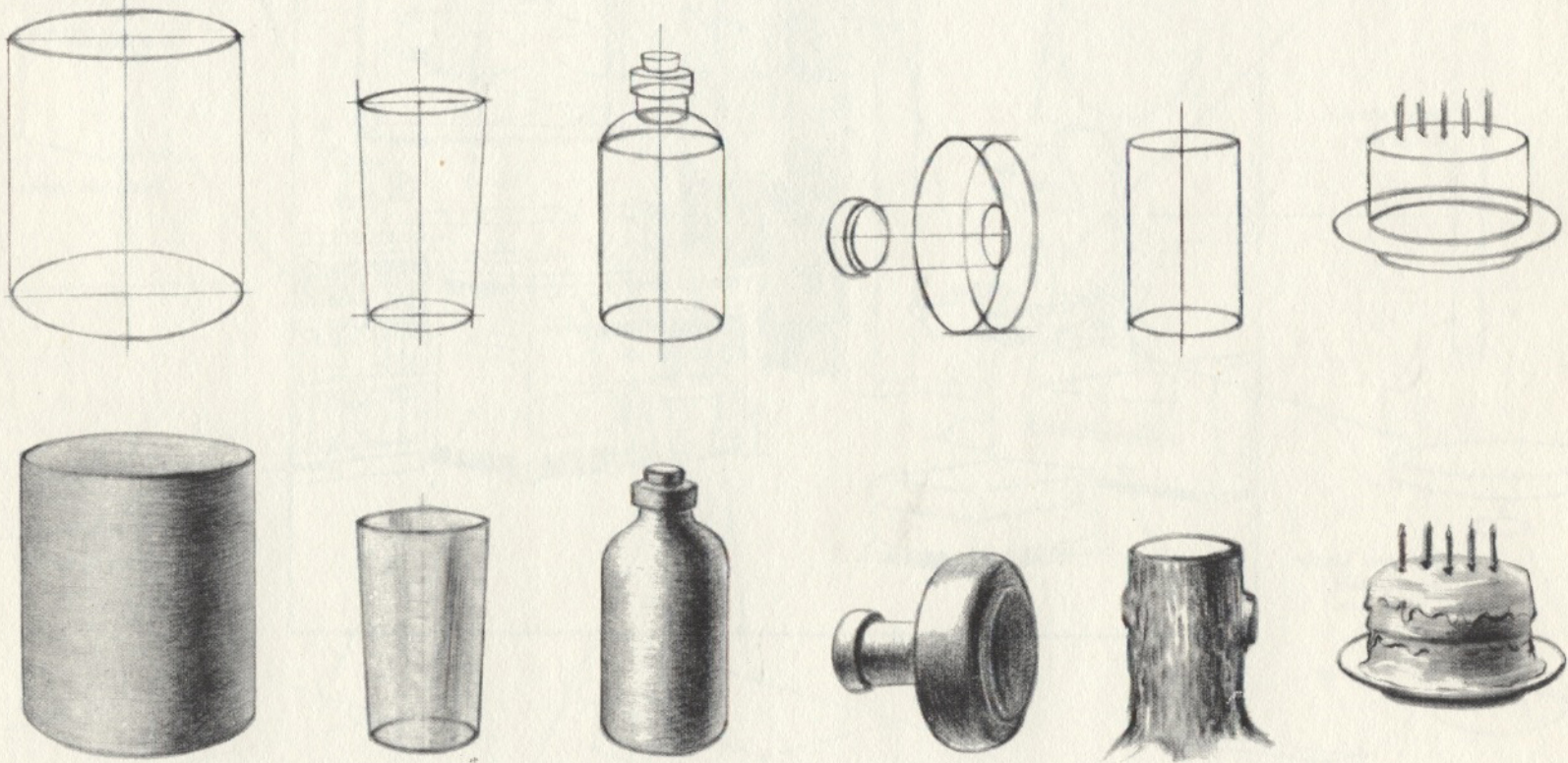
struction drawing" of the same object. This construction drawing reduces the object to its *simple basic form* with all the non-essentials stripped away. Study these pairs of drawings, and then look around you. You will realize immediately that every object in sight, no matter how complicated it may seem at first glance, can easily be reduced to a sphere, a cube, a cone, a cylinder, or some combination of these.

When you look at your radio, for instance, what do you see? You may be tempted to notice first the dial, then the knobs, the

Cone



Cylinder



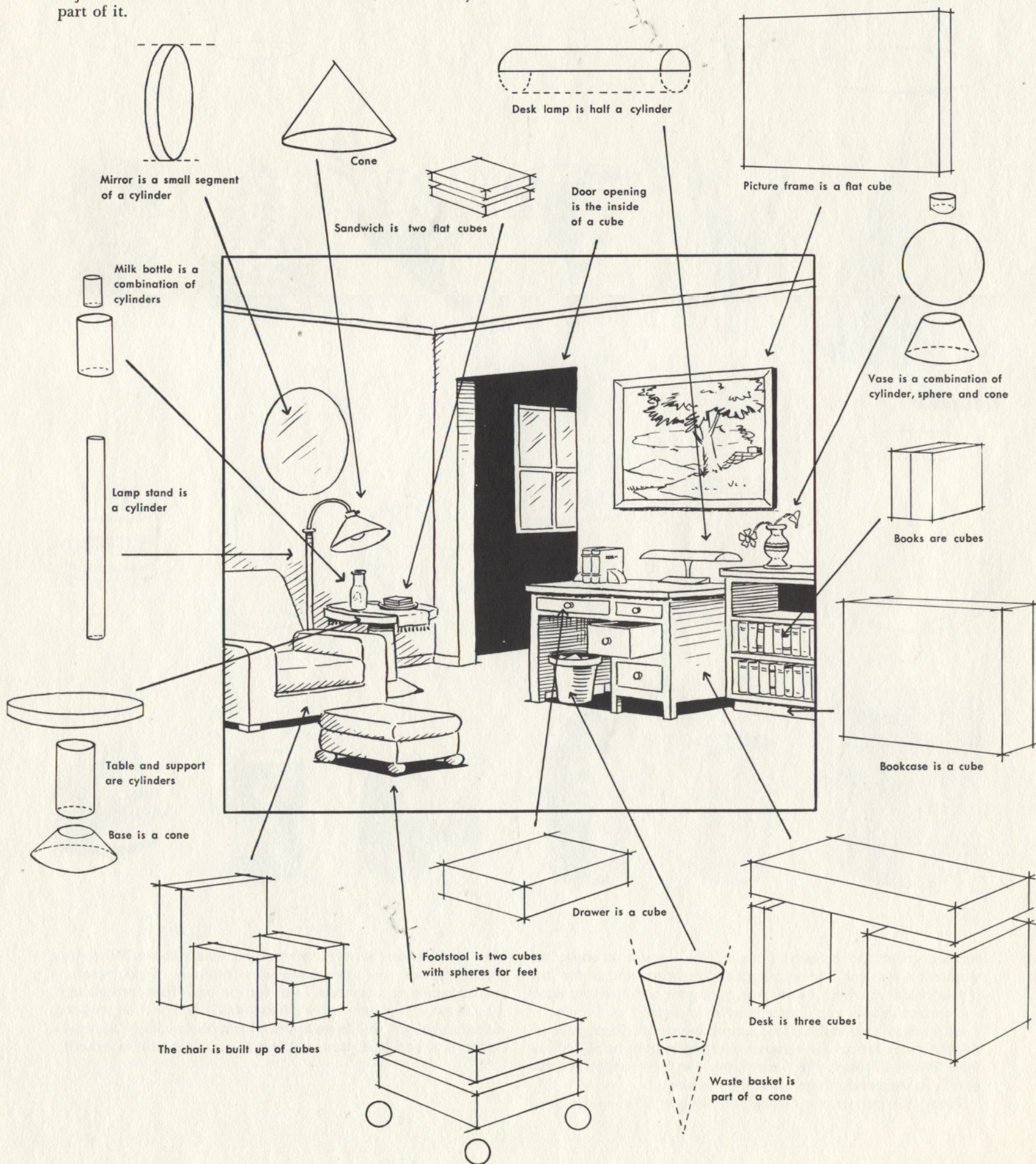
speaker grille, the polished grain of the wooden cabinet, the shadow on one side, the high light on the other, and so on. But if you look at an object in this way, seeing the unimportant parts and surface details, *you'll never be able to draw it convincingly.* Look back at your radio. It's a simple basic cube form, isn't it? All the other factors are comparatively unimportant. *After you have drawn through the basic form, you can easily spot the details in the exact places where they belong.*

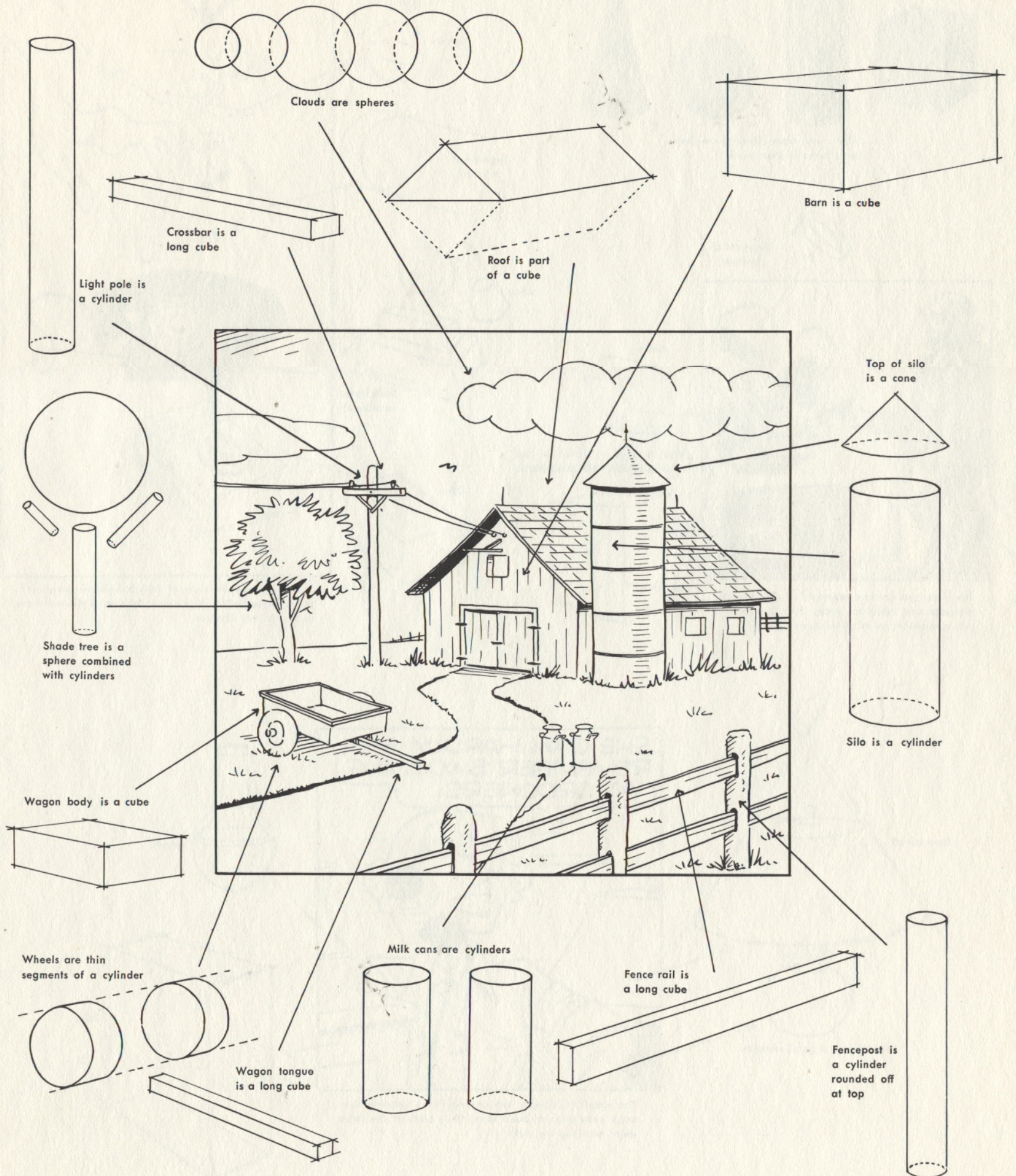
From this minute on, throughout the rest of your life, *look*

first for the basic form of every object which comes before your eyes, whether you are staring at a radio or a rhinoceros, a pomegranate or a princess. Look for the basic form, recognize it, and *draw it through to the other side.* If you will do this conscientiously, you will learn to draw form convincingly before you know it — and half your problem as an artist will be licked!

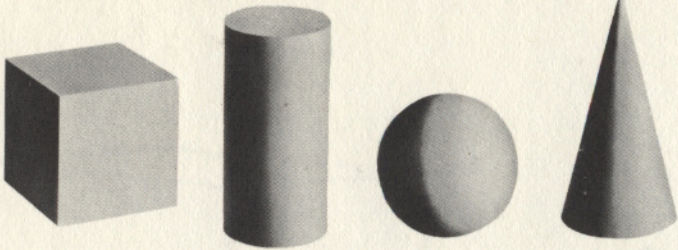
Combining forms in pictures

On these pages we have broken down the objects into their basic forms. The way you combine the forms is important — but it is equally important to use the *correct* forms in constructing your objects. Note that the room itself is a cube, but we only used part of it.

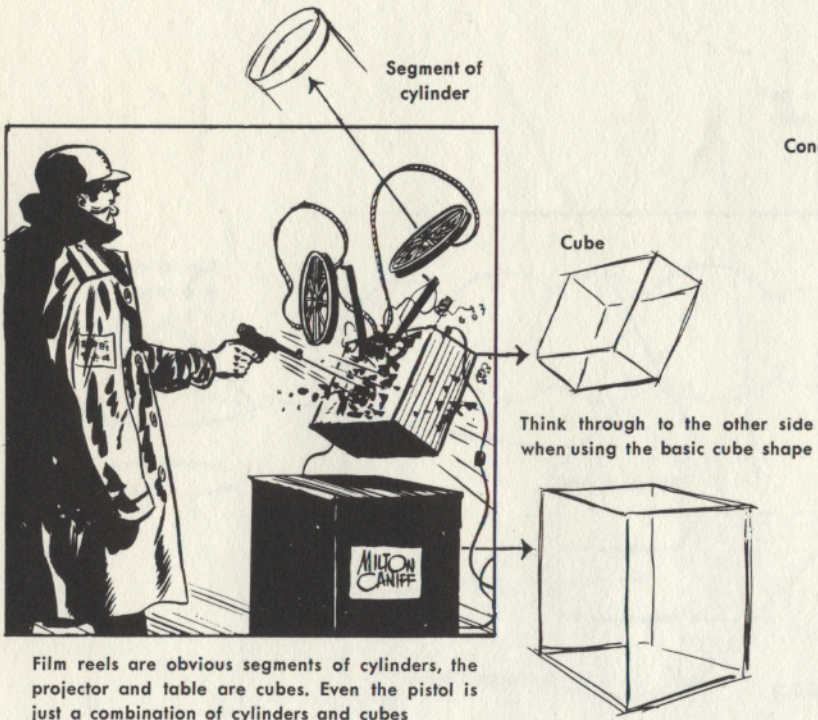




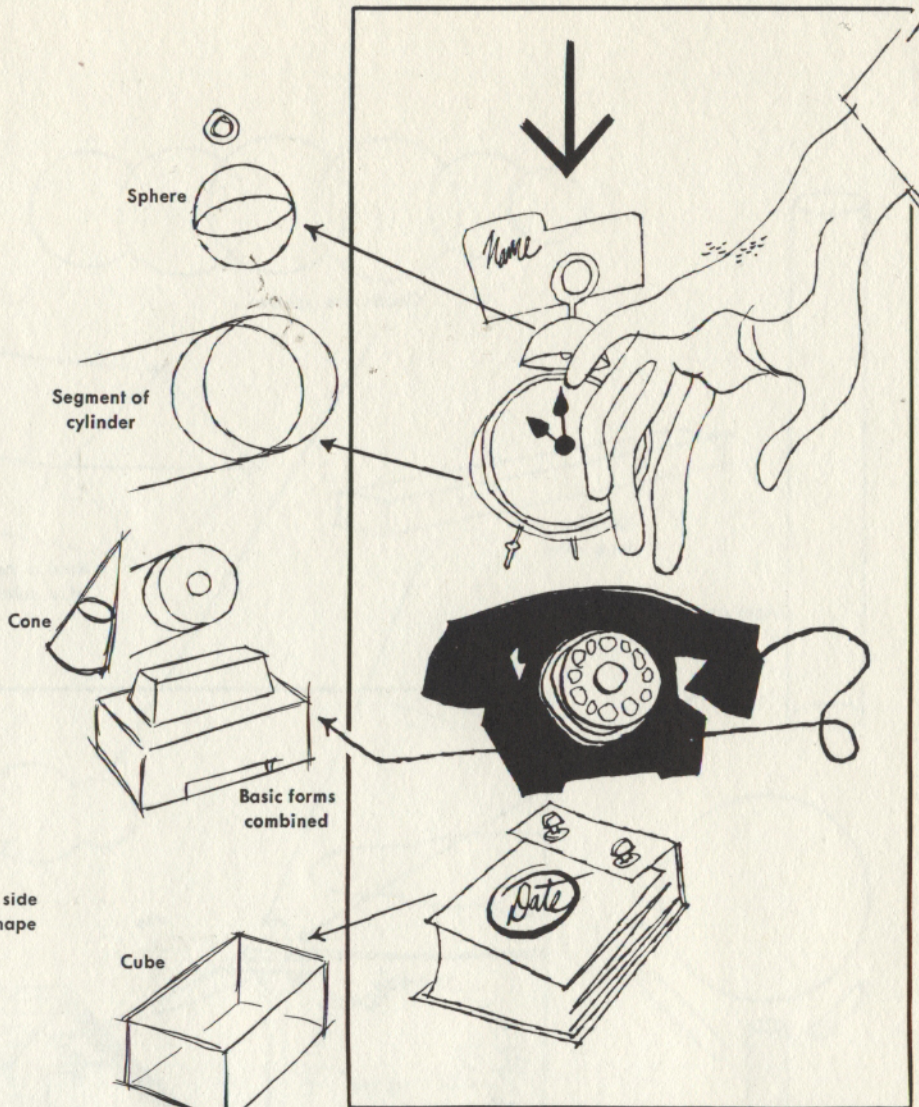
Remember your basic forms



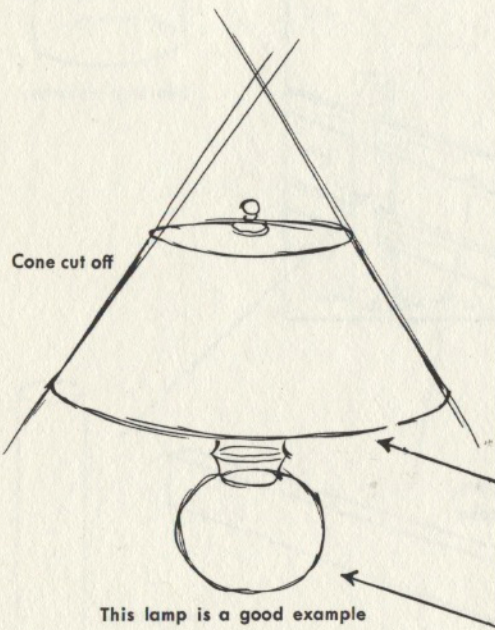
When you draw, keep these four basic forms in your mind



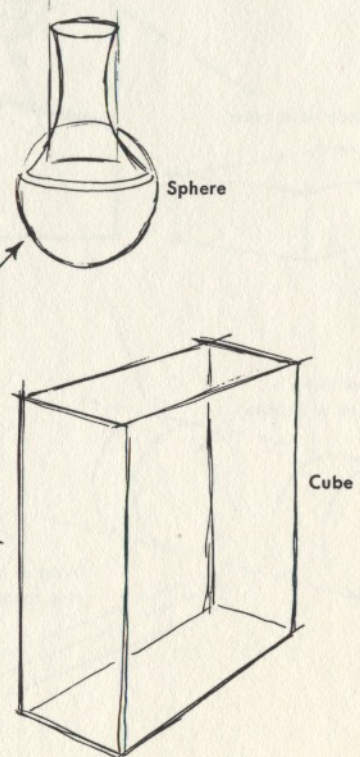
Film reels are obvious segments of cylinders, the projector and table are cubes. Even the pistol is just a combination of cylinders and cubes

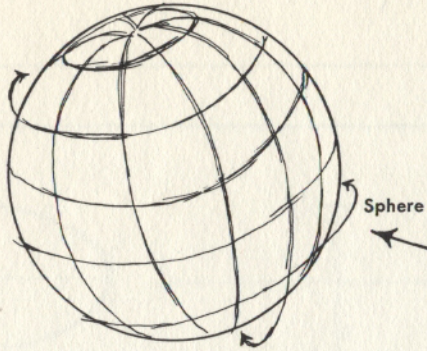


In this example the rules of form have been stretched to get a modern effect. Study and understand the real forms before taking liberties

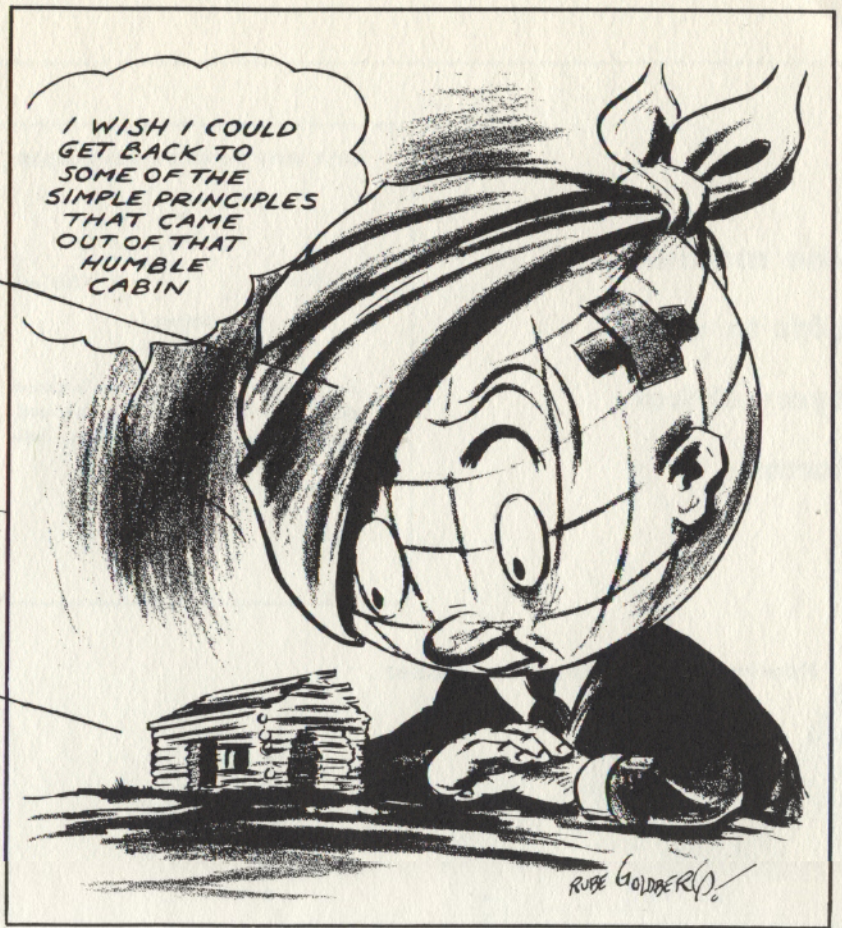
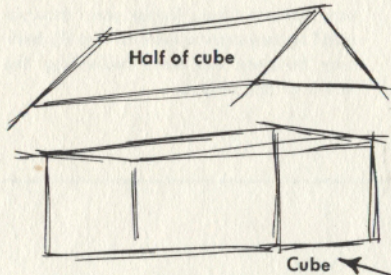


The simplified scenery surrounding Penny shows a thorough knowledge of basic form. Only parts of the forms show, but they are right





A sphere is not flat — its surface goes all the way around it

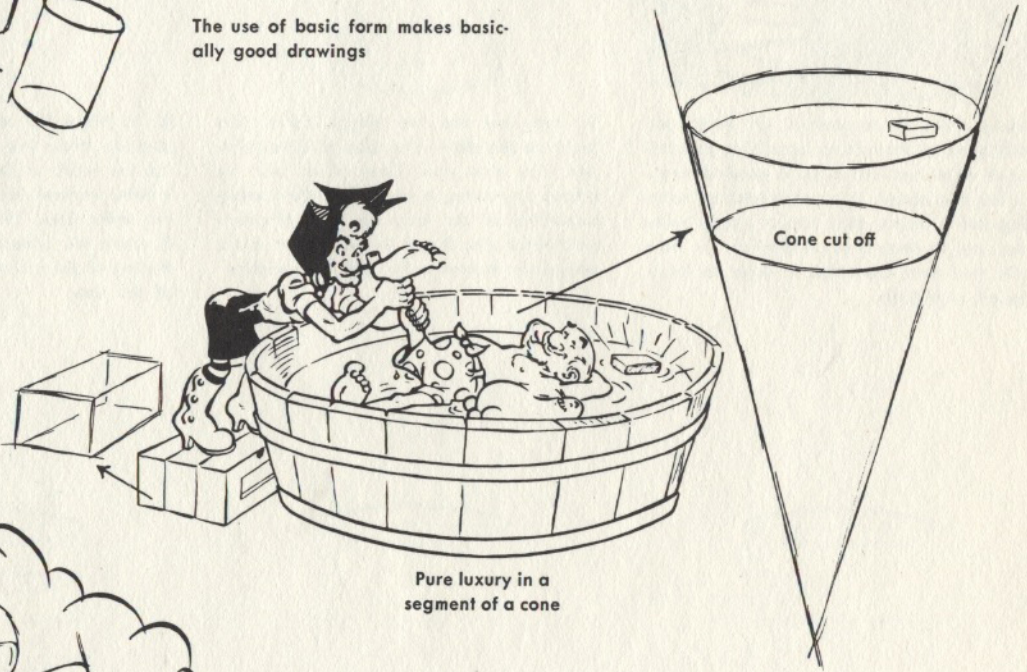


The bandage on the sphere goes around its surface beautifully. The simple log cabin is a cube form with a half-cube for a roof



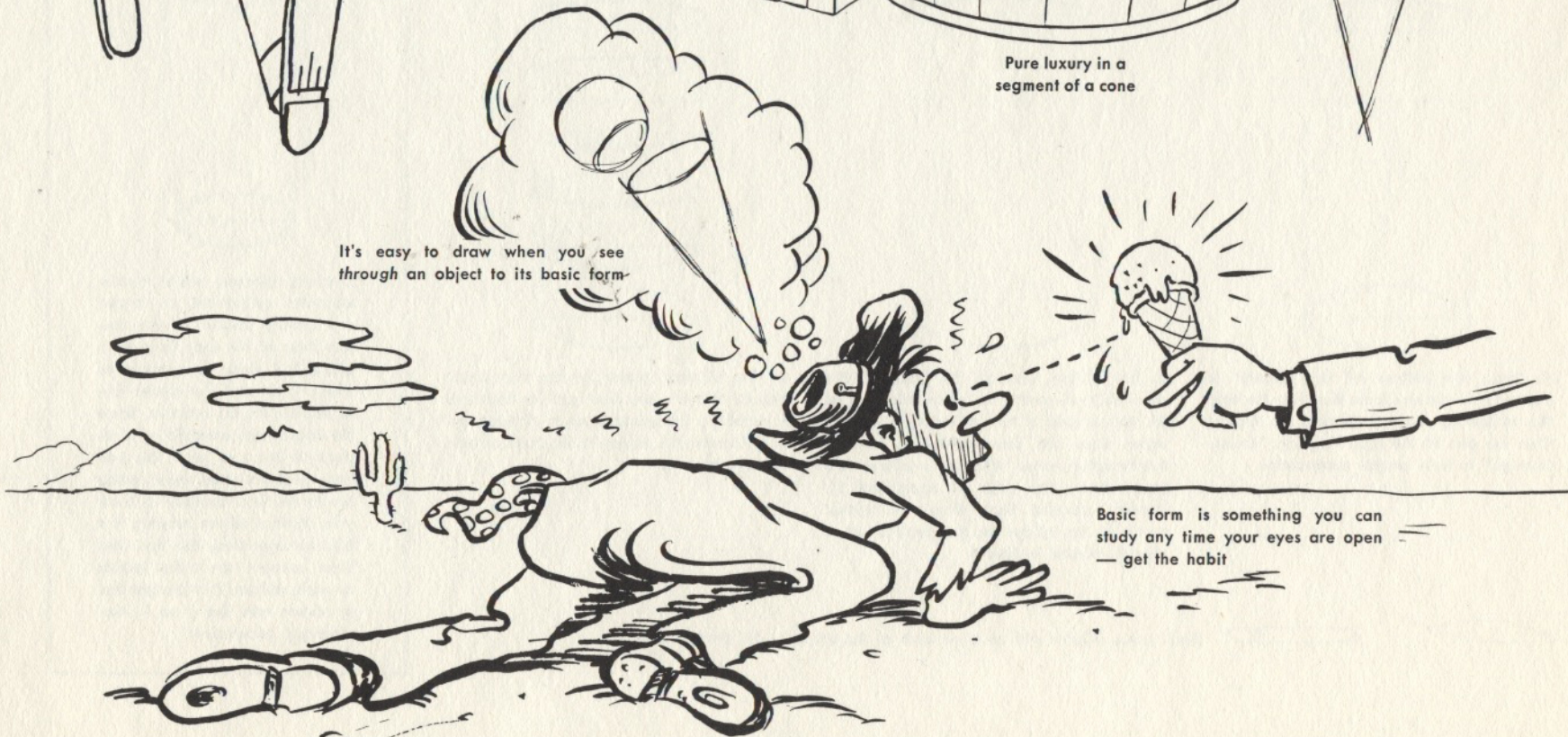
This box is a cube—it's loaded with basic forms

The use of basic form makes basically good drawings



Pure luxury in a segment of a cone

It's easy to draw when you see through an object to its basic form



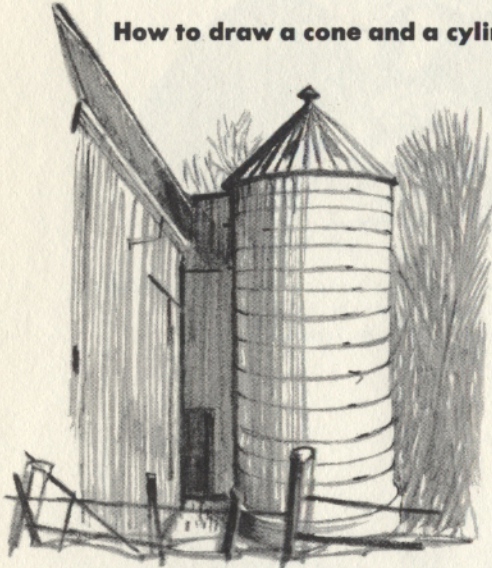
Basic form is something you can study any time your eyes are open — get the habit

Use mechanical aids to draw symmetrical forms

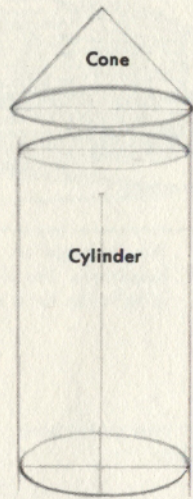
One way to draw an ellipse

1. Indicate the width of your intended ellipse with two short vertical lines and, with two short horizontal lines, indicate its thickness.
2. Using your T square, draw a horizontal line (A) halfway between the top and bottom lines. Using your triangle and T square draw a vertical line (B) halfway between the lines indicating the width of the ellipse.
3. Now connect the four points of intersection where lines A and B cross the lines indicating the width and thickness of your ellipse. The connecting line should be a smoothly flowing curve and each of the four quarters of the resulting ellipse should be of the same size and shape.

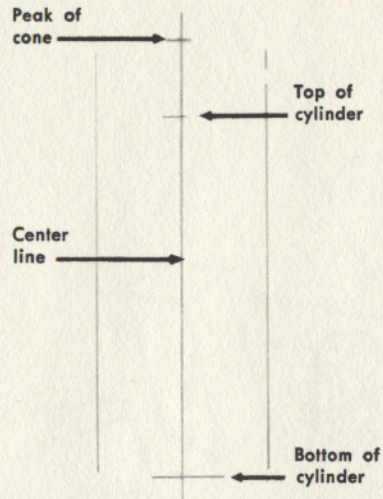
How to draw a cone and a cylinder



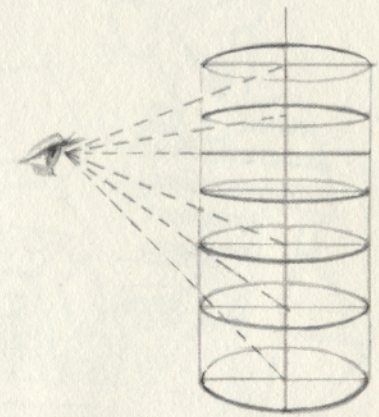
Many times in commercial art work, you will have to draw forms consisting primarily of cones and cylinders. A good example is the silo above. It is constructed of nothing but a simple cone and a simple cylinder, but to draw a convincing picture of a silo, you must know how to draw the basic forms accurately



1. Here are the two simple forms that make up the silo — the cone and the cylinder. The eye level line, which can be placed anywhere, is located approximately two-thirds of the way up the cylindrical part of the silo. This is the level from which objects are viewed in this particular picture



2. To place the elements of the silo accurately, draw two vertical lines to establish the width of the structure. Next, draw a third vertical line halfway between the two width lines. This is the center line. On it, mark the lowest point of the cylinder, the top of the cylinder and the top or apex of the cone



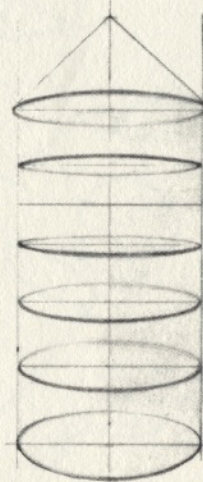
3. Now consider a number of ellipses that must be drawn — the top and bottom of the cylinder as well as the iron bands encircling the silo. As an ellipse moves above or below the eye level line its thickness changes. The farther from the eye level line it moves, the thicker it appears. An ellipse drawn on the eye level line will appear as a straight line. Practice and observation will help you construct ellipses of logical and accurate proportions



4. Since the bottom of the cylinder is farther from the eye level line than the top, the ellipse at the bottom will be thicker than the one at the top. They are "drawn through" in their proper proportions



5. The ellipse forming the base of the cone while of nearly the same thickness as the top ellipse of the cylinder, is a trifle wider since the actual silo top has an overhanging eave. When this ellipse has been drawn the cone is completed by drawing straight lines from the widest points of the ellipse to the peak or apex already located in Step 2



6. The ellipses formed by the iron bands around the silo are next put in. Each one is carefully constructed and is of the proper thickness with regard to its distance from the eye level line

Drinking glasses, while fundamentally cylindrical in shape, are usually smaller at the bottom than at the top. To draw a glass, first place your maximum width lines and the center line as you did for the cylinder. Draw the top ellipse carefully with regard to the eye level line you have decided upon. Next, using the center line to place it, draw your bottom ellipse making it a bit narrower than the top one. Then connect the widest points on each ellipse by a straight line as shown and the glass is convincingly constructed

Don't make ellipses with pointed ends or flat ellipses with circular ends

FAMOUS ARTISTS CARTOON COURSE
Student Work
Lesson 12

To study and practice

This lesson teaches you to look at things in a new way. One of the best habits that you, as a cartoonist, can get into is to look for and draw the four basic forms. Breaking things down into their simplest forms is the cartoonist's job. Sphere, cube, cone and cylinder -- everything under the sun is just one or a combination of these basic forms. Understand this, and half your problems of drawing are licked.

Practice seeing and drawing through objects. Sketch the things that surround you at home and see how the four basic forms combine to make them. Omit details when you do this, drawing the basic forms only. Try half-squinting when you look: this eliminates a lot of detail from your eyes. For added practice, put tracing paper over magazine photos and draw on it the basic forms of the objects pictured underneath.

We will criticize and grade your assignment on how well you draw and understand the use of the four basic forms in your work.

The assignment you are to mail to the School for criticism

On a sheet of 11 x 14-inch Bristol board, measure off a panel 8 inches high and 10 inches wide. Inside it, draw in the foreground a sidewalk with a fire-plug. In the street there is an oil tank truck (three-quarter side view) with a flat front tire. The driver is looking at it. There is a city sky line in the background. This is the basic scene -- you may add any other props or characters you wish -- but remember to use the basic forms to construct the drawing. Finish this assignment in ink.

Present your assignment in the same clean, professional manner you would use if you were submitting it to the cartoon buyer of a publication. Letter your name, address and student number in the lower left-hand corner of the page. In the lower right corner, place the Lesson Number. Mail to:

FAMOUS ARTISTS CARTOON COURSE
Westport, Connecticut

BE SURE to fill out the return shipping label and enclose it with your assignment. This helps a lot in getting your assignment back quickly.