



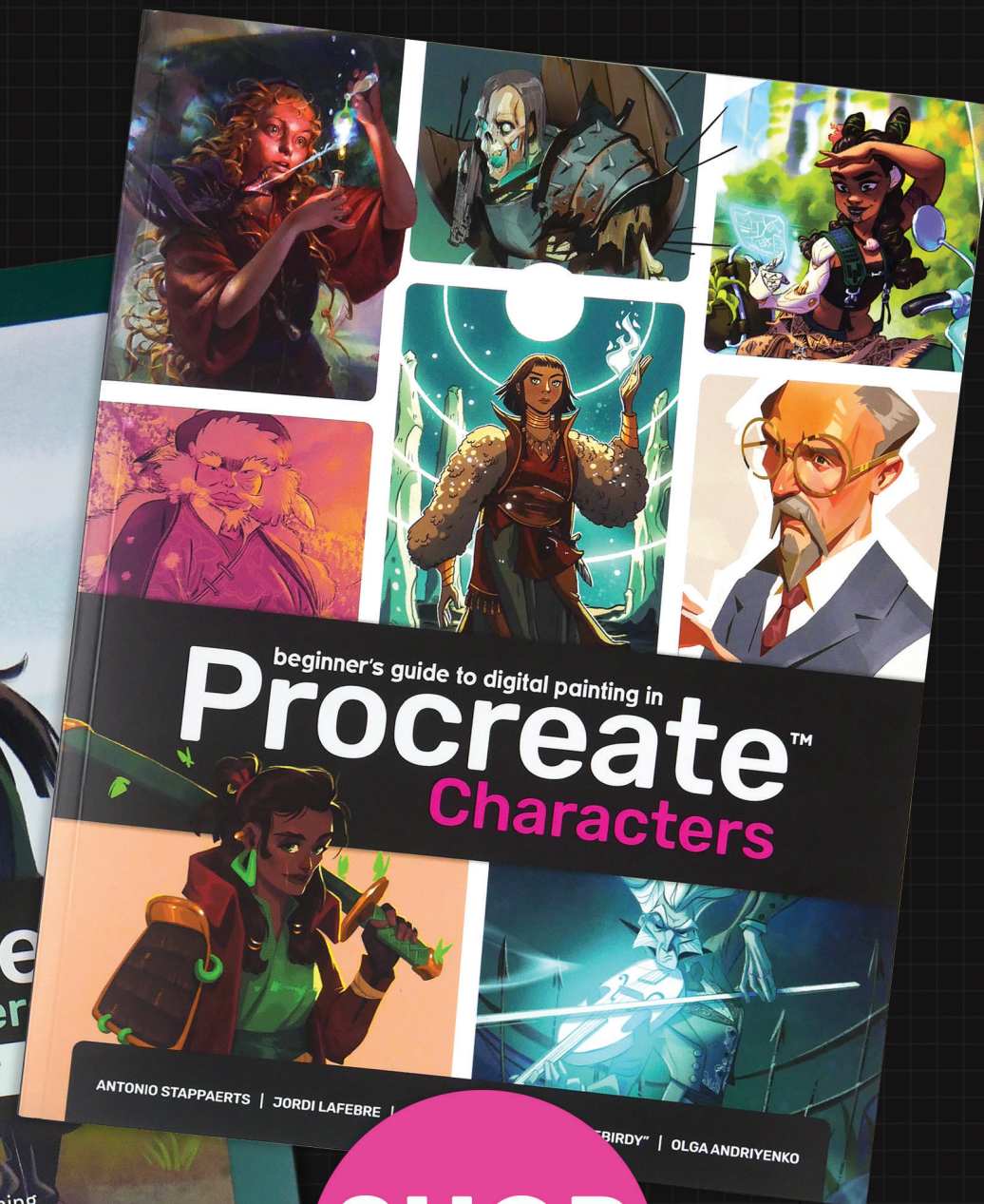
FREE CHAPTER 04

beginner's guide to  
**sketching:**  
characters, creatures & concepts



beginner's guide to digital painting in

# Procreate<sup>™</sup> Characters



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# Creating a friendly witch

Learn the steps for designing a character and creating a complete drawing based on these design elements.

By Rovina Cai

The project brief (a short description given by the client) calls for a small, vulnerable character to contrast with a large brute-type creature. After making a list of possible ideas I've decided on a friendly witch character.

Through a series of steps I will take a look at the key elements that make up the character, showing you the design process behind them and then explaining how to build up the design into a complete sketch. Along the way I will share tips and advice on drawing techniques and how to make the most out of your materials.

## TOOLS

- Pencils (H and 2B)
- Paper (including tracing paper)
- Eraser

*Adding small details such as stray strands of hair and leaves on the branches helps to enhance the believability of what I am drawing.*

*The head is the focal point of the drawing, so this is the area that has the most contrast in terms of light and dark shades.*

*I like to draw sweeping, expressive lines to indicate a sense of movement; they also help to loosen up a drawing.*

*Props and accessories help to add a sense of narrative to the character. When the viewer looks at these elements, they immediately begin to wonder what the story is about.*





# Design the head and face

Shapes help to convey tone and emotion, for example sharp, pointy shapes say "danger", while round shapes are seen as more approachable. Our witch is a friendly character, so her face is round and cheerful. As you progress through the following steps, you'll notice that all the shapes in the design of this character will be soft, organic shapes to help convey to the viewer that this is a friendly and vulnerable character.

During this exploratory stage, I constantly think about shape and how to exaggerate certain elements to create an interesting design.



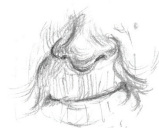
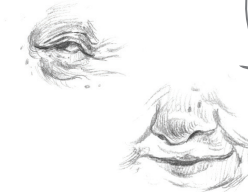
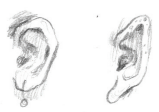
I explore options for the face by starting out with simple shapes and filling them with different facial features.



Using tracing paper allows me to try out different designs for the hair without having to repeatedly draw the face. (Blue lines indicate the drawing I used as a "base" underneath the tracing paper.)

I create a few studies of facial features by looking at photographs. I won't be copying the exact photo in the final drawing, but it's important to study from life to inform design choices and make the drawing believable.

I make sketches as a way to study shapes and forms. Here I am studying the nose and the way that it connects to the mouth. This area of the face is closely linked to the expression of the character.





## 01 Transferring the drawing

For the final drawing, I use 11" x 14" Bristol board. It's a heavy-weight paper with a subtle texture. The paper is an off-white color, which adds some warmth to the finished drawing. I begin by transferring the main reference sketch onto the paper; this is done by tracing the sketch using a lightbox (see page 104). If you don't have access to a lightbox you can use a well-lit window. When I trace, I capture "landmarks", which are the large shapes and important elements within the drawing. I also fill in some of the shadow areas of the hair so that all the interweaving lines don't become confusing. With organic shapes like the hair, my lines can deviate from the sketch a little because it's easy to improvise these areas.

## 02 Shading in the shadow areas

Now that my drawing is transferred, I begin shading. I use a 2B pencil as my main tool, switching to H for lighter tones and delicate details. I always start by shading the darkest part first; in this case, it is the hair.

In this first part of the shading process I stick to the large shapes that I established when tracing and fill in the shadows to create form. It is important to think of the hair not as individual strands, but grouped together in larger blocks, like ribbons.

## 03 Adding details to the hair

Once the shadows are down, I begin adding in details. This is when I can start breaking up the shapes and making them more realistic and organic. Using quick, loose strokes with my pencil, I shade over the ribbon-like shapes that were created in the last step. I continue to focus on shading in the shadows, leaving the lighter areas unshaded to create highlights.

Part of the hair next to the neck and face is in shadow, so I use larger pencil strokes to fill in that entire area. The contrast is much more toned down in this shadow area; there are no highlights, but individual strands can still be distinguished as some shadows are darker than others.



*When tracing, use simple lines to capture the large shapes and significant elements of the drawing.*



*Think of hair not as individual strands but more like a bunch of ribbons grouped together.*



*Use quick, loose pencil strokes to create details in the hair.*



## 04 Shading in the face

I now start working on the face by shading in the shadow areas. The face is a crucial element in the drawing and requires a delicate touch. I use an H pencil for this area so that I can add subtle details without going too dark. I focus on the eyes and capturing the larger forms in the face, such as the nose and the way the wrinkles form around the mouth. I also lightly shade over the entire face in vertical strokes to tone down the contrast between light and dark.

## 05 Adding details to the face

I shade in the nose and cheeks more and use an eraser to pull out some highlights on these forms. I use a Tombow Mono Zero eraser, which has a very thin point like a pencil.

I am now ready to add small details such as wrinkles and adjust certain elements so that the expression is just right. A small adjustment in the curve of the lip or the tilt of the eye can change the expression significantly, so I use a very sharp pencil to carefully tweak these as needed. As I draw, I look back at my reference sketches to make sure I am not straying too far from my original design.

### Mirror, mirror

After working on a drawing for a while, it's easy to lose track of how it is progressing. To see my drawing from a fresh perspective, I use a mirror to look at its reflection. This is a great way to spot any mistakes I may have made and is especially useful when drawing a face or other elements that require symmetry.



04

*The face requires a delicate touch; use an H pencil to add subtle details without going too dark.*



05

*A small adjustment in the curve of the lip or the tilt of the eye can alter the expression significantly.*



# Choose a pose

In addition to the use of contrast, the lines created by the design of the costume can also be used to lead the viewer's eye to areas you would like to draw attention to. In this case, the lines within the costume all run towards the character's face.

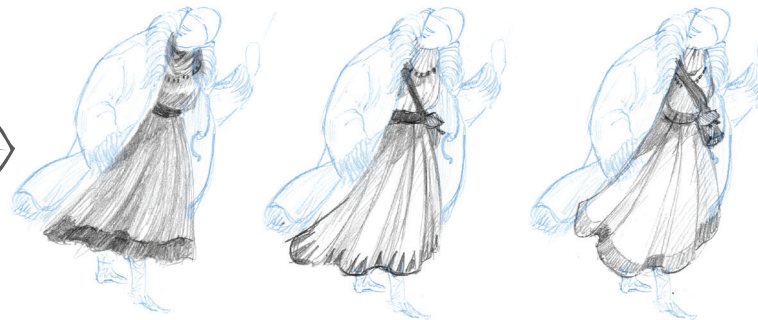
I choose to have the witch in a hunched pose as it shows frailty and vulnerability.

I begin with a general idea for the pose, and start exploring a few different designs for the clothing.



Once I create a pose and design I like, I start sketching variations of it to build on the initial idea, for example varying the shape slightly or changing the material and pattern of the coat.

I always think about the story behind the character and how that influences the design. Here I come up with the idea that the witch could be a traveler or wanderer, attaching to her coat little trinkets that she would collect during her travels.



I use tracing paper to sketch out the dress on top of a previous design for the coat (indicated in blue).

I also design details such as the pattern of the dress and the character's accessories.





## Thumbnails

Before designing specific elements of a drawing, it helps to do some small thumbnails focusing on shape.

The outline or silhouette of a character is the first thing that a viewer will see, so starting out with a strong shape is important. I use a marker or pencil to draw abstract shapes and once I find one I like, I can then enlarge the shape, fill it in with details, and start designing the individual elements.



## 01 Transferring the costume

As in the previous exercise, I first transfer the sketch onto the paper by tracing it. I usually transfer the whole drawing onto the paper in one go. When transferring the costume, I mark in where all the accessories and props would go and indicate the pattern on the dress. Like I did with the hair, I lightly shade in some areas of the fur collar as I trace in order to indicate where the shadows will be. On the coat I also mark the direction that my pencil strokes will follow when I start shading.

## 02 Initial shading and contrast

I begin shading in the shadow areas using an H pencil so that I don't get too dark too quickly. As mentioned, areas with the most contrast in a drawing will stand out so this is where the viewers' eye will go first. I want the focal area to be the head of the character and the collar provides a nice "frame" for this. I make the shadows on the collar very dark, while the lighter areas have almost no shading; the upper body area now has a lot of contrast.



01

*I indicate important elements such as the accessories and the pattern of the dress.*

*The collar provides a "frame" for the face, so I can create a lot of contrast in this area.*



02



### 03 Detailing the trinkets

I am now ready to draw in the little trinkets attached to the inside of the coat. Since each individual object is so small on the page, they don't have to be very detailed. Too much contrast and detail could take the attention away from our focal area (the face), so I use a light touch to indicate the shadows and hint at outlines on these objects. I also shade in the inside of the coat, again following the contour of the form.

### 04 Shading in the coat

I shade in the rest of the coat, following the direction of the lines I indicated while tracing. Again, I make sure my lines follow the contour of the form, for example the shading lines on the arm are curved as if wrapping around the arm. This creates form and suggests a bulky look to the coat which is appropriate for the design. I want the shading on the coat to be quite loose, so I use quick pencil strokes to achieve an expressive quality for the shading. As I shade, I add both texture and form to the drawing.

### 05 Shading in the dress and accessories

I finish off the costume by shading in the dress and accessories. In order to create contrast and visual interest, the dress will be the lightest of all the elements in the character's design. With this in mind, I lightly shade in the shadow areas of the dress and add detail to the accessories. Accessories such as the belt are mostly in shadow, so I am careful not to have too much contrast in these areas. I also add in some sweeping lines that go across the whole dress, to unify the entire area and to create a sense of movement.



*Be careful not to go too dark. Too much contrast and detail could take the attention away from the focal area of the face.*

*Sweeping lines help to unify an area and create a sense of movement.*

03



04

*The lines of the shading should follow the contour of the form.*



05

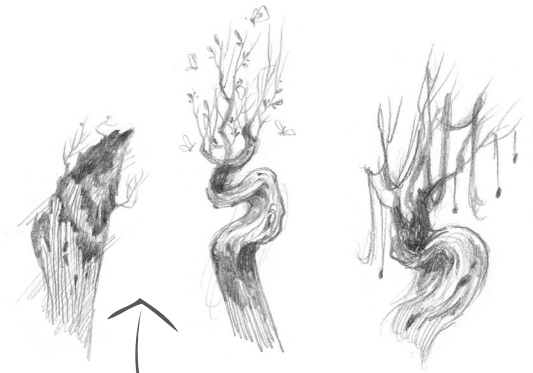


# Working with props

As I sketch, a narrative starts to form around the character. Props are a great way to convey the story. I give the witch a walking stick, which could also be a magical staff or broomstick, depending on how the story develops as we progress through the subsequent steps of the tutorial.

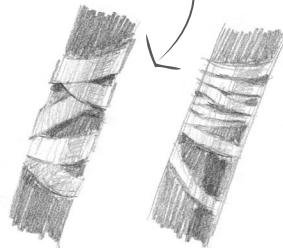


I try out a few different shapes for the walking stick and think about the materials and textures that could be depicted.

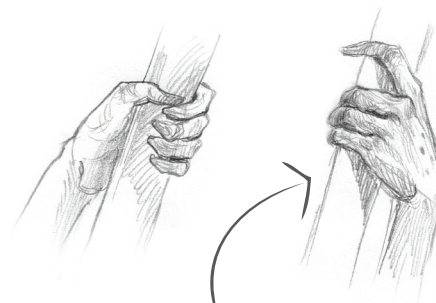


The top of the walking stick is an opportunity to create some interesting designs, so here I explore various ideas that could also help with the narrative of the character.

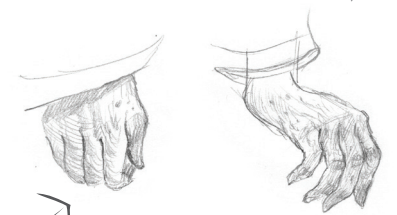
I sketch out some ideas for a ribbon tied around the walking stick; little details such as these help to make the final design more believable and interesting to look at.



In addition to brainstorming design elements, I also draw a few nature studies to learn about different textures that can be observed in trees in real life.



Hands are often hard to draw, so I use my own hands as a reference for the pose and position of the hands on the character.





## 01 Transferring the hands and walking stick

As I trace in outlines from my sketch, I focus on capturing the shape of the hands as accurately as possible. For some of the organic shapes, it is okay to deviate from the lines because accuracy is not important; however, getting the hands right relies on having the correct angle for all the lines and the right distance between all the elements, such as the knuckles and joints.

The walking stick is much easier – the shape of a tree branch can easily be improvised – but I still mark in the basic shapes and indicate where the branch twists and turns.

## 02 Shading and detailing the hands

Because the hands are a relatively small part of the drawing, they do not have to be very detailed. I shade in the shadows to create form and add some imperfections to the skin, such as liver spots. Though the hands of our character would have a lot of wrinkles and veins, they would be hard to see at this scale, so the loose pencil strokes of the shading also serve to suggest those details.

## 03 Shading the walking stick

I create some initial shading on the walking stick, indicating where the shadows will go and the way the branch curves. It's fun to play with these organic shapes and come up with different textures for the bark. The stick will have more detail at the top, where it is closer to the focal point of the witch's head.



*It is important to transfer the lines of the hands as accurately as possible.*

*Initial shading on the walking stick to indicate where the shadows are.*



*As the hands are a relatively small part of the drawing, they do not have to be very detailed.*





## 04 Adding texture to the walking stick

Once the basic shading is done, I begin to add details to the walking stick. I focus on the texture of the bark and constantly refer back to my exploratory sketches for inspiration and reference. I add enough detail to make the object interesting, but keep in mind that this is not the focal area of the drawing. I therefore make sure the shading is not too dark. I use an eraser like I would a pencil, with small, quick strokes to pull out highlights and intricate textures.

## 05 The smaller details

The top of the walking stick is the area with the most detail. Here I have designed the stick to expand out into small branches with butterflies flying around them. I use an H pencil in this area in order to create the delicate branches and leaves. I also add in some expressive lines around the walking stick itself to loosen up the drawing.

### *Simplify with shapes*

To draw complex objects such as hands, it is helpful to start out with basic shapes and build the drawing on top of that. It's like drawing the skeleton underneath before adding the form.

For hands, I draw a triangular base for the palm, then add in circles for knuckles and joints, then lines for the fingers.

I look at a reference photo or my own hands to map out the shapes before putting them down on paper.



04

*I have designed the stick to expand out into small branches with butterflies flying around them.*



05

*When working on the surface of the bark, you can use an eraser to pull out highlights and create textures.*



# Animal companions

I add some animals to go along with the character, making sure that they are to scale and placed so that they look like they are interacting with the character. A good way to determine scale is to compare the object you are measuring against the head or hands of the character; for example I know the raven should be about the same height as the witch's head.



These animals could be the witch's pets or animals that have followed her along her journey. They interact with the character and help to create a little scene or story around her.

Even though the focus is on the design of the character, adding in extra elements can help with the narrative, so that as soon as the viewer looks at the character, stories start to form about who they are and what they do.

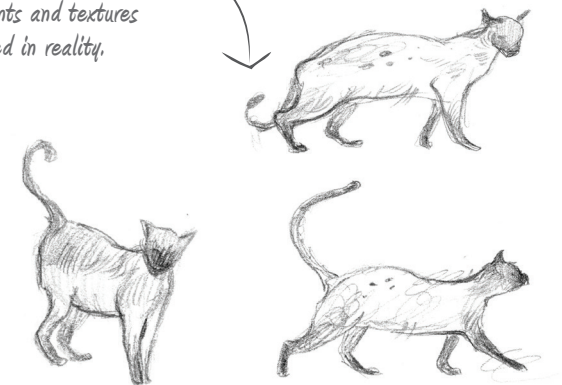


I start out sketching with a raven and cat in mind, but as I draw, I change the shape and anatomy of the animals and add in extra elements and textures not observed in reality.

Since these animals are there to enhance and support the character, their individual design shouldn't be too over the top, otherwise they will pull the attention away from the character.



A big part of design is taking inspiration from real-life elements and adding in something imaginative to create something new. This gives your design a sense of authenticity, while still being original and interesting.





## 01 Transferring the basic shapes

When transferring the sketches, I focus on their outside shape but also indicate where important anatomical elements would fall, such as the wing on the bird. Later, I will require a very sharp pencil for fine details. I sharpen my pencils with a utility knife and use fine sandpaper to sharpen the point (use with caution – see page 13).

## 02 Shading in the animals

I use an H pencil to shade in, focusing on building up the form and creating the texture of the feathers on the crow and fur on the cat.

## 03 Adding details to the raven

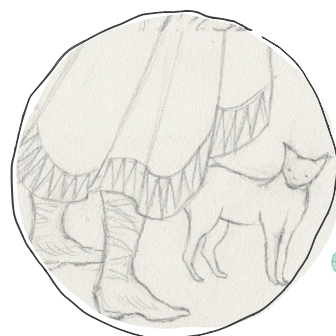
Since the raven is close to the character's head and it will be an important part of the narrative, I can add more details and shading to it than the cat. Using a B pencil with a very sharp point, I use small pencil strokes that hint at feathers. As I draw, I look back at my reference sketches and add in design elements, such as the feathers sticking out the top of the raven's head.

## 04 Adding details to the cat

The cat is a secondary element, so I don't want to draw too much attention to it. I use an eraser to pull back the traced outline. I then shade in some of the darker tones and add small spots to fill the area on the back. The witch's face and hands also have spots, so it is a good way to link these two together. I'm always looking for ways to visually link different elements within a design.

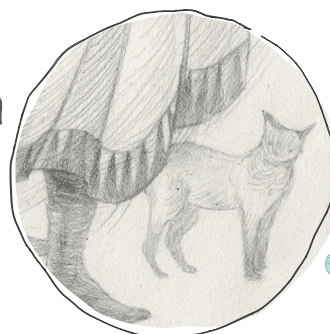
## 05 Finishing touches

I use an H pencil to make sweeping strokes around some of the edges. This loosens up the lines, giving the drawing an expressive quality. I also cover all the shadow areas with one final layer of shading, so that the tones look more unified and smooth and there are no unintentional highlights jumping out of the darker areas. Finally, I add in a hint of a cast shadow at the character's feet, which gives the figure a sense of weight.



*The focus is on the outside shape of the animals.*

01



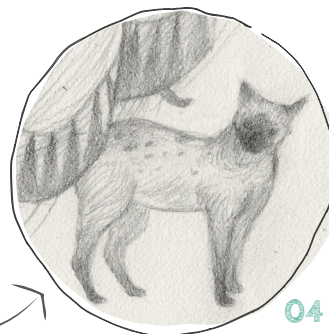
*Use an H pencil to shade in the shadow areas, building form and texture.*

02



*The raven is being engaged by the character and is part of the focal point, so I can add more details to it than I would with the cat.*

03



*I add some small spots to the cat; these spots can also be seen on the witch. This is an effective way of visually linking the two elements in the drawing.*

04



05

*As a last step, I add some finishing touches to enhance the overall appearance of the drawing.*



**Drawing with paintbrushes**

Use a paintbrush to brush away eraser residue without smudging your drawing. I use a large Chinese calligraphy brush, but any soft brush will work just as well. I also use a harder synthetic brush to blend graphite, making the shading smoother. Never blend graphite with your fingers, as it will smudge and make your shading an uneven blur.



# Creating a guardian beast

Learn how to design and draw a guardian beast inspired by creatures from mythology and real animals.

By Rovina Cai

In this part I will explore designing and drawing an imaginary creature that belongs in the same world as the witch character. I will explain the research and design thoughts behind the creature and provide further tips on drawing as I add in the finishing touches.

This part of the project brief calls for a large, brute-type creature. After brainstorming some ideas, I settle on creating a guardian beast inspired by mythological creatures such as the lamassu and sphinx. This provides interesting opportunities for narrative. For example the creature could be something that the friendly witch encounters on her travels, or could be guarding something she is trying to obtain. The story I am starting to build around these designs will help shape the next stage, where everything is combined into a scene.

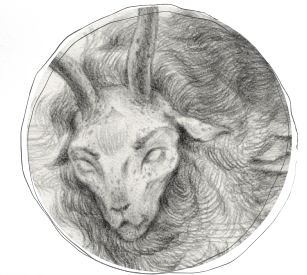
## TOOLS

- Pencils (H and 2B)
- Paper (including tracing paper)
- Eraser

As with the witch drawing, the head is the focal point of the creature design, so this area has the most contrast between light and dark, and also the most buildup in terms of shading.

Fur and various textures on the creature allow for playful and expressive marks throughout the drawing.

A sense of movement is achieved in the wings by using sweeping lines to create a softly shaded area similar to motion blur seen in a photograph.



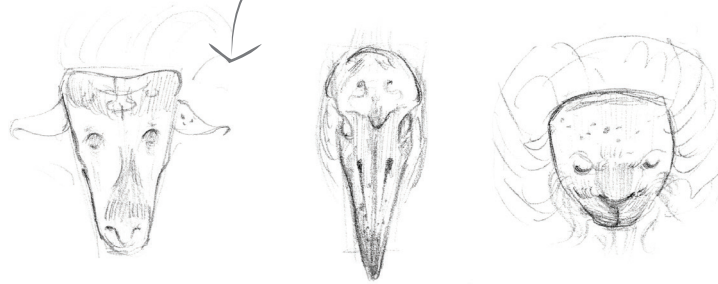
Designing the creature involves studying various elements, textures, and shapes from real animals and then "remixing" everything into something imaginative.



# Head, mane, and horns

Though I am designing a creature, it is still important that the face is able to convey emotion and narrative. I take inspiration from guardian creatures from mythology such as the sphinx. In these stories, the creature is often an intelligent, sentient being, and I want to bring that element into my own design.

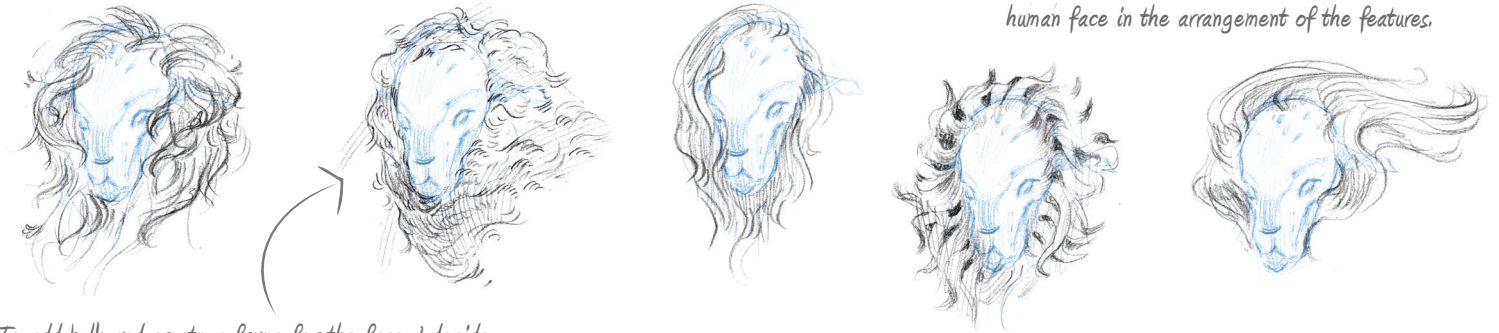
I begin by exploring different shapes for the head.



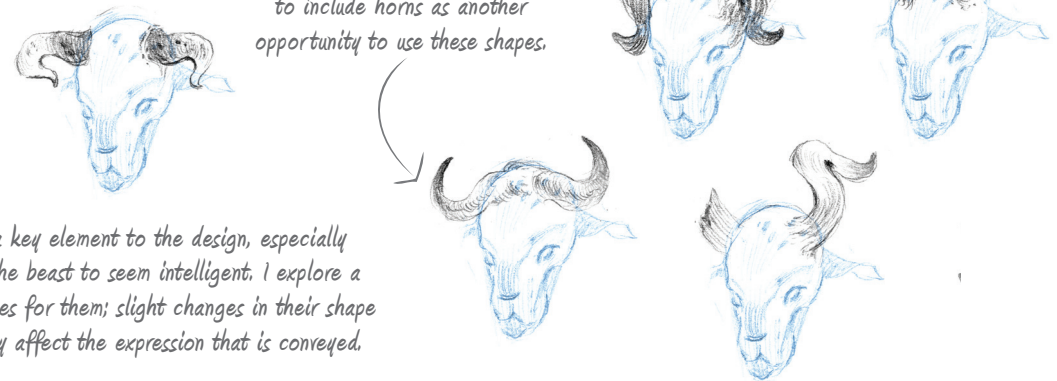
A good way to suggest the beast as an intelligent being is to introduce human-like elements into its design. My sketches of the creature's face are similar to a human face in the arrangement of the features.



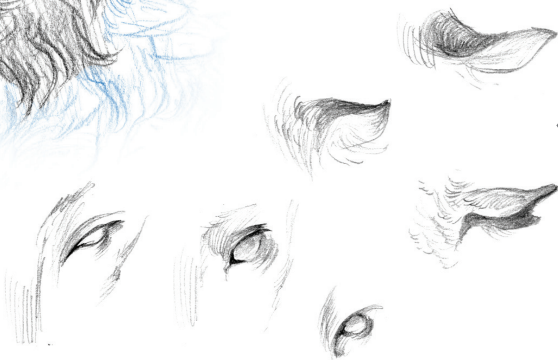
To add bulk and create a frame for the face, I decide to introduce a mane for the upper body area. This also echoes the design of the friendly witch's costume, and so helps to place these two designs in the same visual world.



I want there to be an emphasis on sharp, pointy shapes in my design for the creature, so I decide to include horns as another opportunity to use these shapes.



The eyes are a key element to the design, especially because I want the beast to seem intelligent. I explore a few different shapes for them; slight changes in their shape could dramatically affect the expression that is conveyed.





## 01 Transferring the drawing of the head

I use the same materials for this drawing as in the previous character stage. Following a similar process, I begin by transferring the main reference sketch onto the paper. When tracing the creature's head, I capture important landmarks and focus on the eyes and facial structure. For the mane, I mark in lines that will guide my pencil strokes later on, when I begin rendering the fur.

## 02 Shading in darker areas

Now that I'm ready to begin shading, I identify where the darkest parts of my drawing will be and start there. In this case, the horns and the mane will be the darkest, to contrast with the face which will be lighter and more delicate.

I use a B pencil and concentrate on shading in the shadow areas of the mane. I create small pencil strokes for the fur, following along the guiding lines I drew in while tracing the sketch. The marks I make here serve both as shading and also lines to indicate fur. There are a lot of opportunities to create expressive, playful strokes in this area.

## 03 Shading in the face

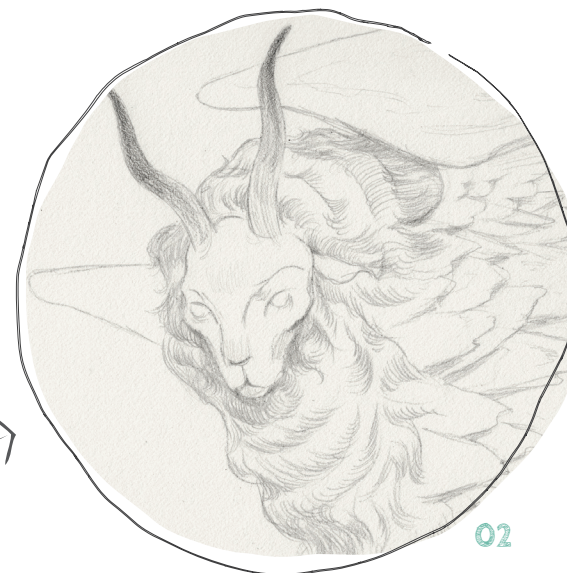
Once I have established some of the darker areas, I can work on the face. It's important not to go too dark when working on this area.

Since the face requires a delicate touch, I use an H pencil, shading in the shadow areas and creating form. I take care to leave some areas of the face unshaded, for example I want the eyes to really pop so I leave them almost entirely unshaded.

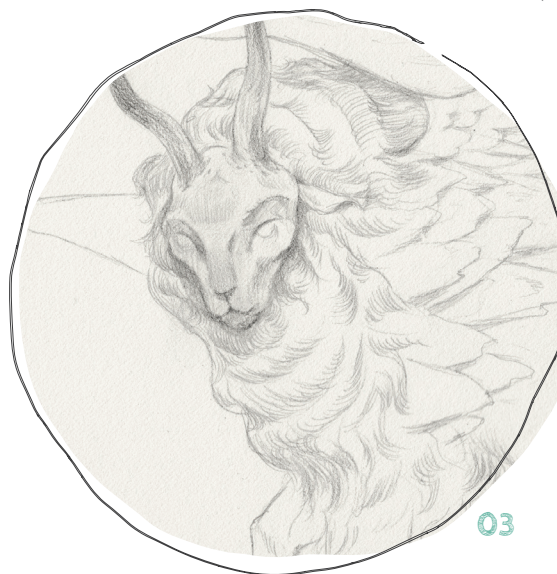
I regularly refer back to my reference sketches to make sure I do not stray too far from the original design.



*Try to capture important landmarks and shapes, and also mark in lines that will guide your pencil strokes later on.*



*When shading in the mane, there are a lot of opportunities to create expressive strokes.*



*Use an H pencil to shade in the shadow areas and create form, but take care to leave some lighter areas unshaded.*



## 04 Detailing the face

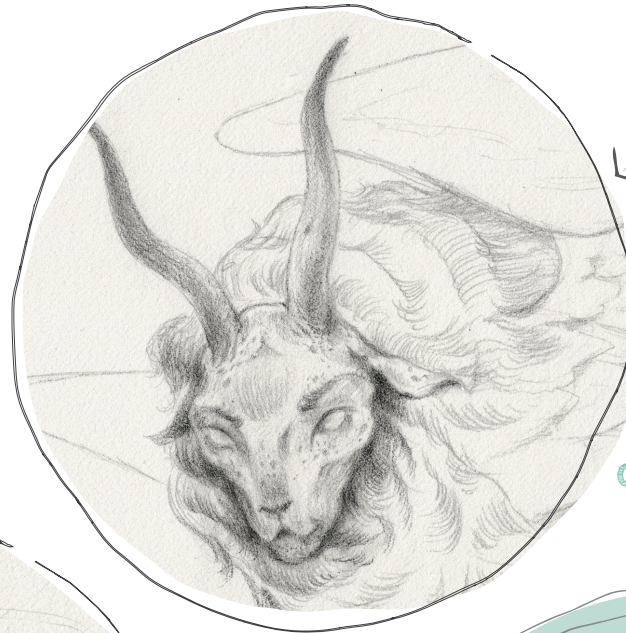
I continue to work on the face and darken the areas where the mane joins the edge of the face. This creates a bold contrast in tone, which brings the viewer's attention to the creature's head. As I mentioned during the design process, I want the creature to have some human characteristics in order to convey intelligence, so I look at photos of human faces for cues on where to shade; you'll notice that the creature has a cheekbone structure and eyebrows that are quite similar to a human.

## 05 Finishing the mane and horns

I go back and forth between different areas as I draw in order to make sure I create a balanced drawing that is not too dark. I start with the shadows in the mane and horns, and then move on to complete the face. When these elements are down, I am ready to finish off the head and surrounding area.

Following along the shading I've already created on the mane, I darken shadows where necessary and add in more pencil strokes to build up the form. I also add some details to the horns and focus on the area where the horns join the head.

*Go back and forth between different areas to make sure the drawing is balanced.*



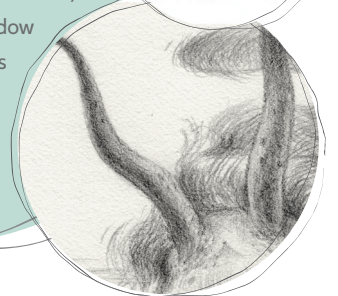
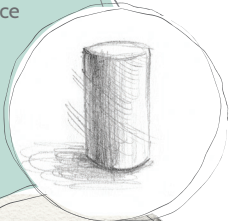
*Observe how the cheekbone structure and eyebrows are quite similar to a human, helping to convey a sense of intelligence.*



### Dynamic shadows

The shadows within a drawing shouldn't be "dead" or flat. If you look at the shadow area on a simple object, such as a ball or a vase, you'll notice that there are actually different shades or levels of darkness within it. There is a reflected light at the edge of the object, and the darkest part, known as the "core shadow", is actually in between the reflected light and the highlight (see pages 19–21).

Keep this in mind when shading in shadow areas, and observe lighting on objects in real life in order to apply it to your imaginative drawings.

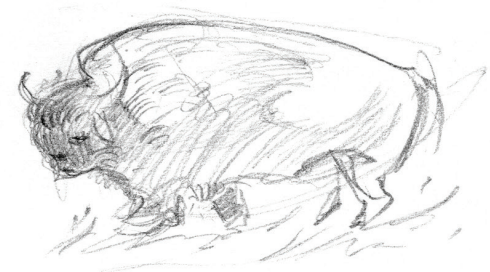
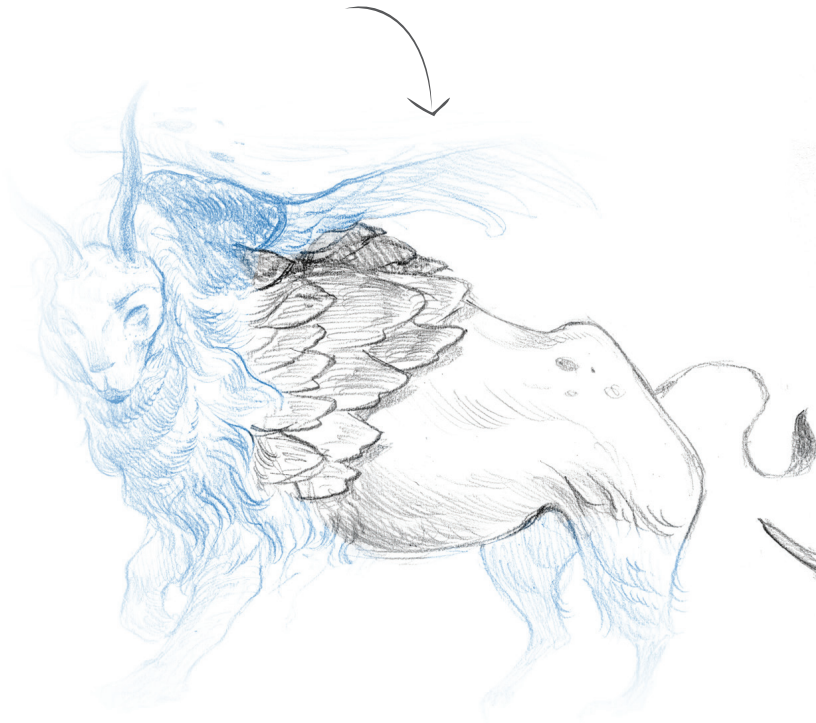




# Body and overall shape

On page 119 I mentioned the narrative potential of shapes. In the design of the witch, there are a lot of round shapes to portray a friendly and approachable character. The guardian beast will contrast with this, so here I will use a lot of pointy shapes to suggest a sense of possible danger and to add an aggressive element to the creature.

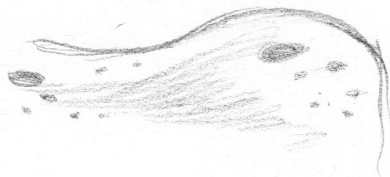
*I begin by sketching a few thumbnails to establish the silhouette or shape of the creature.*



*I create some gesture sketches to study existing animals with the silhouette that I have in mind, including buffalo and rhinoceroses.*



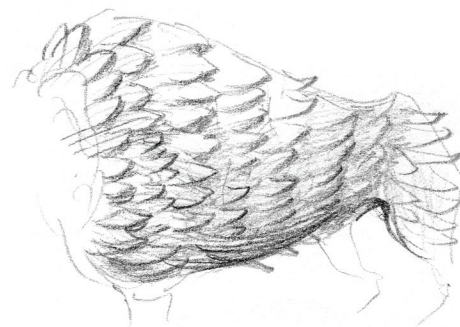




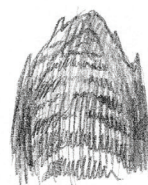
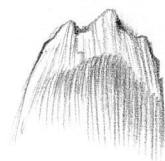
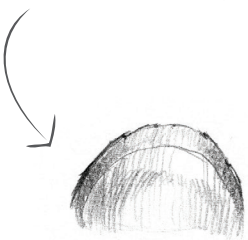
Considering the guardian aspect of the creature, I explore adding scales to the design, like armor. This is inspired by animals such as the pangolin and spiny turtle.



I also experiment with some mark-making, thinking about how to best portray fur.



The brief calls for a "brute" creature, and an effective way to convey this is to add large masses that give the beast a bulky, looming presence.





## 01 Transferring the fur and scales

I transfer the sketch for the body area of the creature by tracing key elements such as the scales. As I trace, I also lightly shade in where the shadows will be underneath the scales; being able to get some of the shading down while tracing helps to make the rendering process faster. The scales do not have to be traced exactly according to the sketch – although I follow the general lines in my main reference, I also deviate from it when I see an opportunity to make more interesting shapes.

## 02 Shading in the scales

Here I also start with the darker areas, filling in the shadows underneath the scales and creating some texture on top. I use a B pencil when shading in these darker areas.

When I traced the drawing in the previous step, some of the lines for the scales were quite loose and sketchy. In this step, I use an eraser to clean them up so that each scale has a clearly defined outline. I also blend the mane into the scales by creating loose shading between these two areas.

## 03 Detailing the scales

I continue to shade in the scales, adding more detail and texture as I build up the shading. The scales and mane should be at about the same level of detail and darkness, so as I work on the scales I compare against the tone of the mane. These two areas create a bulky upper body for the creature which frames its facial features.



01

*As you trace, you can also mark in the shadow areas underneath the scales.*



02

*Some of the lines for the scales were quite sketchy, so you can use an eraser to clean them up so that each scale has a clearly defined outline.*

*The scales and mane should be about the same darkness and level of detail, so you should constantly compare the two areas as you work.*



03



#### 04 Shading in the body

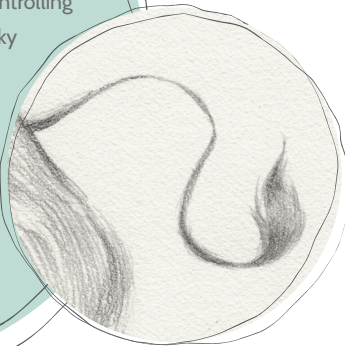
Once the scales are complete, I begin work on the main part of the body. Since there is so much detail and shading in the bulky upper body area, I want the rest of the creature to be more muted in comparison. Using an H pencil, I make light, sweeping strokes across key areas of the body. These strokes function as a subtle fur texture and also indicate form, suggesting where the skin folds and the areas that are in shadow.

#### 05 Completing the body

I finish off the body by building up the shading, creating a combination of long pencil strokes and smaller marks. I take care to use a light touch, keeping some areas unshaded, just like the face. My pencil strokes follow the contour of the form; the direction of my marks will suggest the way that the fur rests and the subtle dips and ridges found on the body.

##### *Varied lines*

Not all lines are equal. Subtle shifts in the width and darkness of your lines will create a dynamic, visually interesting drawing. Controlling the kind of mark you put down can be tricky in the beginning, but with practice you will be able to create a variety of marks that work together to make a cohesive image. Experiment with different pencil grades (from 3H to 6B) and with holding the pencil at different angles (refer back to page 44).



04

*As there is so much detail and shading in the bulky upper body area, the rest of the creature needs to be more muted.*

*Use a light touch, keeping some highlight areas unshaded.*

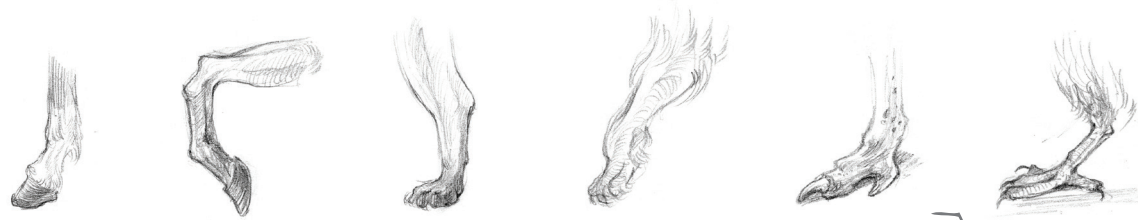


05



# Legs and pose

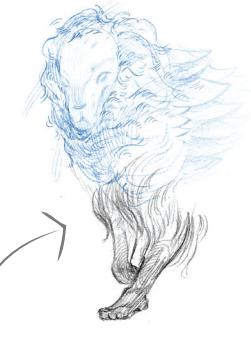
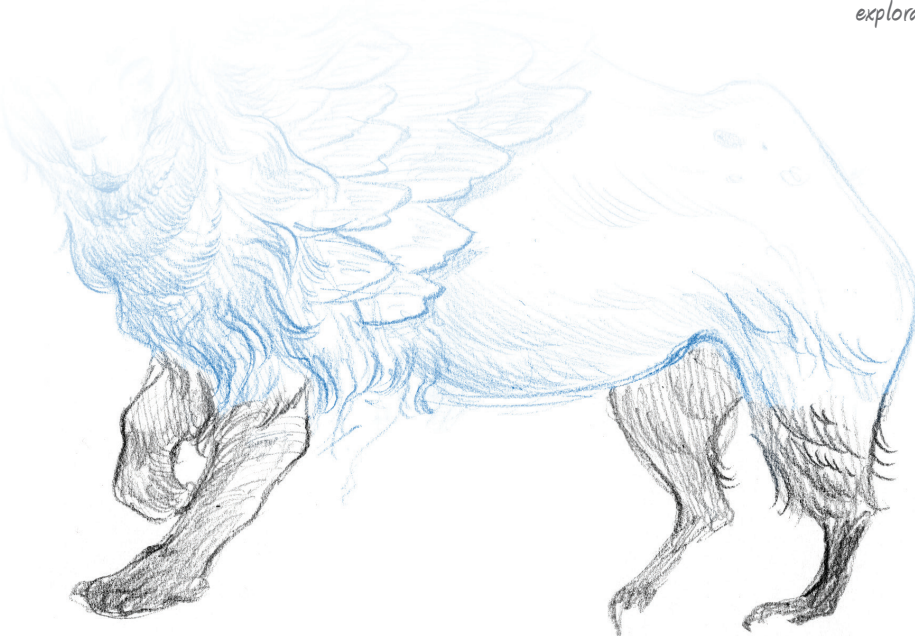
I want the beast to have a classical pose, something that would immediately be recognizable as a mythological creature. For inspiration, I look at historical paintings, prints, and sculptures of mythological creatures, and also study photos of real-world animals to observe how they walk and stand.



As the design of the face has elements of both a lion and goat, I focus on paws and hooves in my exploratory sketches.

While looking for some references of bird claws online, I come across ostrich legs and feel that they are a perfect option for the design, since they look quite unusual.

I also make studies of bird claws, as there are sharp, pointy shapes in them that would work well with other elements in the design.



After sketching different animal legs, I explore a few different options for the pose of the legs, focusing on a classical stance for a mythological creature.

The design of the creature is inspired by animals found in the real world, so I study the legs of various animals to see what fits best.





## 01 Basic shapes for the legs

When transferring the sketch, I concentrate on capturing the basic shapes. I also indicate the direction of pencil strokes for the fur and emphasize where the joints in the leg are located.

## 02 Shading in the front legs

The front legs are based on a lion's, so as I draw I refer back to my exploratory sketches for reference. As I build up the shading on the legs, I also bring the mane down so that the transition between the two is not so abrupt. I darken some parts of the mane just above the legs, giving the creature more form and emphasizing its bulky shape.

## 03 Shading the back legs

With the body and thigh area already shaded in, I extend the shading down the leg and start to render the claws. I researched the texture of ostrich legs and observed a stripy, horizontal pattern. With this in mind, I shade using pencil strokes in a curved, horizontal direction which emphasizes both the texture and form of the back legs.

*Refer back to exploratory sketches of real animals for reference.*



*Concentrate on capturing the basic shapes and emphasizing where the joints are.*

01



02

*Use curved, horizontal strokes to create both texture and form.*



03



#### 04 Adding details

Now I add details and darken the shading where needed. I build up the shading on the claws, creating an even gradient that leads up the leg to the body.

#### 05 Finishing details on the legs

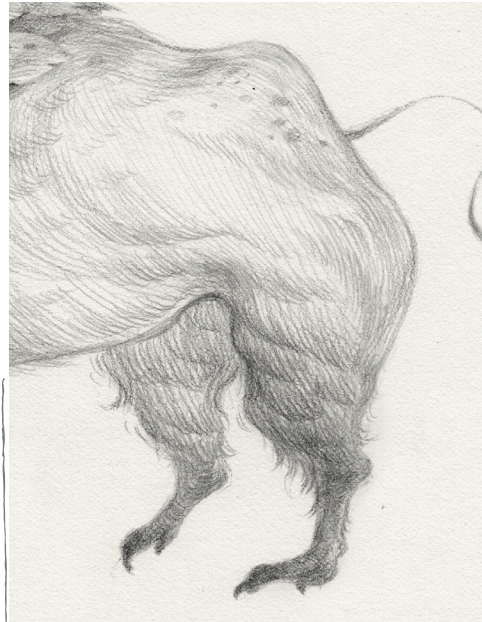
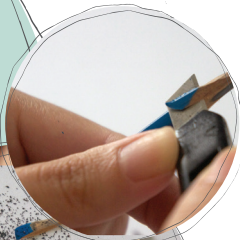
I add in a cast shadow underneath the creature, giving it a sense of weight. This is especially important because the creature needs to appear large and hulking. The drawing has a lot of expressive marks in the fur so to accentuate this, I add some similar lines around the cast shadow. These lines create visual interest and movement within the drawing. They are made with an H pencil, using quick, light strokes.

##### Sharp pencils

Take care when using sharp instruments.

This method is not suitable for children.

It is good practice to sharpen a pencil with a utility (snap-off) blade. A hand-sharpened pencil allows you to customize the tip for specific types of marks. A longer graphite tip will also allow you to work with the pencil at a variety of different angles. Always sharpen away from your fingers, using your thumb to push the blade against the edge of the pencil.



04

*The hind legs are darker in tone than the body, which helps to balance the design, otherwise the drawing would be too "heavy" towards the upper body and the head.*



05

*Once the legs are shaded in, add in a cast shadow underneath the creature to give it a sense of weight.*



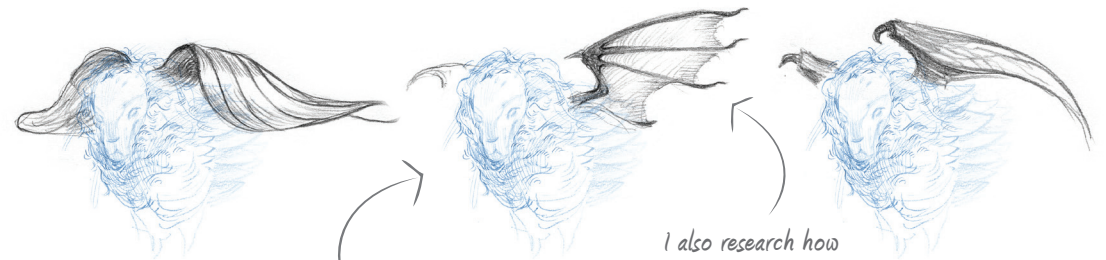
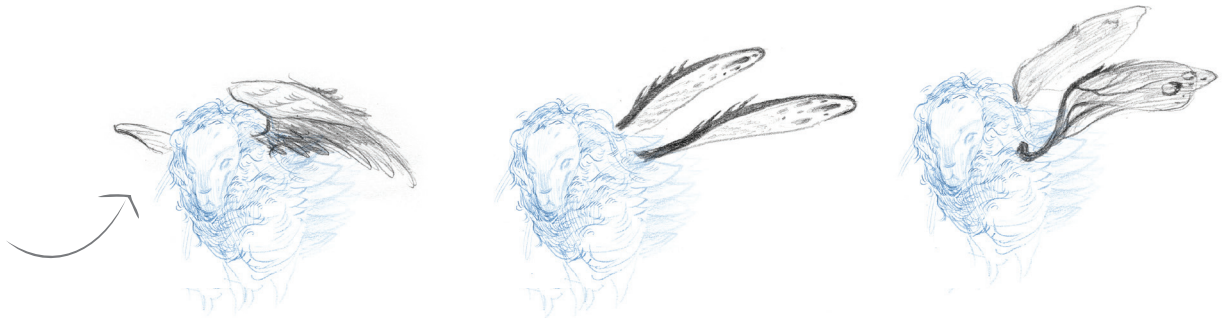


# Wings

Since the creature has bird-like hind legs, I decide that it would be appropriate to incorporate some wings into the design.

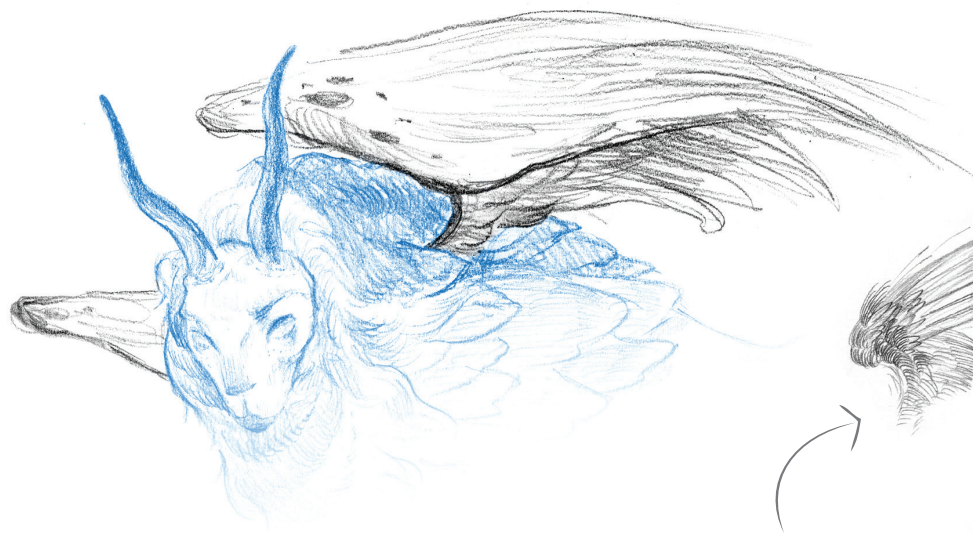
As mentioned, part of the inspiration behind my creature is the mythological sphinx. During my research, I found that many depictions of these creatures were quite stylized, especially the wings. So in my own design I use simplified shapes and forms in reference to the mythological inspiration.

*I explore different options for wings, taking inspiration from a wide range of winged animals, such as bats, birds, and insects.*

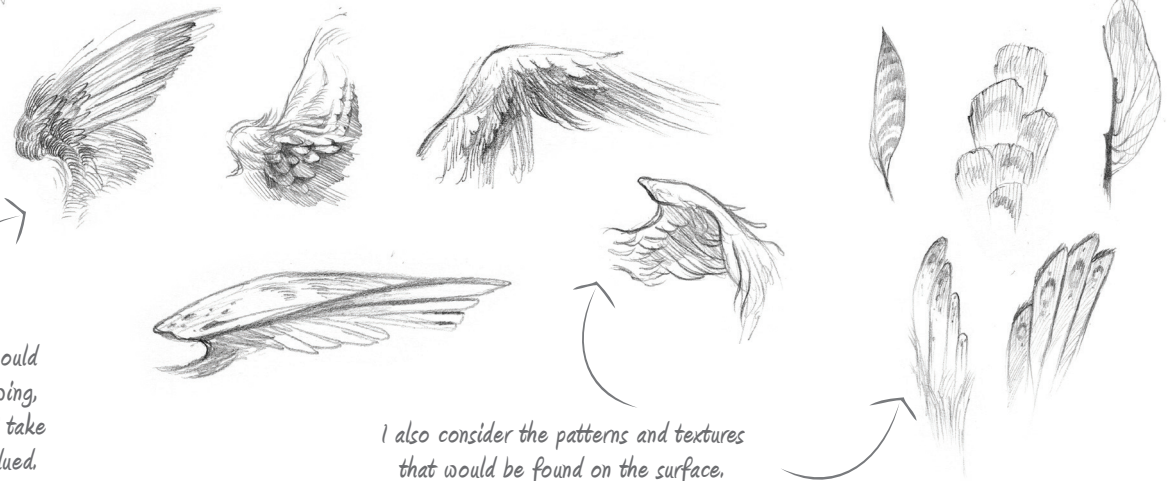


*I use tracing paper over previous exploratory sketches to work out the placement of the wings on the body of the creature.*

*I also research how wings would fold and how feathers would be arranged on the underside of the wing.*



*In order to be convincing, the wings would need to cover a large area of the drawing, but since they are not the focal point I take care that the design is simple and subdued.*



*I also consider the patterns and textures that would be found on the surface.*





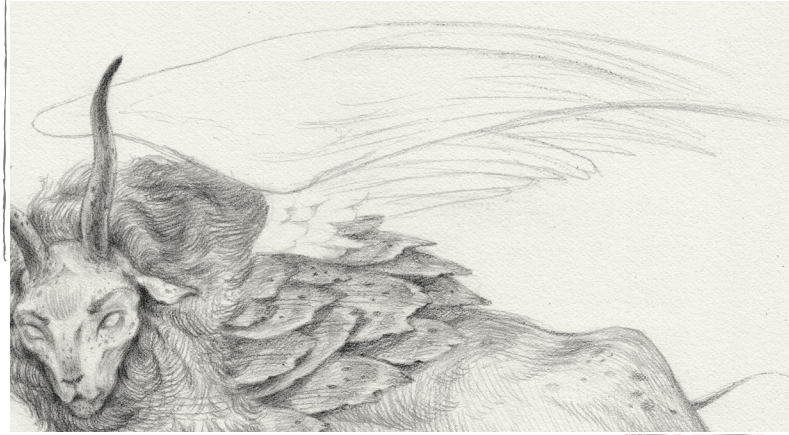
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## 01 Transferring the wings

When transferring the sketch of the wings, I only capture the outside or overall shape, without much focus on the feathers or details on the surface. I know that when I begin to shade in this area my lines will be quite loose and expressive, so I use similarly loose lines when tracing. This ensures that my traced lines are not too dark or solid, otherwise I would have to go back and erase them before I begin the shading.



01

*Use loose lines when tracing the wings — this ensures that the traced lines are not too dark or solid.*

## 02 Basic shading

Once all my lines are loosely sketched in, I start to build up the shading in the wings. I add in details like feathers and indicate where the shadows will go. I don't want the wings to stand out too much so I keep the shading quite subtle, using an H pencil to create soft lines.



02

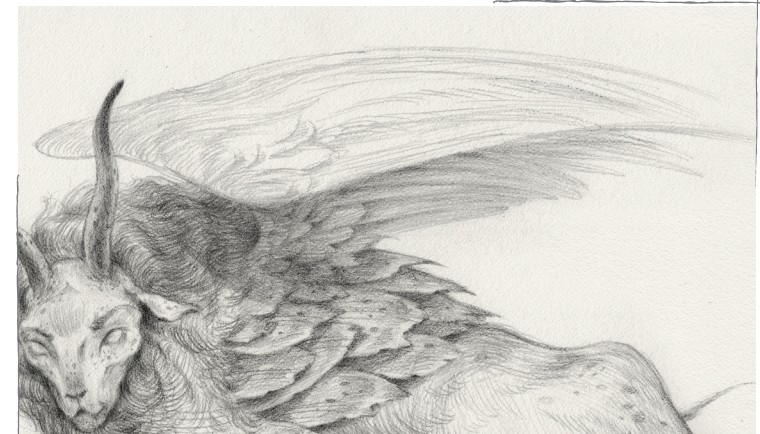
*The contrast in this wing area is low and should appear as one shadow shape if you look at the drawing from afar.*

## 03 Rendering the shadow areas

The underside of the wing is in shadow so I start to focus on rendering in this area. I pick out some individual feathers and shade the areas in between them. However, note that the contrast in this area is low, and if you look at the image from afar, this whole area appears as one dark shape.

I also add in a cast shadow on the mane, in areas where the wing would cover the light source from above.

*Keep the shading quite subtle so that the wings don't stand out too much.*



03



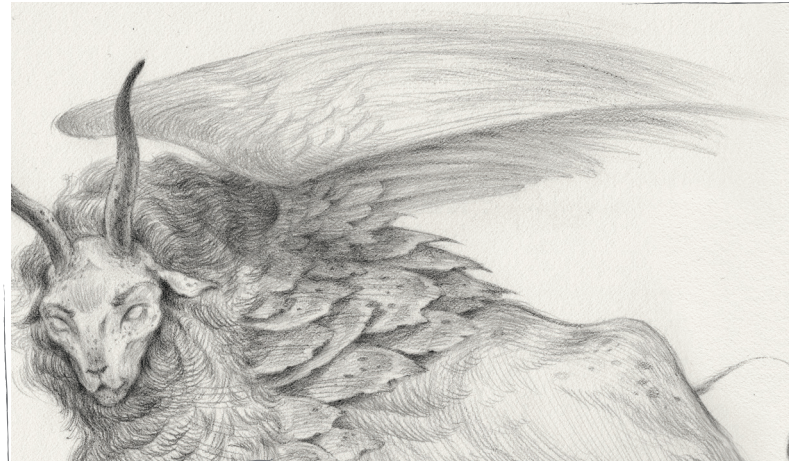
#### 04 Shading the top of the wing

I'm now ready to shade in the top side of the wing. I want to keep this area light and airy, both in terms of tone and the type of marks that I make. Towards the back of the wing the shading is very soft, creating an effect that looks similar to motion blur in a photograph. To create these soft lines, I use an H pencil and make sure that the tip is not too sharp – a blunt pencil works best when creating soft lines.

When shading the other end of the wing (closer to the head), I make sure my lines follow the contour of the form so that the surface of the wing appears curved.

#### 05 Finishing touches

I shade in the tip of the other wing that sticks out behind the head, again making sure my lines follow the curve of the surface. I add in some finishing touches and address any areas that jump out too much, either by darkening some parts or using an eraser to lighten some of the shading. I also loosen up the drawing by creating expressive sweeping lines, both along the edges and over the top of shaded areas.



*A blunt pencil works best when creating soft lines.*

04

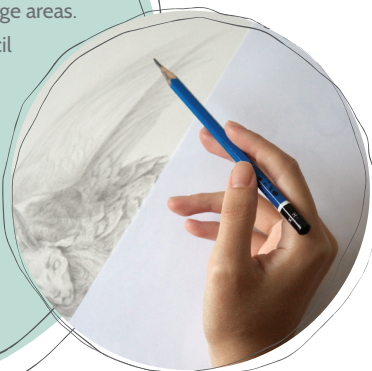
*Add in some finishing touches and balance any areas that jump out too much.*



05

#### *Sweeping lines*

As I've emphasized during these exercises, mark-making is an important thing to consider when drawing. Long, expressive lines are especially useful in creating movement and unifying large areas. To create these lines smoothly, grip the pencil lightly and use your wrist to create sweeping movements across the page. It may be necessary to turn the paper so that making lines in a certain direction feels more natural. I also use a piece of plain paper in between my hand and the drawing, so that I can rest my hand comfortably without smudging the drawing.





# Illustrating a scene

Learn how to draw a dynamic scene, integrating the character and creature designed on the previous pages.

By Rovina Cai

In this final part, I will bring together the friendly witch and guardian beast to create a complete scene. I'll cover techniques for designing a dynamic composition and posing the designs from the earlier exercises to fit them into the scene. I will also explain how to design and draw natural and human-made elements found in the landscape of the scene.

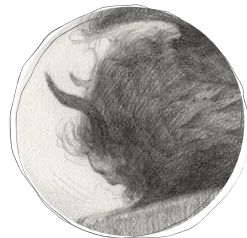
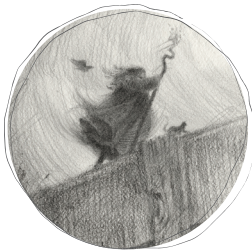
This part of the process is where everything comes together; all the research and ideas that went into the design of the creature and character can now be applied to create a cohesive illustration that tells a story.

For this part, I will illustrate a meeting between the witch and the beast. Through a series of abstract thumbnails, I came up with the idea that the beast would be guarding a bridge that the witch comes across on her travels. The final illustration will have just enough visual information to hint at a story, while still leaving room for the viewer's own interpretation.

## TOOLS

- Pencils (H and 2B)
- Paper (including tracing paper)
- Eraser

*There is a contrast of organic shapes and lines found in the landscape and straight lines found in the bridge. The balance of the two creates a visually interesting image.*



*The focal area of the drawing is the witch and the beast. All other elements within the drawing create implied lines that move the eye around the composition and lead the viewer's attention back to the focal area.*



*A sense of drama is created through the positioning of the two subjects and the implied lines that suggest movement within the drawing.*

*The approach to this drawing is much more loose and expressive; though I am still thinking about the design of individual elements, the focus is on creating mood and atmosphere.*



# Design the composition

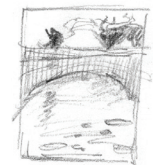
I begin by sketching the overall composition using a series of thumbnail sketches. When making an illustration with a complete scene, it is important to think of the image as a whole before designing specific elements.

The design process for this part is different to the previous ones. I think about all the elements at the same time as I create thumbnails. For example as I think about how the bridge fits into the composition, I also design the shape of the bridge and where the character and creature will be in relation to it. For the sake of clarity, I have separated the process into four exercises, but keep in mind that I work on all of these elements alongside each other to create a cohesive image.



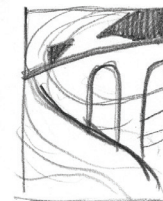
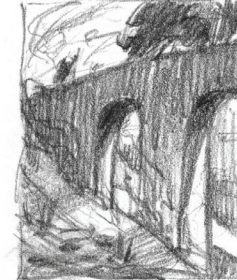
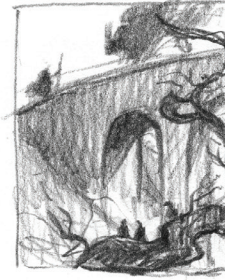
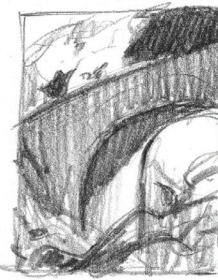
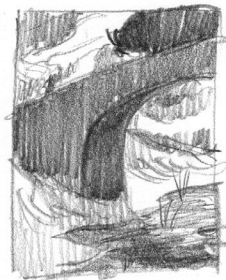
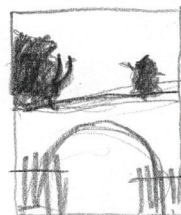
I start off with some very simple thumbnails, thinking about abstract shapes and lines rather than specific recognizable elements.

I also do some thumbnails for possible story and location ideas. At this stage the thumbnails are very rough; I'm not worried about drawing correctly, just note-taking in visual form.



Some ideas include the creature guarding a bridge or the character chasing the creature.

Once I come across an idea that I like, I do more thumbnails with variations of the same setting, trying out different elements and positions for the character and creature.



I liked the idea of the bridge, so I try it out with various landscape elements such as a river, some branches, and a grassy hillside.



### 01 Basic thumbnail

I begin with a round of thumbnails exploring abstract shapes. I do not depict the actual figures or any recognizable elements, but I do keep in mind that I am working with one big shape (the creature) and one little shape (the character). Diagonal and curved lines help to create a dynamic composition, so I focus on arranging my shapes around these lines.

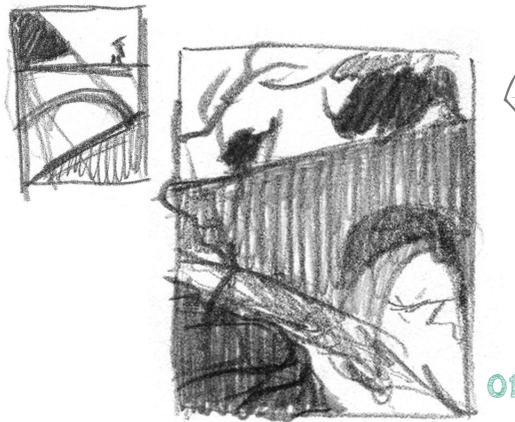
Once I find an abstract I like, I start thinking about what these shapes could be and how to relate them to the story. I had a curved line in my abstract that reminded me of an arched bridge, so I make a new thumbnail of my character and creature standing on a bridge. At this point I decide that my story for the illustration is to be the beast guarding a bridge, which the witch comes across on her travels.

### 02 Detailed thumbnails

The next step is to take the thumbnail a bit further and flesh it out. In this updated thumbnail, things start to come together and I think about specific elements in more detail. I make a little side sketch, simplifying the lines to make sure that the composition is working well. I also plan the shading and value structure of the drawing in this thumbnail, indicating where the darkest and lightest parts will be.

### 03 Preliminary sketch

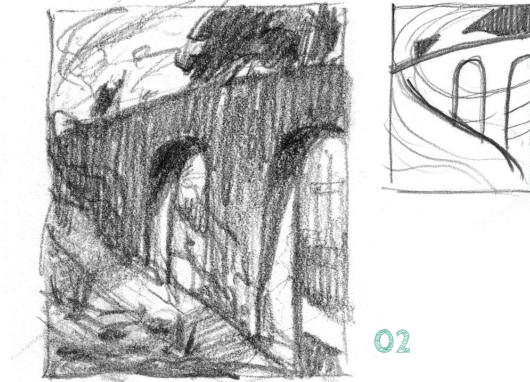
Once I am happy with my plans, I proceed to the preliminary sketch. In this sketch, all the different elements in the drawing are designed and this is what I will use to trace over for my final drawing. As I draw the creature and character, I go back to my previous designs and use them as reference. I will cover the design process for the bridge and landscape in later exercises, however, it is important to work on all the elements in the drawing side by side, so that the finished illustration is cohesive.



01

*Work with abstract shapes and lines rather than depicting the actual figures or any recognizable elements.*

*At this point, all the different elements in the drawing are designed and planned in preparation for the final version.*



02

*At this stage, the thumbnail is still very rough and I consider this to be like taking notes with sketches, rather than actual drawing and designing.*



03



#### 04 Transferring the drawing

Now that my design is complete, it's time for a familiar step: transferring the sketch onto the paper for the final drawing. The approach to this drawing is more expressive than the previous stages as much of the landscape will be comprised of energetic, improvised lines, so when I transfer the sketch, I only mark in the bridge and a basic outline of the two figures.

#### 05 Adjusting the drawing

The bridge incorporates quite a few straight lines and I want to make sure I get them right, so I use a ruler to adjust and draw accurately. I also darken some of the traced lines and indicate some details such as the beast's scales and fur. The drawing is now ready for rendering.

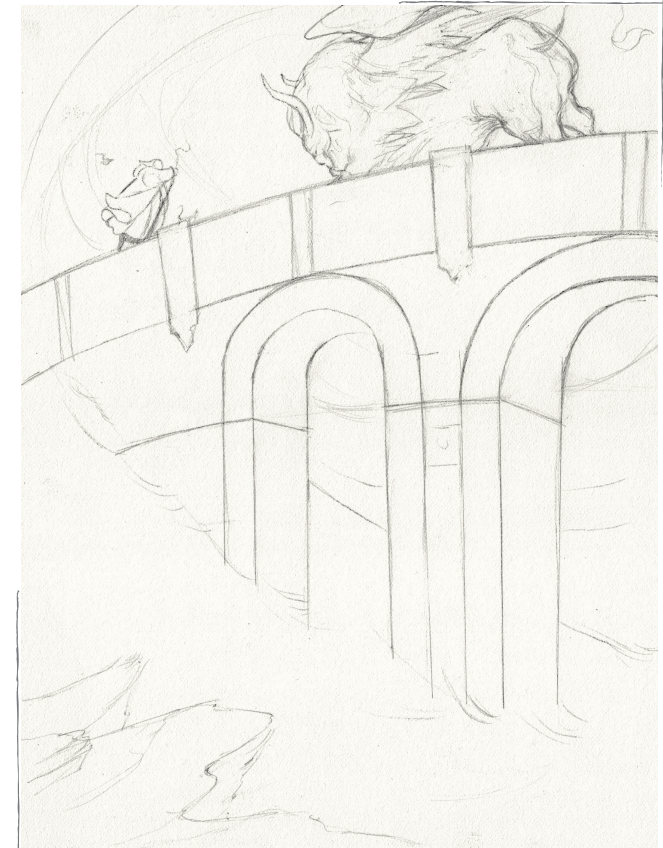
##### Guidelines

Drawing arches and repeating elements can be tricky; using a guideline to mark in where an object goes will help you draw things correctly. When drawing things in perspective, it helps to think of everything in terms of squares and rectangles. For example to draw an arch, I first draw a rectangle to mark where the top and side edge of the arch will be. I then use this rectangle as a guide to draw the curved shape of the arch.



04

*The approach to this drawing is more expressive than the previous steps, so only mark in the bridge and figures.*



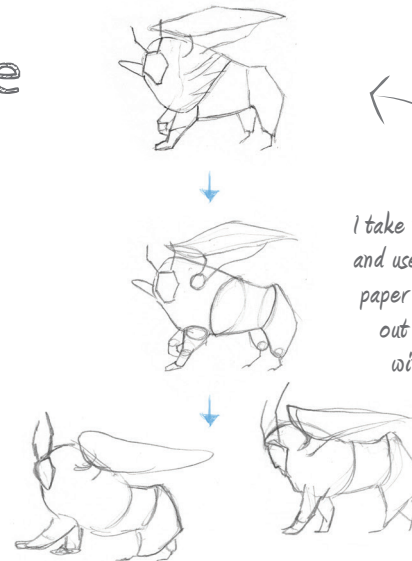
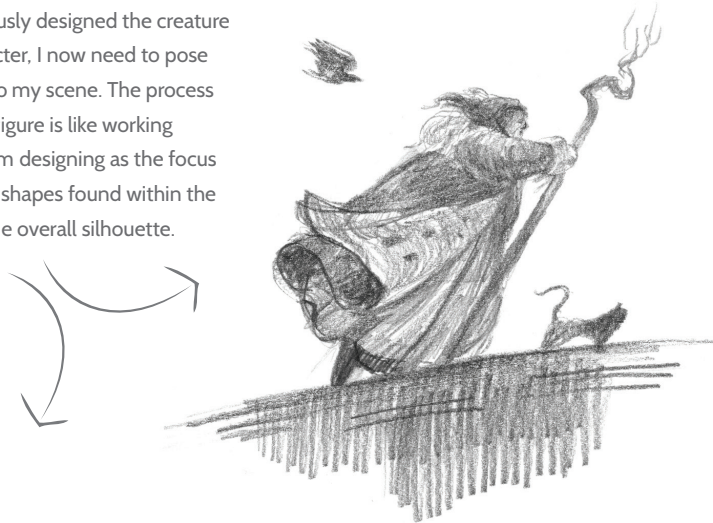
05

*Use a ruler to draw the straight lines of the bridge accurately.*



# Pose the character and creature

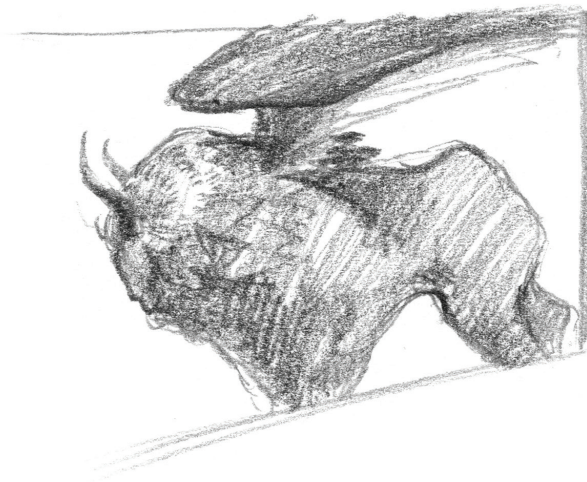
Having previously designed the creature and the character, I now need to pose them to fit into my scene. The process of posing the figure is like working backwards from designing as the focus is on the large shapes found within the designs and the overall silhouette.



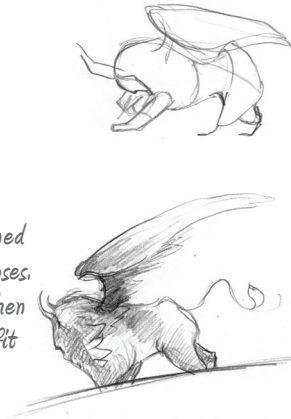
I take the previous designs and use a piece of tracing paper over them to mark out the large shapes within the design.



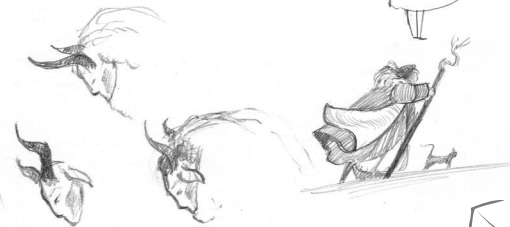
From the traced sketch, I add more definition to the shapes, drawing in areas that are hidden in order to get a better sense of how everything connects.



Once I have the basic shapes planned out, I can move them around into poses. I stick to quick gesture drawings when working out the pose that would fit best into the final composition.



Once I find a pose I like, I then make a more refined sketch, drawing the details back into the shapes.



I want the witch to be in a more powerful, dynamic pose, as if she is greeting or challenging the beast. By contrast, I pose the beast as if it is bowing its head in obedience.





## 01 Shading in the witch

I start the shading process by identifying the darkest part of my drawing. In this case, it is the figures. The witch and the beast are backlit (the light is coming from behind the bridge), so this would make them appear as if they are in shadow.

I begin blocking in the witch, shading in the darkest parts such as the inside of her coat and her walking stick. I also lightly indicate her hair and the folds of her dress. This area is quite small and requires precision, so I shade with a 2B pencil with a very sharp point.

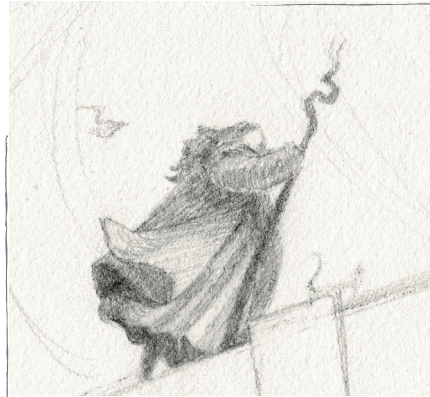
## 02 Shading in the beast

I move on to the beast and repeat a similar process, marking in the shadows under the scales and loosely shading in the fur on the body. I know this whole area will be quite dark, so in my first layer of shading I can be quite loose and rough with my pencil marks. There will be more layers of shading on top to blend in the marks.

## 03 Adding details to the witch

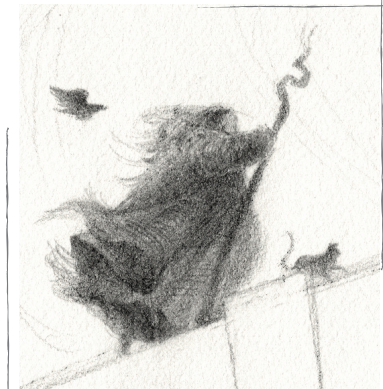
I alternate between the witch and the beast to make sure I do not go too dark with my shading. It's always easy to add more shading to darken something, but removing shading that is too dark will ruin the mark-making or texture of a certain area. Once I have some of the beast shaded in, I am ready to finish off the witch. Since the character occupies a small area of the drawing, there doesn't need to be too much detail. I use small marks to suggest the folds of her collar and details in her face. I also shade in her cat and raven.

*The light is coming from behind the bridge; this makes the witch appear as if she is in shadow.*



*You can be loose and rough with the pencil marks in your initial layer of shading because this whole area will be dark.*

*Take care not to shade too darkly.*



### Maquettes

For complex creature or character designs, it is useful to create a maquette to use for reference. The model doesn't need to be detailed – a small sculpture capturing the basic shapes will allow you to view your design from different angles and come up with more interesting compositions. You can also use it as reference for lighting when shading in the drawing. I use non-hardening modeling clay, but any malleable material like polymer or paper clay, or even a kneadable eraser, would work.





## 04 Adding details to the beast

The beast is larger than the witch, so I spend more time shading and adding details here. Now that the witch is done, I am able to use her as a reference for how dark the shading on the beast needs to be. I focus on shading in the darkest areas on the beast, including the horns and the shadows underneath the wing.

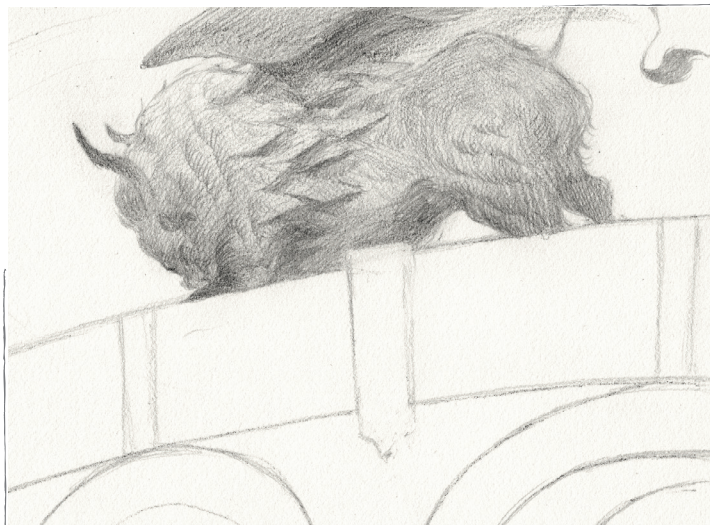
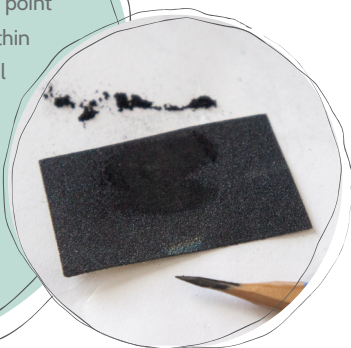
## 05 Completing the figures

Comparing the beast to the witch, I realize it is not dark enough, so I darken the beast significantly and also add in little details like the spots on its fur and horns. I finish this area by creating one more layer of shading over both the figures. I also blend with some graphite powder on a brush. This gives the edges a soft appearance which works well for creating mood and atmosphere within the drawing.

### *Even sharper pencils*

Earlier in this chapter, one of my tips was to sharpen a pencil using a utility blade.

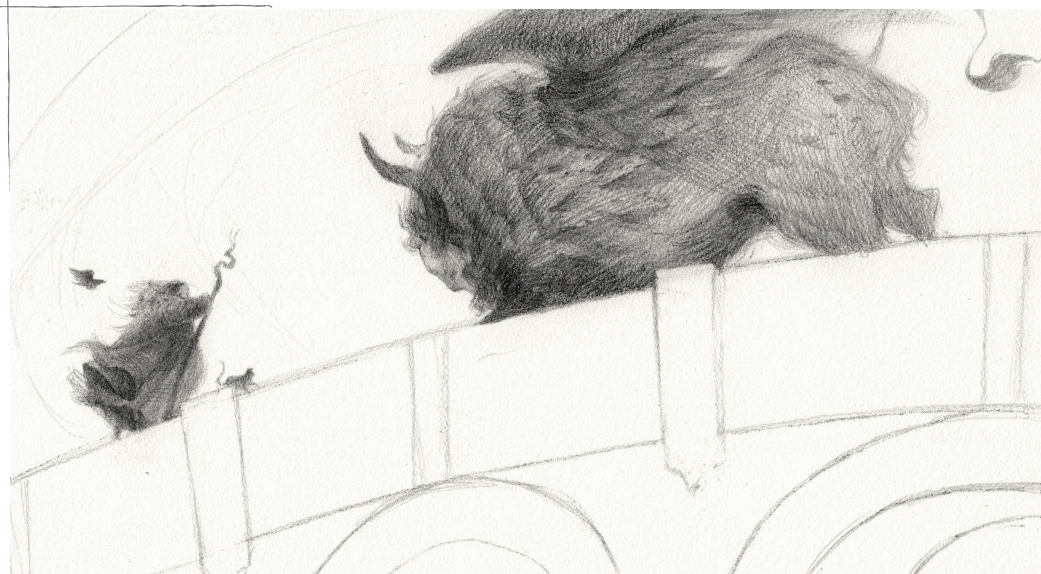
While it is possible to get a very sharp point with the blade, keep some sandpaper within reach to use to quickly sharpen your pencil as you work. The graphite powder that comes from the sharpening can then be applied to the drawing using a paintbrush, used to smooth out large areas of shading or add a soft, smoky effect to some edges.



*Use the witch as a reference for how dark the shading on the beast needs to be.*

04

*You can blend the shading using graphite powder. This softens the edges creating mood and atmosphere.*



05



# Draw the bridge

The shape of the bridge was already determined in my planning for the composition, so when I sketch in this exercise, I focus on the surface texture and design. I also look for ways to add small details to the bridge in order to create visual interest.

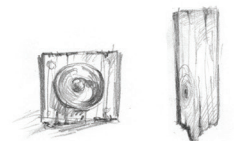
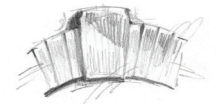
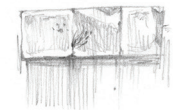
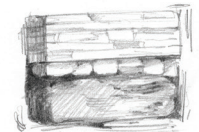
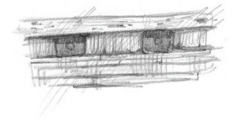
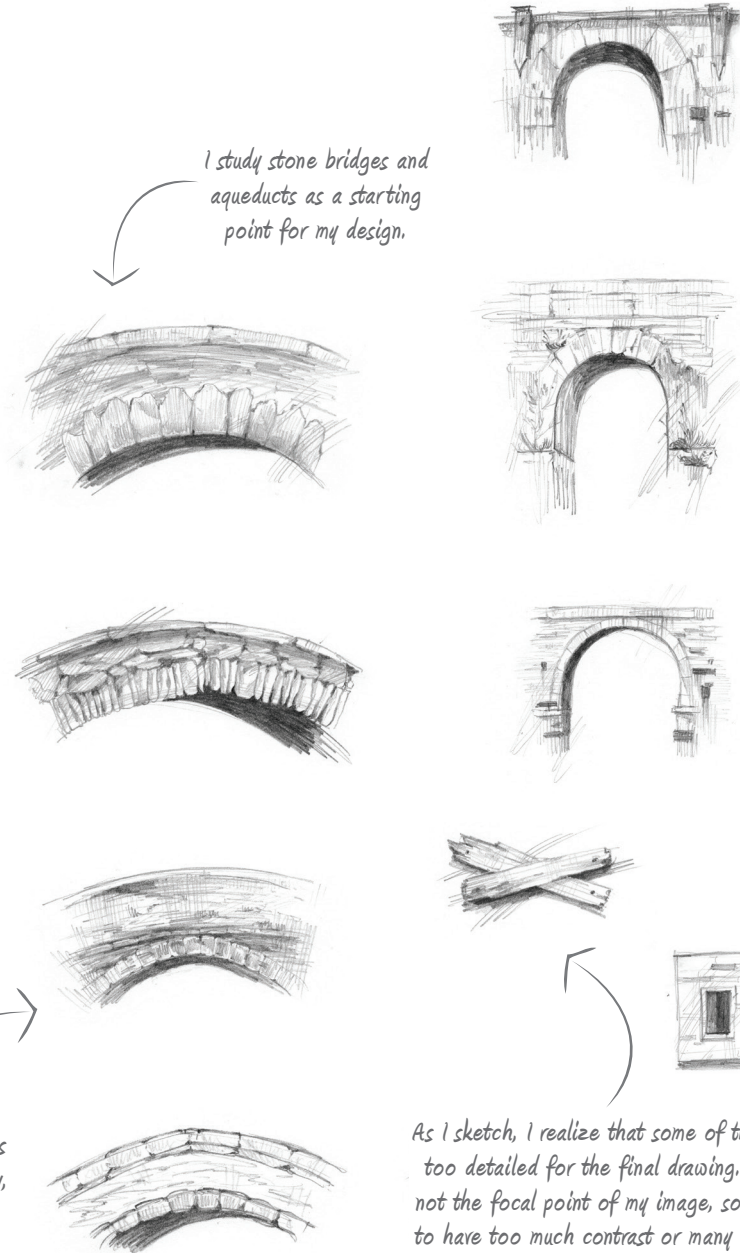
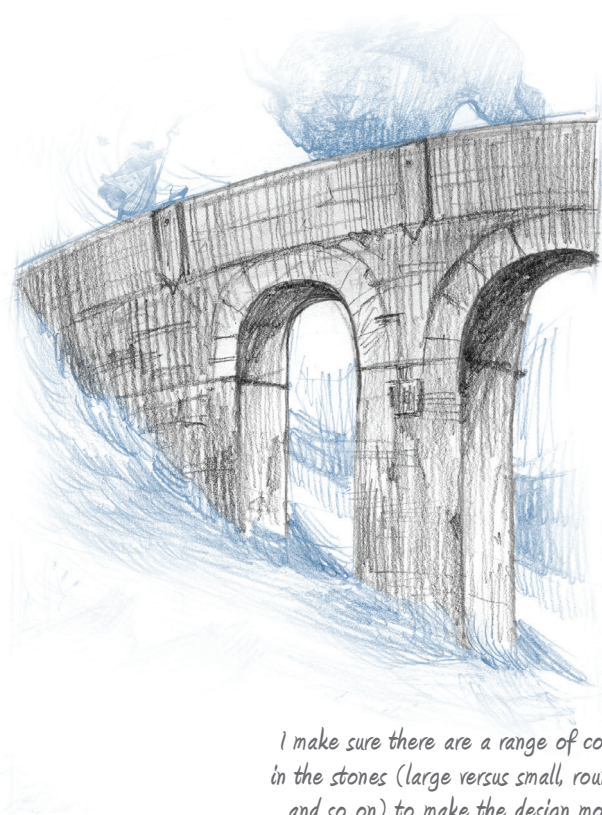
*I study stone bridges and aqueducts as a starting point for my design.*

*I try a few different arrangements for the stones, looking at reference photos to get an idea of the variety of bridges in real life.*

*Decorative elements help to build a sense of character; the bridge is a unique structure in an imaginary world, not just a generic bridge that could be anywhere.*

*As I sketch, I realize that some of these designs are too detailed for the final drawing. The bridge is not the focal point of my image, so I don't want it to have too much contrast or many complex shapes.*

*I make sure there are a range of contrasting shapes in the stones (large versus small, round versus pointy, and so on) to make the design more interesting.*





## 01 Initial shading

I lay down an initial layer of shading over the entire bridge, marking in the shadows as I go along. I also indicate some surface details such as cracks in the stones and the grain of the wooden decorations. I want the bridge to appear ancient, so there are plenty of opportunities to add in small details of decay.

I shade in the bridge using vertical lines; this creates a sense of movement which leads the eye up towards the figures at the top of the bridge.

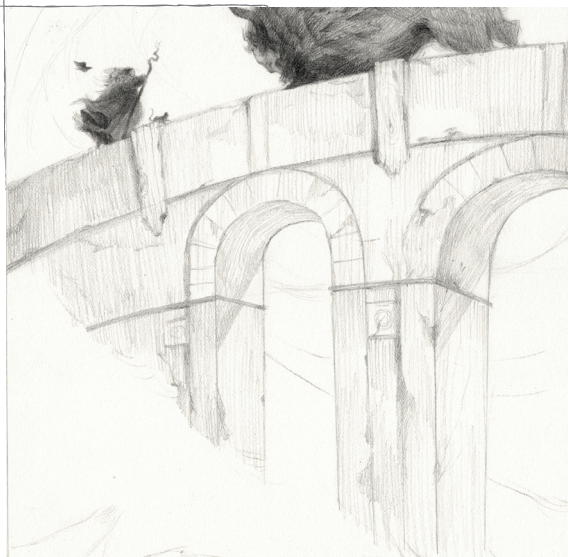
## 02 Shading in the arches

Starting with the darkest parts of the bridge, I shade in the shadows underneath the arches. I also begin to shade in the stones that frame the arches. I use a B pencil to shade in the shadows. Though the area needs to be quite dark, I make sure the shadows are not too solid; the shading gets lighter as the shadow moves down the side of the arch.

## 03 Shading in the bridge

I then move on to shading in the main part of the bridge. The light is coming from behind, so this whole area will be in shadow. However, because of reflected light from the ground, the shadows on this side of the bridge are not as dark as under the arches.

I also add small details as I continue to shade, breaking up straight edges by adding in textures and bits of grass. Since the bridge is old, I don't want anything to look too symmetrical or clean.



01



02

*There are plenty of opportunities to add in small details of decay.*



03

*I use a B pencil and make sure the shadows are not too solid.*

*The light is coming from behind, so this whole area will be in shadow.*





04

#### 04 Adding details

Once the bridge has been shaded in, I can focus on the details. I shade in the wooden decorative elements and continue to create more texture over the stones. I add in horizontal lines (in a cross-hatch style) to the middle section of the bridge to hint at bricks, differentiating the texture from the top part of the structure.

#### 05 Corrections and adjustments

It's easy to get lost in all the small sections of the bridge, and though I have been using a very light hand, some details stand out too much. I therefore finish off this section with a layer of shading over the entire area, creating long vertical pencil strokes across the entire bridge. This helps to blend the shading and tone down of some of the contrast.

*I use cross-hatch techniques to shade in the wooden decorative elements, and continue to create more texture over the stones.*



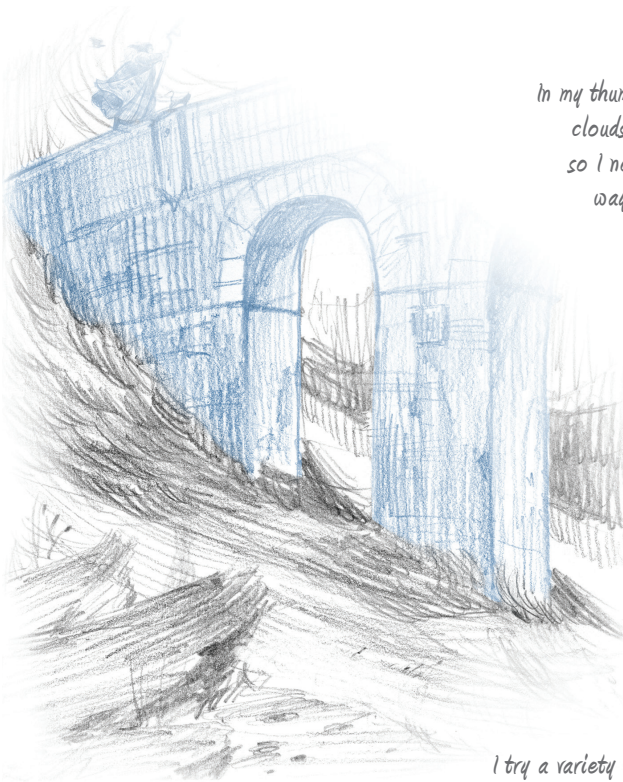
05

*I shade lightly over the entire bridge area to even out the contrast.*

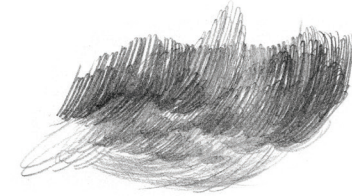
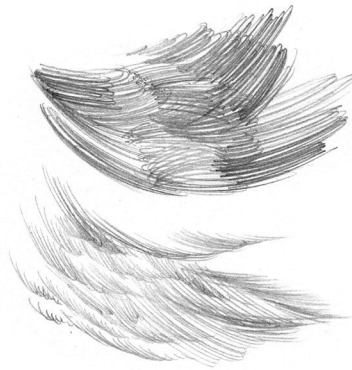


# Draw the landscape

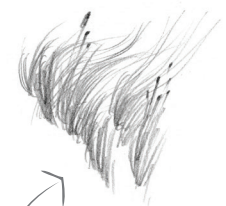
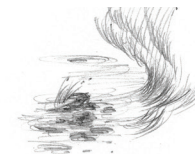
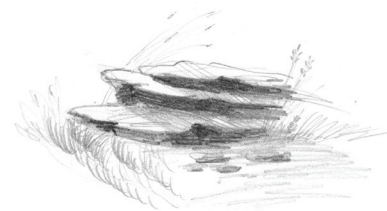
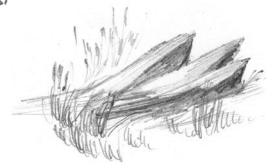
Like the bridge, the landscape is designed when working on the overall composition of the drawing. It is difficult to retain the exact design of grass and clouds between the sketch and the final, so in this sketch, I just loosely indicate shapes and lines that will go in the final drawing.



*In my thumbnails, I have indicated clouds in the background, so I now explore different ways to draw clouds.*



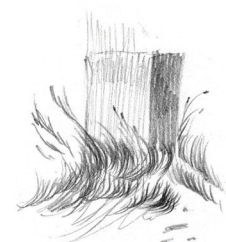
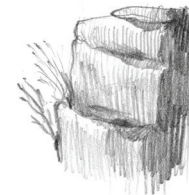
*I focus on moody storm clouds; they will add a sense of drama to my image.*



*I also study the base of the bridge and the way that grass would wrap around the stones.*



*I try a variety of different marks that can be used to render grass, from small, quick strokes to longer, organic lines.*

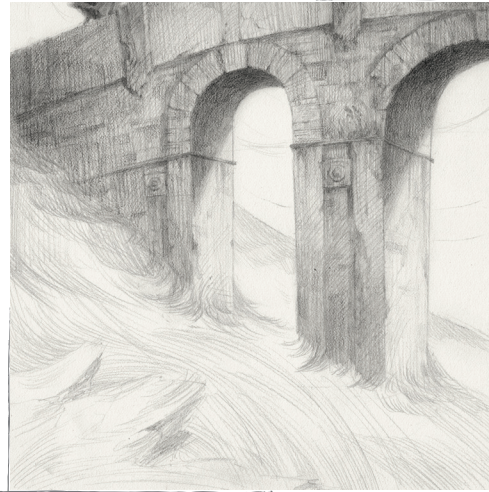




## 01 Shading in the grass

This part of the drawing relies on creating loose, expressive marks. In my exploratory drawings, I created a variety of different sketches for the grass, experimenting with mark-making. I will use these as a guide while I work on the final drawing. I don't copy any of my references directly, but use them to inform my choices when making marks.

I want to keep the grass light in tone to contrast the solid shading in the bridge, so as I shade, I make very loose marks, leaving ample white space in between each line. This kind of shading will give the drawing an airy feeling, which heightens the atmosphere and movement within the image.



01

*Using a loose extended grip will help to create light gesture lines.*



## 02 Shading in the sky

I approach the sky in the same manner as the grass, using loose, expressive marks to create implied lines which convey movement. I take care to follow the lines designed in my initial thumbnail, for example the clouds create a sweeping shape in the background, which brings the whole composition together.

## 03 Adding detail to the sky

The clouds are a background element, and I don't want them to be too dark, so I use an H pencil to add in small details and areas of shading. I include a range of different tones and marks when shading in the clouds: the areas closer to the horizon have more complex shapes, indicating storm clouds, while the area behind the witch has less detail so that the clouds do not distract from the focal point.

*Include a range of different tones and marks when shading in the clouds.*



03



02

*You can use loose marks to create implied lines in order to help convey movement.*





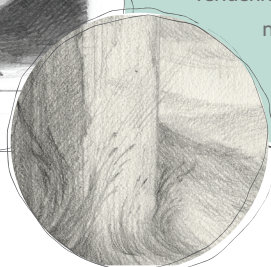
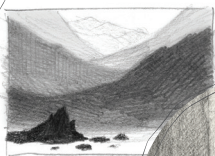
## 04 Adding form to the grass

Now that the sky is complete, I move on to finishing the shading of the grass. Although it covers a large area of the drawing, the grass needs to be subtle so that it doesn't compete for attention with the focal point. A good composition has uncluttered areas where the viewer's eye can "rest" away from areas of interest, and the grass serves as that space in this drawing.

When working on the grass, I am very selective with my shading and leave the white of the paper in many areas. I use a 2H pencil so that my shading remains light in tone.

## 05 Finishing touches

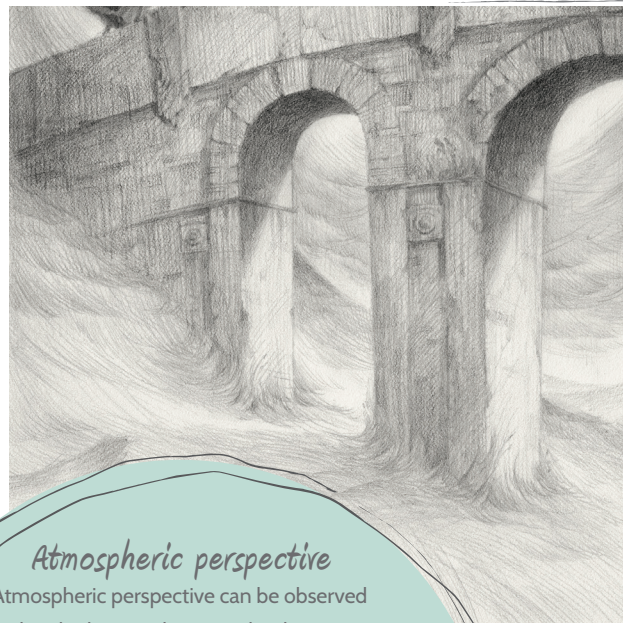
I am now ready to add finishing touches to the whole drawing. I draw in small rocks using a light oval motion, pick out some individual strands of grass, and also add some final textures to the bridge. These small adjustments add another layer of detail to the drawing, making it more believable and visually interesting.



### Atmospheric perspective

Atmospheric perspective can be observed when looking at objects in the distance.

Elements that are far away appear hazy and have less detail and contrast compared with those that are closer to the viewpoint. Study from real life or look at a photograph of mountains and you'll notice that the further back an element is, the more faded it will appear. Creating the illusion of atmospheric perspective gives a drawing a sense of depth, making it more life-like and dynamic. Keep this effect in mind when rendering and take care not to add too much detail and contrast to background elements.



04

*Remember to leave areas that are less busy to give the viewer's eye time to rest.*

*Adding small details gives believability to the drawing, making it more visually interesting.*



05





### *Wrap up*

You can now apply these same techniques and tools to your own work and create a unique world from your imagination.

Happy exploring!





# Creating a guardian beast

Learn how to design and draw a guardian beast inspired by creatures from mythology and real animals.

By Rovina Cai

In this part I will explore designing and drawing an imaginary creature that belongs in the same world as the witch character. I will explain the research and design thoughts behind the creature and provide further tips on drawing as I add in the finishing touches.

This part of the project brief calls for a large, brute-type creature. After brainstorming some ideas, I settle on creating a guardian beast inspired by mythological creatures such as the lamassu and sphinx. This provides interesting opportunities for narrative. For example the creature could be something that the friendly witch encounters on her travels, or could be guarding something she is trying to obtain. The story I am starting to build around these designs will help shape the next stage, where everything is combined into a scene.

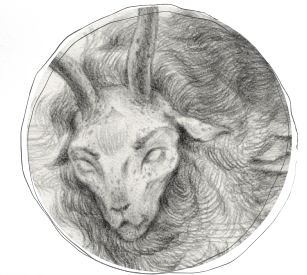
## TOOLS

- Pencils (H and 2B)
- Paper (including tracing paper)
- Eraser

As with the witch drawing, the head is the focal point of the creature design, so this area has the most contrast between light and dark, and also the most buildup in terms of shading.

Fur and various textures on the creature allow for playful and expressive marks throughout the drawing.

A sense of movement is achieved in the wings by using sweeping lines to create a softly shaded area similar to motion blur seen in a photograph.



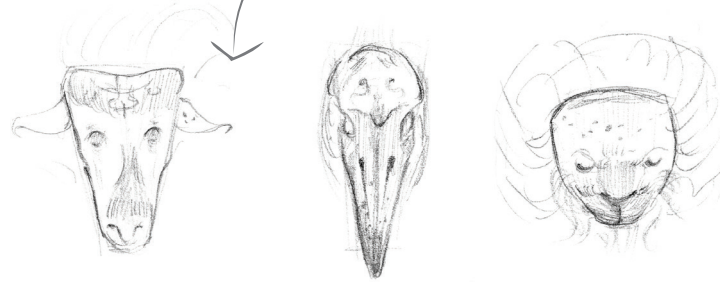
Designing the creature involves studying various elements, textures, and shapes from real animals and then "remixing" everything into something imaginative.



# Head, mane, and horns

Though I am designing a creature, it is still important that the face is able to convey emotion and narrative. I take inspiration from guardian creatures from mythology such as the sphinx. In these stories, the creature is often an intelligent, sentient being, and I want to bring that element into my own design.

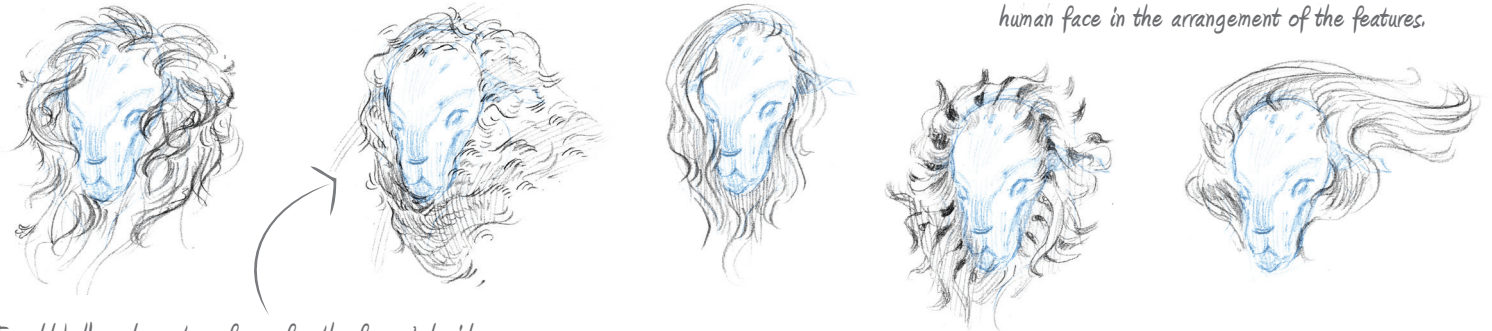
I begin by exploring different shapes for the head.



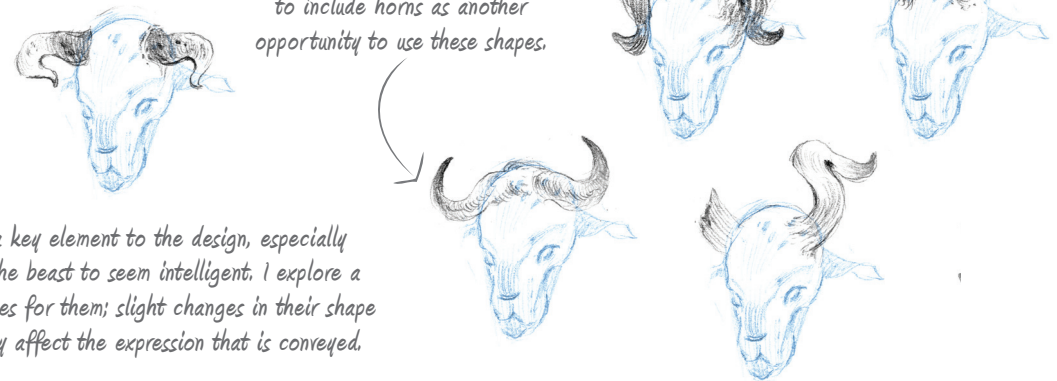
A good way to suggest the beast as an intelligent being is to introduce human-like elements into its design. My sketches of the creature's face are similar to a human face in the arrangement of the features.



To add bulk and create a frame for the face, I decide to introduce a mane for the upper body area. This also echoes the design of the friendly witch's costume, and so helps to place these two designs in the same visual world.



I want there to be an emphasis on sharp, pointy shapes in my design for the creature, so I decide to include horns as another opportunity to use these shapes.



The eyes are a key element to the design, especially because I want the beast to seem intelligent. I explore a few different shapes for them; slight changes in their shape could dramatically affect the expression that is conveyed.





## 01 Transferring the drawing of the head

I use the same materials for this drawing as in the previous character stage. Following a similar process, I begin by transferring the main reference sketch onto the paper. When tracing the creature's head, I capture important landmarks and focus on the eyes and facial structure. For the mane, I mark in lines that will guide my pencil strokes later on, when I begin rendering the fur.

## 02 Shading in darker areas

Now that I'm ready to begin shading, I identify where the darkest parts of my drawing will be and start there. In this case, the horns and the mane will be the darkest, to contrast with the face which will be lighter and more delicate.

I use a B pencil and concentrate on shading in the shadow areas of the mane. I create small pencil strokes for the fur, following along the guiding lines I drew in while tracing the sketch. The marks I make here serve both as shading and also lines to indicate fur. There are a lot of opportunities to create expressive, playful strokes in this area.

## 03 Shading in the face

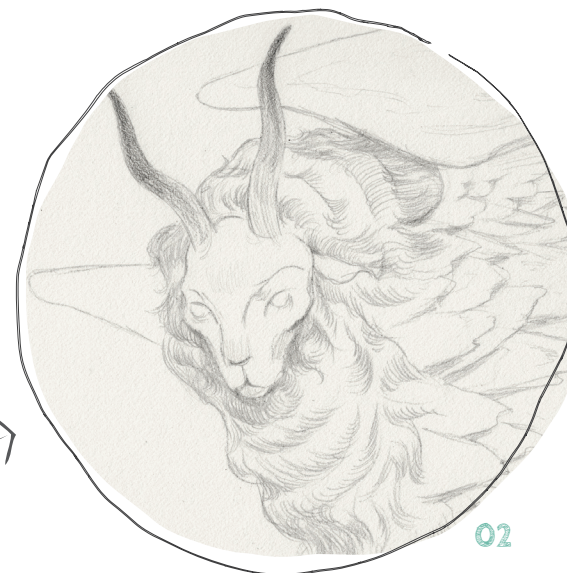
Once I have established some of the darker areas, I can work on the face. It's important not to go too dark when working on this area.

Since the face requires a delicate touch, I use an H pencil, shading in the shadow areas and creating form. I take care to leave some areas of the face unshaded, for example I want the eyes to really pop so I leave them almost entirely unshaded.

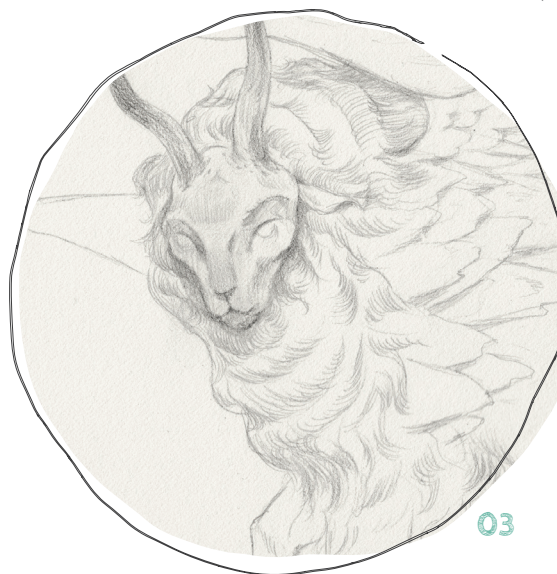
I regularly refer back to my reference sketches to make sure I do not stray too far from the original design.



*Try to capture important landmarks and shapes, and also mark in lines that will guide your pencil strokes later on.*



*When shading in the mane, there are a lot of opportunities to create expressive strokes.*



*Use an H pencil to shade in the shadow areas and create form, but take care to leave some lighter areas unshaded.*



## 04 Detailing the face

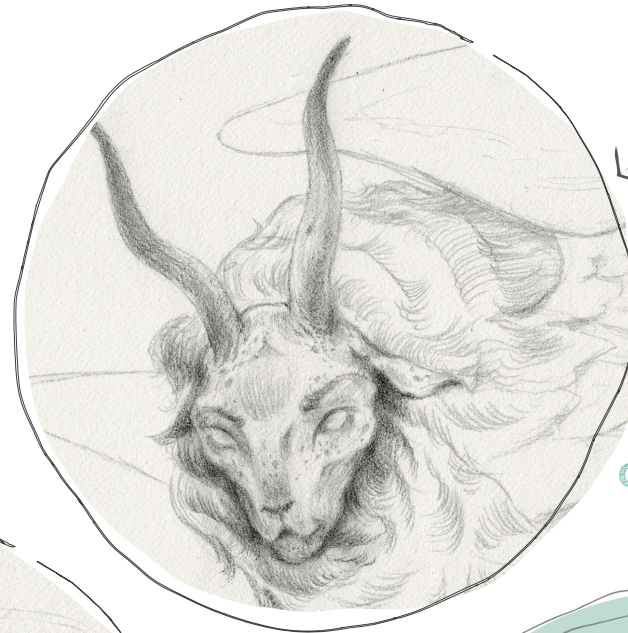
I continue to work on the face and darken the areas where the mane joins the edge of the face. This creates a bold contrast in tone, which brings the viewer's attention to the creature's head. As I mentioned during the design process, I want the creature to have some human characteristics in order to convey intelligence, so I look at photos of human faces for cues on where to shade; you'll notice that the creature has a cheekbone structure and eyebrows that are quite similar to a human.

## 05 Finishing the mane and horns

I go back and forth between different areas as I draw in order to make sure I create a balanced drawing that is not too dark. I start with the shadows in the mane and horns, and then move on to complete the face. When these elements are down, I am ready to finish off the head and surrounding area.

Following along the shading I've already created on the mane, I darken shadows where necessary and add in more pencil strokes to build up the form. I also add some details to the horns and focus on the area where the horns join the head.

*Go back and forth between different areas to make sure the drawing is balanced.*



04

*Observe how the cheekbone structure and eyebrows are quite similar to a human, helping to convey a sense of intelligence.*

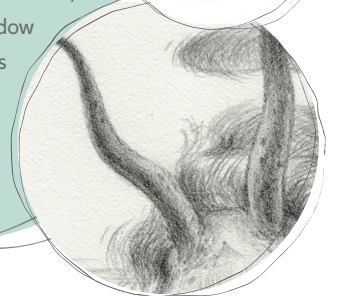
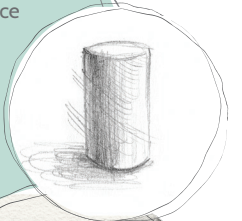


05

### Dynamic shadows

The shadows within a drawing shouldn't be "dead" or flat. If you look at the shadow area on a simple object, such as a ball or a vase, you'll notice that there are actually different shades or levels of darkness within it. There is a reflected light at the edge of the object, and the darkest part, known as the "core shadow", is actually in between the reflected light and the highlight (see pages 19–21).

Keep this in mind when shading in shadow areas, and observe lighting on objects in real life in order to apply it to your imaginative drawings.

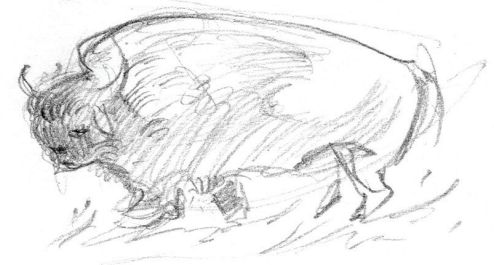
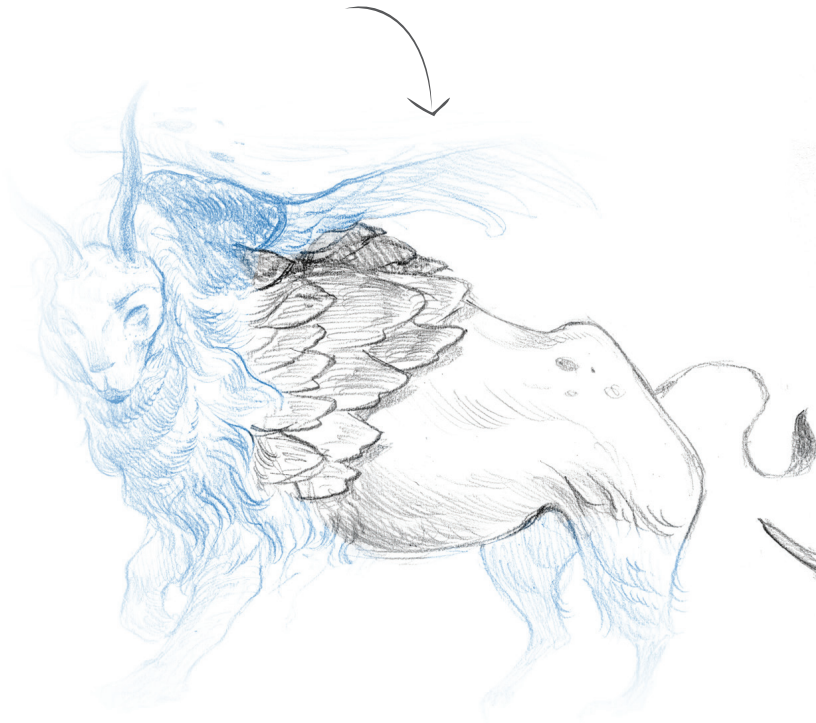




# Body and overall shape

On page 119 I mentioned the narrative potential of shapes. In the design of the witch, there are a lot of round shapes to portray a friendly and approachable character. The guardian beast will contrast with this, so here I will use a lot of pointy shapes to suggest a sense of possible danger and to add an aggressive element to the creature.

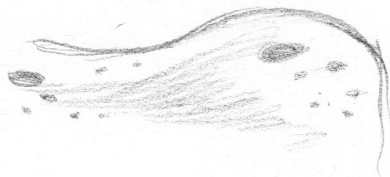
*I begin by sketching a few thumbnails to establish the silhouette or shape of the creature.*



*I create some gesture sketches to study existing animals with the silhouette that I have in mind, including buffalo and rhinoceroses.*



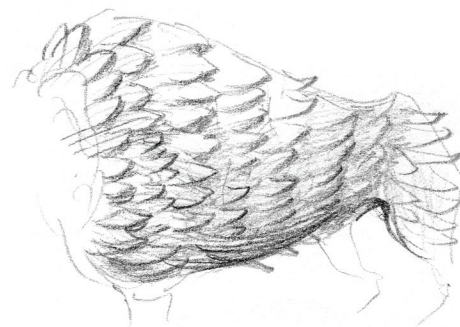




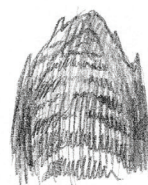
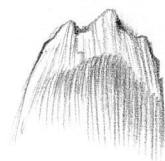
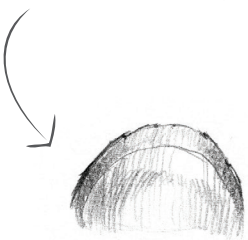
Considering the guardian aspect of the creature, I explore adding scales to the design, like armor. This is inspired by animals such as the pangolin and spiny turtle.



I also experiment with some mark-making, thinking about how to best portray fur.



The brief calls for a "brute" creature, and an effective way to convey this is to add large masses that give the beast a bulky, looming presence.







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