

The Horizon Line

The Horizon Line: Defined as a straight line where the sky meets the land or where the sky meets the sea (the apparent line that separates the earth from the sky) – the literal horizon



If you sit down on the beach the horizon line comes down with your “point of view” (whether you are looking through your eyes or using a camera). The horizon line is your eye line .

Sometime we call the Horizon Line – The Eye Line

With the LOW horizon line – we see more sky and less ground



Now if we stand up and are really tall or stand on a ladder - the horizon line comes up with us. The HIGH horizon line means we see less sky and more ground



For the record: As artists we hate to have the horizon line in the dead centre of our page or film scene (the film frame). We would see an equal amount of the sky as we see of the ground. That would be perfect mathematical balance or symmetry.

That is something we hate – predictable patterns.

We need variety

We enjoy Variety In All Things – thank goodness for the rock formation



We are film makers – so we THINK FILM!

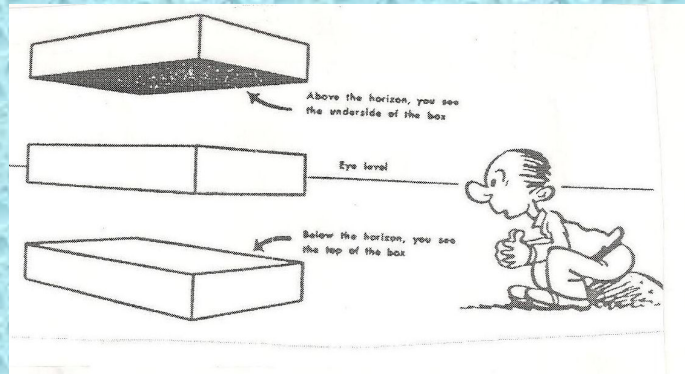
- As animators we have to think like a film maker – we are directors
- So before any film maker starts to shoot a scene they have to set up the physical camera
- Where they place the camera (how high) – THAT IS the Horizon line
- The audience sees our film scenes through the camera so we also call the horizon line the ***Audience's Eye Line***

The Camera

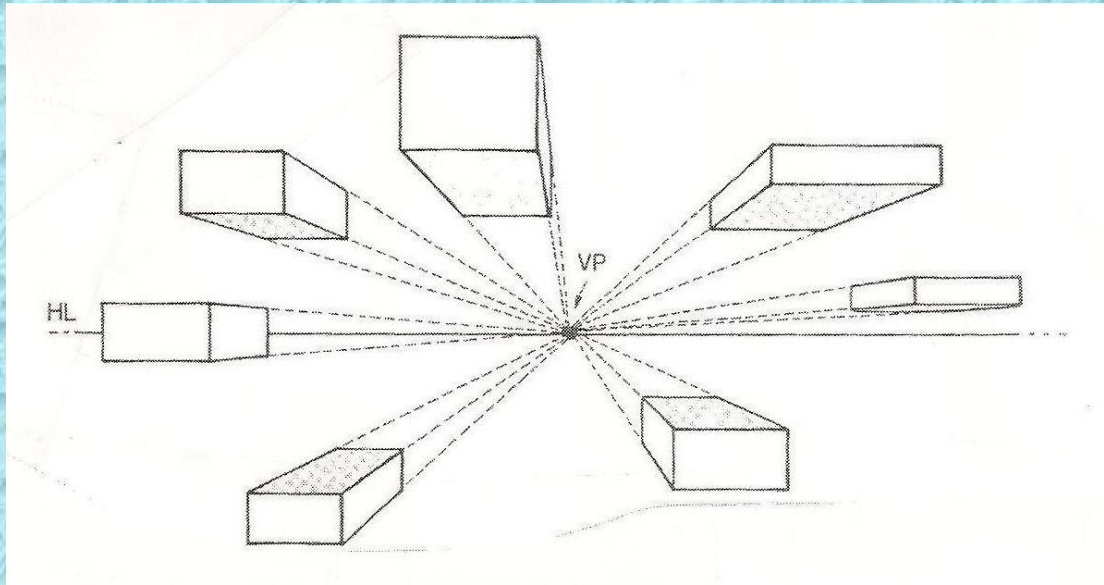
- In order to start any layout or prop drawing you have to start with a horizon line (A straight line on our animation paper) - in other words where are you going to place the camera
- We, as artists, are drawing on a 2D piece of paper and have to simulate what a real 3D camera see/ can do
- So by lowering or raising the horizon line on our page we are raising or lowering the camera (***which is the audience's point of view***)
- ***Just by drawing a line on our paper we are manipulating how the audiences views our film scene – always think of your animation paper as a film scene***
- The horizon line is very important to your drawing so it goes on first and it has to be done in a completely separate colour from anything else – when you have hundreds of perspective construction lines on your layout roughs and you can't find your horizon line you will be in trouble
- The horizon line is needed for controlling size and scale (something we will talk about down the road) – so your director / supervisor will ask you where your horizon line is - knowing full well you have no idea –***so START OVER – you got caught***

We are visual learners

- Let's look at your cubes – pick them up
- Look at your cube with your eyes looking at it straight on – right in the middle of your cube
- You cannot see any of the top or the bottom of the cube - fact



- Lower the cube a bit so it dips just below your eye line – you can now see on top of the cube – but just a sliver of it – a small amount. As you move the cube farther away from your eye - you see more of the surface (the top) of the cube

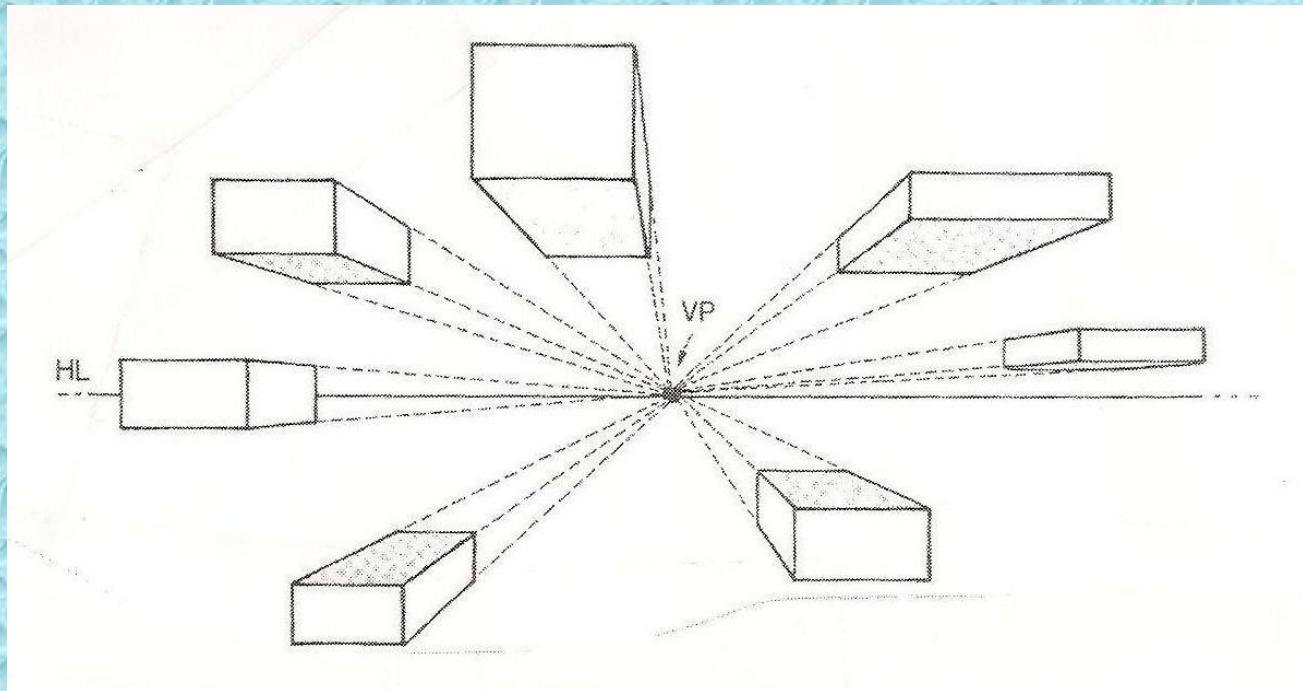


- Now move the cube just above your eye line – you now see a little bit of the bottom of the cube.
- As you move the box higher above your eye line you see more of the surface (the bottom) of the box

Horizon Line Facts

- There is only one horizon line in a background
- For one and two point perspective: All vanishing points occur on the horizon line
- You always start layouts with a horizon line and it must be labeled (with an HL with a circle around it) and drawn with a ruler
- The horizon line must be a separate colour than anything else in your drawing
- If any part of an object touches the horizon line – or if the horizon line crosses through it - we cannot see on top of it or underneath it – look at your cube again
- If an object is above the horizon line we see underneath it – and the depth lines go down to the horizon line
- If an object is below the horizon line we see on top of it – and the depth lines go up to the horizon line

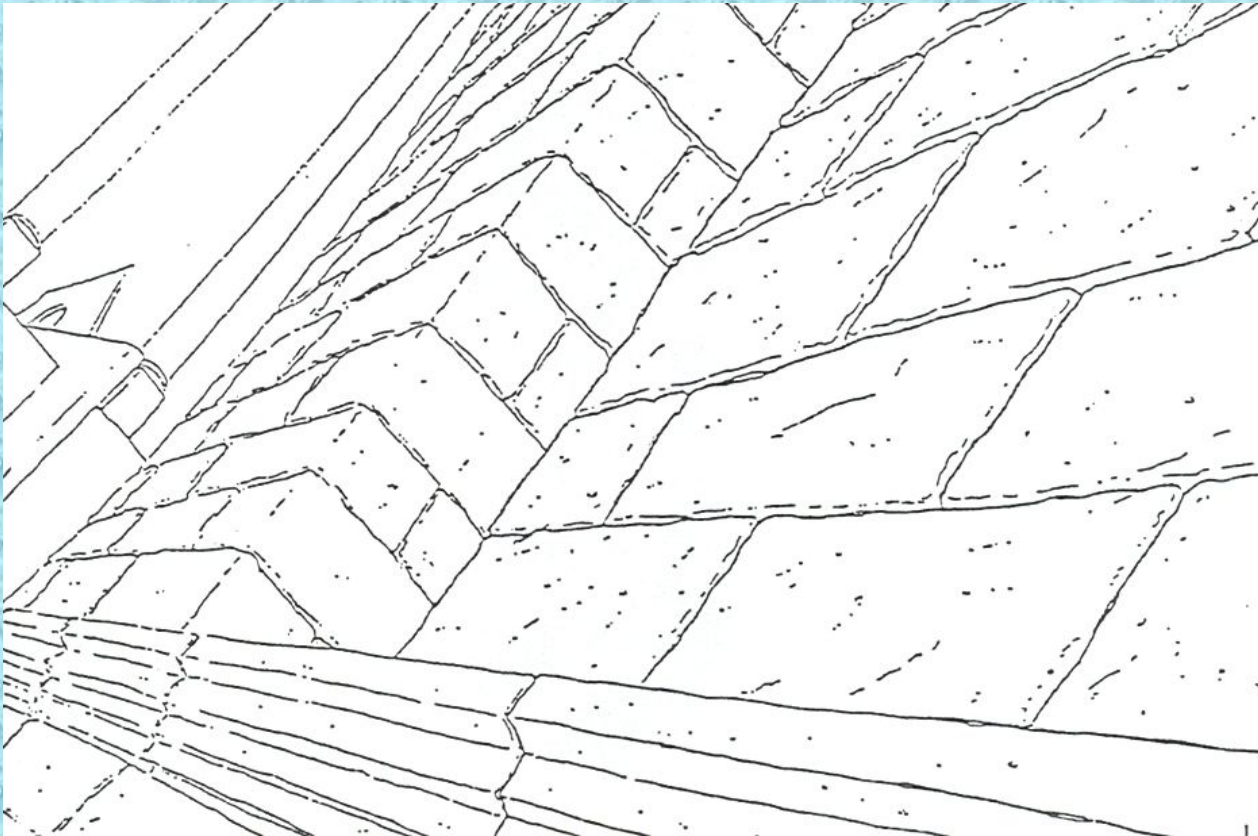
- When an object (like the cube) is close to the horizon line (above or below) we see very little of the surface
- The farther away from the horizon line the object gets the more of its surface we see (on top or underneath it)
- Never let the top or bottom of the object line up perfectly with the horizon line – it creates a tangent – a drawing error



- For the purposes of first year we will keep the Horizon Line perfectly horizontal – parallel to the top and bottom of our paper
- Does the horizon line have to be horizontal?

No

- Since we can tilt the camera or tilt our heads so too can the horizon be tilted – we call that an Oblique Angle – we'll save that until second year



- http://www.drawingprofessor.com/tutorials/horizon_line/index.html