

Shape and Form

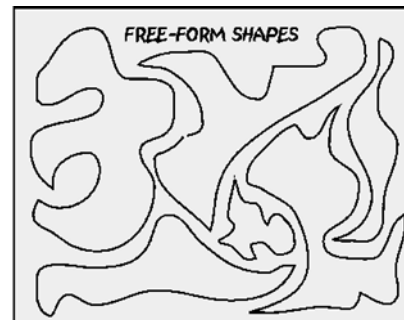
Shapes and forms are very similar. This is why we will be discussing these two elements together. So similar in fact, that only one thing separates the two elements – depth.

Shapes are flat, two-dimensional objects that have height and length. Forms are three-dimensional. Like shapes, **forms have height and length, but they also have depth.** All shapes and forms fit into one of two categories:

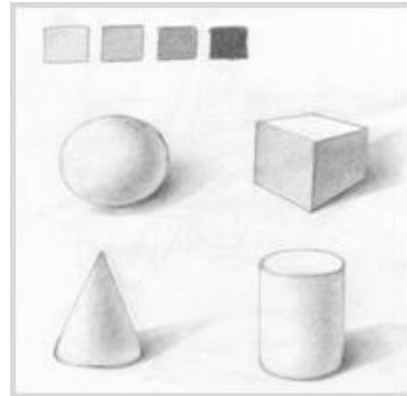
Geometric shapes/forms – manmade, precise objects that look like they were drawn with a ruler or some other drawing tools.



Organic shapes/forms – natural, freeform objects that have flowing lines and edges



There are many, many geometric shapes and forms. In fact, you could probably make a list of dozens of them. However, the **basic shapes are circle, square, triangle and rectangle.** The **basic forms are sphere, cube, cone and cylinder.** All other shapes and forms are variations or combinations of these basic ones. Organic shapes and forms, by their very nature, are a little harder to pinpoint. Most organic shapes don't have regular sides or edges. This makes it nearly impossible to give them names.



Artists use shapes to create flat, two-dimensional types of drawings and paintings. Forms are used to create a more realistic or three-dimensional style of art. In order to produce a solid, realistic piece of art, artists must also master the element of space. It's not enough to know how to draw three-dimensionally; you must also be able to create the illusion of depth on a flat piece of paper or canvas. In the next few sections, we will discuss the "tricks of the trade" that help artists produce very realistic paintings and drawings.