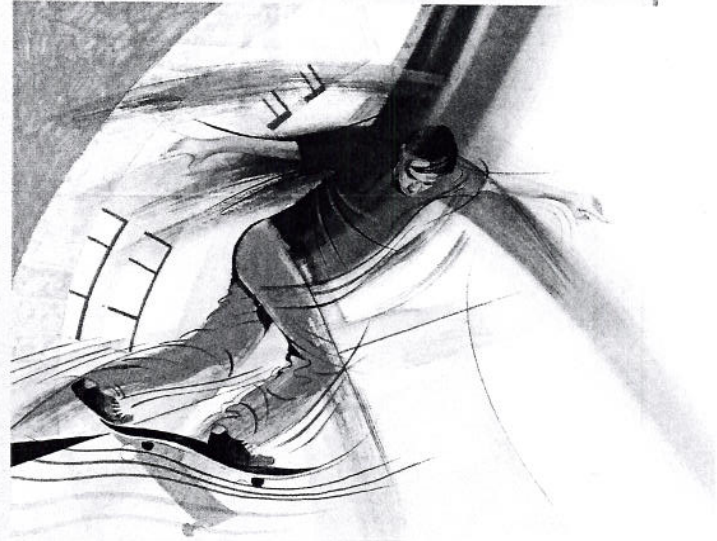


## Directional lines

Just as lines conduct the traveler through the contours of a map, directional lines guide the viewer through a composition. As an artist, you have the power to determine where to place them for emphasis. Imagine you are taking your onlooker through the composition, either on a frenetic rollercoaster ride or gentle walk through the woods. Draw a skateboarder in action using directional lines to indicate the direction of dynamic movement.



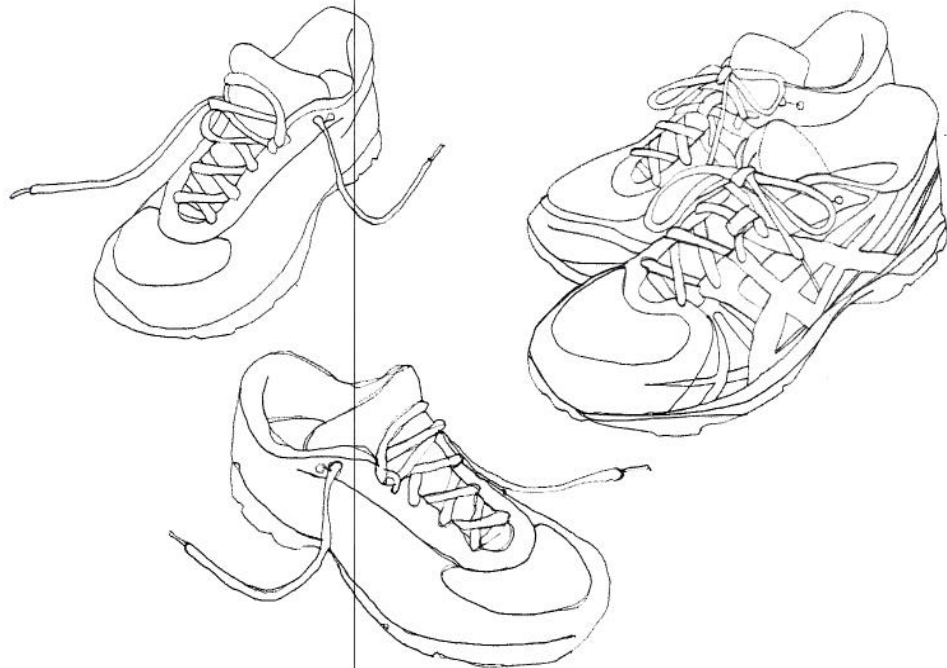
At first glance, the eye is attracted to the fluid red brushmarks on the body of the gymnast. It is led first down then up to the ribbon spirals.



The red element once again pulls the viewer's eye down in a forward-moving diagonal from the top right edge of the composition toward the skateboard. Contrasting lines balance the piece and add dynamism.

## 4 Outlines and contour drawing

Outlines follow the outside edges of a subject. These kinds of lines can be worked as a continuous line drawing, where you look at your paper from time to time, or through a blind drawing process, where you purposely avoid peeking at your paper or canvas until you are finished. You can modify any outline drawing by switching hands or adding textural accents and mixed media to your initial linework. Practice your drawing and painting skills further by tracing the outside edges of figures and objects in nature and other environments. Contour drawings describe the form of the object, a little like drawing a series of hoops around an arm to explain its shape. The English sculptor Henry Moore used this method of observational drawing in many of his figure compositions or sketches.



Choose a simple, everyday subject such as a sneaker and draw its outline. Getting the shape right without any interior lines to help guide your measurements can be tricky. Attempt a second sketch, this time including more visual information (for example, the laces). Finally, draw all the details on the shoe. The curving shapes of its structure and decoration are similar to contour lines because they follow a 3D shape.

## 5 Virtual gallery

**Paul Getty Museum** Study the lines in Théodore Géricault's equestrian sketches.  
[www.getty.edu/art/gettyguide/art/objectdetails?artobj=246](http://www.getty.edu/art/gettyguide/art/objectdetails?artobj=246)

