

Simple to follow theory for landscape drawing and painting

This simple system will help you achieve the illusion of depth in your work, by making different elements appear closer and further away.

To help you achieve this we will first look at one point perspective followed by a bit of color theory and lastly mark making. There's a practical activity at the end of this handout, you can do it with any art materials you have at home.

One point perspective: definition

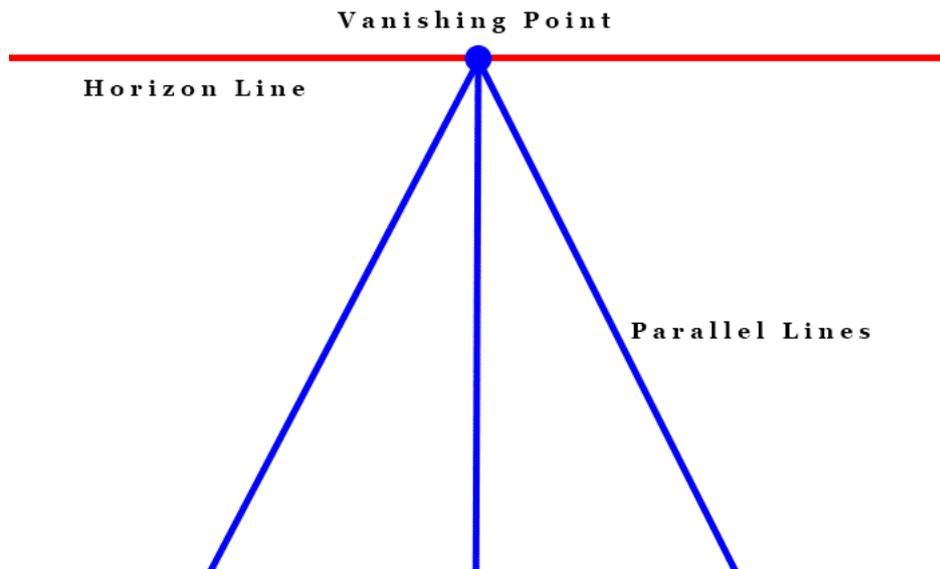
“...a mathematical system for representing three-dimensional objects and space on a two-dimensional surface by means of intersecting lines that are drawn vertically and horizontally and that radiate from one point on a horizon line...”

Although this definition sounds complicated, the concept is relatively simple. One point perspective is a drawing method that shows how things appear to get smaller as they get further away, converging towards a single 'vanishing point' on the horizon line. It is a way of drawing objects upon a flat piece of paper (or other drawing surface) so that they look three-dimensional and realistic.

Drawing in one point perspective is usually appropriate when the subject is viewed 'front-on' (such as when looking directly at the face of a cube or the wall of building) or when looking directly down something long, like a road or railway track.

Visual examples

Here are two visual examples of one point perspective used for a landscape. On the first one we can see the theory and on the second one we can see how David Hockney applies this simple theory to represent a snowy landscape.



You can use this image as a guide to draw your own or perhaps you'll prefer to do a picture from your imagination or from another image you might find in the internet. Whichever you choose, make sure to do a drawing or a drawing and painting using one point perspective. In that way you'll really take onboard the theory by applying to your own work.



Steps:

If you don't have paint at home try using pencils, pastels or any color art materials you have handy.

1. Draw the horizon line, vanishing point and parallel lines as shown on the previous page. You can do it with paint 😊
2. Paint the sky using two tones, a darker and lighter. Use expressive mark making.
3. Paint everything white from the horizon line downwards leaving the parallel line marks slightly visible.
4. Paint in the green fields which divide the horizon and ground.
5. Paint in the brown and green road perspective lines.
6. Paint in the shadows on the snow using light blue and light purple.

7. Paint in all the perspective fields lines on both the right and left hand sides.
8. Paint the trees from the bottom layer upwards allowing each layer to dry before applying the next one. Use the darkest colors on the first layers and the lightest at the top.
9. Paint in the hedges using directional mark-making.
10. Paint all the details using a fine brush.