

A watercolor sketch of various objects. On the left is a tall, slender blue vase with a circular opening at the top. In the center is a sail or flag with yellow and blue horizontal stripes. To the right is a dark, rounded bowl or pot. At the bottom right is a red-handled tool, possibly a screwdriver or wrench, lying on a surface. The background is a mix of light and dark washes.

Keeping a Sketchbook: Learning to Draw Objects

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at Vanderbilt University

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f 30
w 20

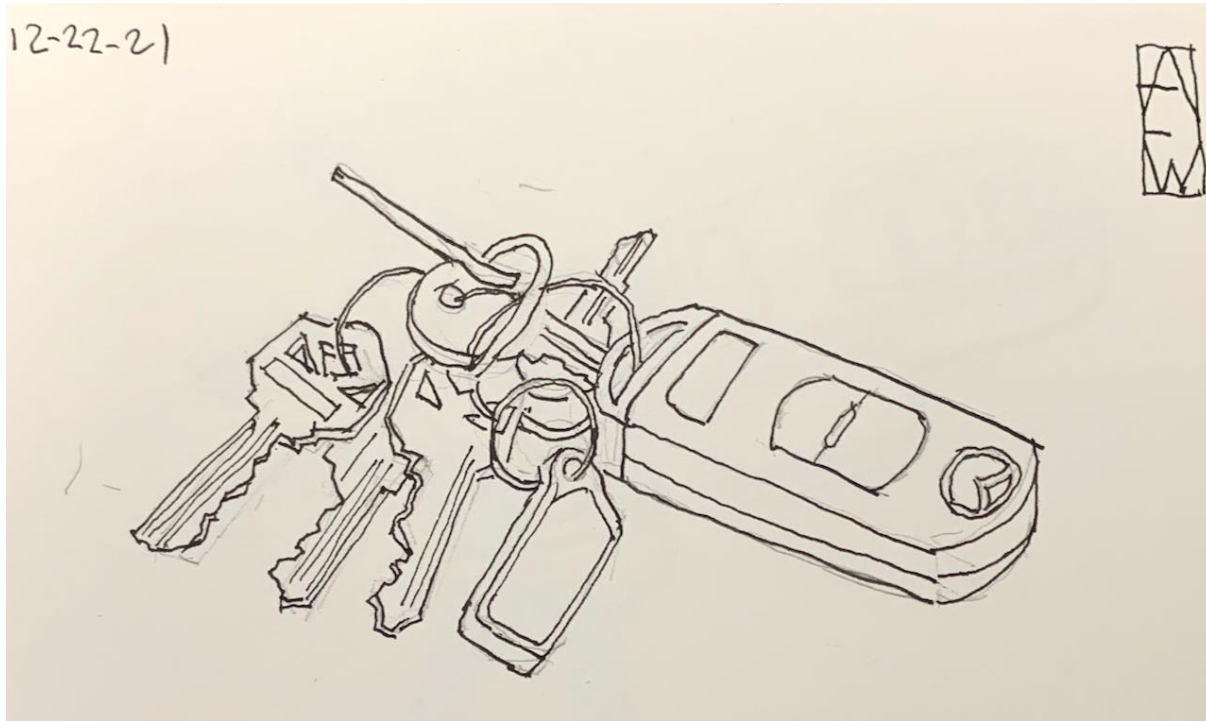
Developing a Sketching Practice

- Better to aim for a little bit each day, around 20 minutes
- Better to do 20 minutes for 6 days than plan for 2 hours on weekend
- You can get tired at first
- Some days you just have more time than others, so allow for variation
- A lot of my sketches are done over 3-4 days, especially if done inside
- When you come back to a sketch a day later you see it with fresh eyes
- Aiming to develop a habit of sketching
- Helps to prevent perfectionism

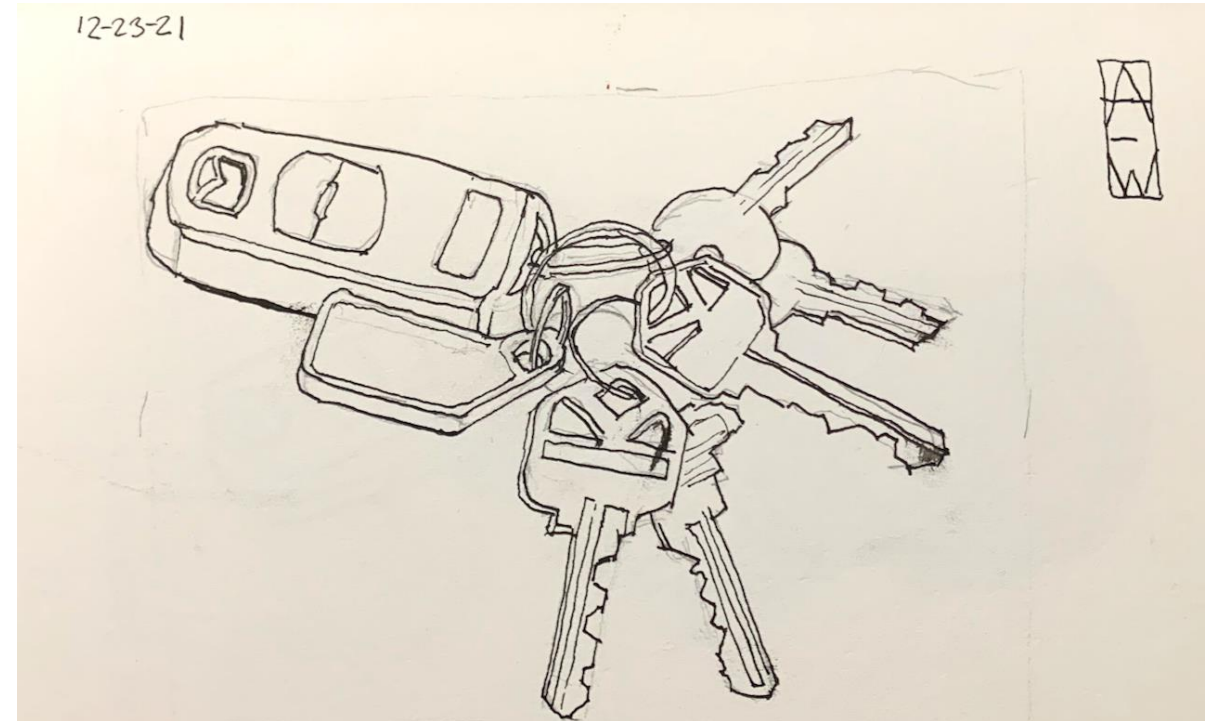
Learning to sketch basic shapes and objects

- Most things we view are composed of basic shapes: cubes, cylinders, spheres, cones
- Learn how to sketch these first, ready to tackle real objects
- Also need a basic idea of shading to convey form
- Objects are nice to start with:
 - Not a lot of perspective
 - Easy to set on your desk and draw from
 - Can come back a day later and pick up where you left off
 - Teaches you a lot of lessons about drawing
 - The light indoors is constant
- Gives you appreciation for how complex objects are around us
- When you get some confidence, fun to draw collections of objects

Examples of sketching objects



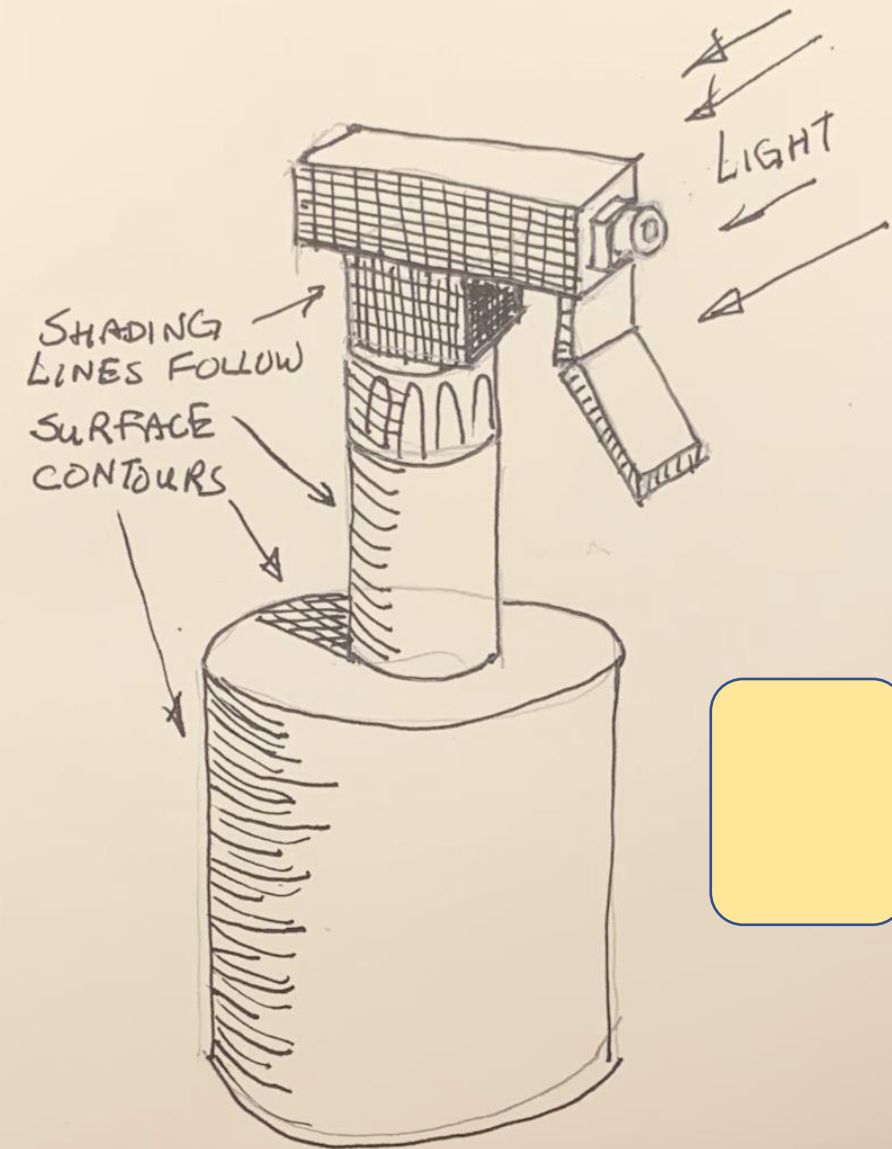
First try



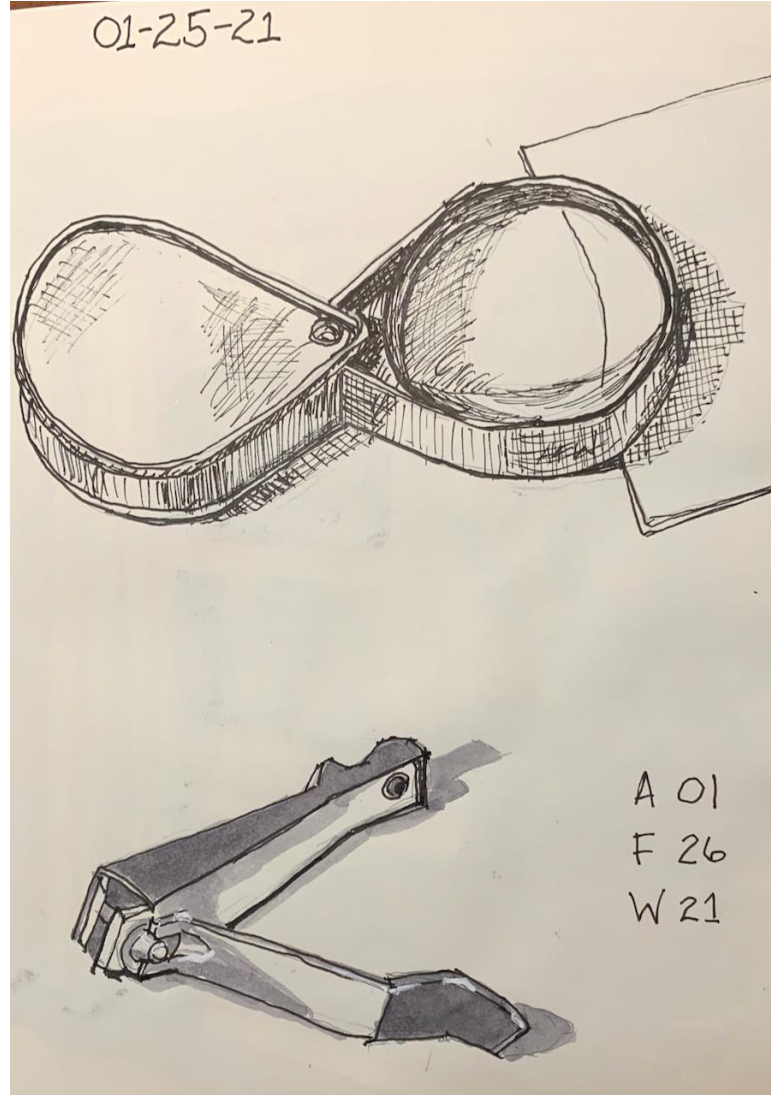
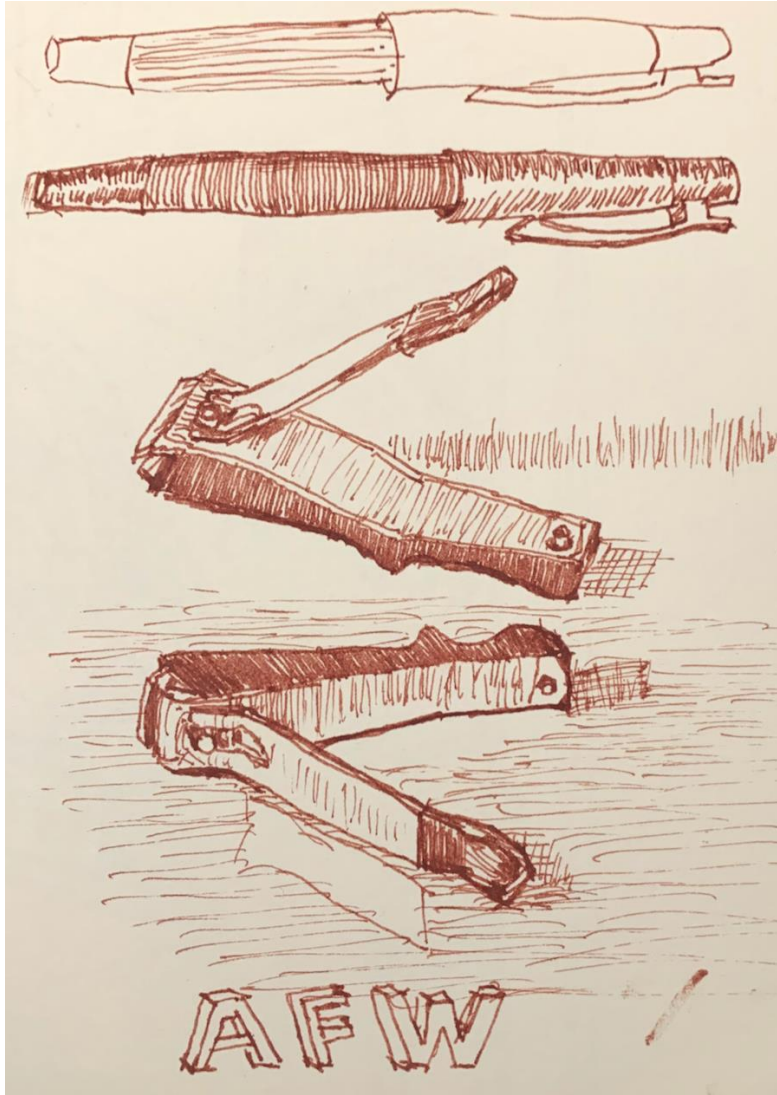
Second try a day later

Decomposing an object into shapes

- Many items can be decomposed into basic shapes
- Doing this can help you see what's going on with the design of the object
- Simple model helped me understand transition from cylinders to cubic form at top of sprayer

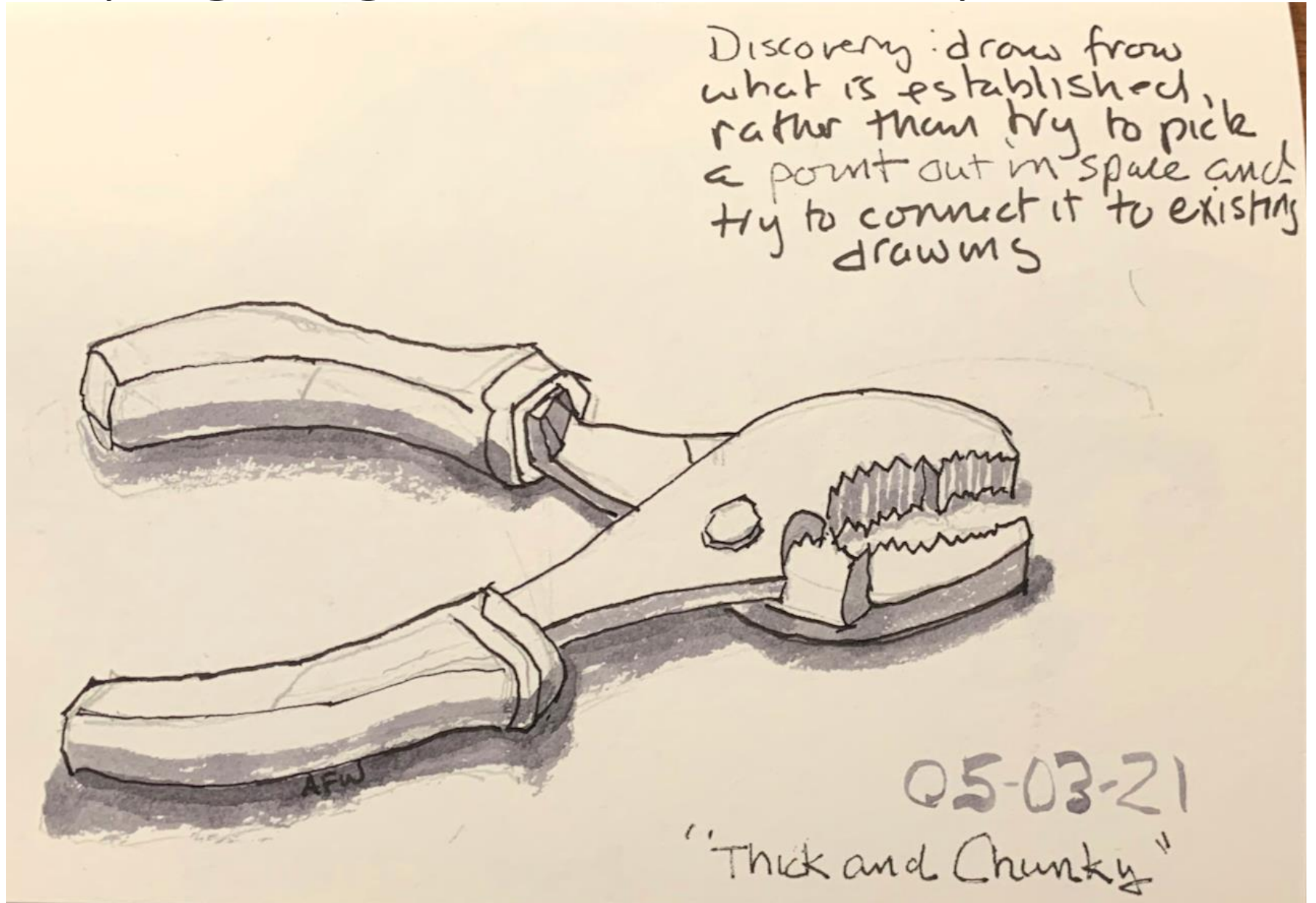


IDEALIZED SPRAY BOTTLE
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Examples:
Draw same
object
multiple
ways

Examples: Trying to get dimensionality



Tools are great objects because they typically have a lot of surfaces and textures.



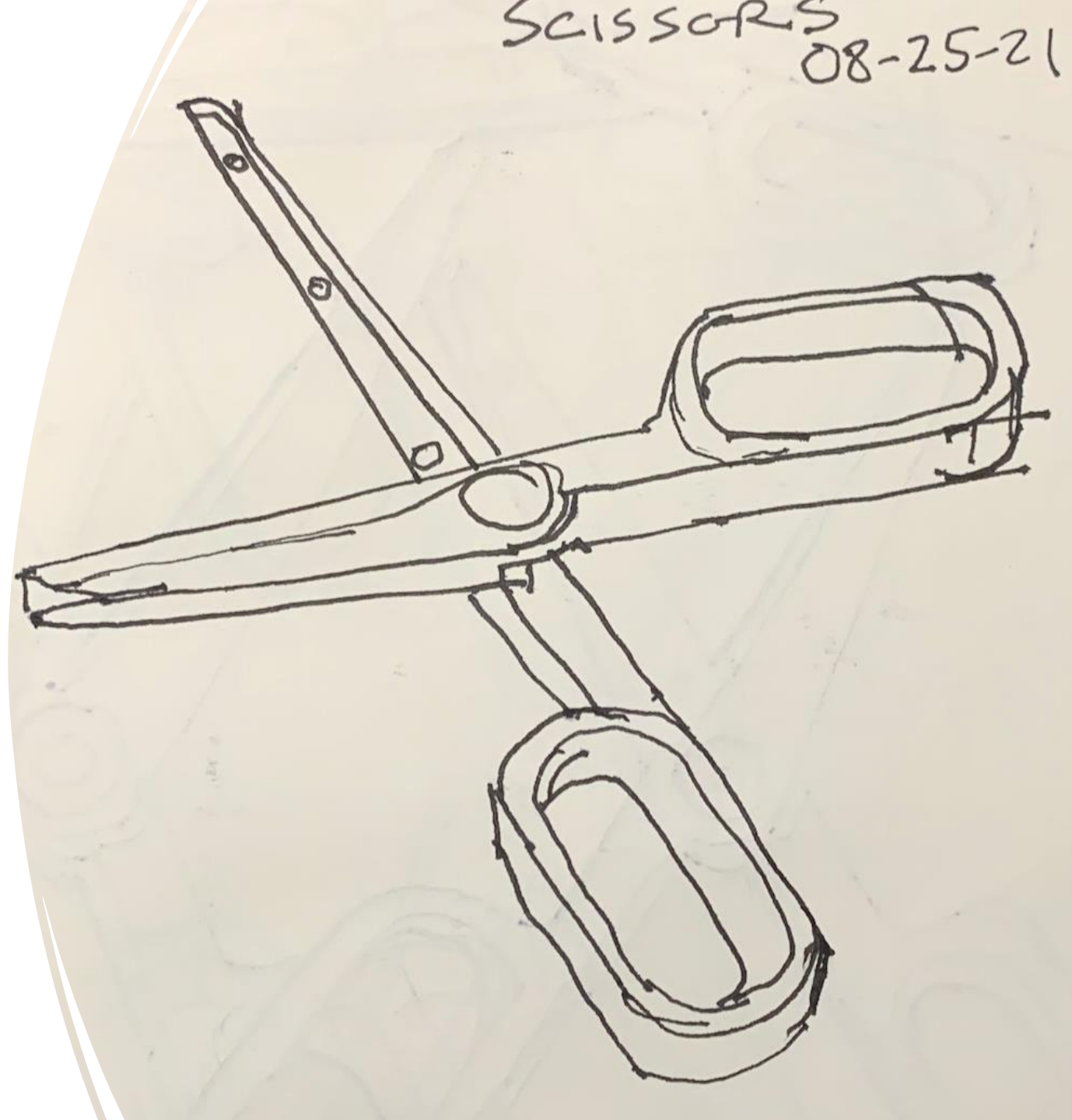
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Example: More Complex Subject

- A lot of curved surfaces
- Surfaces not at right angles
- Different Textures

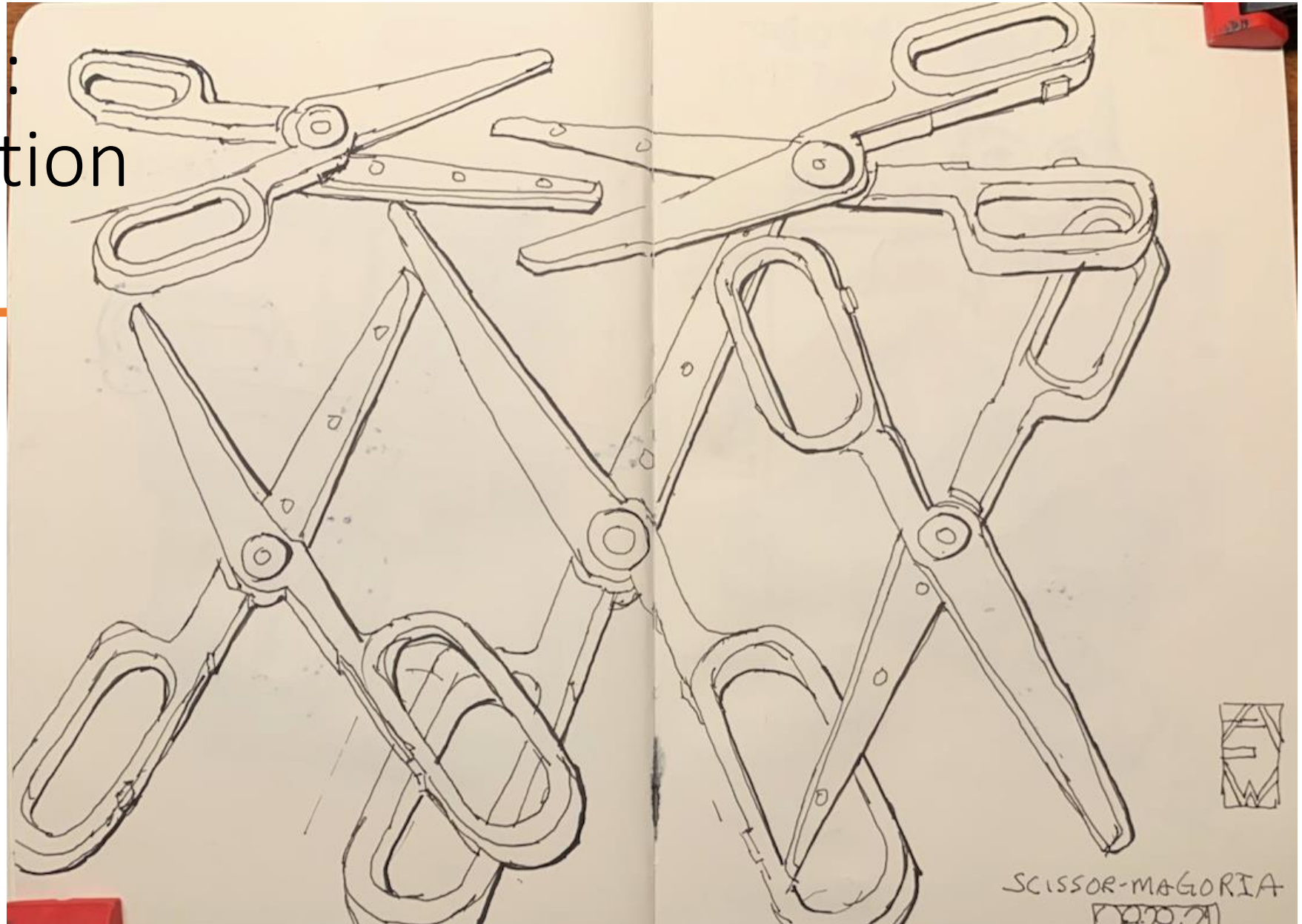
A Simple Object in a short time

- Only had a few minutes at the end of the day



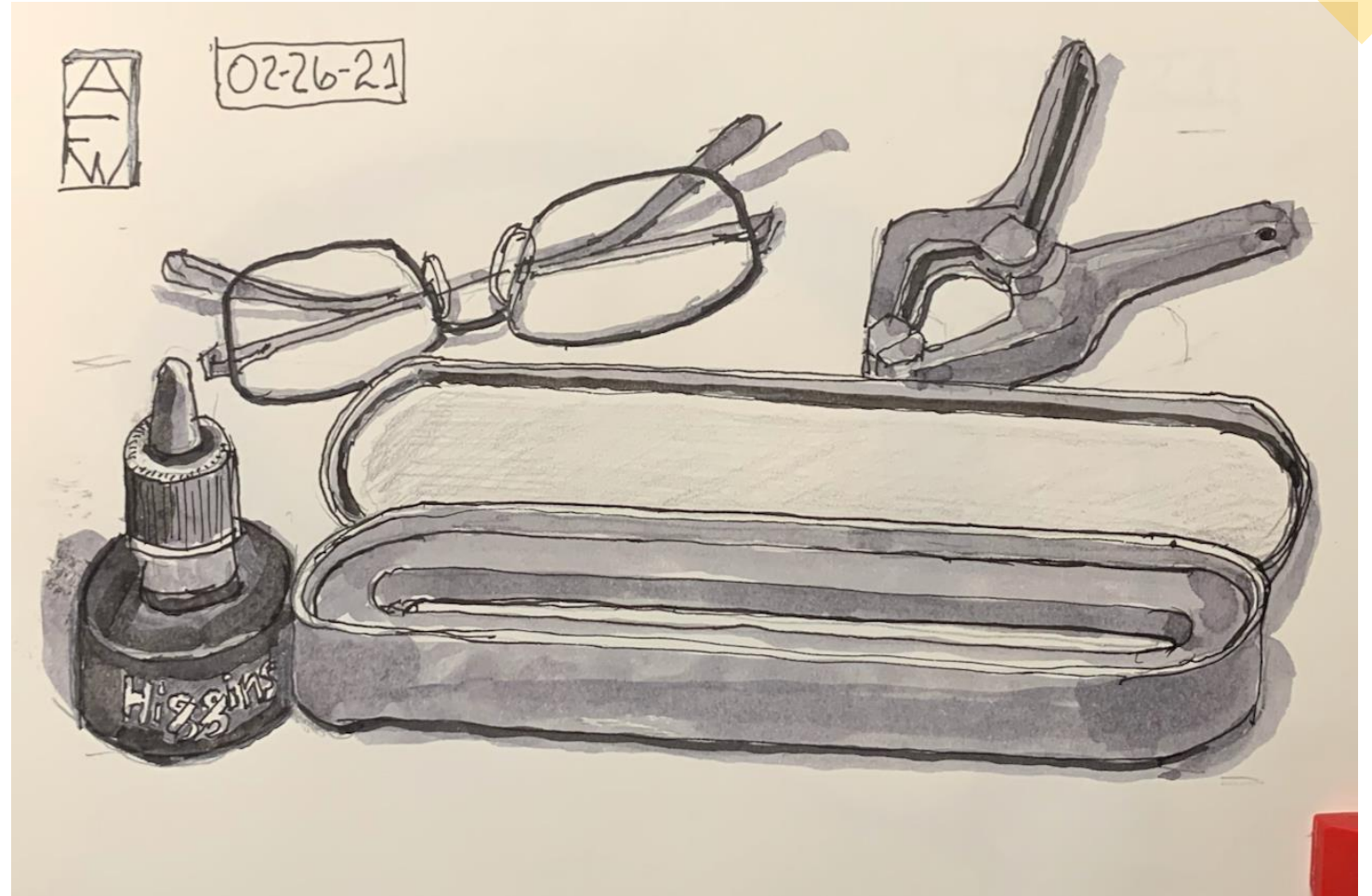
The next night: idea for repetition on a theme

- Notice overlap gives illusion of depth
- Variation of size and direction makes over all image more interesting
- Human eye likes repetition and variation



Sketch a Group of Items Together

- Practice noting relative size and placement
- Again, notice overlap can give sense of depth
- Used ink wash for values



Sketch a Bunch of Items Together

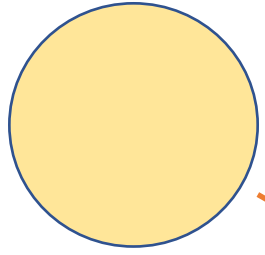
- Putting items together helps you experiment with composition
- Composition is the placement of items in the scene for maximum effect
- These items are not related, but you could do collections, for example, shoes, tools, bottles, etc.
- Notice difference between solid and transparent objects



Ideas for objects to draw

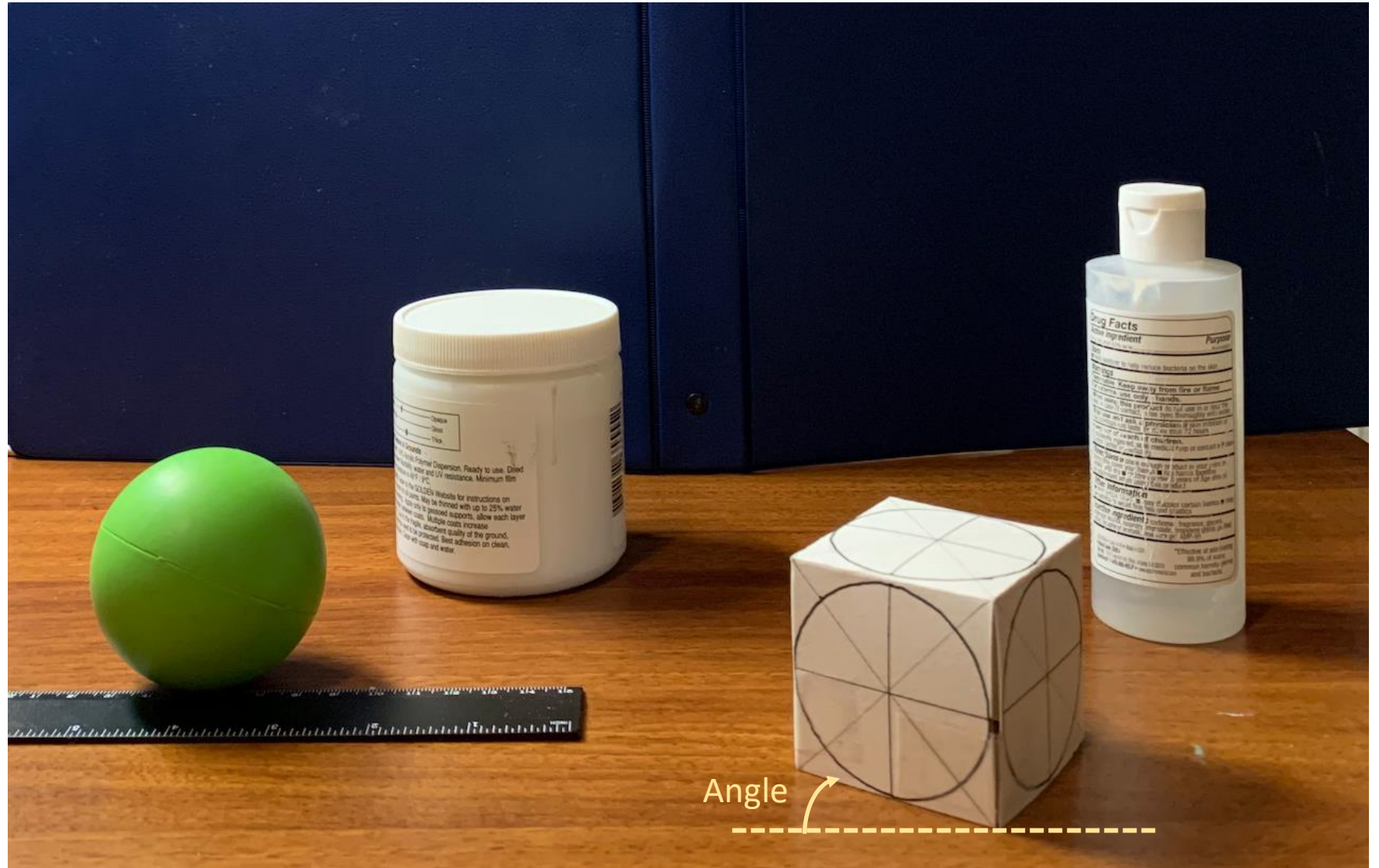
- Shoes
- Purses, briefcases, backpacks
- Kitchen utensils of all kinds
- Tools: hand tools, power tools.
- Plants in pots, flowers
- Bottles of all kinds, glass, plastic, etc.
- Lamps
- Chairs, furniture
- Pens, pencils, office supplies
- Souvenirs
- Sports and workout items
- Try to reproduce the drawings in this presentation
- Book ends, knick-knacks
- Toys
- Hats, gloves
- Cleaning utensils, eg., vacuum, dust pan
- Models, such as cars or ships
- Things that are important to you
- Sketch the same thing from various viewpoints
- Sketch the same thing with different media, pencil, colored pencil, charcoal, watercolor
- Fruits, vegetables, desserts
- Garden tools, shovels, wheelbarrows
- Anything that catches your interest

Drawing Basic 3D shapes in 2D

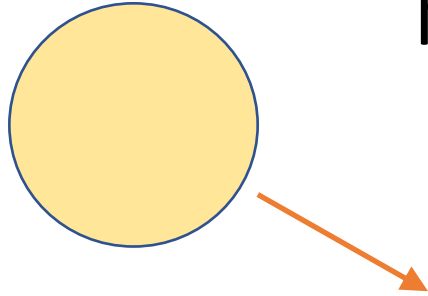


Light source is about here

Basic 3D shapes are:
Spheres, cylinders
and Cubes



Reflective surfaces change lighting



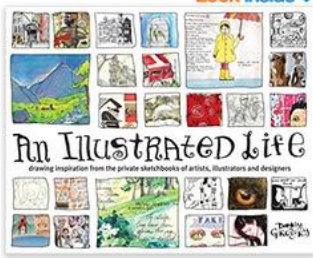
Light source is about here

- Right side of cube and bottle much lighter
- Shadows of cube and bottle are lighter
- Bottle shadow now partly vertical
- See pdfs on drawing shapes.



Reflective surface

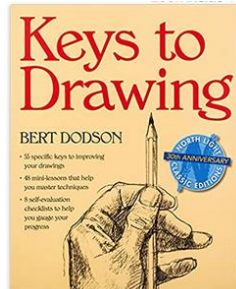
Bibliography



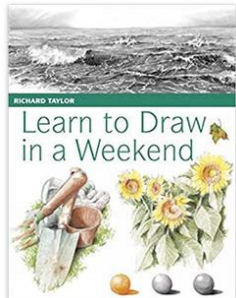
An Illustrated Life: Drawing Inspiration from the Private Sketchbooks of Artists, Illustrators and Designers Paperback – Illustrated, December 1, 2008 by Danny Gregory-wide variety of notebooks



An Illustrated Journey: Inspiration From the Private Art Journals of Traveling Artists, Illustrated, February 28, 2013 by Danny Gregory-more focused on landscape journals



Keys to Drawing by Bert Dodson, Great classic beginning book on drawing



Learn to Draw in a Weekend, by Richard Taylor-Good organization and covers basic 3D shapes, plus lots of interesting drawings.