

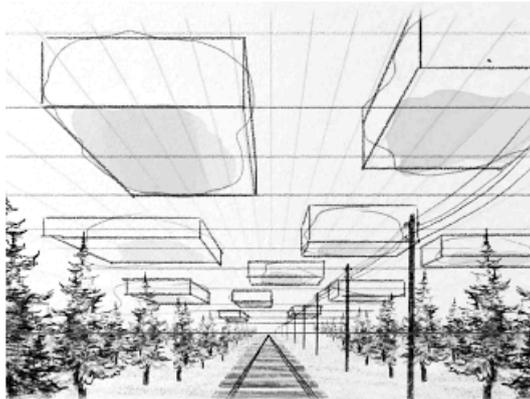
THE TEXTURE OF THE SKY



Hilary Brace, *Untitled*, 2020

Look down at the sky, watch as it unfurls and blooms beneath you. Textured layers of shadow and mist, the shifting oceans of gradient tones.

The sky is rich with clouds. Observe the textures and edges where they meet, where they define each other. Mimic this as you sketch. Define clouds in the gaps between the sky.

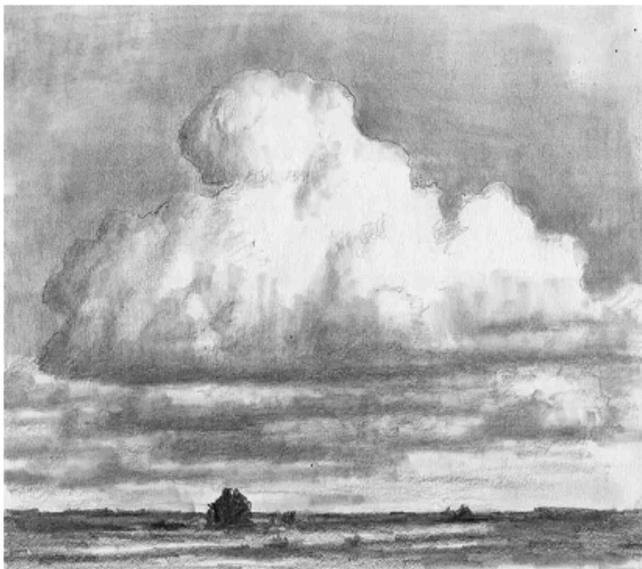


Clouds are fluffy, balls of cotton, floating through the sky and they follow the rules of perspective just like everything else. But don't stress – drawing clouds isn't about getting each detail perfectly measured!

To capture their form, here's a cheat sheet:

The closer a cloud is to the horizon, the smaller and softer it appears. For an extra pop of realism, look to where the clouds overlap, to create a sense of depth.

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Cumulus clouds (Lower Atmosphere)
They have a flat base with a fluffy dome.
 Simplify these domes as spheres to build detail and texture.



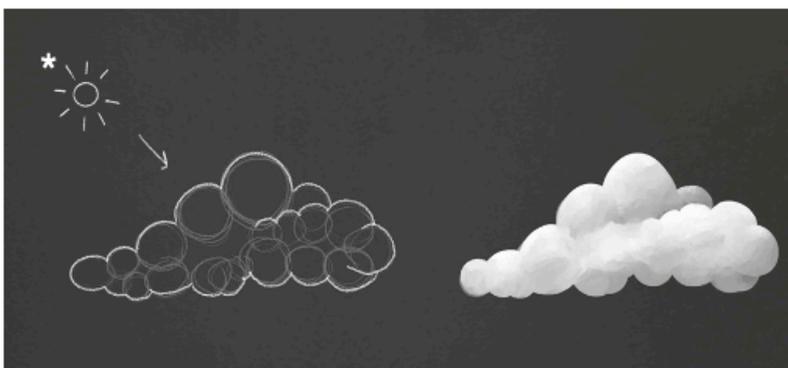
Cirrus Clouds (Higher Atmosphere)
They are thin and wispy like hair blowing in the wind.
 Draw them softly, making light impressions with an eraser over flat tones for the sky.



Stratus clouds (Very low atmosphere)
They are fog-like masses that may touch the ground. These clouds don't have much shape, so focus on the negative space at their edges, and the soft textures within.



Nimbus Clouds (Rain clouds)
Storm clouds can be incredibly tall, with beautiful billowing patterns. Picture them as being made up of several nimbus clouds, building texture from 'smaller' spheres.



This diagram helps us picture clouds as 3D forms, by simplifying to overlapping spheres.

From these simplifications we can develop our clouds by adding tone, softening edges, and adding finer details to these geometric shapes.

*Where is the light coming from?

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