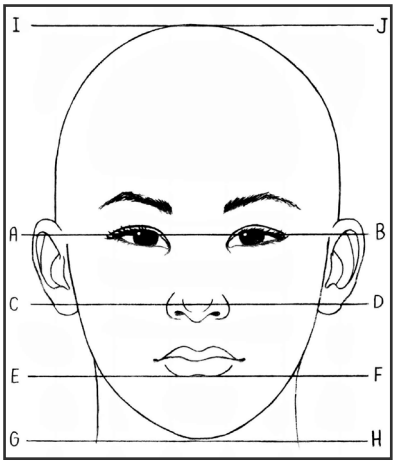
HORIZONTAL FACIAL PROPORTIONS OF ADULTS

Brenda Hoddinott



H-01 BEGINNER - FOCUS ON PEOPLE: Before you attempt to draw adult faces, it helps to know how to plan a place for everything, sort of like a blueprint. Even though the heads and faces of adults come in many shapes and sizes, the same basic guidelines for proportions apply to almost everyone.

In this lesson, you set up simple, easy to remember guidelines for drawing horizontal adult facial proportions, and then draw proportionally correct ears, eyes, and a nose and mouth within your outline.

Suggested drawing supplies include white drawing paper, a ruler, graphite pencils, and erasers. You also need basic math skills (or a calculator) for measuring and dividing various distances.

This project introduces you to very simple guidelines for remembering the facial proportions of adults, and is divided into three parts:

- **EXAMINING ADULT HEADS AND FACES:** Beginners to drawing portraits tend to draw eyes too high on the head. In this section, you examine drawings that illustrate the shapes of skulls and faces, and the correct placements of various facial features, including eyes.
- **DRAW THE OUTLINE OF THE HEAD:** You draw a circular shape to represent an adult human head, with the top half wider than the bottom.
- **ADD HORIZONTAL LINES TO THE OUTLINE:** You divide the length of the head into two halves, and the lower half into three equal distances.
- **DRAWING EARS AND FACIAL FEATURES:** With the blueprint complete, you now add ears, eyes, and a nose and mouth to your head shape using the three distances in the lower half of your drawing. It's not important that you draw the ears and features well. The goal is to simply draw everything in its proper place.

15 PAGES – 19 ILLUSTRATIONS

Recommended for artists of any skill level, as well as home schooling,
academic, and recreational fine art educators

Published by Hoddinott Fine Art Publishers, Halifax, NS, Canada, Revised 2005

EXAMINING ADULT HEADS AND FACES

The most common mistake, made by beginners to drawing portraits, is to draw the eyes too high on the head. However, if you look closely at an adult head, in fact you can see two halves, with the eyes positioned on the halfway point where the two halves meet. Below are four simple variations of the top and bottom halves of a human head. Either skull shape can be matched with any one of the facial shapes, thereby providing many possibilities for the shapes of human heads.

ILLUSTRATION 01-01 – SKULL SHAPES

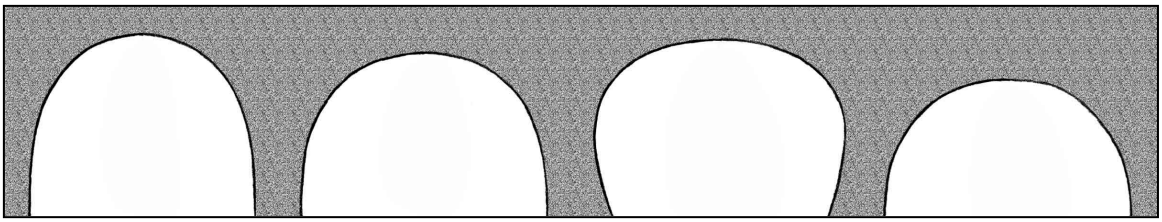


ILLUSTRATION 01-02 – FACIAL SHAPES

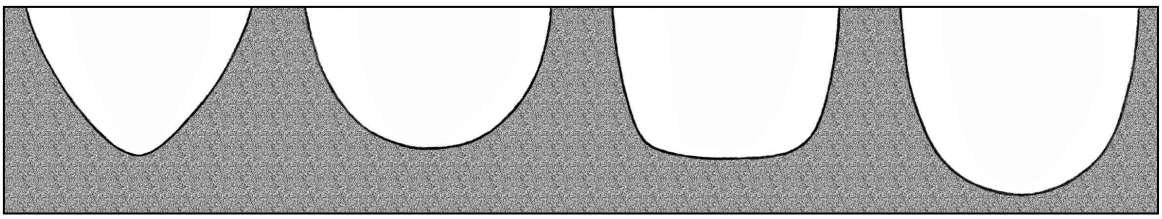


ILLUSTRATION 01-03

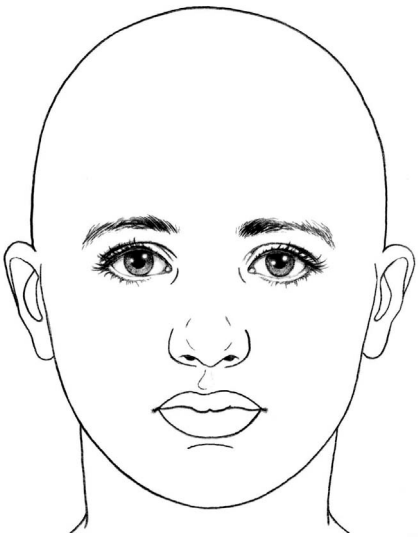
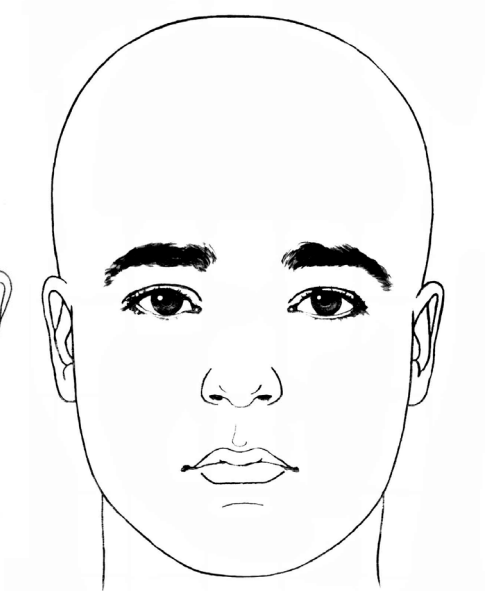


ILLUSTRATION 01-04



The shapes of human heads, and the sizes and placements of people's facial features are very different. Yet, the basic guidelines, for rendering accurate proportions, apply to almost everyone.

Proportion is the relationship in size of one component of a drawing to another or others.

Compare the shapes of these two adult heads to Illustrations 01-01 and 01-02.

Which skull shape is closest to each of these two people?

Which of the basic facial shapes is closest to each?

I find the forth skull shape and the second (and first) facial shape to be close to the female head. For the male, I think the skull shape is close to the third, and the facial shape is similar to the forth. However, a couple of the other shapes are also close.

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1) **Examine each face in Illustration 01-05, and find the locations of the horizontal halfway sections.**

   The eyes are halfway between the top of the skull and the bottom edge of the chin. The half of the head above the eyes has the eyebrows, forehead and skull. Most of the face, including the nose, mouth and chin is below the eyes.

2) **Re-examine Illustrations 01-01 and 01-02, and choose a skull shape and a facial shape.**

3) **Sketch them joined together to make an outline of a complete head.**

   It's perfectly okay to draw your skull shape (or facial shape) slightly different than in the illustrations, such as wider, narrower, shorter or even longer.

   However, don't wander too far away from the basic shape, or your drawing may be too far outside the parameters of what is considered normal human anatomy.

4) **Turn your outline of a head-shape into an original person, by adding some facial features and hair.**

ILLUSTRATION 01-05



Keep in mind that the basic fundamentals of facial proportions are the same for everyone, despite the diversity of human faces.

Various factors determine the physical appearances of adult faces, such as the size, shape, and placement of features, physical development and age, differences in skeletal structures, diversity of ethnic origin, environmental factors, diet, gender, and lifestyle. When examined closely, even identical twins often have subtle differences in their faces.

5) **Have fun creating different people by mixing and matching other skulls and faces, and then adding facial features.**

DRAW THE OUTLINE OF THE HEAD

Take the phone off the hook, find your drawing paper, let the dog in, sharpen your pencil and find your ruler! Use good quality white drawing paper in case you need to erase. An HB pencil worked well for me, but you can use whatever pencil you prefer.

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Remember; the suggestions for the proper placement of adult facial features in this lesson are not "rules". Most human heads and the placements of features will follow these guidelines, but, always keep in mind that there may be exceptions.

6) Use a ruler to draw a rectangular drawing format on your drawing paper.

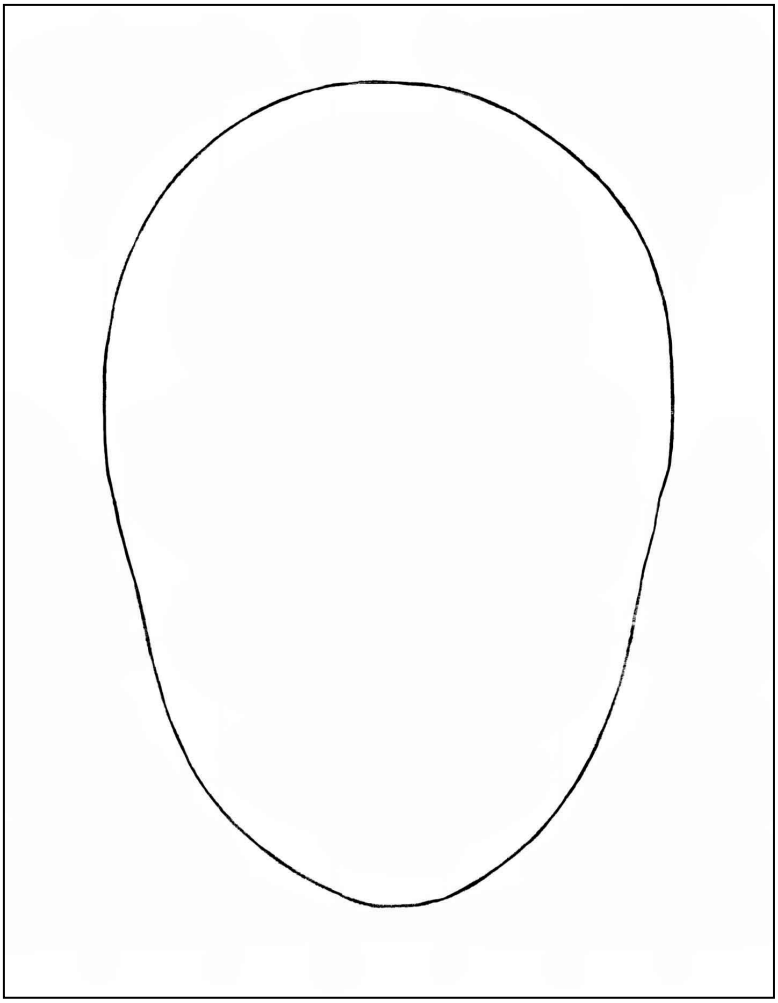
Drawing format (sometimes called a *drawing space*) refers to the area of a drawing surface within a specific perimeter, outlined by a shape of any size, such as a square, rectangle or circle. Suggested sizes include 5 by 7 inches, 6 by 8 inches, or 7 by 9 inches.

7) Draw a very light line of symmetry down the center of the rectangle.

Measure and mark a small dot at the halfway point of the top and bottom sides of your rectangle. Use a ruler to connect the two dots. This line helps keep your head shape symmetrical and is a guide for measuring the placement of facial features.

Symmetry in drawing is a balanced arrangement of lines and shapes, on opposite sides of an often-imaginary centerline. In the scans of my drawing throughout this project, the line of symmetry is too light to see.

ILLUSTRATION 01-06



8) Draw a circular shape to represent an adult human head, with the top half wider than the bottom.

The basic outline of an adult head is similar in shape to an egg.

The line of symmetry you drew down the center of your rectangle, is helpful for measuring distances on either side, to make sure the head in your drawing is symmetrical.

TIP To find out more about drawing with a line of symmetry, refer to *B-03 Simple Symmetry* in *B-level Beginner: Learn to See*.

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ADD HORIZONTAL LINES TO THE OUTLINE

In this section, you divide the length of the head into two halves. Then the lower half will be divided into three equal distances.

In time you will be able to judge all proportions visually, but for now please use a ruler.

9) Draw a horizontal line that touches the edge of the very top of the head.

This line is parallel to the top and bottom of the rectangular drawing surface (and vertical to its sides).

10) Mark this line IJ.

11) Draw a second horizontal line touching the lower edge of the chin.

12) Mark this line GH.

ILLUSTRATION 01-07

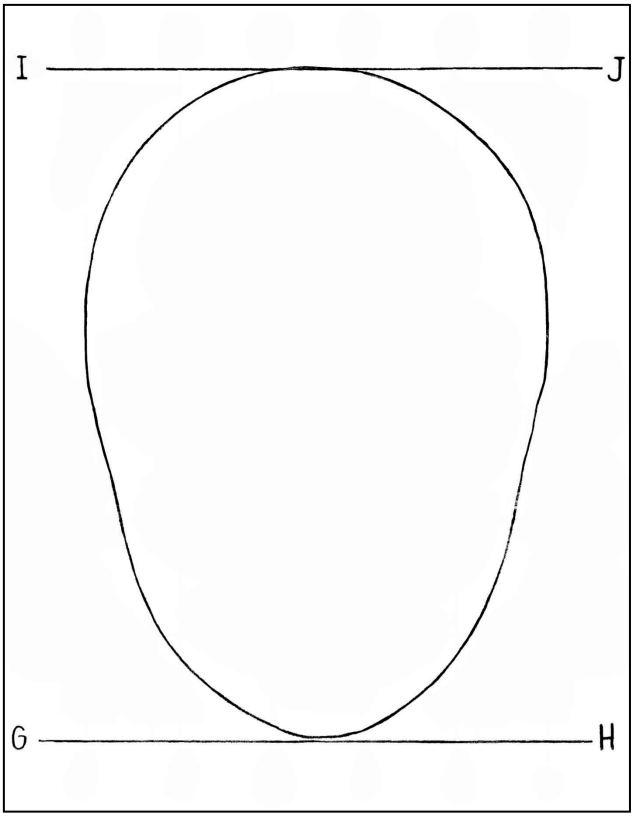
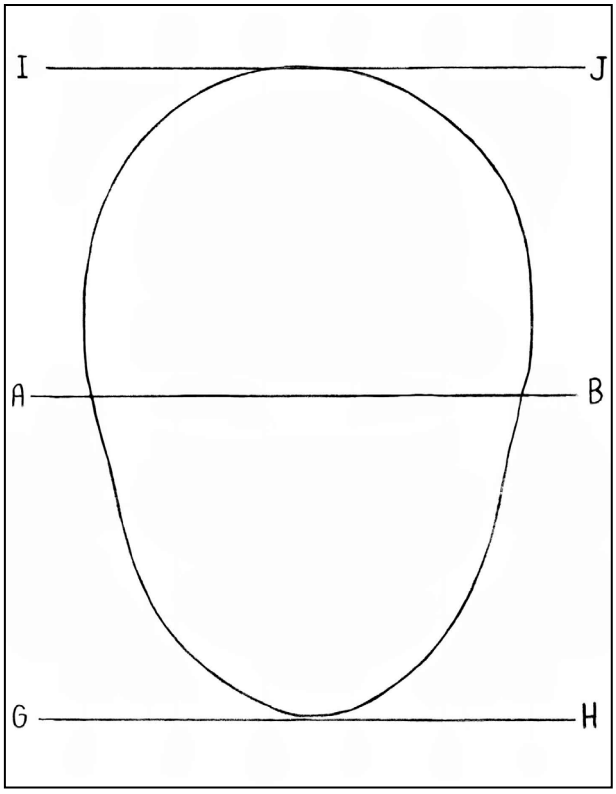


ILLUSTRATION 01-08



13) Measure the total vertical distance along the center vertical line (too light to see in my drawing), from the top of the head to the bottom of the chin.

14) Divide this total measurement in half and mark it with a small dot.

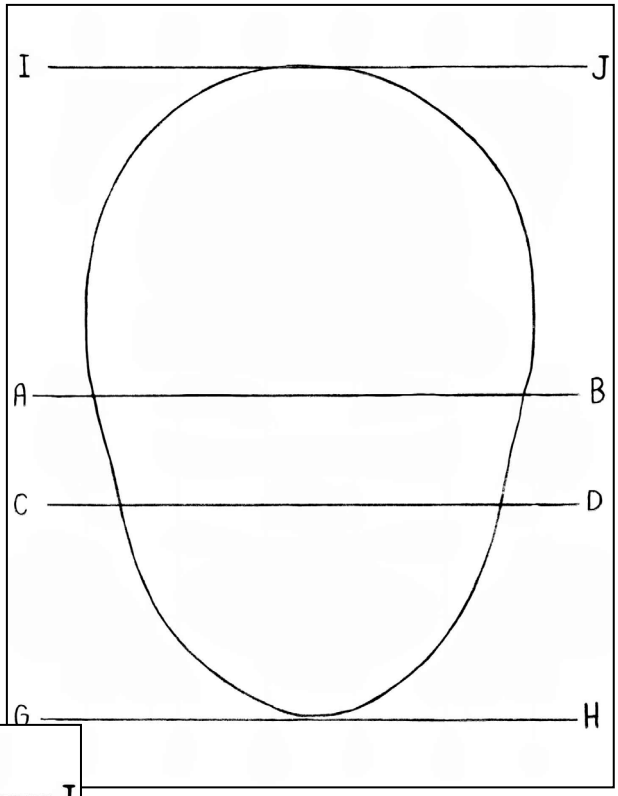
Feel free to use a calculator!

15) Draw a horizontal line (AB) through this dot, dividing the head into two halves (as in Illustration 01-08).

Most people's eyes and the top sections of their ears are somewhere along this line, halfway between the top of the skull (not the top of the hair) and the bottom edge of the chin.

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ILLUSTRATION 01-09



16) Measure the vertical distance between lines AB and GH.

17) Divide this distance by three and lightly mark the two points with dots on the center vertical line (too light to see in my drawing).

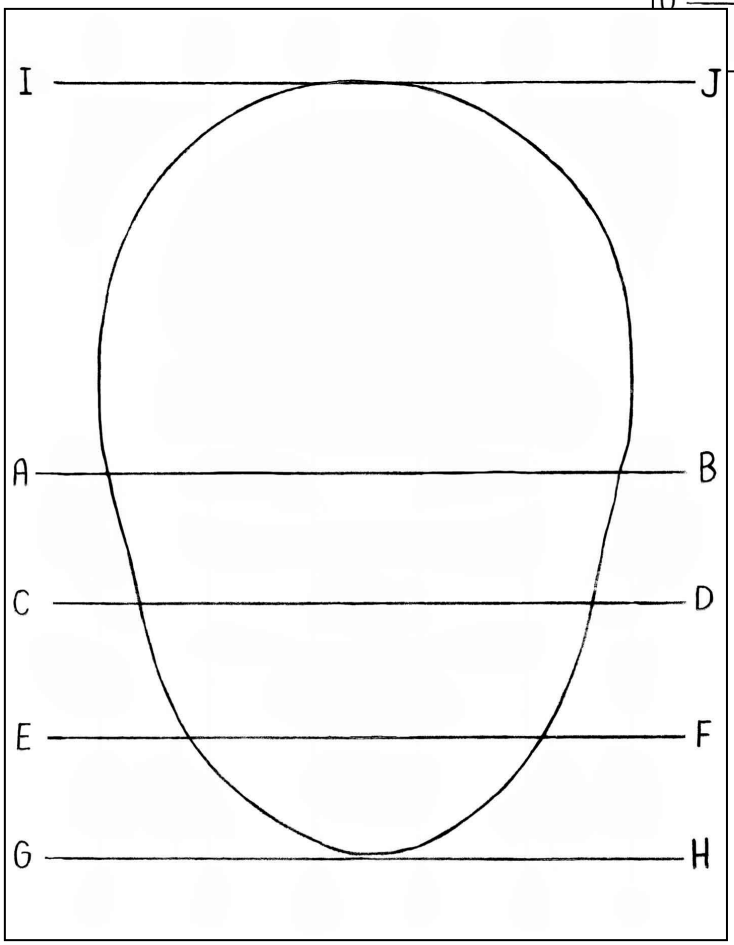
18) Add a fourth horizontal line through the upper point (closer to AB).

This line is parallel to each of the other three lines, IJ, AB, and GH.

19) Mark this line CD.

The lower part of the nose and the lower sections of the ears touch this line.

ILLUSTRATION 01-10



20) Add a fifth horizontal line through the lower point (closer to GH).

This line is parallel to each of the other four lines.

21) Mark this line EF.

The lower edge of the bottom lip will be close to or touch this line. Now the vertical distance between lines AB and GH is divided into three equal sections.



Artists use several methods for establishing adult facial proportions. I have found this method to be accurate and very easy to remember.

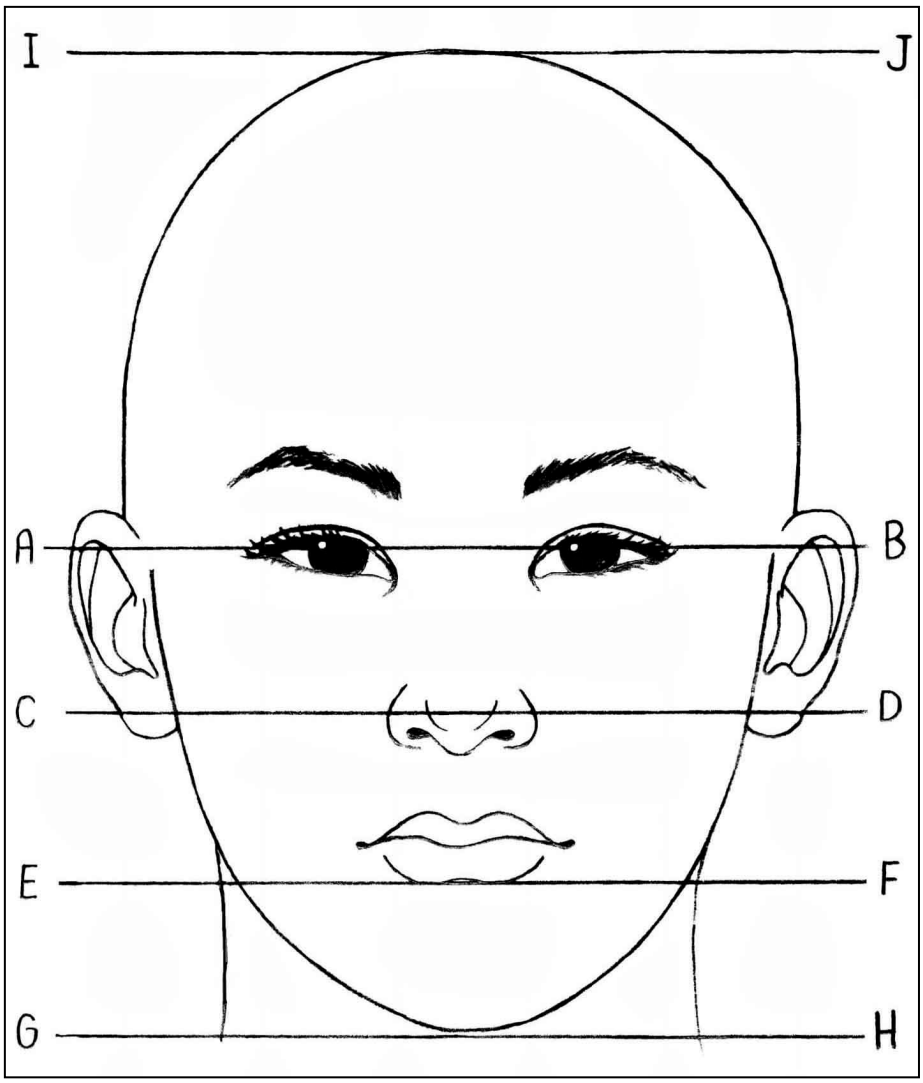
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Following is a review of the basic adult proportional guidelines. In the next section you add features to your facial outline. Refer to Illustration 01-11 to help you understand the following:

Line AB divides the length of the head in half:

- The top of the ears and the eyebrows are usually on or above AB.
- The whites of the eyes and the irises are often touching AB.
- The lower eyelids are generally below AB

ILLUSTRATION 01-11



Line CD is one-third of the way from line AB toward the bottom of the chin.

- The base of the cheekbone is often on or above line CD.
- The bottom section of the nose is usually touching CD.
- The lower edges of the ears are generally below CD.

Line EF is halfway between lines CD and GH.

- The mouth (usually the lower lip) touches EF.
- The chin takes up most of the space between lines EF and GH.

DRAWING EARS AND FACIAL FEATURES

Your blueprint is complete and it's time to add a face. In this section you draw ears, eyes, and a nose and mouth on your head shape using the three distances in the lower half of your drawing. It is not important that you draw the ears and features well. The goal is to simply place everything in its proper place. You may even choose to draw completely different features.

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Remember, it's more important to draw the ears and facial features in their correct places, rather than fuss about the intricate details.

22) Draw the outlines of the ears with the tops above AB and the bottoms below CD.

ILLUSTRATION 01-12

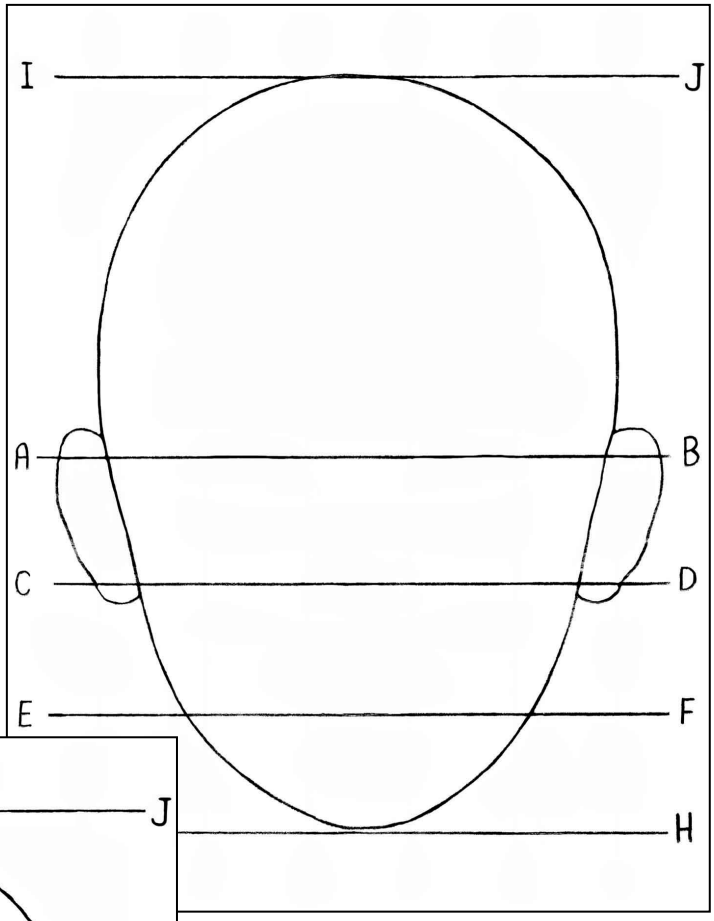
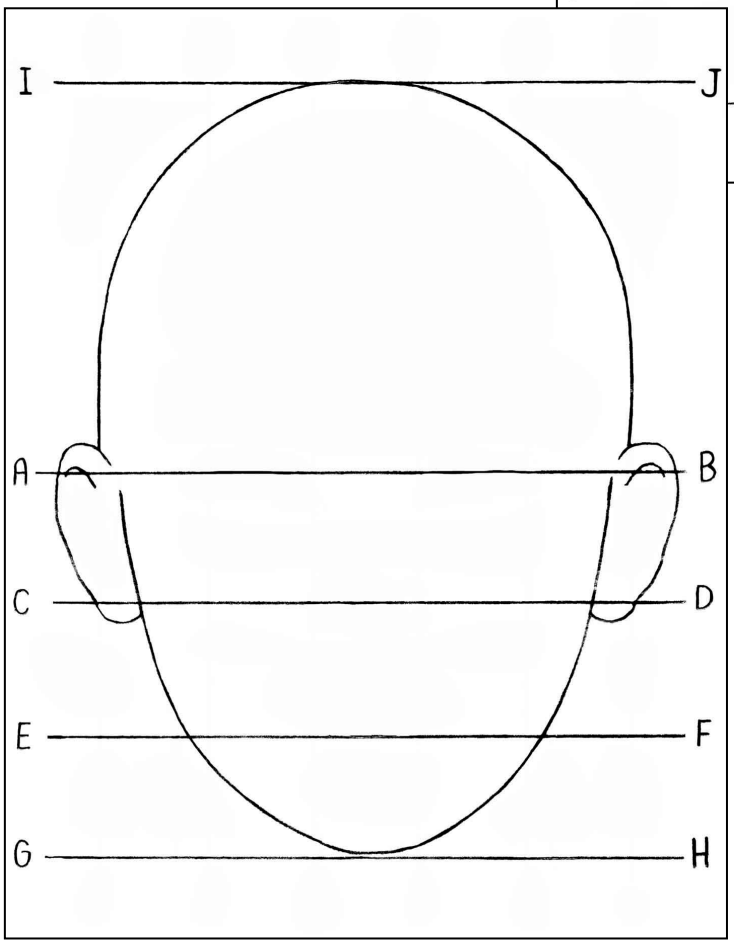


ILLUSTRATION 01-13



23) Erase the vertical lines (indicating the outline of the head) between lines AB and CD (on both sides of your drawing).

24) Re-draw the outline on each side (between lines AB and CD) leaving an opening for the tops of the ears to extend inward.

25) Extend the outlines of the tops of the ears inward, toward the center of the face.

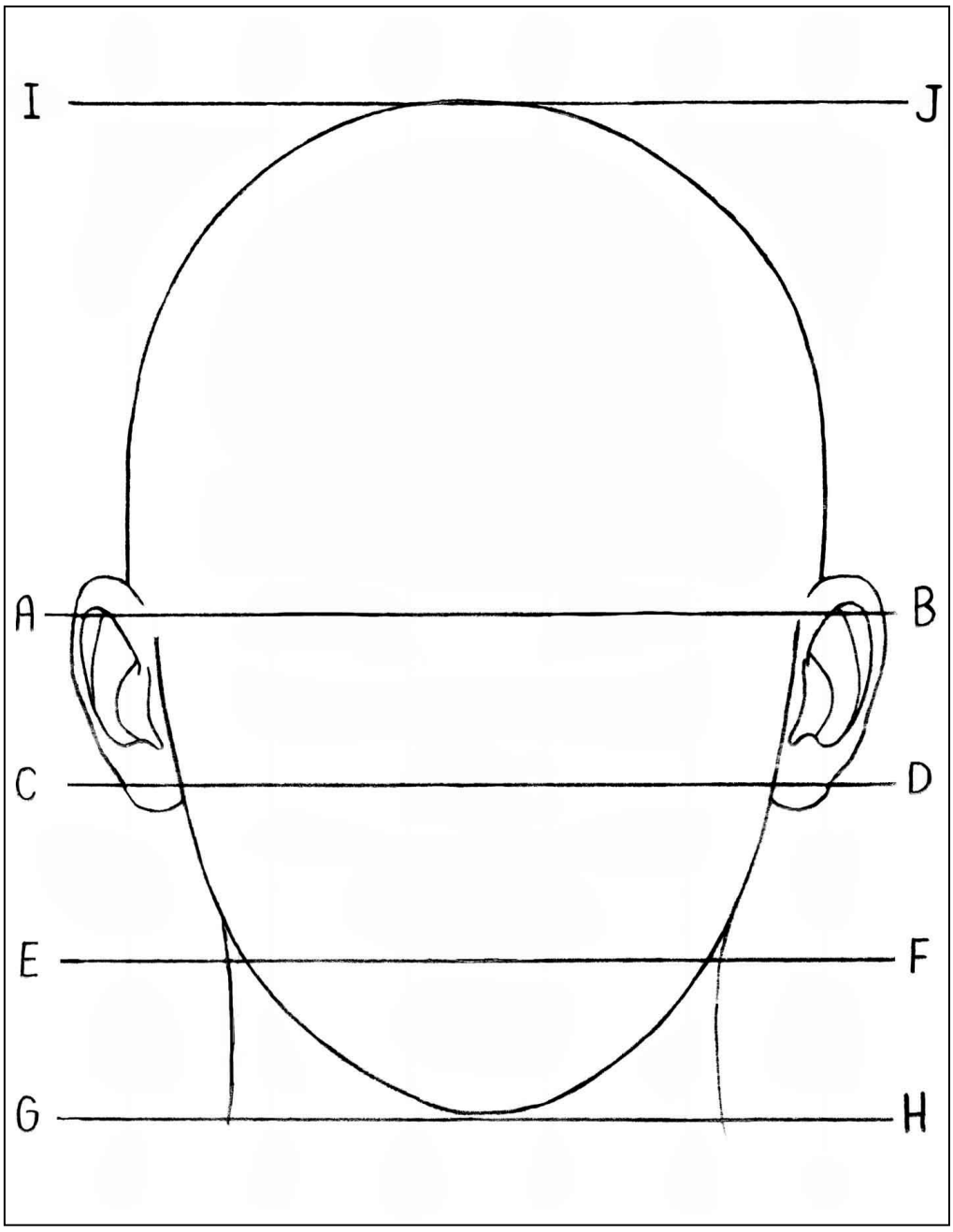
26) Draw short curved lines on the upper section of each ear (touching AB) to indicate the outer rims of the ears.

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27) Add more detailed lines to each ear to represent its various parts.

Even though fine details are not important in this lesson, try your best and you may be pleasantly surprised!

ILLUSTRATION 01-14



Each individual face is physically unique, due to inherent variations in the sizes and shapes of heads, faces, and features. You can complete the facial features on your drawing however you wish. The only important factor, to achieve a realistic human face, is to put everything in its correct place according to the facial guidelines.

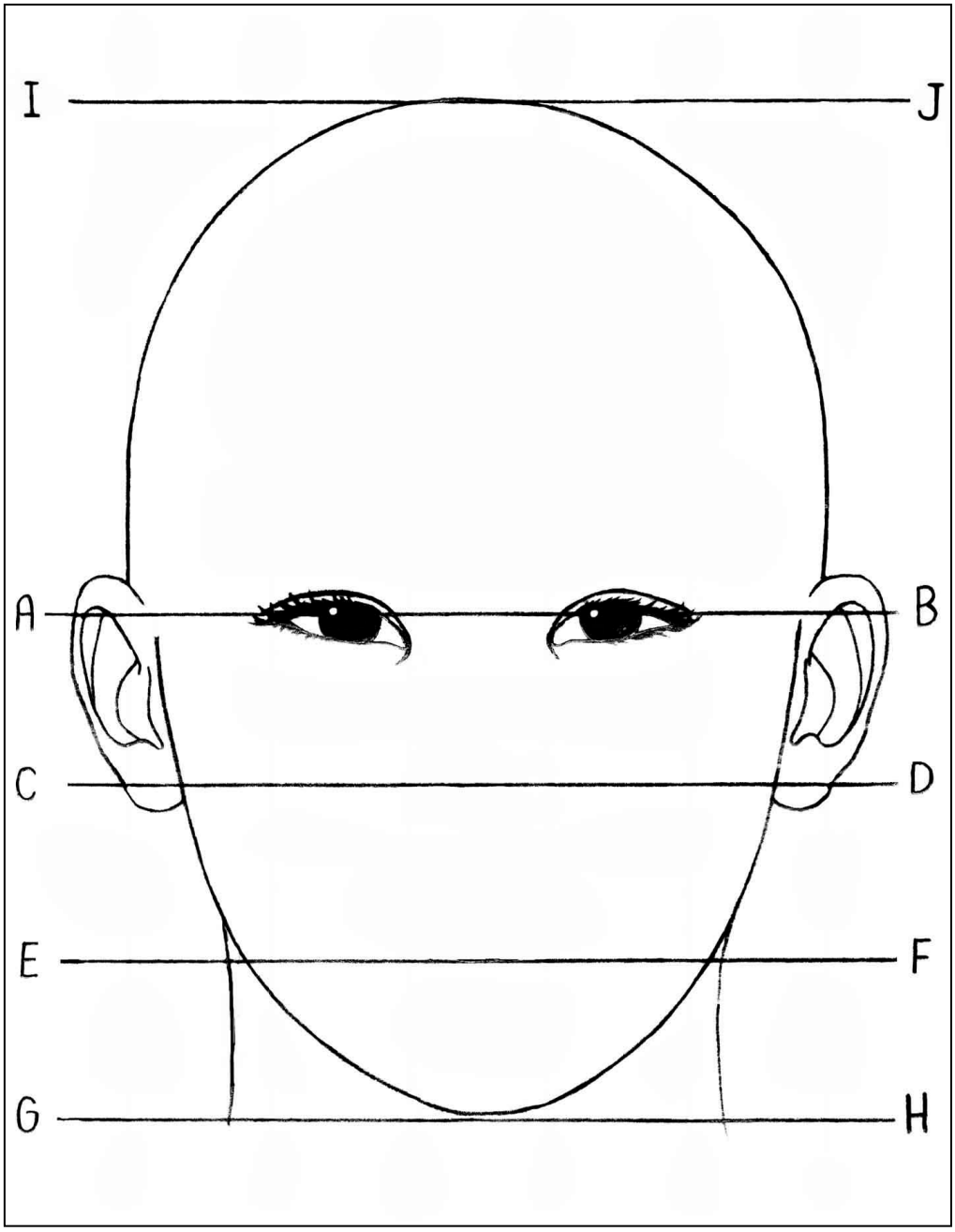
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28) Draw the eyes along AB.

To help you decide how wide to draw each eye, refer to Illustration 01-15 and observe the following:

- The widest section of the head is “five-eyes wide”.
- The width of an eye is equal to one of these distances.
- The distance between the eyes is equal to the width of one eye.

ILLUSTRATION 01-15



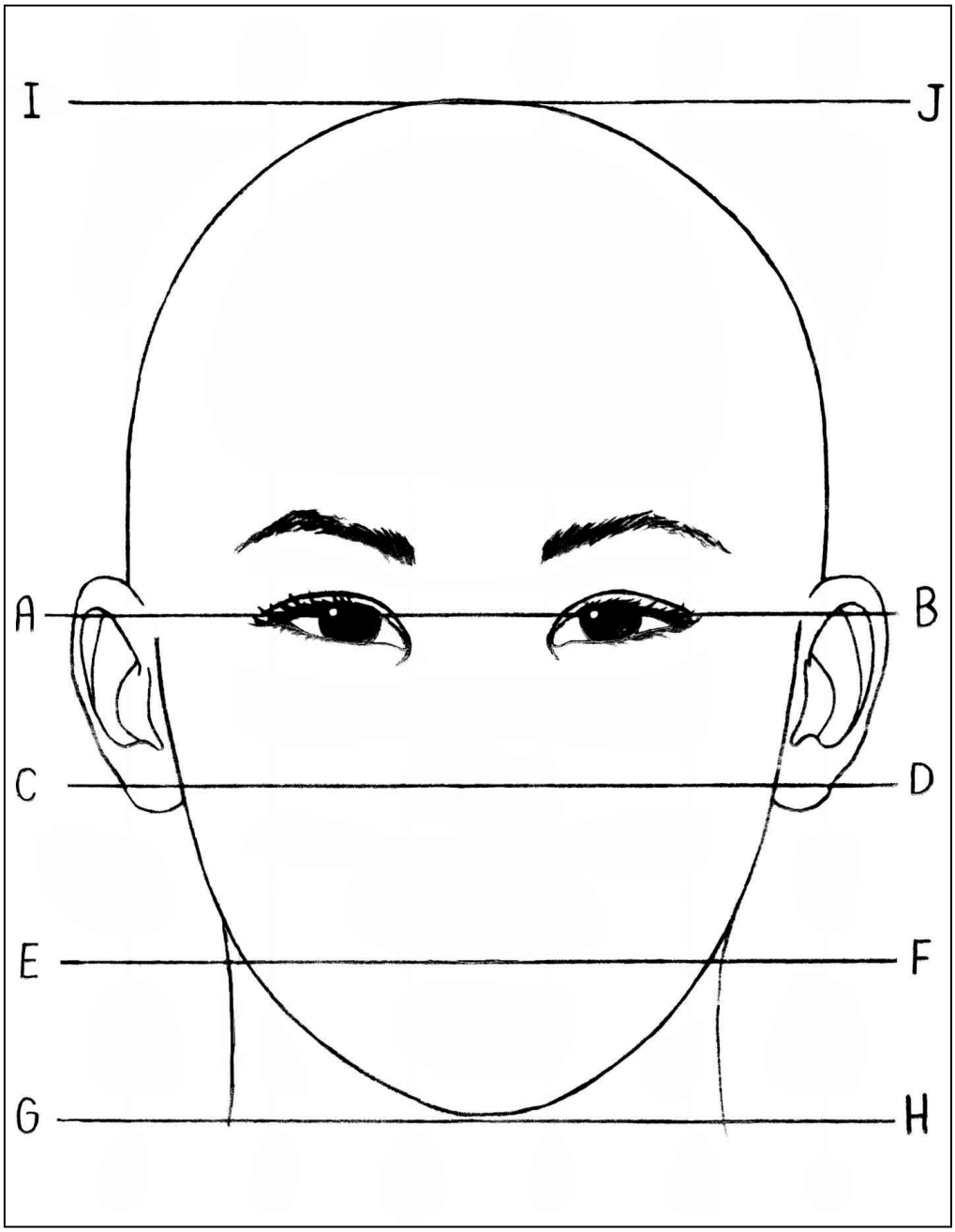
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29) Draw some eyebrows above AB.

You can draw eyebrows:

- Light or dark
- Thick or thin
- Very curved, slightly curved, or fairly straight
- Very close to the eyes or a little higher on the forehead.

ILLUSTRATION 01-16



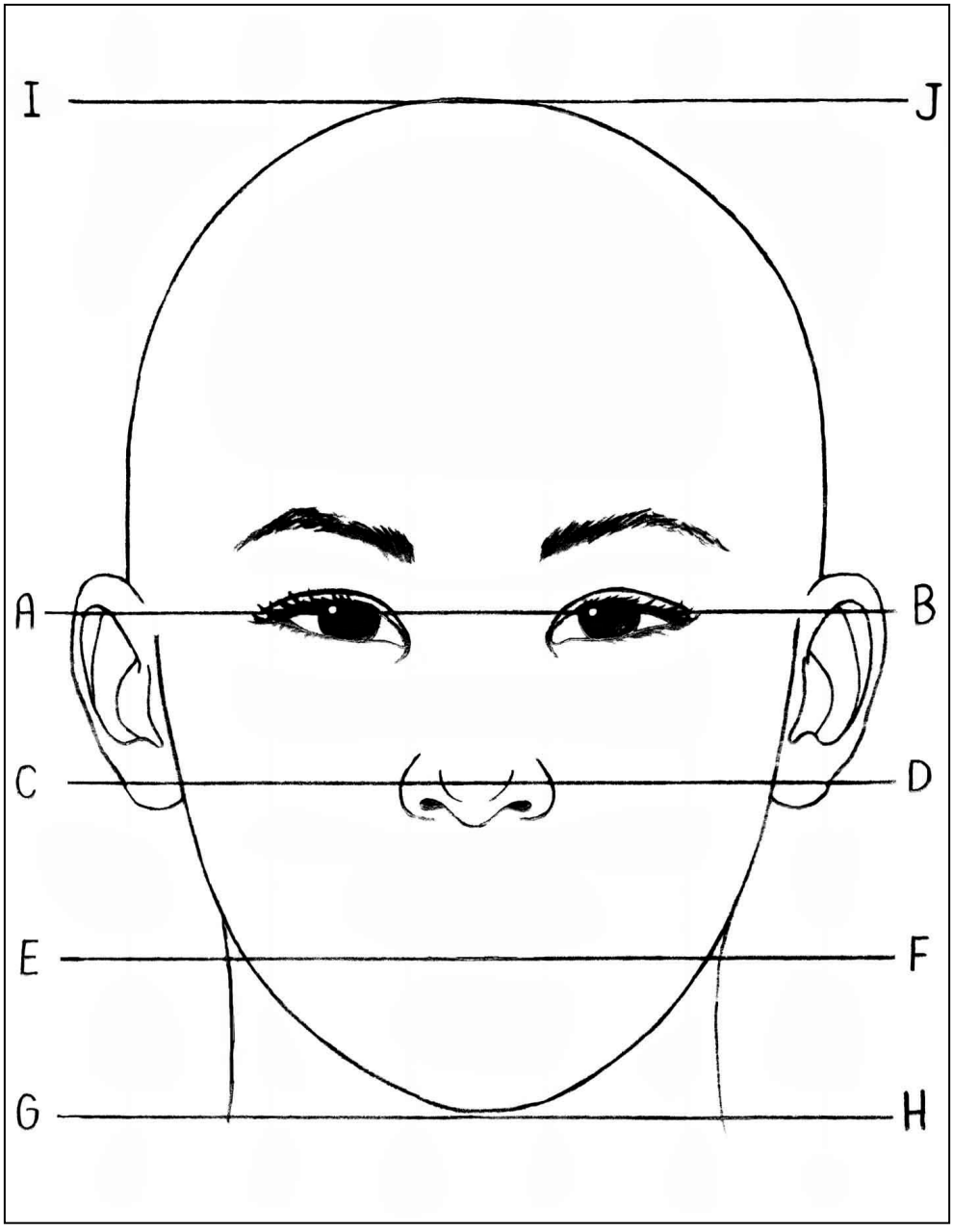
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30) Draw the nose.

The following guidelines apply to most adult faces:

- The lower section of the nose touches the horizontal line CD.
- The very bottom edges of the nostrils are often below CD.
- The nose is approximately the width of the distance between the eyes.
- The base of each cheekbone usually aligns with the bottom section of the nose.
- The lower parts of the ears horizontally align with the bottom section of the nose.

ILLUSTRATION 01-17



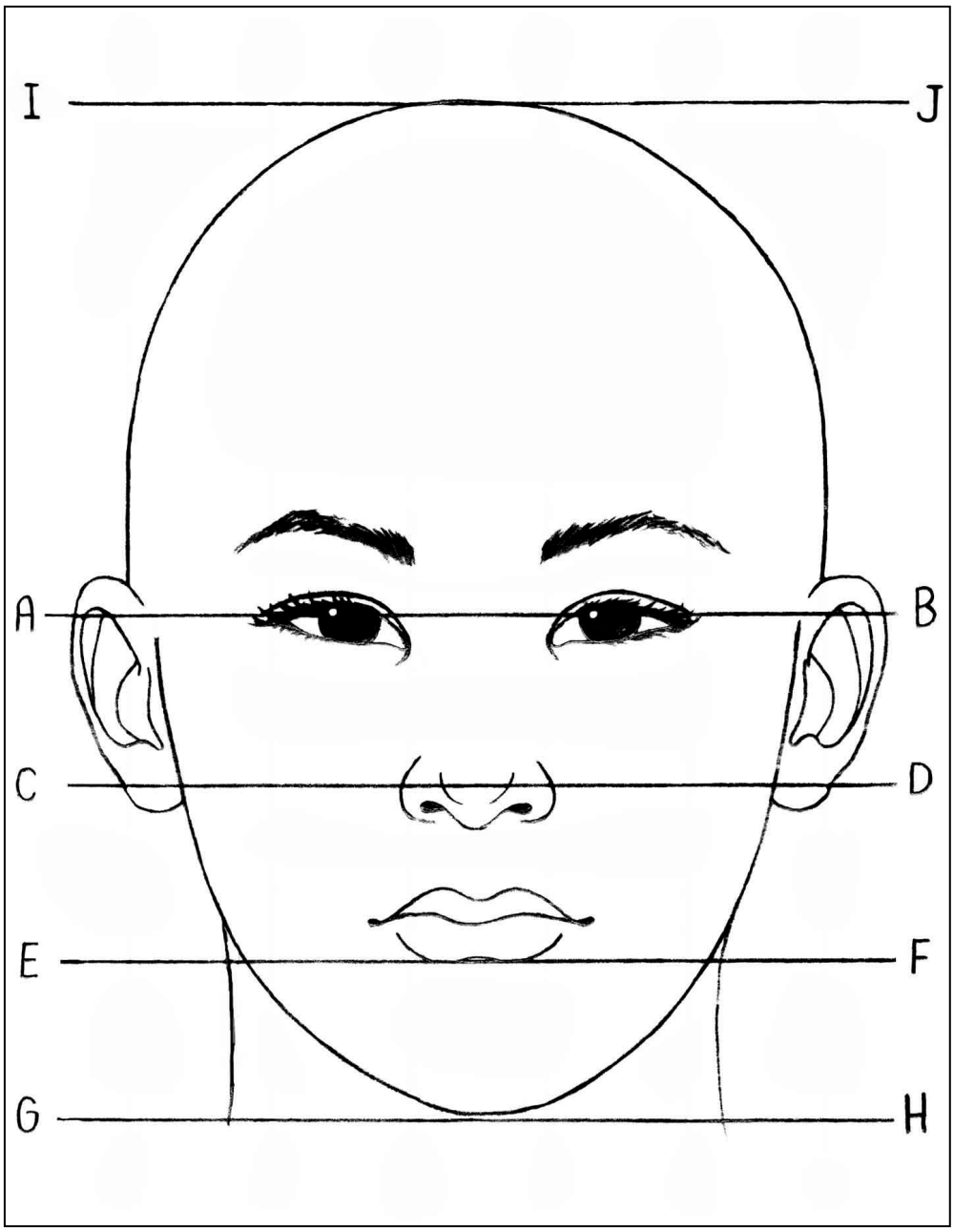
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31) Draw the mouth.

The following guidelines generally apply to adult faces:

- The lower lip is usually touching or slightly above line EF.
- The mouth is generally wider than the nose.
- The lower lip is approximately halfway between the lower section of the nose and the bottom of the chin.
- The outer corners of the mouth are usually directly under the irises of the eyes.

ILLUSTRATION 01-18

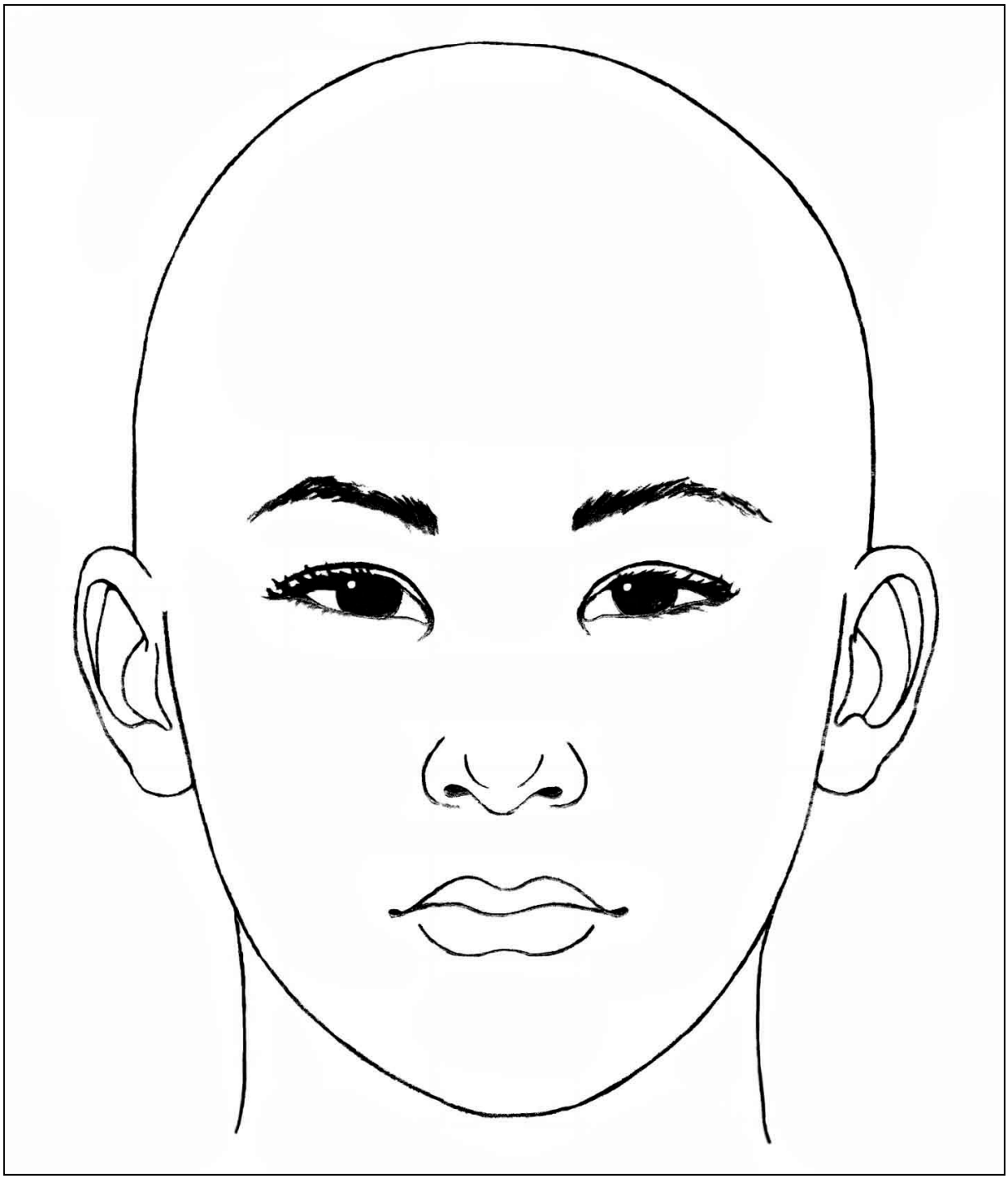


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32) Use your kneaded eraser to lighten the outline of the top of the head until it's almost invisible, and then add some hair.

33) Sign your name, add today's date on the back of your drawing, and then pat yourself on the back!

ILLUSTRATION 01-19



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BRENDA HODDINOTT - BIOGRAPHY

As a self-educated teacher, visual artist, portraitist, forensic artist, and illustrator, Brenda Hoddinott utilizes diverse art media including graphite, technical pen, colored pencil, chalk pastel, charcoal, conté crayon, and oil paints.

> My philosophy on teaching art is to focus primarily on the enjoyment aspects while gently introducing the technical and academic. Hence, in creating a passion for the subject matter, the quest for knowledge also becomes enjoyable.
>
> >Brenda Hoddinott<

Born in St. John's, Newfoundland, Brenda grew up in the small town of Corner Brook. She developed strong technical competencies with a personal commitment to self directed learning, and the aid of assorted "Learn to Draw" books. During Brenda's twenty-five year career as a self-educated civilian forensic artist, numerous criminal investigation departments have employed Brenda's skills, including Royal Canadian Mounted Police and municipal police departments. In 1992, Brenda was honored with a commendation from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and in 1994, she was awarded a Certificate of Membership from "Forensic Artists International".

Her home-based art career included graphic design, and teaching recreational drawing and painting classes. As supervisor of her community's recreational art department, Brenda hired and trained teachers, and designed curriculum for several children's art programs. In 1998, Brenda chose to end her eighteen-year career as an art educator in order to devote more time to writing, drawing, painting, and developing her websites.

Drawspace http://www.drawspace.com incorporates her unique style and innovative approach to curriculum development. This site offers downloadable and printable drawing classes for students of all abilities from the age of eight through adult. Students of all ages, levels and abilities have praised the simple step-by-step instructional approach. This site is respected as a resource for fine art educators, home schooling programs, and educational facilities throughout the world.

LEARN-TO-DRAW BOOKS BY BRENDA HODDINOTT

- **Drawing for Dummies (2003):** Wiley Publishing, Inc., New, York, NY, this 336 page book is available on various websites and in major bookstores internationally.
- **The Complete Idiot's Guide to Drawing People (2004):** Winner of the Alpha-Penguin Book of the Year Award 2004, Alpha - Pearson Education – Macmillan, Indianapolis, IN, this 360 page book is available on various websites and in major bookstores internationally.

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