

CARTOONS a d a i a t i o n

BY DAVID MOSTYN
• CREATE YOUR OWN CHARACTERS
• MAKE MOVING SCENES



FIRST YOU START WITH A BODY

Whatever you do, do not try to draw your cartoon starting at the head and working down. It is a good idea to think of drawing it in the same way as if you were getting dressed. You would not put on your shoes first and then try to get your socks on. You put on your clothes in the correct order until you are fully dressed. It is the same with drawing a cartoon. There is no short cut to doing it. You start with the basic construction and then build on it until you have a complete drawing.

This section describes how you build that first, basic construction. You should make these drawings on thin layout paper.

- Heads are generally egg shaped, so draw an egg.
- Put in a neck.
- Draw a rectangle for the body.

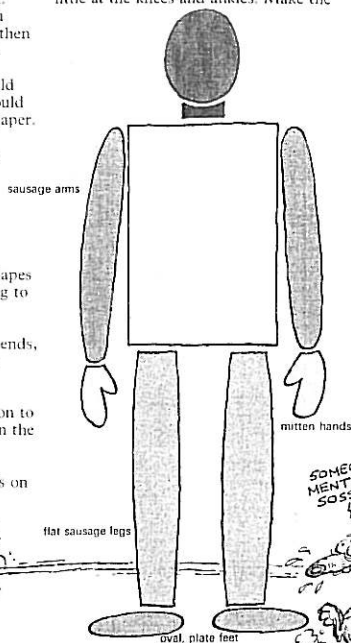
For the arms, draw two sausage shapes with flat ends, the lower ends reaching to where the top of the legs will be.

Draw in two more sausages with flat ends, and make them a bit longer than the arms. These are the legs.

Draw two mittens, thumbs inwards, on to the ends of the arms. You have drawn the hands.

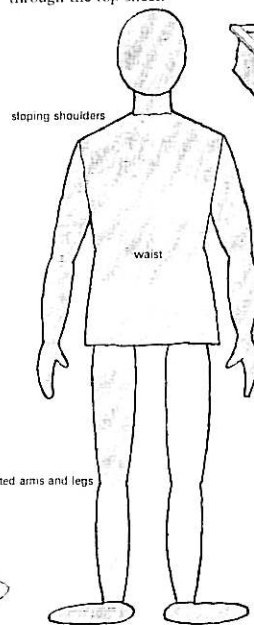
Similarly, for feet, draw two flat ovals on to the ends of the legs.

Now we can start to make the body look better. At the moment, the shoulders look as though there is a coat hanger in them, so slope them down a little. Make a waist, too, about half way down the rectangle. Look at your own arms. They go in a little at the elbows, and in again at the wrists. The legs, too, should go in a little at the knees and ankles. Make the



legs meet at the top where they join the rectangle.

Now you are thinking that you have never seen a real person who looks like your drawing. This is where you use your light box. Take this first drawing that you have just made, lay it flat on the glass, and put another sheet of paper on top. With the light switched on you should be able to see your first drawing clearly through the top sheet.



If you want to have another go at it, take another sheet of paper and trace a better figure through on to your new sheet. If you are still not happy, simply try again, and again, as many times as you want.



When you are finally happy with your basic construction, you will have a sound idea of how to start drawing a figure. Do not forget proportions: the head should fit six or seven times into the overall height of the figure.

Now you can also see how useful the light box is. By tracing over your old drawings, you can make clean, corrected drawings without the mess of rubbing out all the time.

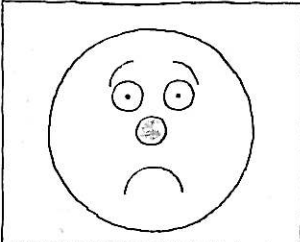
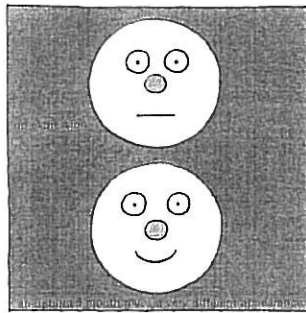
LET'S FACE IT

Now you have a good idea of how to build up the framework of the body, it's time to go further. Let's start with the face.

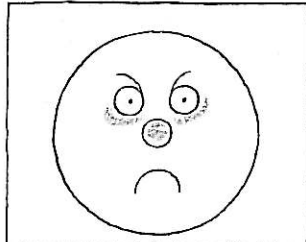
All you need is a series of circles, one circle for the nose and two for the eyes. Put in a line for the mouth. Now you have to decide what kind of person you want this figure to be.

Why not decide to draw a big, fat, happy man? So, draw a big smile where you had a straight line before. He really looks happy.

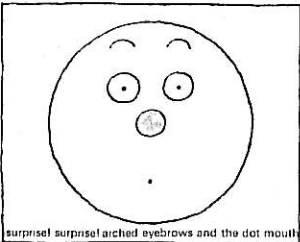
Here's an example of a smiling face going through a series of mood changes: sad; angry; surprised; laughing.



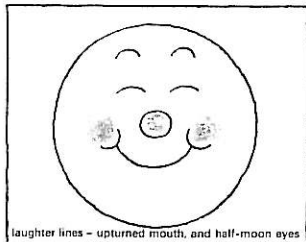
downturned eyebrows and mouth indicate sadness



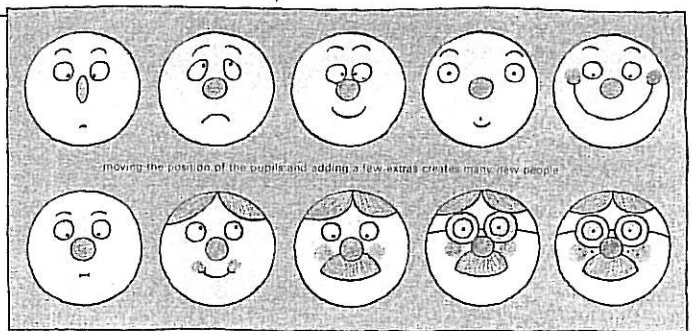
what an angry face! note the frown and the shadows



surprise! surprise! arched eyebrows and the dot mouth



laughter lines - upturned mouth, and half-moon eyes

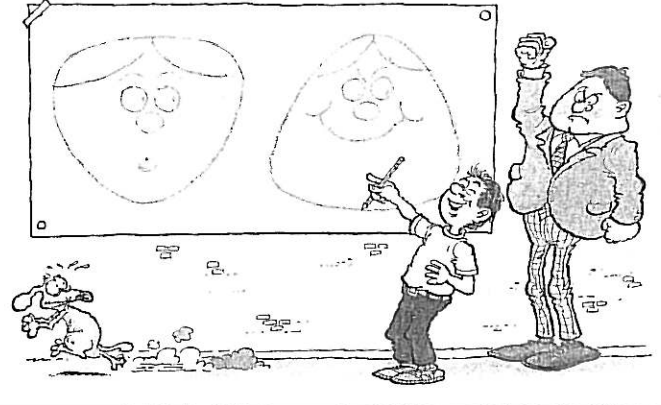


moving the position of the pupils and adding a few extras creates many new people

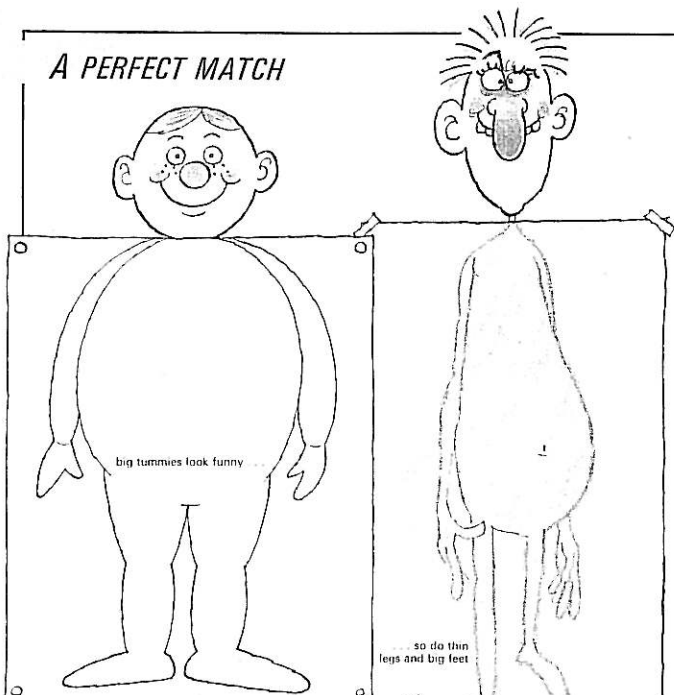
Once you have drawn your basic construction, you can do whatever you like with it. Change the shape of the nose. Then change the eyes. Try moving the eyes closer together and then further apart. Try the mouth. Make it very wide. Now make it very small. Try different hairstyles. Put moustaches on some of your men. Add a pair of spectacles. What

about freckles? And, don't forget to move the eyeballs around.

Now try changing the shape of the head. You can still begin with a circle but, once you have done that, make it wider at the top and narrower at the bottom. Then try it the other way round. You can spend hours inventing different-looking people.



A PERFECT MATCH



big tummies look funny

so do thin legs and big feet

Of course, a cartoon is not just a face. There is a body attached to it. When you draw the body, remember to try to carry the personality shown in the head through to the body. If you have drawn a fat, smiling face, put it on a fat body. And a weird-looking face goes on a weird-looking body. Put in the basic construction and then, over the top on thin layout paper, draw in the kind of person you want, using the light box.



the bare bones

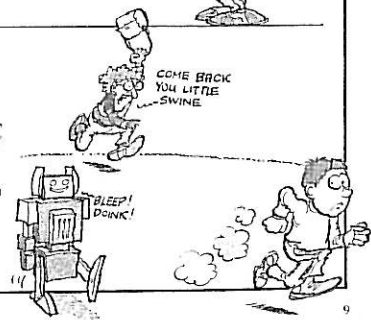


adding simple clothes brings your body to life



When you have decided on your body, put on the kind of clothes you think will suit the person. If you have drawn a young person, dress him or her in appropriate clothes such as sweatshirt, jeans, and trainers. Older people could look very silly in jeans and sweatshirts, so you might dress them more formally. On the other hand, you might want to make them look silly on purpose!

Don't forget hands and feet. You can make them both very big, indeed, and hands and feet can be very expressive.



ZOOMING ALONG!

So far, you have drawn your figures so that you are looking at their fronts. And they have been stationary.

Now you have to make the drawing turn. This will mean that an arm or a leg will be partly hidden behind the body.



It is quite easy to make a figure move. Start by drawing a stick figure walking along. Think about the way you walk. Notice that your left leg moves forward together with your right arm. So draw the

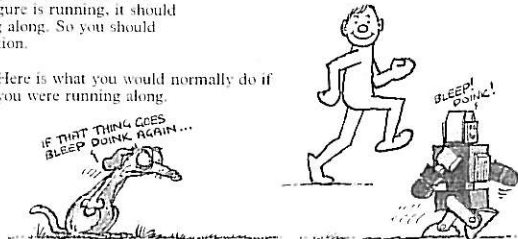
When you do the basic construction, always draw in the whole arm or leg. Then, when you come to trace over the construction, just leave out the bits that you won't see.

stick figure in that position. Using this figure as your 'model', draw a cartoon figure in a similar pose. Now try to make the stick figure run and, using it as your model again, draw the cartoon.



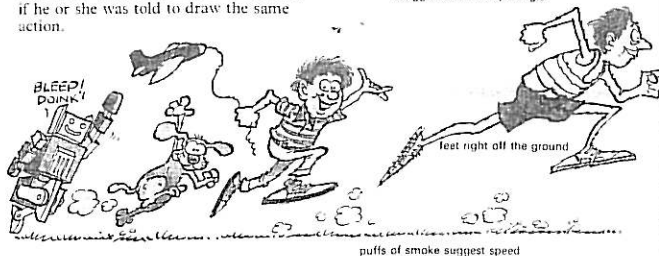
In general, to make their point, cartoonists draw very extreme action. For example, if the figure is running, it should be really zooming along. So you should emphasize the action.

Here is what you would normally do if you were running along.



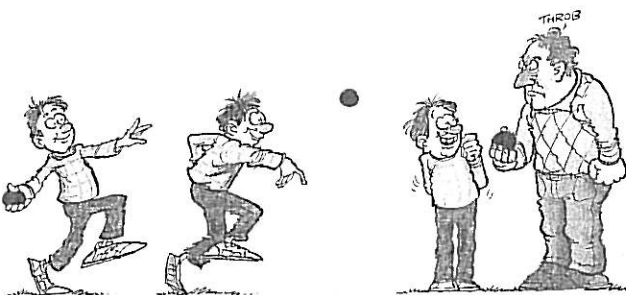
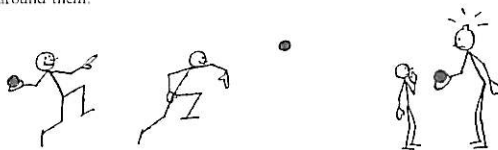
But here's what a cartoonist would draw if he or she was told to draw the same action.

exaggerate the body's angle



puffs of smoke suggest speed

Experiment with your stick people. Make them do all kinds of different types of actions, and then construct your cartoons around them.



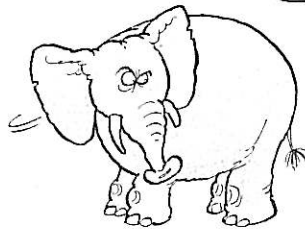
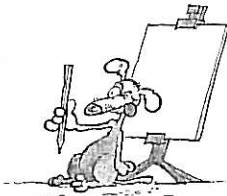
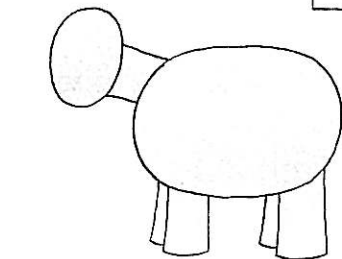
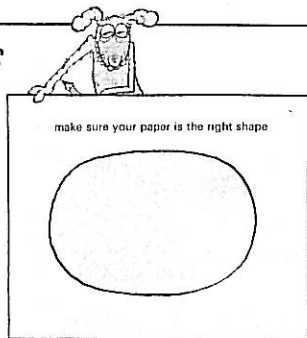
HOW TO DRAW ANIMALS

The method for drawing animals is exactly the same as the one used for drawing the human figure. Taking into account the obvious differences in the various animals that we all know, you can use this method to draw almost any animal.

As with the human figure, start with the body.

Then add the head, neck, and legs.

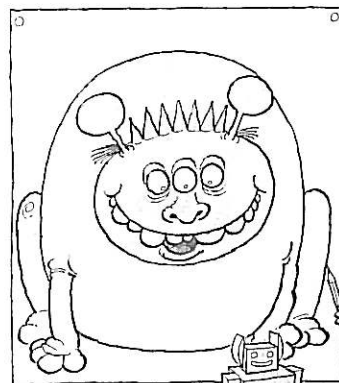
If the animal has a tail or a trunk, now is the time to put them in.



You can use the methods we have already talked about to change their expression; after all, most animals do have two eyes, a nose, and a mouth.



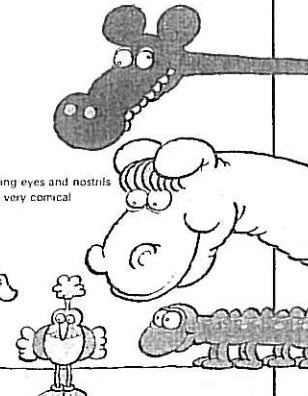
Do not be put off by being faced with having to draw an animal. As with the people you've already drawn, once you have the basic shape of your creature, you can then help yourself by looking in a book at a photograph of the creature you are drawing.



bulging eyes and nostrils look very comical

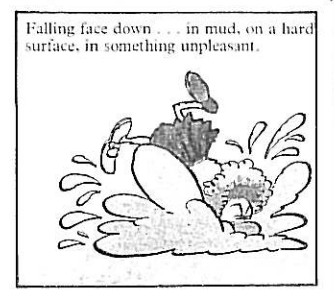
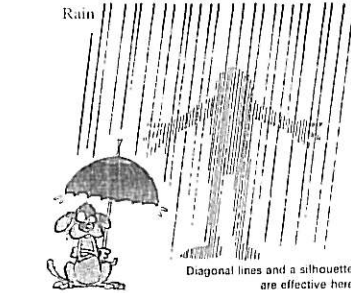
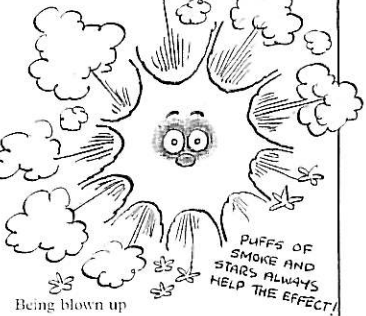
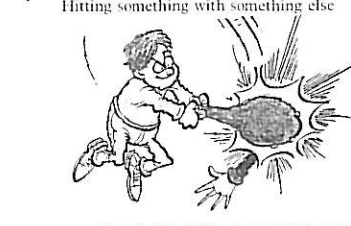
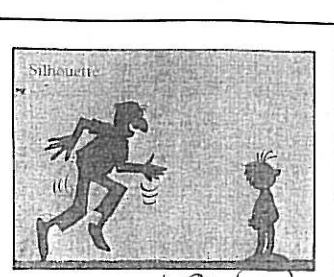
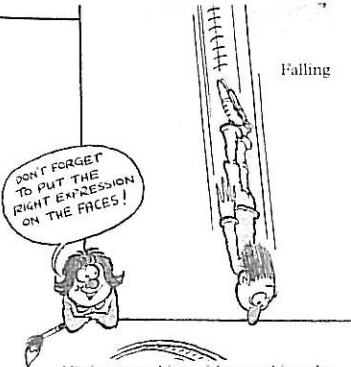
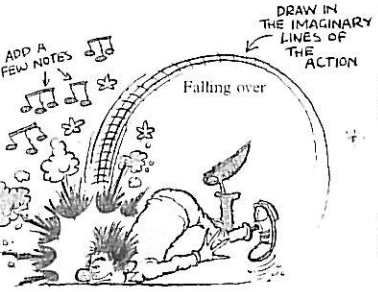
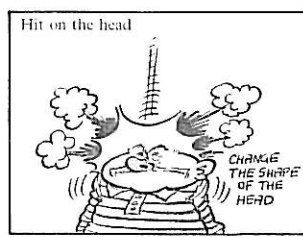
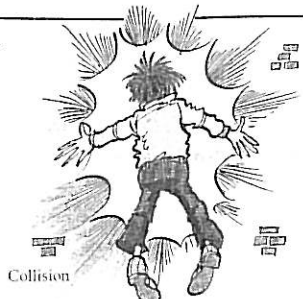
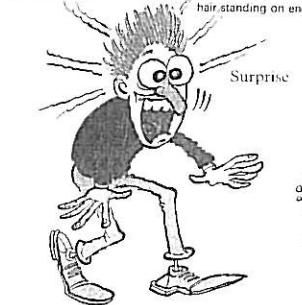
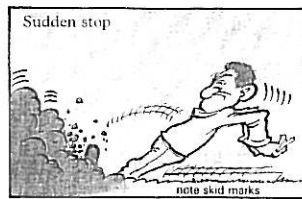
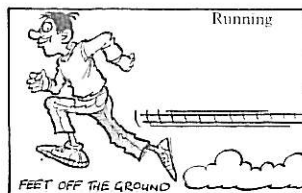
BLEEP! DOINK!

You can even make up some weird-looking animals of your own.



CRASH! BANG! WALLOP!

Although your cartoon is beginning to take shape, it still needs more action to bring it to life. There are various 'tricks of the trade' to achieve this.



HAND LETTERING

Lettering by hand is an art in itself. In your library, you will find whole books on just this subject. Here are a few easy ways to include lettering in your cartoon.

CAPTION LETTERING

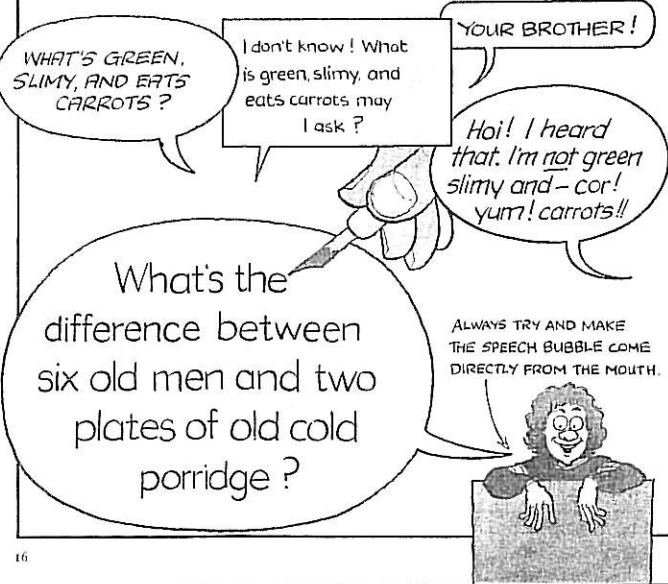
Look at any strip cartoon in a comic. You will notice that all the lettering in the balloons is very easy to read. Even if it looks as though it has been lettered by hand, these days, much of it is done by computer. Also 'instant' lettering is available from many shops. Many cartoonists prefer to letter their own work, however.

There are no rules about what kind of type you should use. You can make it all

capitals, or you can use capitals and small letters. You can make it roman (upright) or italic (sloping).

ITALIC Roman CAPITALS

Provided your lettering is very clear, you can decide for yourself. Always rule in guidelines in pencil first. Now, still using a pencil, write out the caption to see how it will fit in the space available. When you are happy with the look of it, finish it off in ink or in fine felt-tipped pen.



ALWAYS TRY AND MAKE THE SPEECH BUBBLE COME DIRECTLY FROM THE MOUTH.

SOUND LETTERING

The other kind of lettering that is used in cartoons is what I have called 'sound lettering'. This lettering simply adds to the effect that you are trying to draw. You

can draw the lettering in any way you want, provided you can read it clearly and that it conveys the word or action that you are describing.

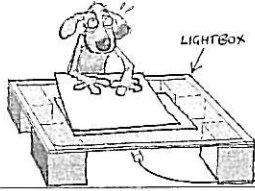


ANIMATION

Animation is quite different from drawing 'cartoon illustrations'. Animated cartoons are very expensive and take a great many experienced people a lot of time to produce.

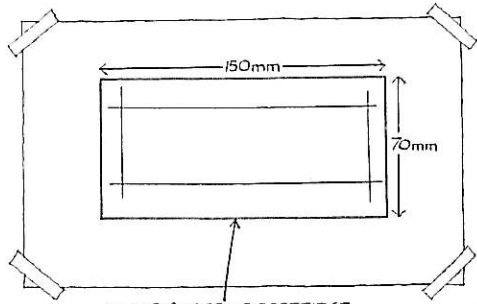


There is a way that you can make your own 'moving' pictures that isn't expensive at all. And, with the help of your friends, you can have lots of fun. You can certainly make a moving picture on your own, but it is quicker if there is another pair of hands to help. The process is very easy, but you must do it in the right order. You will need your light box, cartridge or quite stiff paper, and a felt-tipped pen.



1.

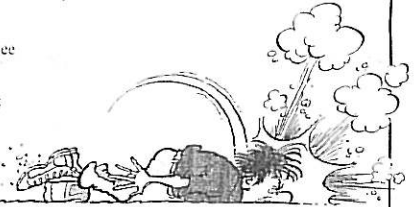
Draw a rectangle in the middle of a sheet of paper and tape it to the top of the light box. Draw a grid.



CUT 25 PIECES OF CARTRIDGE TO THE SIZE OF THIS GRID

2.

The action. At first, choose a very simple action. Then, once you can see how it works, you can make more complicated pictures. Perhaps you could decide to show a man walking along and then falling over a brick.



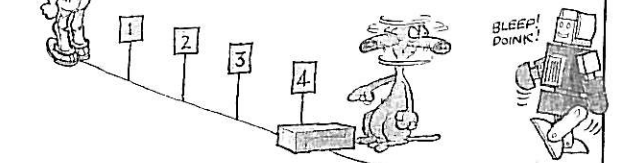
3.

Plan your sequence of actions. For example, how many steps should the man take before he reaches the brick? How will he move when he falls over the brick and then lands on the ground?



4.

You have decided that the man takes four steps up to the brick. So you must animate one step and then repeat it three more times.

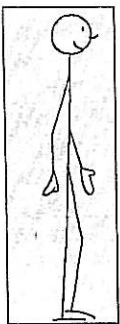


ANIMATION 2

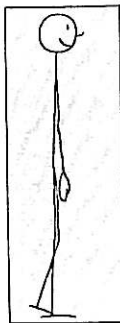
5.

Now, break the one step by deciding how many movements will go into each step. The general rule is that, if you put in more steps, the movement

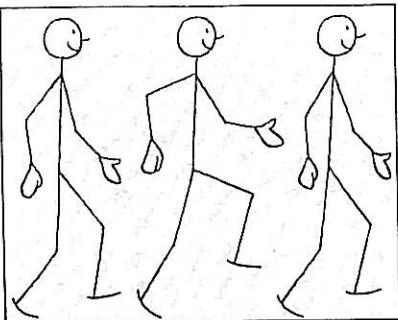
will be slow, less steps and the movement will be quick. Decide that the man is moving quickly, and put in five steps. Draw the first movement, the last movement, and then the three between. Repeat this series of drawings three times for the three steps.



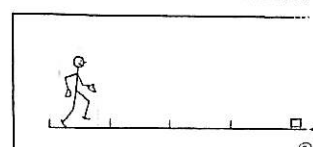
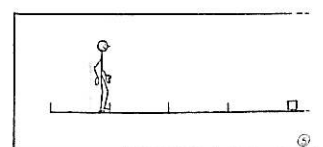
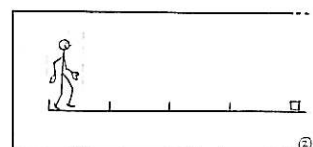
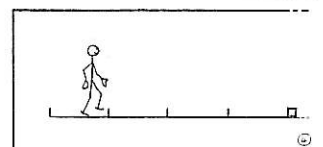
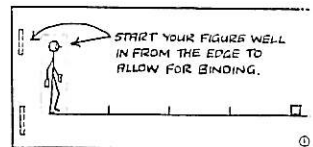
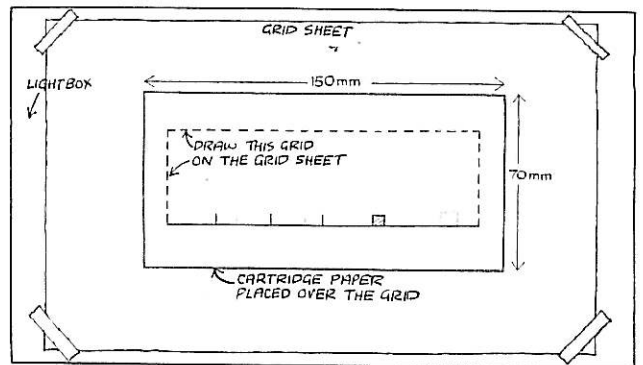
FIRST MOVE



LAST MOVE



YOU CAN PUT IN MORE STEPS IF YOU THINK THE MOVEMENT WILL BE SMOOTHER.



ADD A NUMBER TO EACH SHEET. YOUR DRAWINGS MUST BE IN THE CORRECT ORDER.

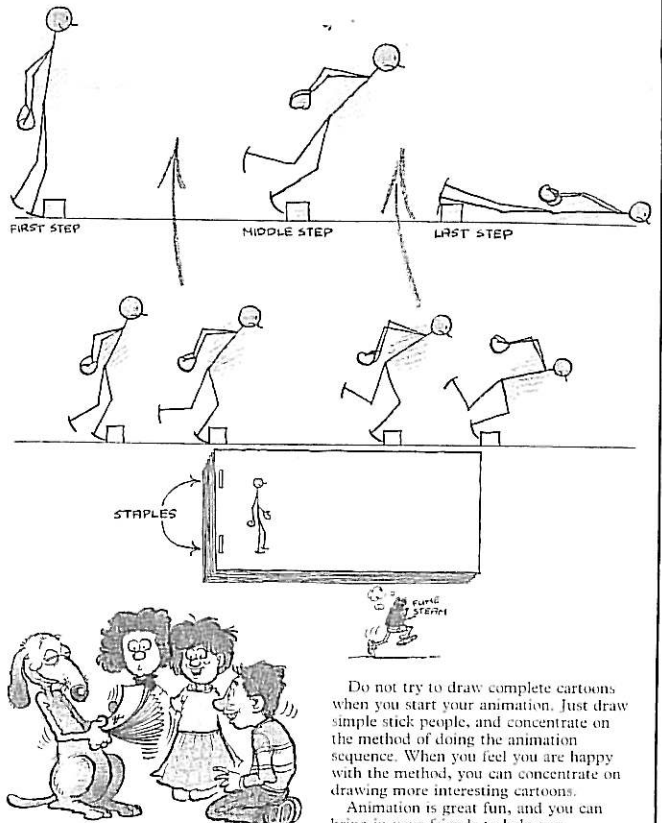
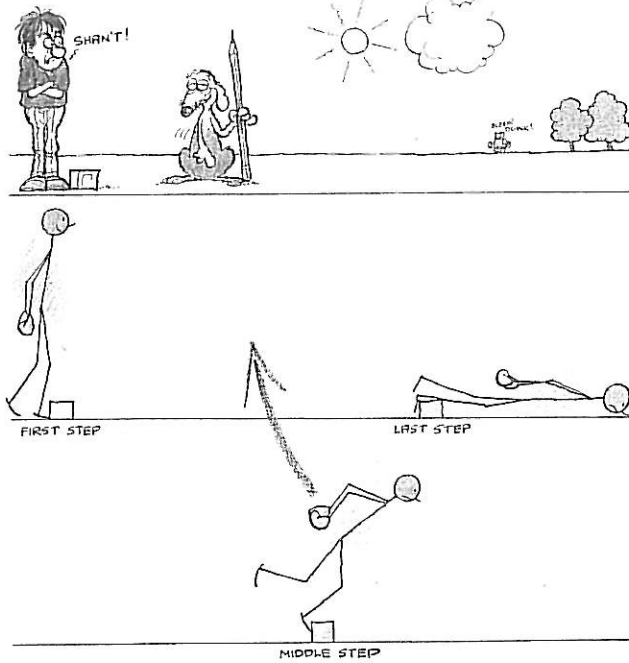
So that the action flows smoothly, take care to place each drawing exactly over the one before. If it helps, draw two parallel lines, and then place your figure between these lines.

ANIMATION 3

6.

It is a little more complicated to make your man fall over the brick and land on the ground. Draw the first action.

and then put in the last action. Now, divide the sequence still further, and draw what you think the figure will look like in the middle of the fall. That done, you can add one or two more stages before and after this central action. That's the job completed.



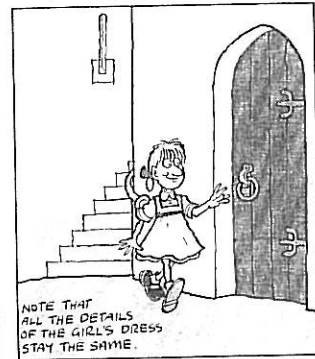
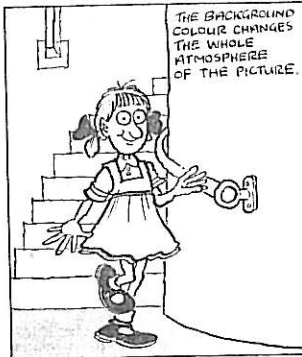
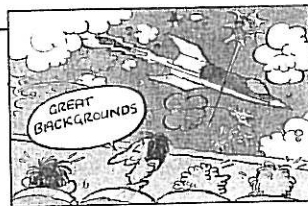
Do not try to draw complete cartoons when you start your animation. Just draw simple stick people, and concentrate on the method of doing the animation sequence. When you feel you are happy with the method, you can concentrate on drawing more interesting cartoons. Animation is great fun, and you can bring in your friends to help you.

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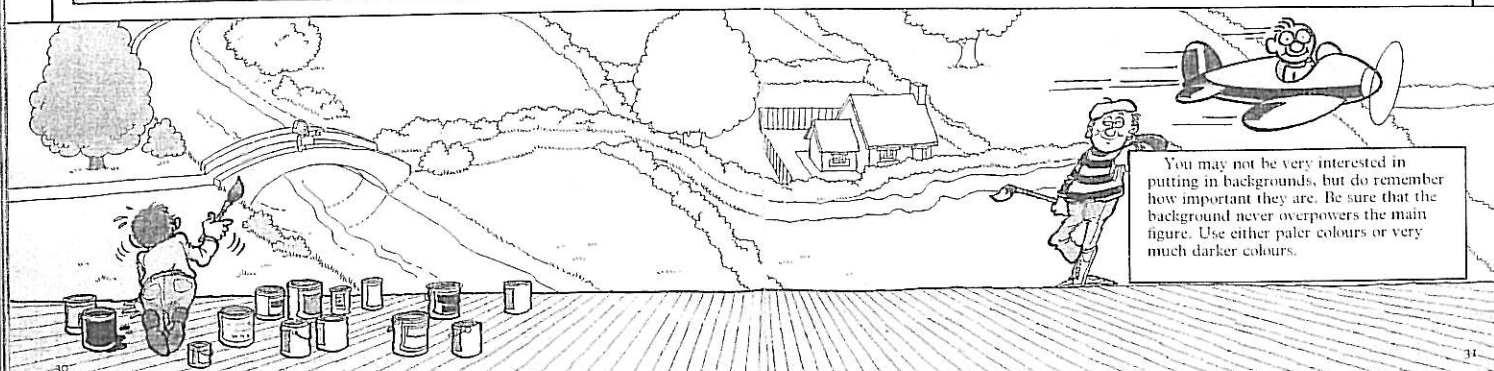
BACKGROUNDS

Backgrounds in cartoons, especially in cartoon films, are art forms in themselves. They can create a lot of atmosphere. If you look at the background to the next cartoon film that you see, you will notice that great skill and care have been put into it to create just the desired effect.



The background to a cartoon is just as important as the central figure, so do not disregard it. If you are going to do a number of drawings involving a character moving around against the same background, make certain that the detail

of the background is identical from picture to picture. If you change the angle, then the background will change, but the detail will stay the same, seen from a different angle, so that the central character is always clearly visible.



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