

L11 Practice Sheet: Environment & Background Design

LESSON GOALS

- Design readable environments with clear spatial depth and scale
 - Draw landscapes and architecture with confidence and structural accuracy
 - Create backgrounds that support and enhance the main subject without competing with it
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4-WEEK PLAN OVERVIEW

Week 1: Landscape Fundamentals

Outdoor sketching sessions — draw the view from a window or a local park, focusing on foreground/mid/background separation.

Week 2: Architecture & Structures

Draw buildings, streets, and interiors using perspective construction as scaffolding.

Week 3: Organic Environments

Trees, foliage, rocks, water — drawing complex organic forms with efficient visual shorthand.

Week 4: Designed Backgrounds

Create an original background design that tells a story and creates a specific mood without any figures present.

KEY CONCEPTS IN THIS LESSON

- Landscape Drawing — Reading and translating outdoor environments — sky, terrain, vegetation, and distance — into clear, structured drawings.
 - Architectural Sketching — Drawing buildings and constructed environments with enough structural accuracy to be convincing, sketched quickly enough to be practical.
 - Foreground, Mid-ground & Background — Three distinct spatial zones that create depth in a composition — each requiring different levels of detail, value, and edge quality.
 - Atmospheric Depth — Using value, edge quality, and color temperature to suggest distance and scale — even in the absence of linear perspective.
 - Designing Believable Spaces — Creating environments that feel internally consistent and inhabited — telling a story through the space itself before any figure enters it.
 - Trees, Foliage & Organic Structures — Visual shorthand for drawing complex organic forms — the fractal-like repetition of nature translated into efficient drawing marks.
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