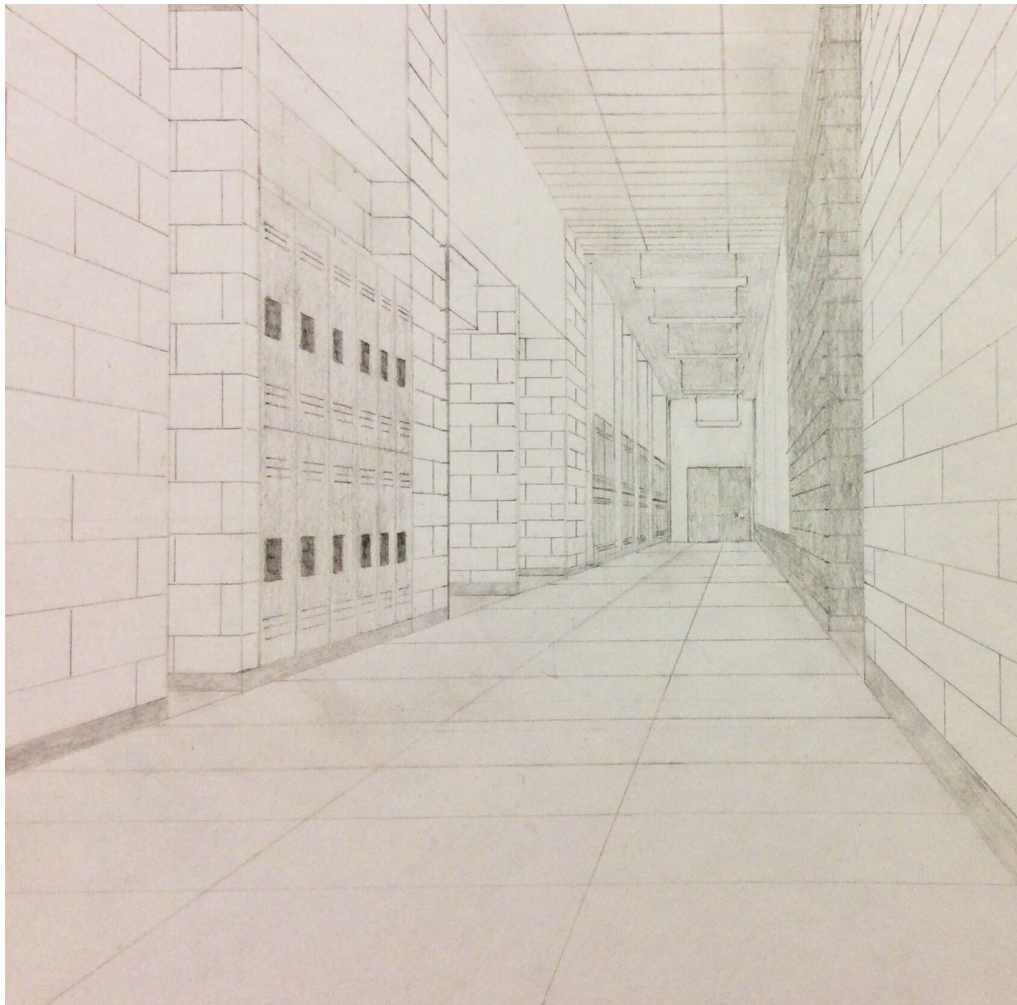


# Perspective: An Introduction

## What is PERSPECTIVE?

Linear Perspective is a system used to create images that appear three-dimensional on a two-dimensional surface (like a drawing or painting).

There are various kinds of linear perspective, but all of them use lines and points to create the illusion of objects in three-dimensional space.



## Setting up

Click the video above and see how to set up your drawing board.



## VOCABULARY

*Here are some terms that you need to know...*

**LINEAR PERSPECTIVE** is a system that uses lines and points to create an illusion of three-dimensional objects on a two dimensional surface.

**VANISHING POINT** is the place where lines moving away from the viewer appear to converge. There are often multiple vanishing points in a perspective drawing.

**HORIZON LINE** is the imaginary line that exists at the eye level of the viewer.

**ORTHOGONAL LINE** is a line that shows perspective by passing through a vanishing point.

## History

**Paolo Uccello** (1397-1475) was an Italian artist and innovator in developing linear perspective. He was said to have been so obsessed with perspective that, after hearing him talking in his sleep, his angry wife accused him of having an affair with a woman named *Prospettiva* (perspective).

Below is an early example of Uccello's work in perspective, *The Battle of San Romano*. Note the spears on the ground and how they point backward toward a vanishing point.



ABOVE:  
Paolo Uccello

LEFT:  
The Battle of San  
Romano



## MORE ON HOW IT'S DONE

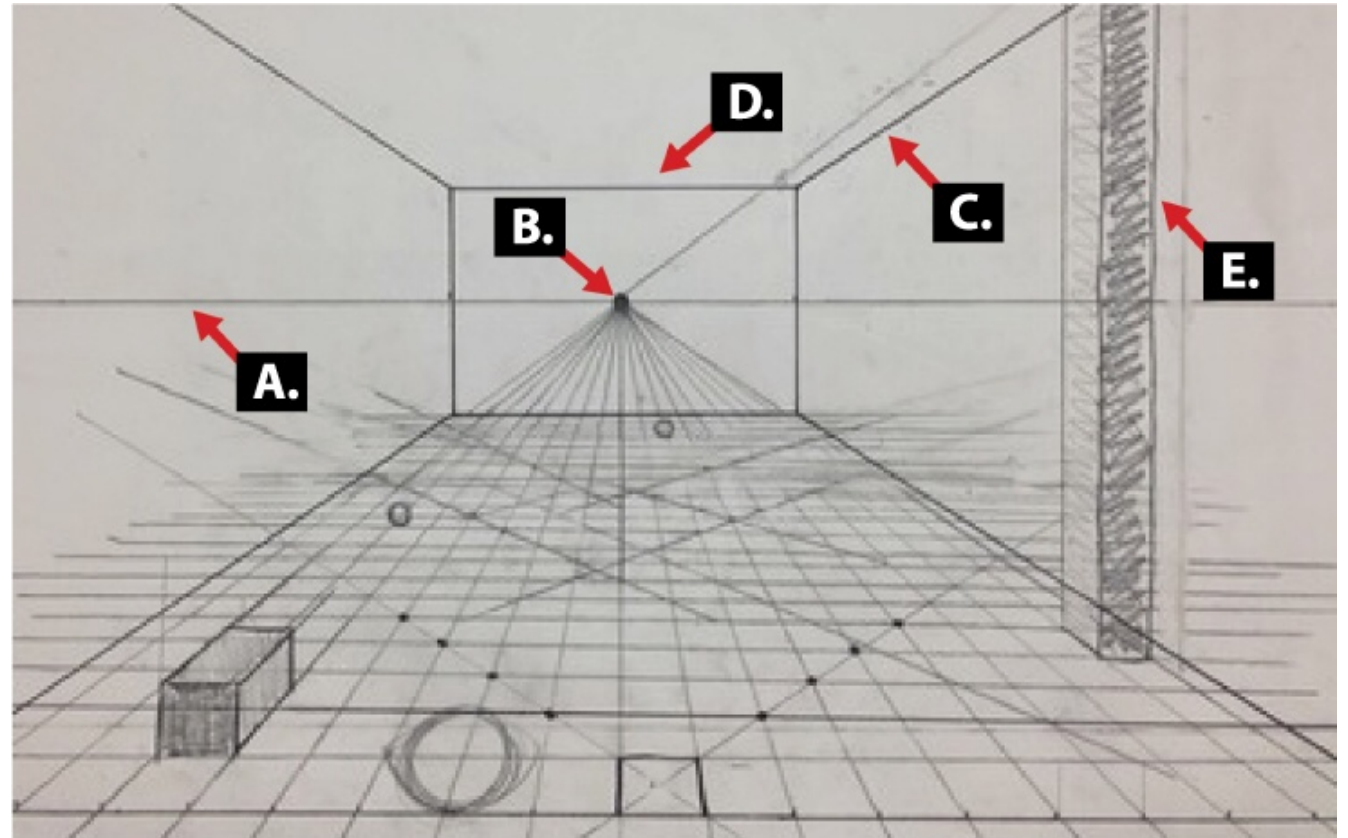
You've learned how to set up your drawing board, and some of the vocabulary related to perspective. You've learned a little about the history, too. Now, let's take a look at a very basic perspective drawing to learn a little more about this useful technique.

The image at right is a simple, one-point perspective drawing. The artist began by first drawing the **HORIZON LINE (A)**, and then marking a single **VANISHING POINT (B)**.

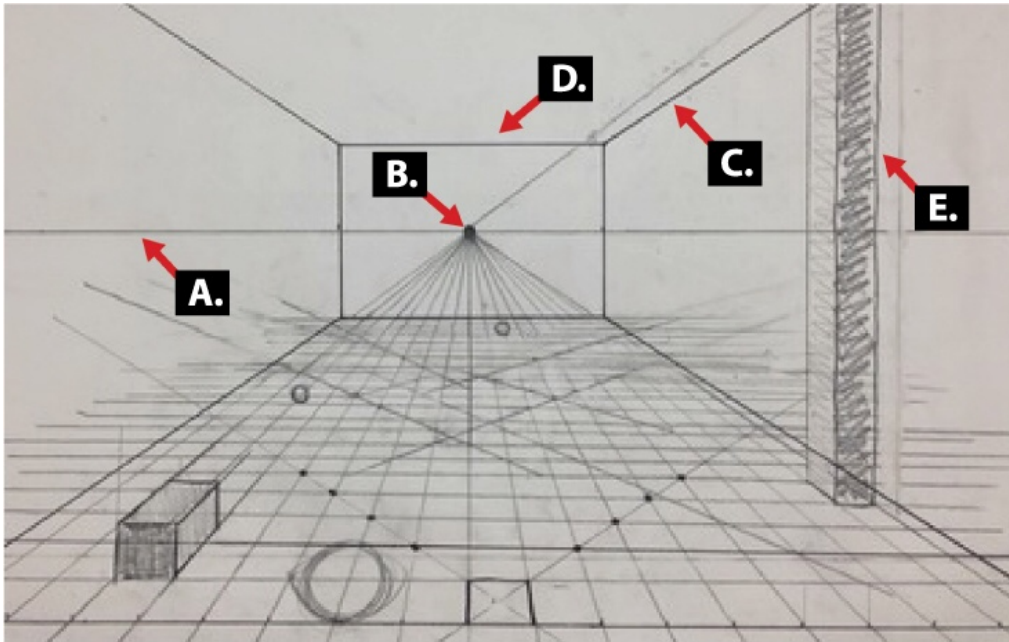
The **VANISHING POINT** is the point where lines that are parallel to the viewer's direction of gaze would appear (if extended) to converge. Think about looking down a set of railroad tracks and you'll get the idea.

Those lines, the ones that appear to be parallel to the viewer's gaze and are headed to the vanishing point, also have a name: **ORTHOGONALS (C)**.

It is also important to note that lines that are perpendicular to the viewer's gaze stay the way they appear in reality. **HORIZONTAL (D)** and **VERTICAL (E)** lines are drawn absolutely horizontally and vertically.







## Guess what... YOU'RE READY TO BEGIN!

You have all of the basic ideas that you need to create your own room or hallway drawing. Set up your board, establish a horizon line and place a vanishing point on the horizon line near the center.

**HINT 1:** After you've done all of the set-up, your next step is to create the rectangle that represents the far wall.

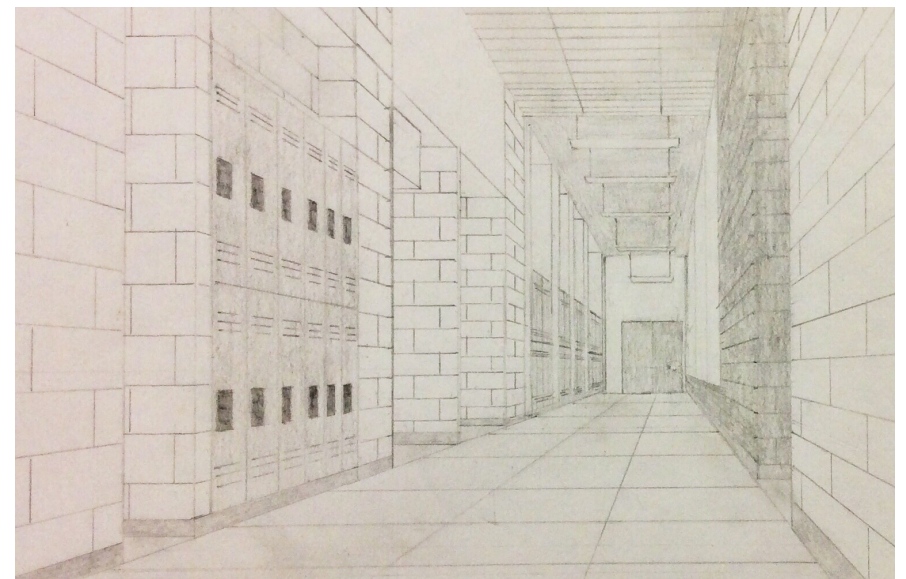
**HINT 2:** Remember that if it appears to be horizontal or vertical, it probably is!

So, get started on your drawing. Unlike many artistic techniques, **linear perspective** has definitely right and wrong answers. Once you understand the basics of the system and have practiced them for a while, you'll be surprised how easy it is to have success.

Study the drawing above again. After the artist added his **VANISHING POINT**, he drew the rectangle around it that represents the far wall of the room. He then lined up a straight edge with the corners of the rectangle and the **VANISHING POINT**. He drew outward from the corners of the rectangle toward the edges of the paper. Notice how these simple lines quickly establish floor, walls, and ceiling of the room.

### IMPORTANT NOTE

Your **HORIZON LINE** is not likely to be on the floor. As it represents the viewer's eye level, it wouldn't be at the floor unless your viewer was laying his head on the ground (or was a bug!).



## **Illustrations:**

Cover, page 2, page 9

Cresswell-Clay, Nathaniel. "Hallway." Shippensburg Area Senior High School, Introduction to Drawing.

Pages 4-5

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Page 7

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