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8 Steps to Draw Manga Properly by Amuro Reyes

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Let me ask you a question. Are you a big fan of manga or Japanese animation? If so, have you fulfiled what you plan to do or still struggling to come up with your own drawings. If so, you are not alone as that was me as well when I first started out 22 years ago. With that said, here are my 8 steps to draw manga properly.

1. A4 Size White Paper

Firstly, get an A4 size white paper. They are easy to get in bookstores and manga bookshops. You can either get a drawing block which if you can remember drawing as a kid during school days or pieces of paper packaged together.

Although Japanese started out drawing on card boards, you do not need to start that way since paper is available in abundance. I suggest having at least 4-5 drawing blocks of A4 size white paper.

2. Markers, Pencils, Poster Colors And Rulers

This are the other set of essential tools you need to have.

For markers, I recommend Pilot Drawing Pens with the tip thickness of about 0.2mm. Though there are other markers, this is what I used frequently as they are always available and hence easier to obtain from my local bookstores be it in towns or cities.

But do not draw with markers rightaway. Instead trace them after you have done pencil sketches.

For pencils, I highly recommend merchanical ones. Though they cost more with separate supplies of pencil leads, they are well worth the price as conventional pencils and sharpeners may not always complement each other in creating quality drawings.

To add color to your drawings, get both colored pencils and poster colors if you have to with filler trays, thin and thick brushes.

For rulers, get both short and long ones. The short is for drawing smaller objects like swords, rifles, knives, guitars, guns and boxes while the long is for designing ships, robots, cars and battlecruisers.

3. DVD, Comic And Magazines

Although those costs money, they are still the essential tools you need to create a great story with great drawings.

Unless you are a creative storyteller and artiste by nature, you need an abundant collection of manga dvds, comics and magazines for both inspiration and creating a mental mindmap in remembering the manga characters' most common features, expressions and characteristics.

Such as their big eyes, colourful hair, different forms and moods etc.

4. Create Your Story

Begin by writing your story.

I do not know about you but I usually get a collection of ideas after watching numerous manga shows and reading comics. Such as Mobile Suit Gundam, Macross, Robotech. I started off with 1 article but as my ideas expanded, I created more articles which ultimately formed into a booklet and then a book with each article as its chapter.

At this point, do not think of drawing just yet. Just think of how to write your story and make it better from there.

5. Sketch All Characters On Each Page

Once you have your story in place, try sketching all your story characters on each separate page.

At the same time refer back to your comics and graphic magazines for reference and remembering better without copying. The first page should be the character standing and in normal mode while the next should be their variety of different expressions based on their moods.

Begin by drawing basic shapes like circles and oval shapes for their heads and bodies before further adding hair, faces and clothes they wear. This should be for humans and animals.

For weapons and machines, use squares, rectangles and triangles as starting points.

Doing all these will take about 1-2 weeks to finetune everything based on experience and depending on number of characters you have in your story.

6. Scan And Photocopying All Your Drawings

To avoid your drawings from getting lost or spoilt, make multiple scans and photocopies of all your drawings through your PC and printed paper so that you do not have to draw everything from scratch and save a lot of time as well.

7. Trace And Color Your Drawings

Doing both of these will take about 3-4 weeks as you not only have to trace over pencil sketches but color your drawings with different tones of light and shadow.

8. Binding

Once you are done with everything, bind all your works

Relax for a day. Then go back to your works and see if there are improvements needed to be made.

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Amuro Reyes - About Author:
If doing all these still does not give you what you expect or want in drawings, feel free to check out my site on a How To Draw Manga Faces.

If you find doing all these takes a lot of time, you might consider automate the entire process quickly and easily with a Manga Studio software tools.

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