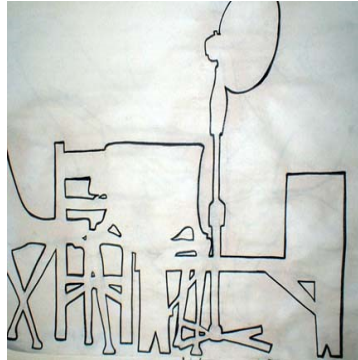


FOUNDATIONAL ART

NEGATIVE SPACE DRAWING

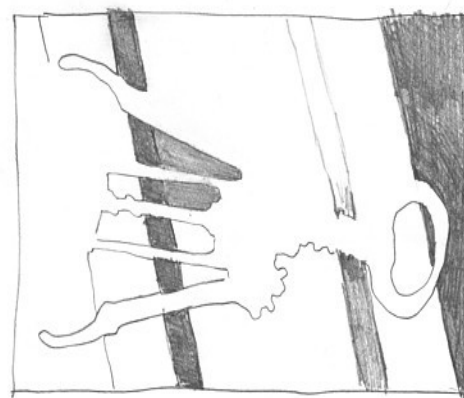


OBJECTIVE: To create a drawing that includes **ONLY** the negative space surrounding it.

What is negative space?

Negative space is the area of an image not occupied by shapes or forms. This part of the drawing is often neglected, or filled with casual scribbles. Negative space drawing involves concentrating on drawing the background, leaving the object white - an excellent exercise in observation.

In negative space drawing, instead of observing the positive shape of an object, you draw the shape of the space around the object. This may include any background detail or pattern, or it may be drawn as a simple silhouette. In many drawing books, you'll find an example which begins with drawing an outline of the object, and shading all around it. Although it is a silhouette, **this is NOT correct negative space drawing**. As you draw the outline, you are doing a **POSITIVE** drawing - focusing on the positive spaces - the solid shapes of the object. The correct approach to negative space drawing involves observing the shapes formed between different parts of the object, or between one edge of the object and a boundary. By drawing the background spaces or shapes between the edge of the object and the opposing edge or boundary, the positive form of the object is left 'undrawn', resulting in a correct negative space drawing. This is the reverse of normal positive space drawing, where you would be looking at the form and drawing its edges. Seeing negative spaces correctly is a skill worth developing. Negative space is used a great deal when you want to avoid outlining and create true value drawing. It is needed when you have a texture like light-colored hair or grass, when you need to focus on the dark shadows behind and underneath the strands. The 'foreground' - the positive shapes of light hair or grass - are 'left behind' as white paper while the shadows and dark are drawn with dark charcoal or pencil.



Terms to know:

Negative Space: Negative space is the area of an image not occupied by shapes or forms. This part of the drawing is often neglected, or filled with casual scribbles. Negative space drawing involves concentrating on drawing the background, leaving the object white - an excellent exercise in observation.

Space: is the area provided for a particular purpose. It may have two dimensions (length and width), such as a floor, or it may have three dimensions (length, width, and height). Space includes the background, foreground and middle ground.

Composition: is the placement or arrangement of visual elements or ingredients in a work of art, as distinct from the subject of a work. It can also be thought of as the organization of the [elements of art](#) according to the [principles of art](#).

Procedure:

We will be creating a still life of objects in which students will be creating negative space drawings from.

Warm-Up

Grab a drawing board and find a seat on the floor. Now practice drawing the negative spaces between the legs of the chairs and the tables. Remember to really follow the contours of the objects as well as you can. Remember you are only drawing the negative spaces. Do not draw any details of the objects, just the spaces that surround them. It might be easiest to draw the outline of the object then move to the negative spaces within.

1. First examine the still life, walk around it, find the part that you find most interesting and grab a seat.
2. Once you have found the perfect spot, use your viewfinder to find the best composition. Don't settle with the first composition you see, move your viewfinder around. Make it bigger and smaller until you find the perfect composition. Make a mental note, or a written note on a separate piece of paper so that you can find the same spot over and over again.
3. Now it is time to start drawing. Remember you are only drawing the negative spaces. Do not draw any details of the objects, just the spaces that surround them. It might be easiest to draw the outline of the object then move to the negative spaces within.
4. We will start with pencil then move on to charcoal drawings.