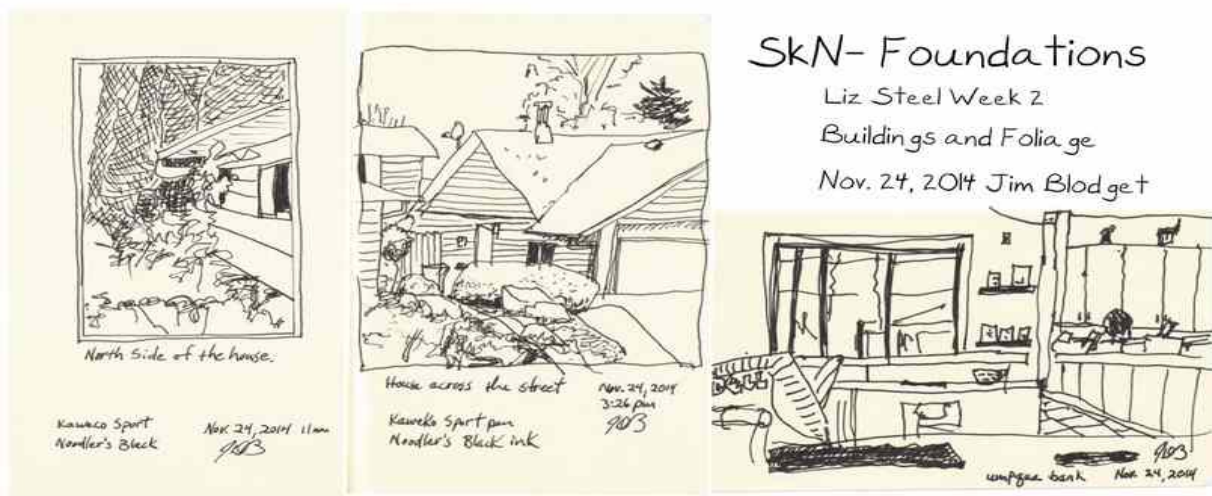


Straight Line Practice

by: Jim Blodget

Dec. 27, 2014



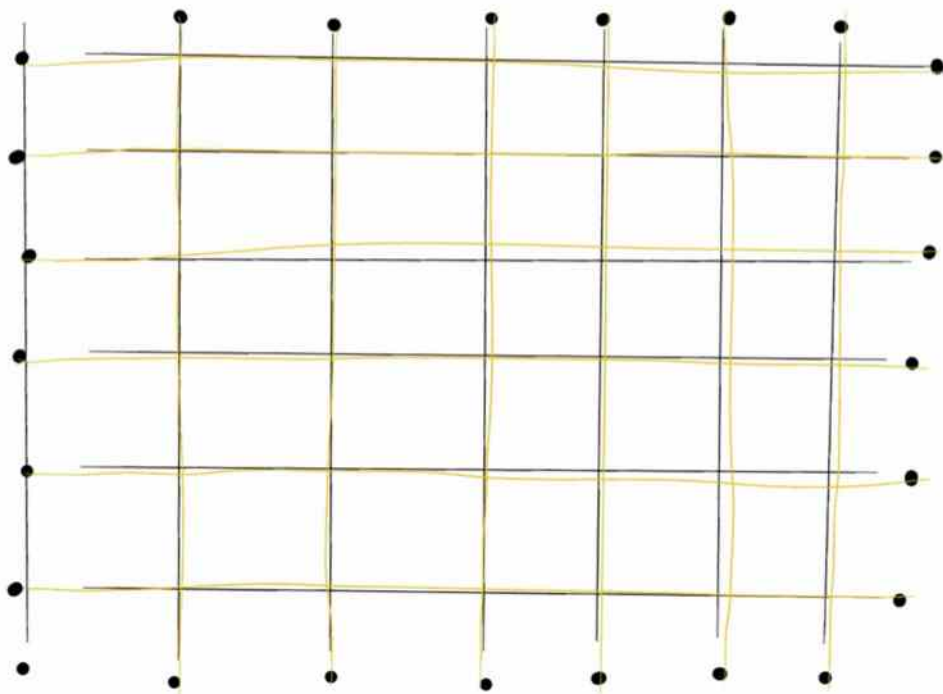
I noticed after doing these sketches that all my lines were wobbly. I didn't want them wobbly. I was trying to draw them straight. I knew that I needed to practice drawing straight lines, but I didn't know what to try. I did a bit of research and found several how-to articles and Youtube videos. Common advice included:

1. Draw from the shoulder, not the elbow, wrist, or fingers.
2. Find the most comfortable direction to draw a straight line and always use that direction turning the paper to draw other angles. Usually for a right handed person that's drawing a diagonal line going from the lower left to the upper right.
3. Use a guide. Place bold, dark lines behind your paper and trace or use a straight edge or slide your hand along the edge of the paper to draw horizontal or vertical lines.
4. Draw from point to point.
5. Keep your eye on the end point or at a point ahead of your pencil or pen as you draw.

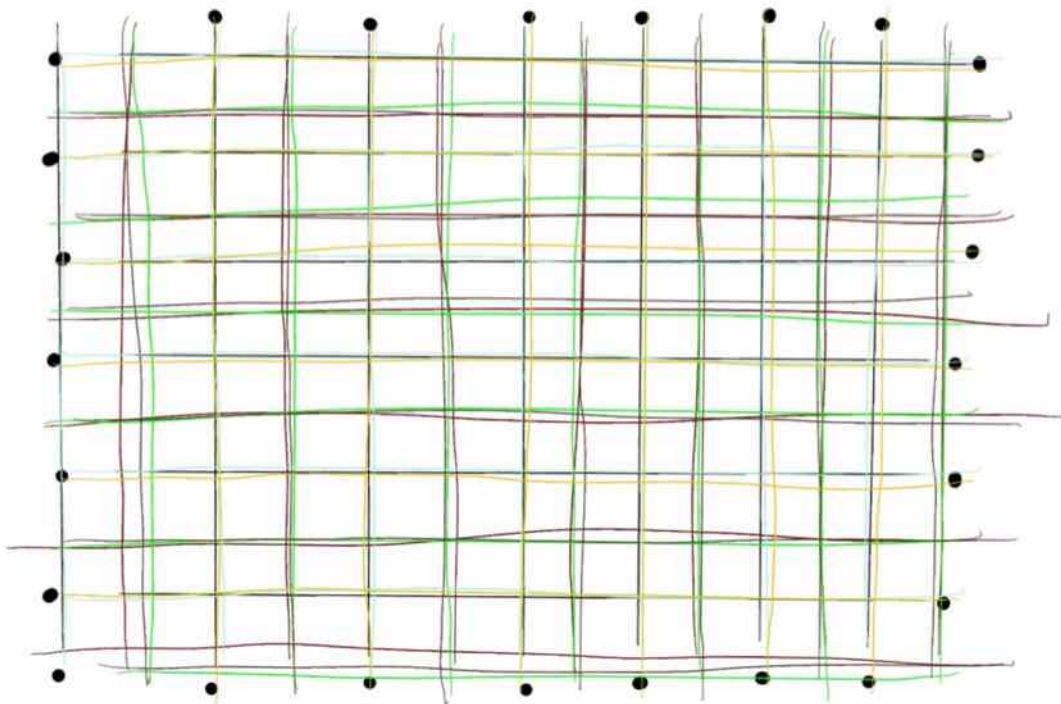
I knew from practicing in other fields that you need to practice with a purpose (with a specific goal). You don't progress by repeating the skills you do well. It's best to practice mindfully the skills you need to improve. You also need to attribute failure to specific technical problems so you know what to work on in the next practice session.

Drawing is both a physical and a mental activity. You need to practice to gain physical strength and dexterity – to make that muscle, bone, nerve, spinal cord, brain connection and turn that conscious action into an automatic one and make it a permanent hardwired path. You need to form good habits and strengthen the right muscles. You also need to relax with a goal to draw effortlessly.

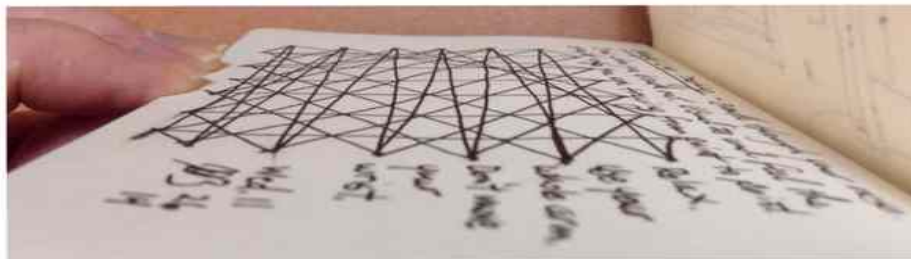
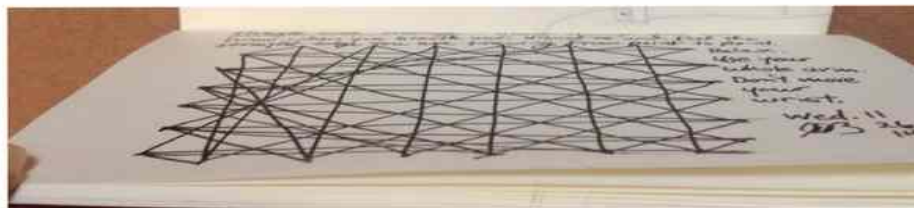
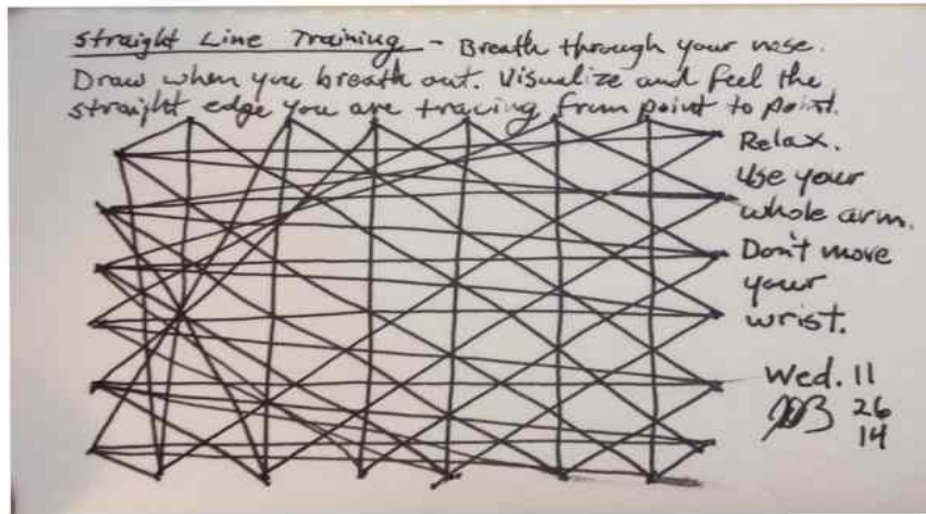
I decided to practice drawing lines from point to point using my whole arm moving from my shoulder keeping my fingers, wrist, and elbow locked. I would practice without turning my paper or using a guide.



Straight Line Training

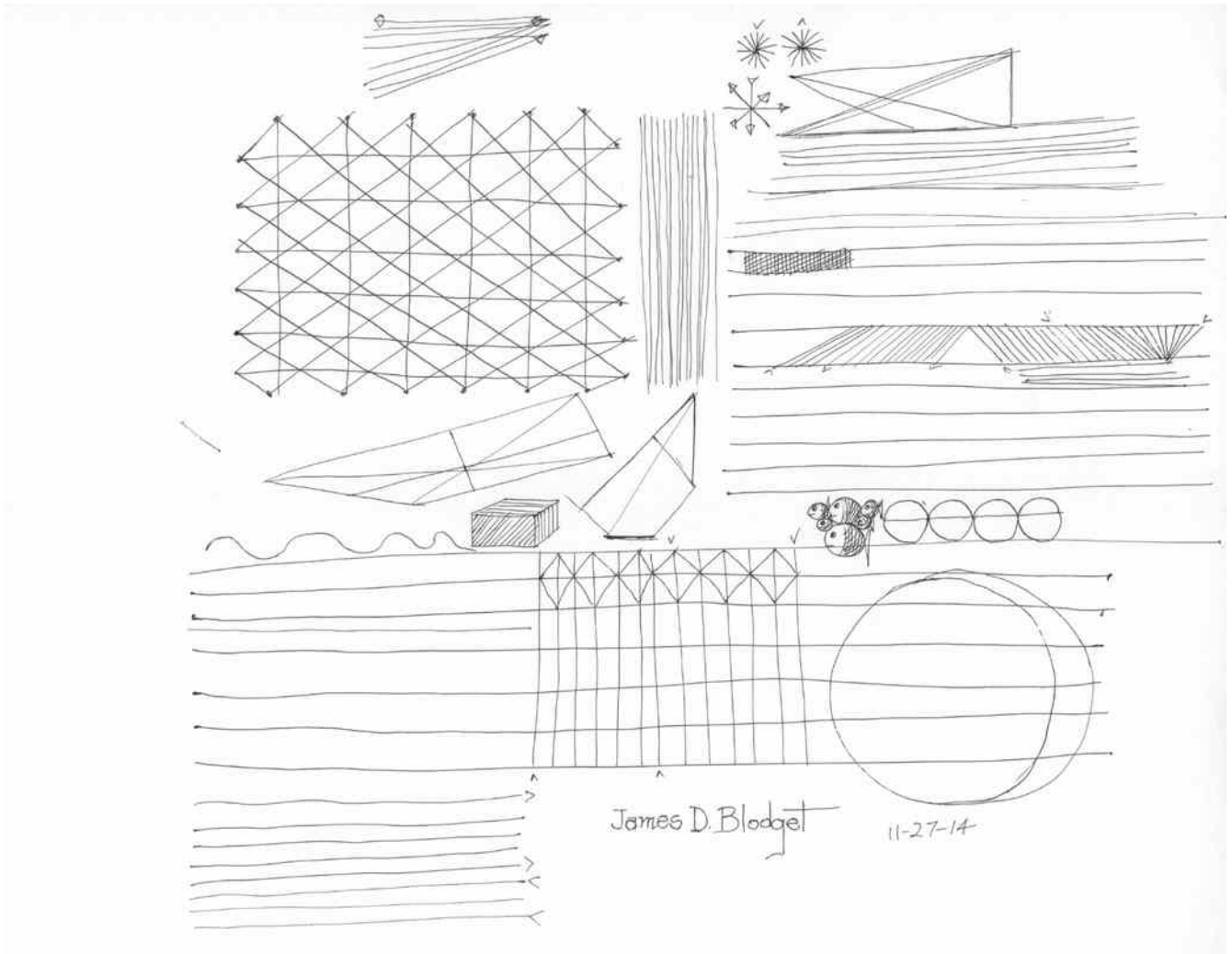


I first tried practicing with my iPad, but I abandoned that in favor of working with pens on paper. There are differences between media. I figured if I was going to form good habits I would need to work with the actual media I would use.

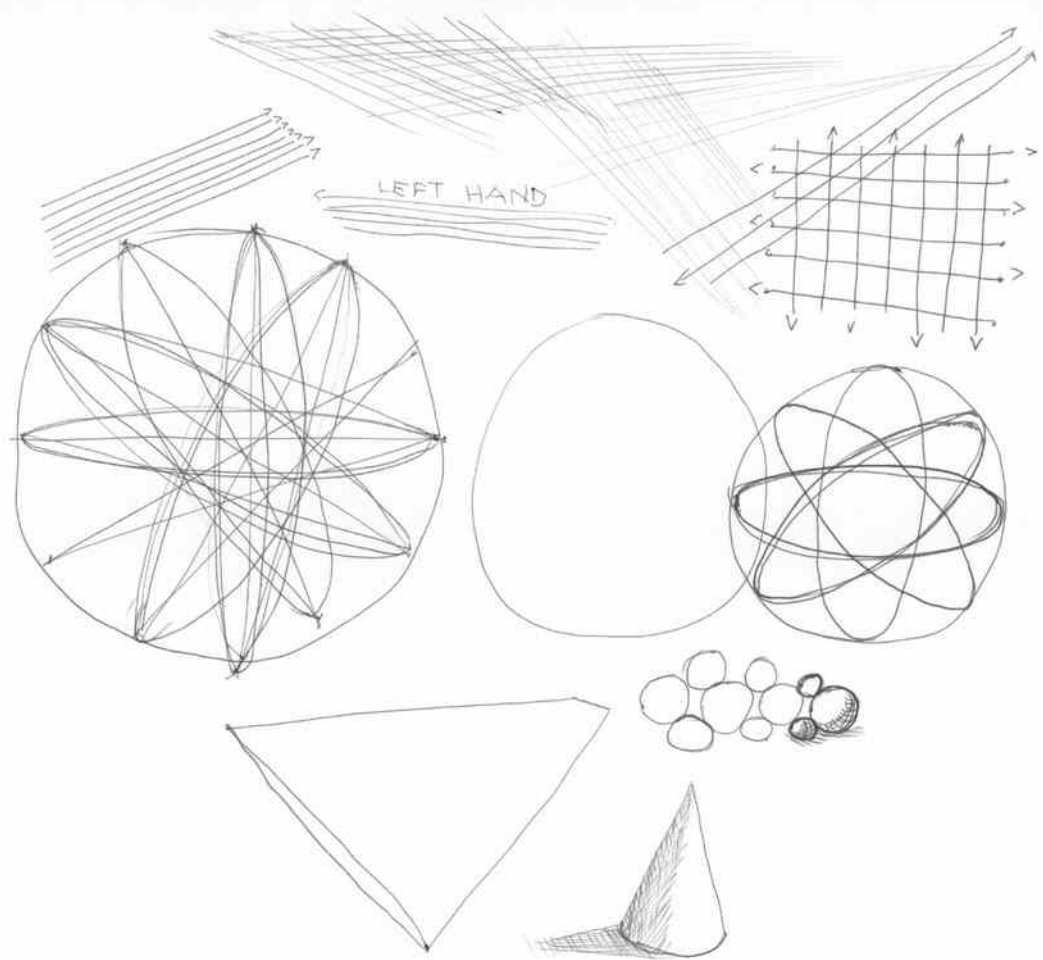


I discovered that you can better judge the straightness of the lines if you foreshorten the lines by sighting down the page.

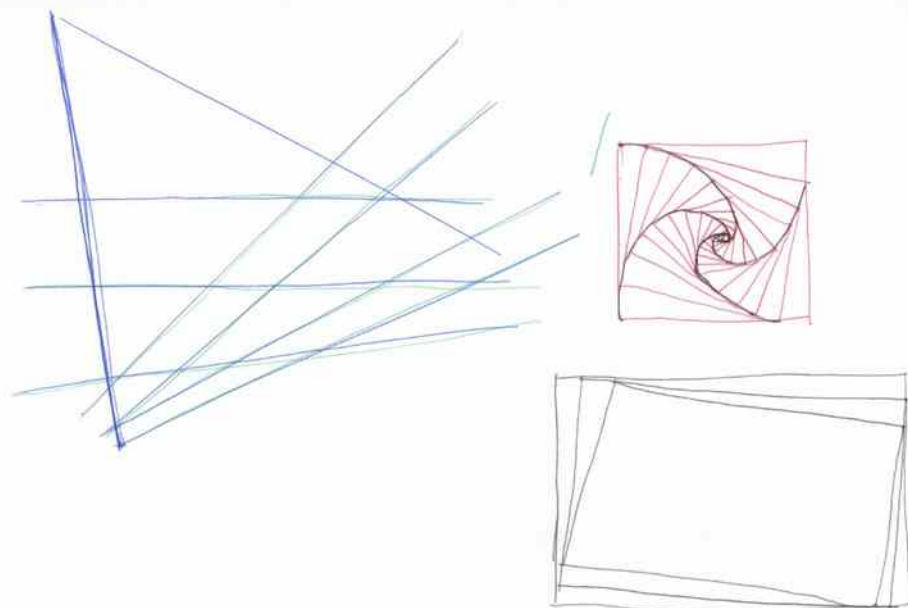
For the next few days I practiced drawing freehand with a ballpoint pen. I tried drawing lines of different lengths in all directions.



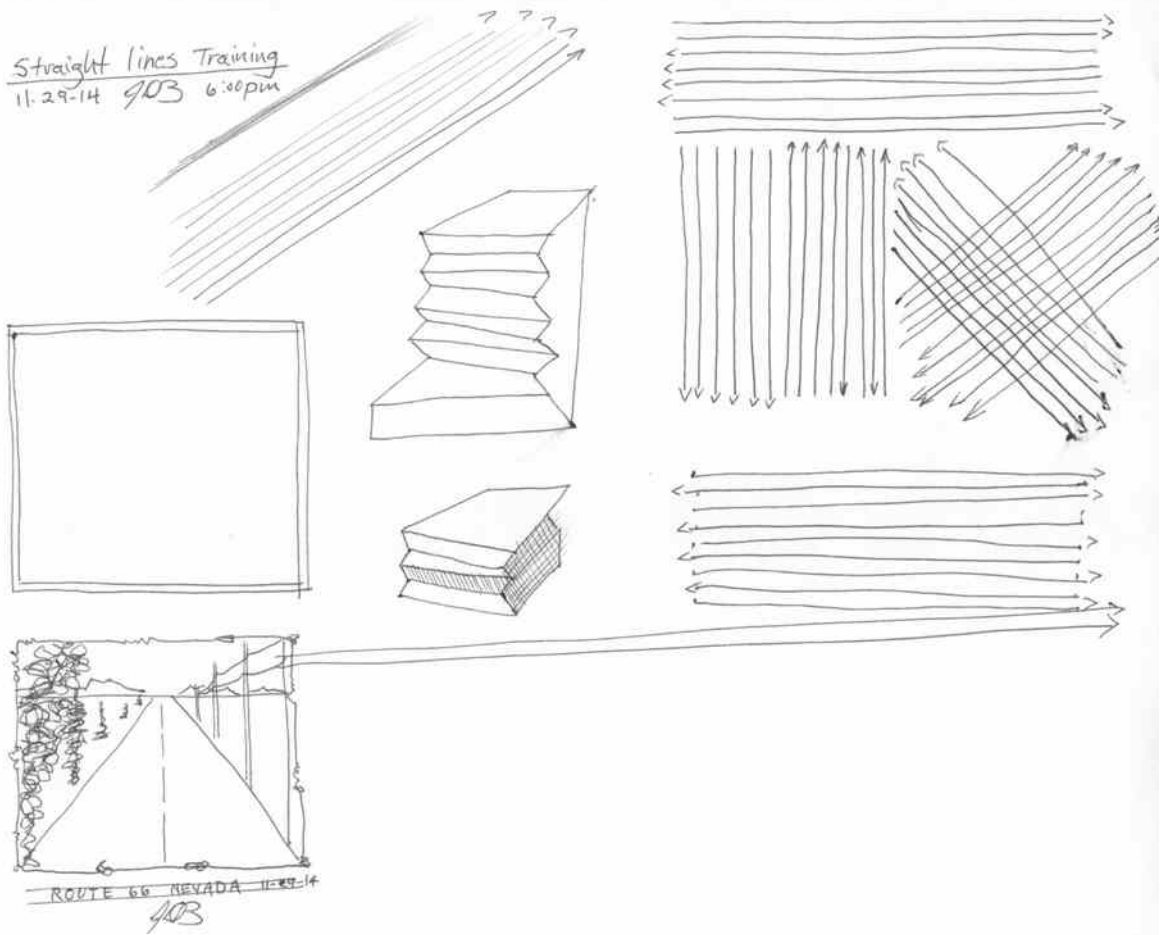
My first attempts were shaky, particularly long lines.



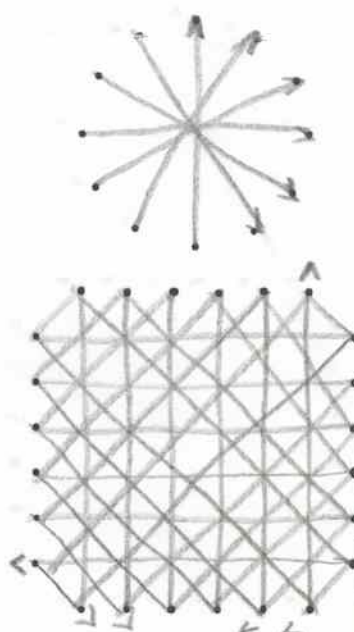
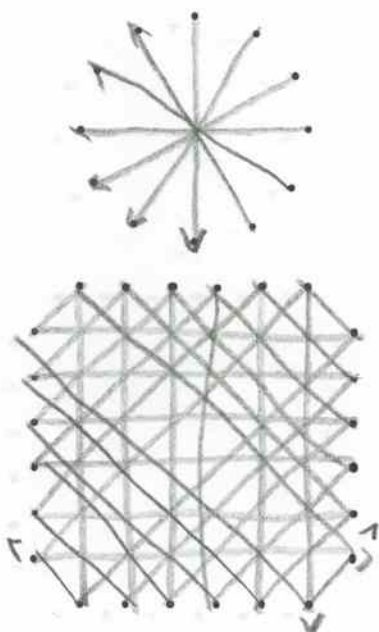
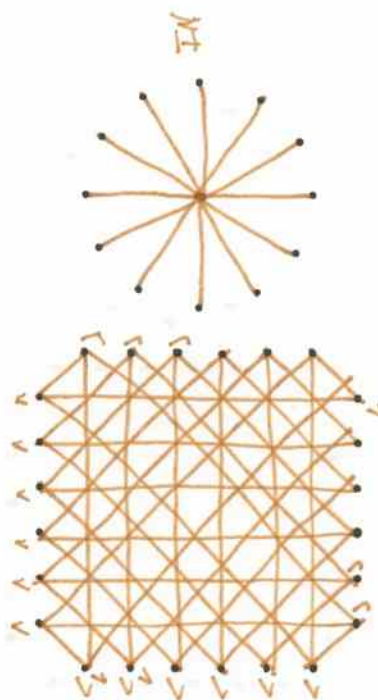
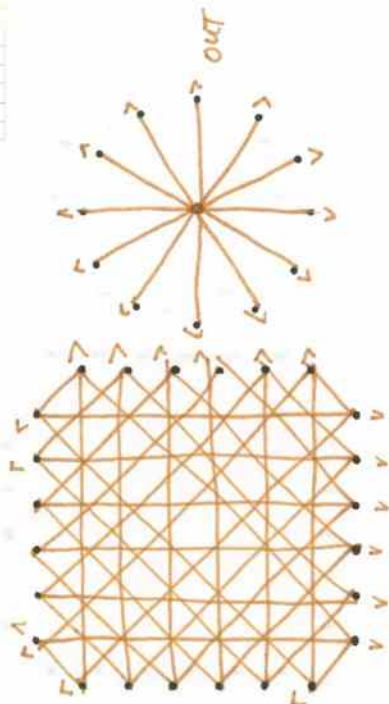
At this point I was also trying various curves. I decided to concentrate on drawing straight lines for several weeks. I would tackle curves later.



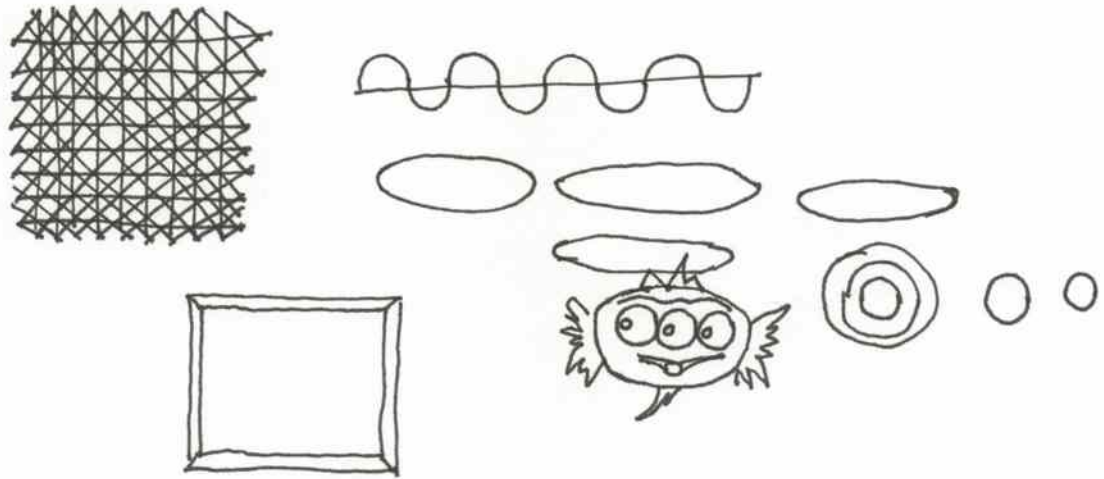
I did a bit of research on straight line designs to add interest to my practice.



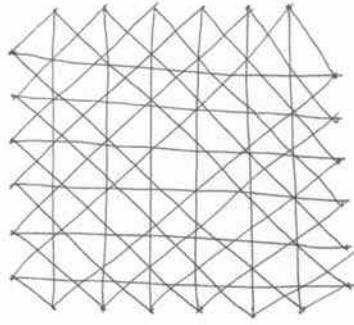
I'm doing better, but some directions are still worse than others. I did a little straight line sketch to test my skills.



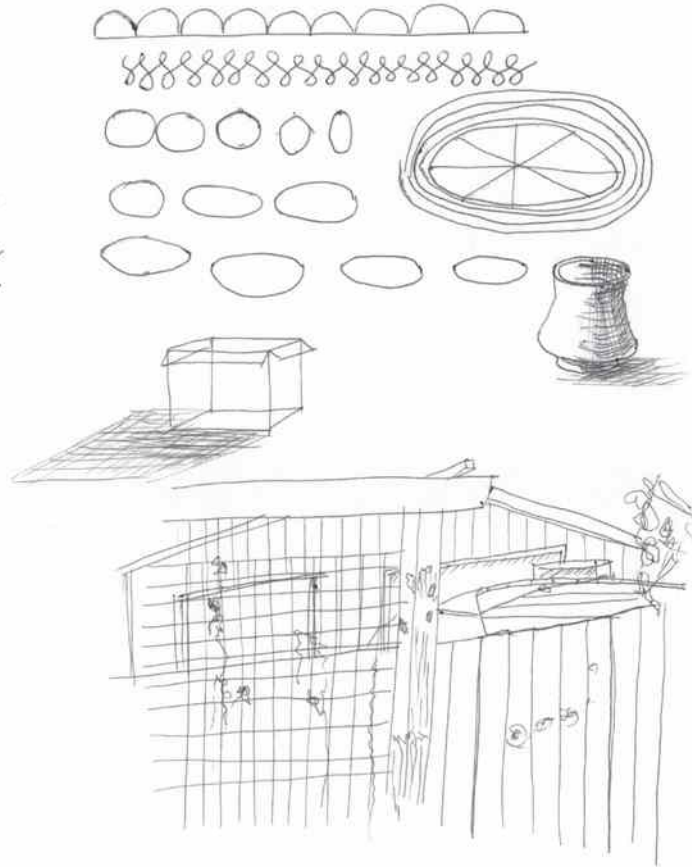
I made a practice sheet that I could print with points on a rectangle and around a circle.



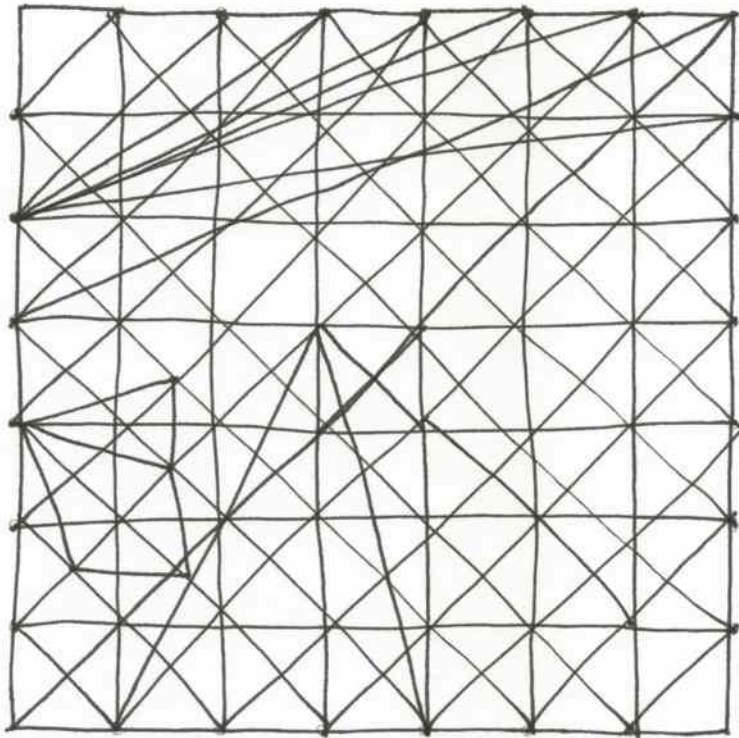
Couldn't resist trying a few curves.



Line Practice
12-1-14 2013



After warming up, I drew a scene looking out my window that had a lot of straight lines.



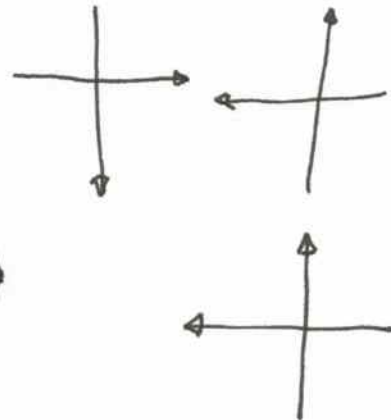
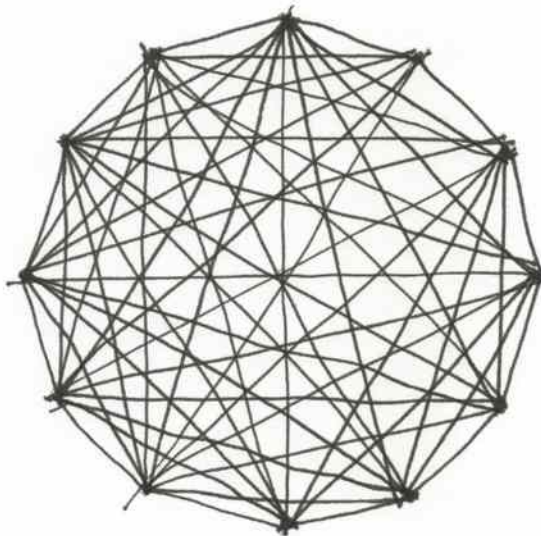
Straight Line

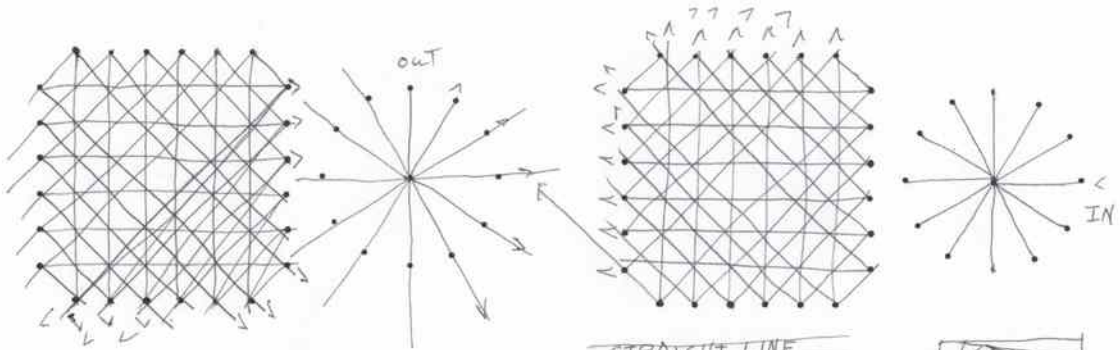
Practice

Dec. 4, 2014

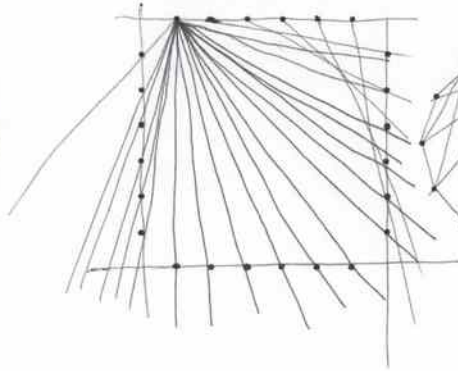
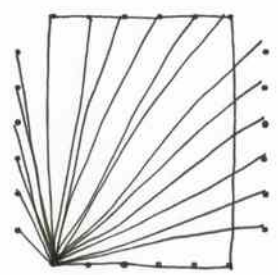
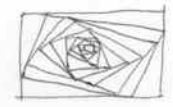
103

uni-ball Vision fine

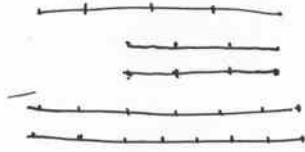




STRAIGHT LINE
PRACTICE 12.8.14
903



New Paper

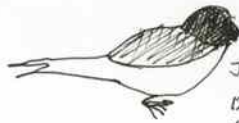
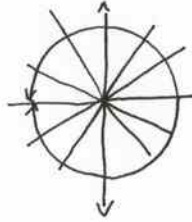


LINE STUDY

12-11-14

AB

UNI-BALL VISION FINE PEN

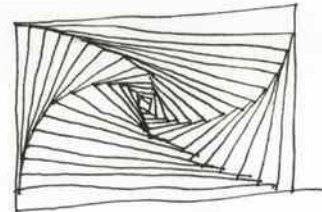


JUNCO

12-24-14

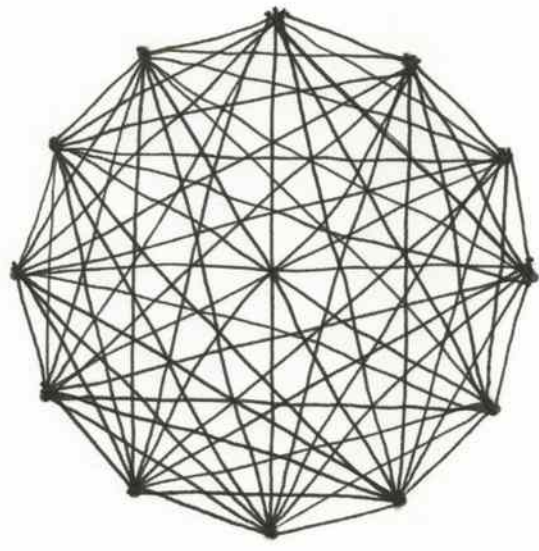
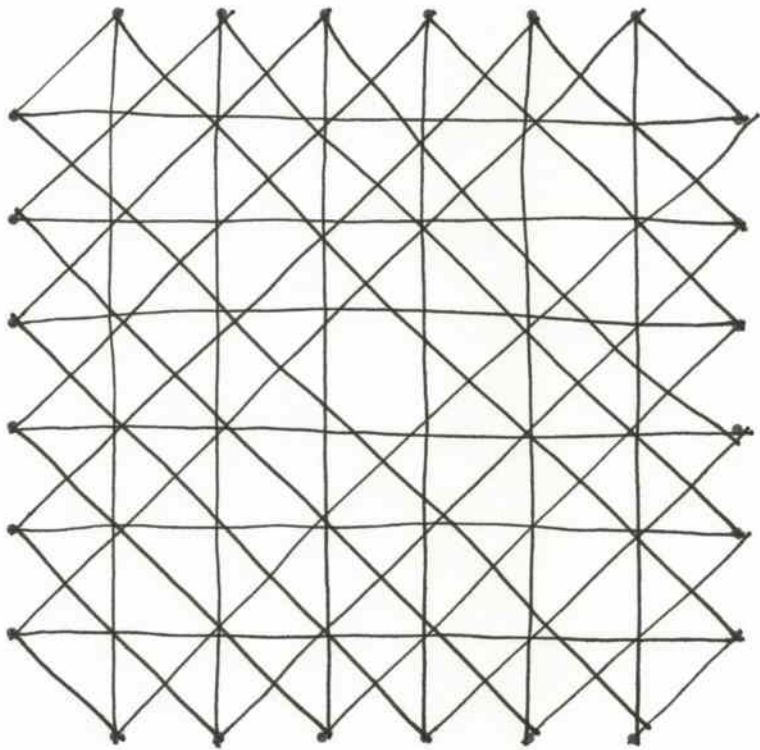
Kawaco Sport

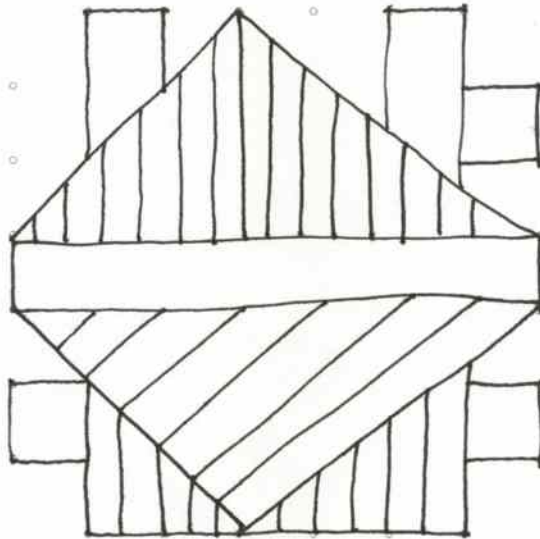
AB



Print from Epson Print on iPod
set to Photo Quality Paper

Kawaco Sport
12.22.14
JDB



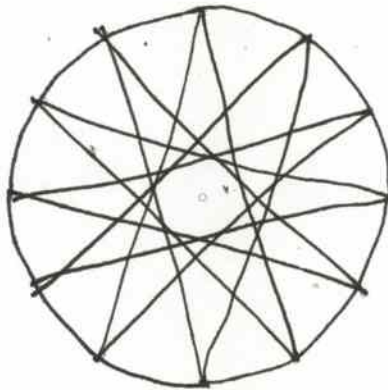


Straight Line Practice

12-24-14

JB

Kawaco Sport



Print from Pages on iPad

It's been about four weeks now of sporadic practice, but I think it's helping.



This is a small sketch I did on location in my 3 ½ x 5 inch Moleskine pocket notebook. I can see some improvement.

I had a few surprises. I thought drawing from left to right, top to bottom would be the easiest directions. I discovered however that my straightest lines were drawn by pushing the pen from right to left and from bottom to top. The same is true for me when it comes to drawing diagonal lines. I get consistently straighter lines by pushing from lower right to upper left than pulling from upper left to lower right and by pushing from upper right to lower left rather than pulling from lower left to upper right.