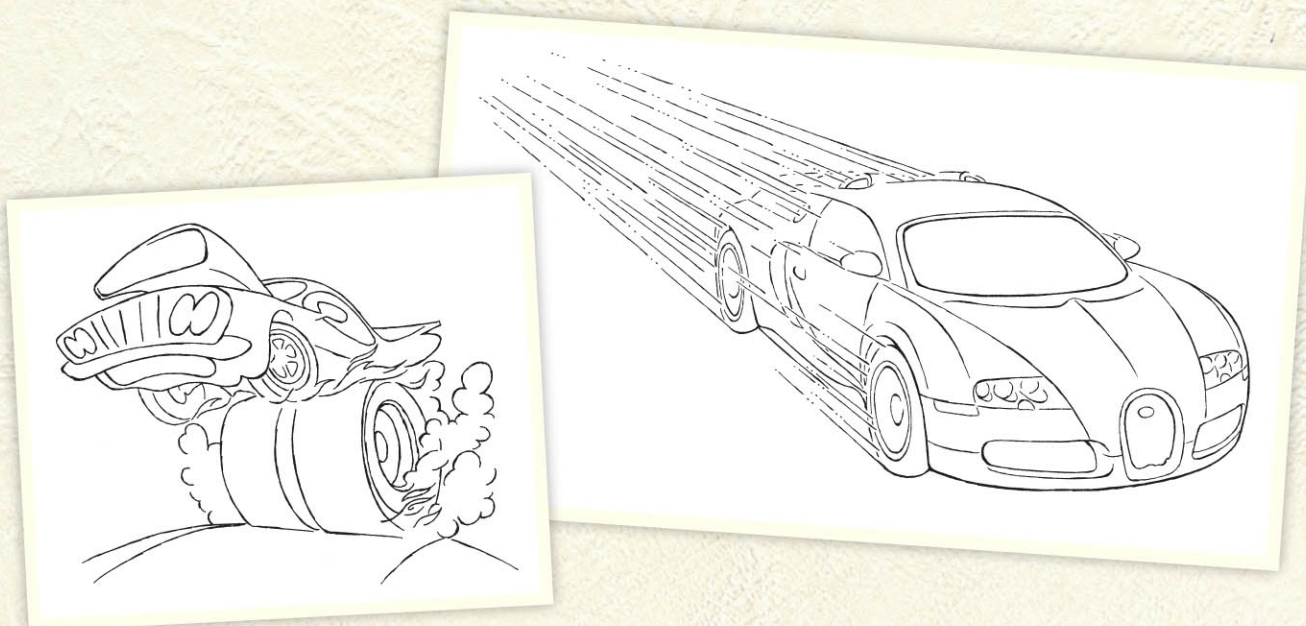
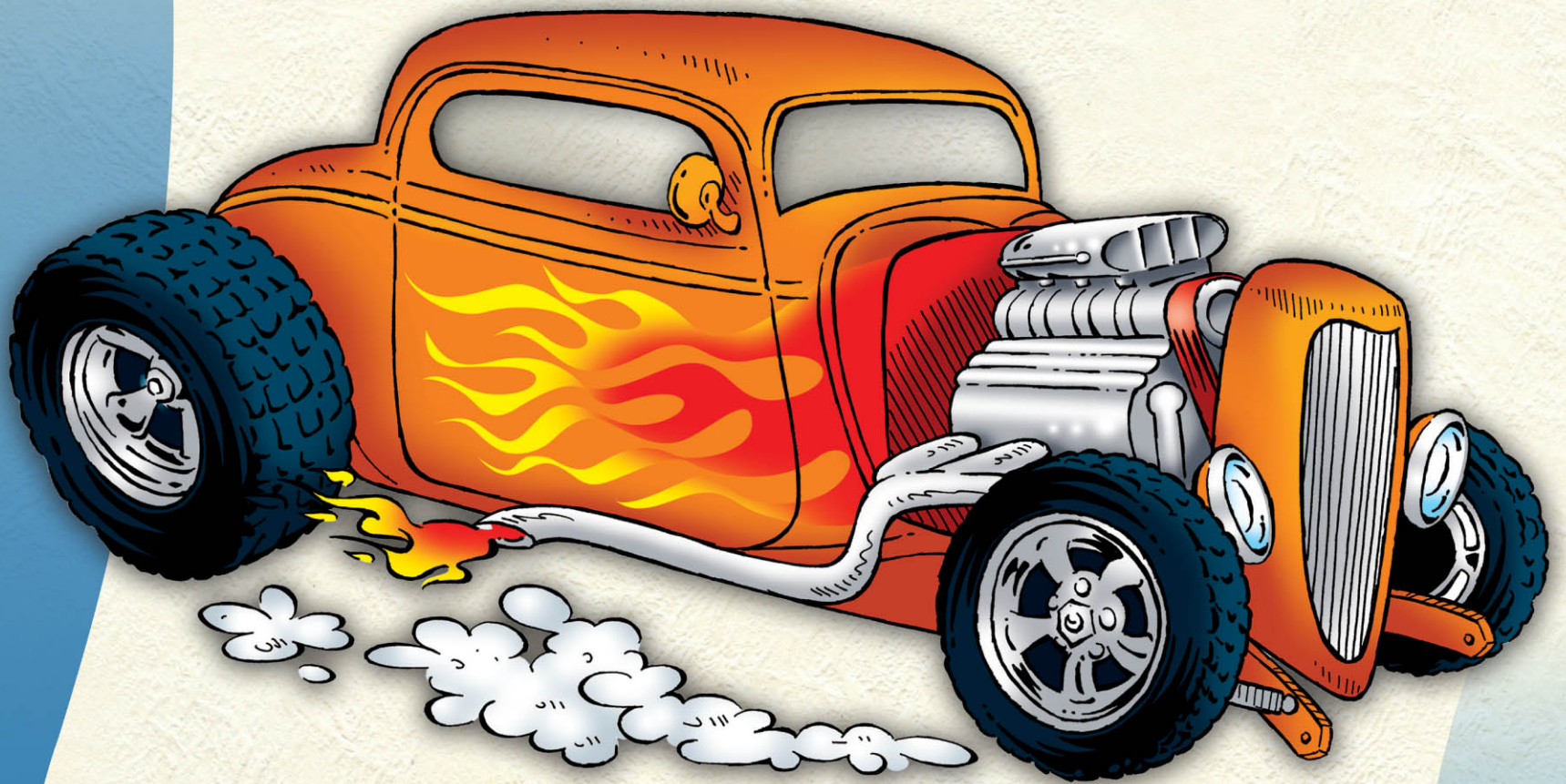


HOW TO
DRAW &
PAINT

Cool Cars

Learn the art of cartooning step by step



Exaggerating details ■ Depicting movement
Drawing caricatures ■ Adding backgrounds

BY JACK KEELY



Cool Cars

Whether it's a low-slung sports car or a rough-and-tumble offroading vehicle, cars are exciting subjects for illustrators because there are endless ways to interpret them. In this book, I'll share with you a variety of ways to draw cars, from realistic renderings to wacky, over-the-top cartoons. You'll learn how to add vibrant color to your illustrations, create characters to put behind the wheel, and even concoct creative backdrops for fully rendered scenes. You'll also discover how to depict actions such as speeding, slowing down, and burning out. In no time you'll be capturing all the cool cars you see on the road—from a tiny two-seater to a giant gas guzzler. So rev up your imagination and get ready to put some mileage on your favorite pen or pencil!

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Walter Foster would like to thank cool-car photographer Wes Allison for letting us use his cool photos.

Get in Gear

Cartoonists work in an unlimited range of styles and techniques with a vast array of art media—from pencil or pen and ink to markers, paints, and even computer programs. When you're just starting out, don't worry about developing a

personal style. Just experiment with a variety of materials—you'll soon discover your favorite ways to create shadows, add highlights, and more. The little tricks and techniques you find along the way will naturally add up to your personal style.

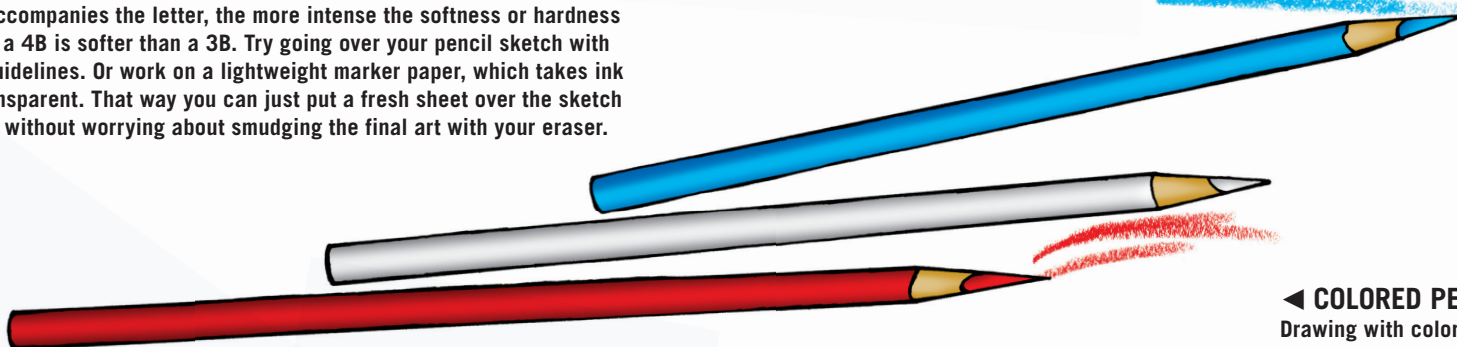


▲ GET THE POINT

Pencil is a good medium to use for preliminary sketches. Drawing pencils are labeled with numbers and letters to indicate the hardness or softness of the lead (actually graphite): B pencils are soft, H pencils are hard, and HB pencils are right in the middle. The higher the number that accompanies the letter, the more intense the softness or hardness of the lead. For example, a 4B is softer than a 3B. Try going over your pencil sketch with ink and then erase the guidelines. Or work on a lightweight marker paper, which takes ink well but is somewhat transparent. That way you can just put a fresh sheet over the sketch and ink the final drawing without worrying about smudging the final art with your eraser.

◀ MOBILE MEDIUM

Felt-tip pens create a good, controlled line and allow you to move your arm freely, making them ideal for fast sketches. Because you don't have to carry an ink supply, they also are ideal for whipping out quick ideas when you're on the road.



◀ COLORED PENCILS

Drawing with colored pencils can be very effective. Working in layers allows you to build up a variety of shades and develop intense colors. Depending on your approach, the results can be light and impressionistic or richly hued and very realistic.

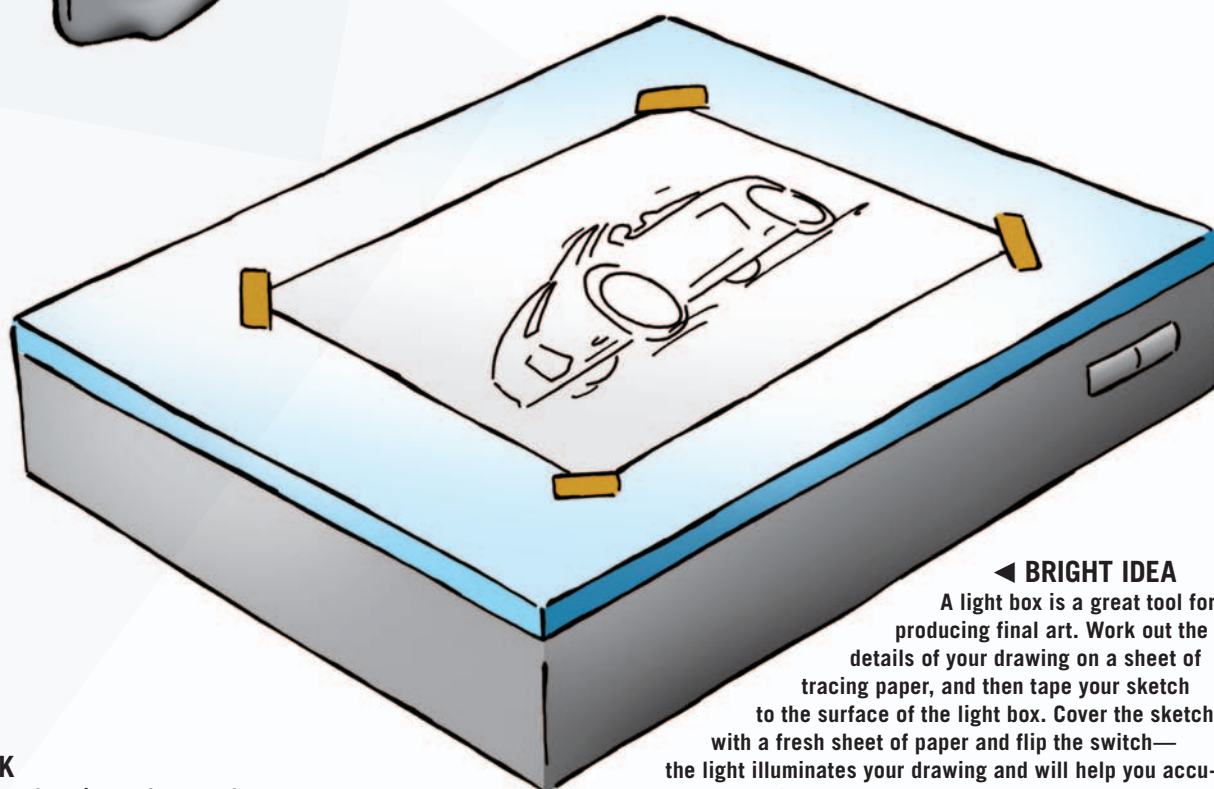
◀ NEEDED KNEADED

Kneaded erasers are soft and pliable enough to shape into a point for removing little smudges. They don't disintegrate as you use them, so you can get rid of pencil lines without covering your paper with annoying eraser crumbs.



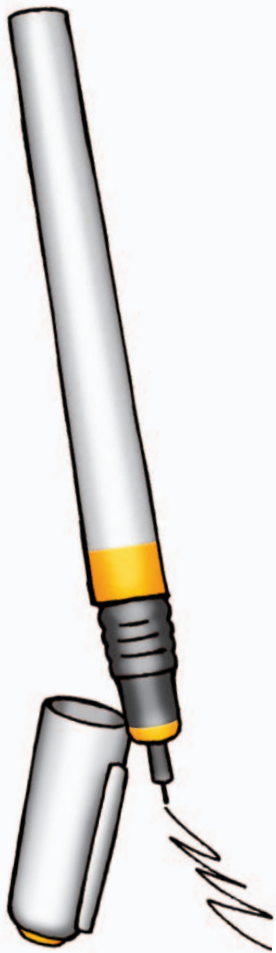
▲ MAKE YOUR MARK

Rendering drawings with markers is another popular way to quickly lay down bold color. Markers are popular with designers and illustrators because the resulting effects can be very bold and graphic or more subtly modeled and painterly.



◀ BRIGHT IDEA

A light box is a great tool for producing final art. Work out the details of your drawing on a sheet of tracing paper, and then tape your sketch to the surface of the light box. Cover the sketch with a fresh sheet of paper and flip the switch—the light illuminates your drawing and will help you accurately trace the lines onto the new sheet of paper. If you prefer working on tracing paper but want your finals to be on heavier paper such as card stock, create your final illustration on tracing paper and then photocopy it onto the card stock.

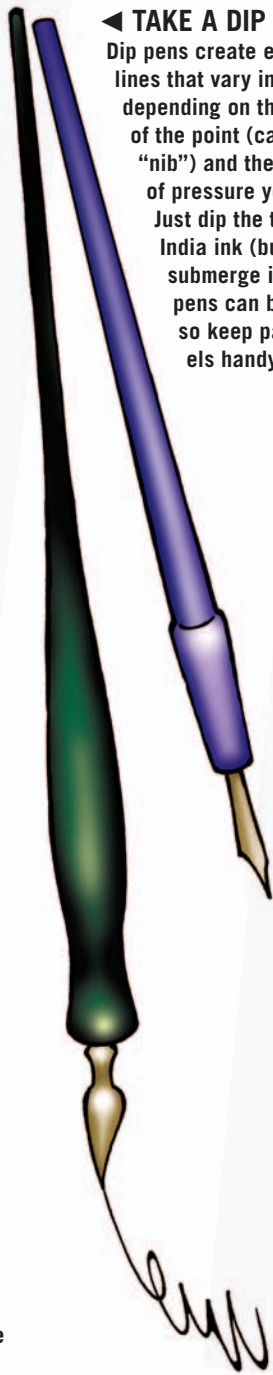


▲ GETTING TECHNICAL

Most of the drawings in this book were created with a technical pen. These pens can't be beat for producing even, controlled lines. Technical pens come in a wide variety of calibrated sizes capable of producing anything from a fine hairline to a bold stroke. Technical pens are rather expensive, though, so if you choose to make the investment, handle the pen with care.

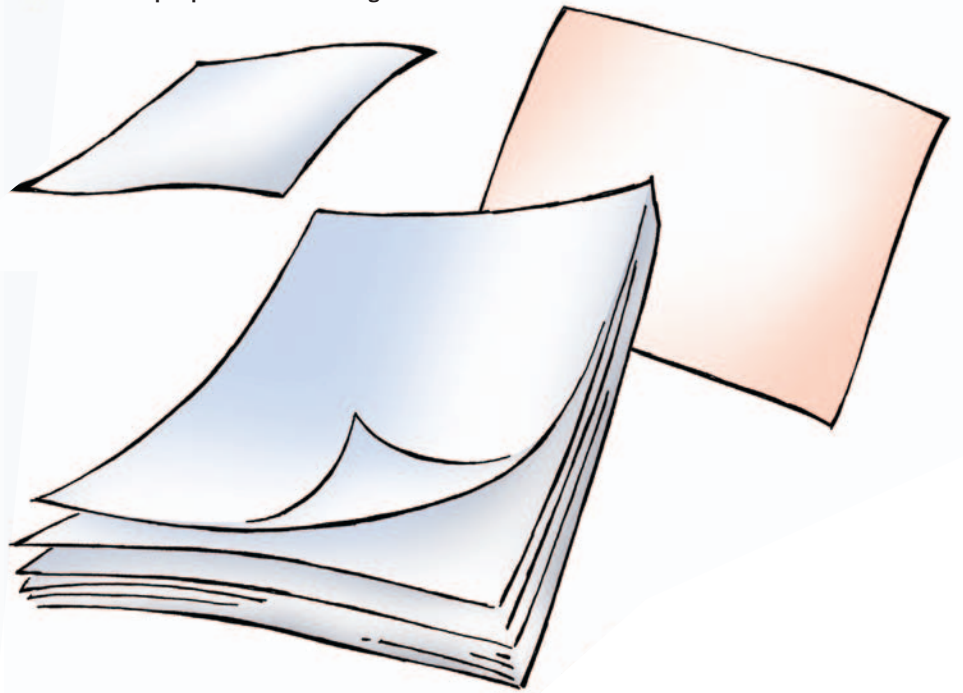
◀ TAKE A DIP

Dip pens create expressive lines that vary in width depending on the size of the point (called the "nib") and the amount of pressure you apply. Just dip the tip into India ink (but don't submerge it). These pens can be messy, so keep paper towels handy.



◀ BRUSHING UP

The fluid lines of a brush and black ink can be delicately precise or boldly dramatic depending on the amount of pressure you use. A brush also is good for filling in large areas of black. Try using a wash technique with a diluted mixture of ink brushed on over a pen and ink drawing. Brush techniques with watercolor, gouache (opaque watercolor), or colored inks are great-looking options. Buy a good-quality brush at an art store—cheap brushes won't keep a point or create elegant lines.



▲ FUNNY PAPERS

You can draw cartoon cars on anything from typing paper to grocery bags. I like to work out sketches on tracing paper; then I use a technical pen to create the final drawing on marker paper (see page 5). Smooth Bristol paper is another good option for ink. When working with watercolor paint, you'll need to use watercolor paper, which comes in many different textures and weights. If you're printing an illustration that you've colored digitally, use printer paper with a nice, smooth finish to ensure the best results.

CHECK THE MORGUE

Save useful images from magazines or, better yet, your own snapshots so you'll have a catalog of images to refer to when you sit down to draw. This type of file is called an "artist's morgue." The internet and reference books also offer a variety of images.



▲ GO DIGITAL

Technology has opened up a dizzying array of options for artists who want to work digitally. In the world of computer graphics, you can create your entire illustration with programs that allow you to emulate the look of real ink and paint. You also can scan your original drawing and use computer programs to manipulate it by altering textures, colors, and backgrounds. It takes some time to master these programs, but once you do there is no limit to where your imagination can take you.

Media Mania

The high visual impact of black-and-white drawings is undeniable—however, adding a jolt of vibrant yellow or red can put your car illustrations into overdrive. Most of the illustrations in this book were drawn with ink, scanned into a computer, and colored using photo-editing software (Adobe Photoshop®)—but many of the same effects can be achieved

with more traditional media such as colored pencils, markers, and watercolor paint. The four cars shown here were drawn in ink and given bright, bold color in four different ways: digitally, with colored pencils, with markers, and with watercolor paint. Experiment with different media and find out what works best for you!

DIGITAL COLORING

Coloring your images digitally offers incredible precision and control. You can use any type of digital graphic design software (such as Adobe Photoshop® or Illustrator®), depending on your preference. After scanning my line drawing and opening it with the software, I use the pen tool to create individual layers for each basic color—the body, the tires, the headlights, etc. Then I create a clipping layer (a new layer attached to an existing one) to add shading. One of the great things about digital coloring is that you can experiment with different color schemes without worrying about damaging the original.



▲ ADDING VIVID COLOR

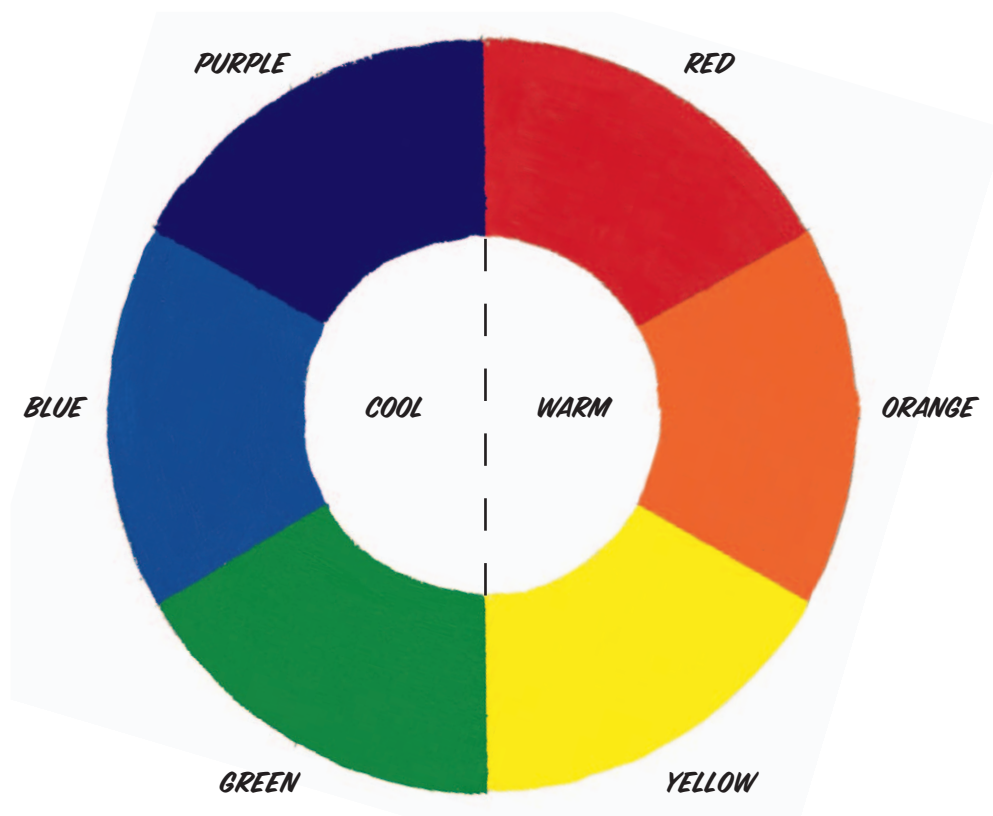
I draw this Chevy Camaro with a technical pen and then scan my drawing. Using photo-editing software, I drop in bright, aggressive colors for the car, making it the focal point. Then I stipple (create the appearance of texture with hundreds of tiny dots) the tires and asphalt to make them nicely contrast with the simple, graphic lines of the car.

COLOR BASICS

Whether you're coloring your images digitally or using other media such as watercolor or markers, it's a good idea to have a basic understanding of color relationships. The primary colors (red, yellow, and blue) are the three basic colors that all other colors are derived from, and they can't be created by mixing any other colors. Each combination of two primary colors results in a secondary color (purple, green, and orange), and a combination of a primary and a secondary color results in a tertiary color (such as red-orange or yellow-green).

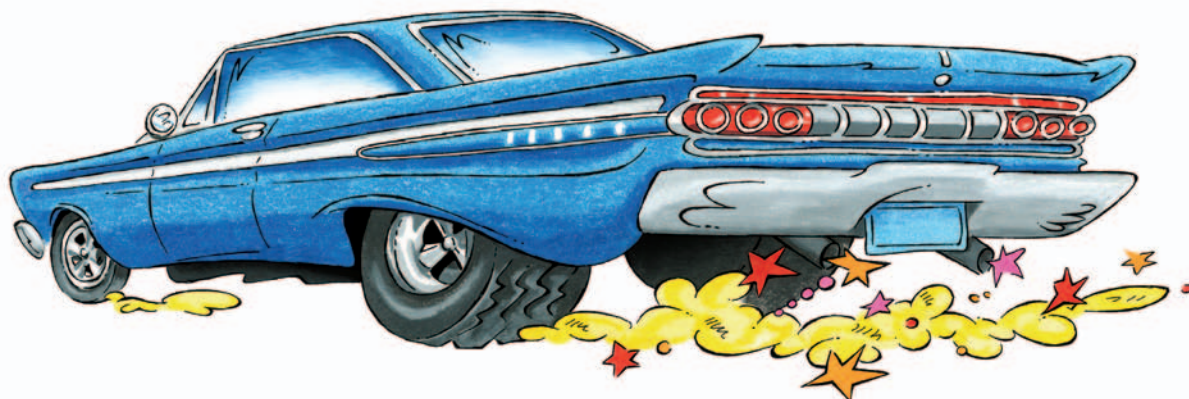
The color wheel pictured here demonstrates color relationships and will help you choose and use color effectively in your drawings. Any two colors directly across from each other on the wheel (like orange and blue) are complementary colors; when paired, they create dynamic contrasts.

In addition to demonstrating color relationships, the color wheel also illustrates the "temperature" of different colors. Red, orange, and yellow are considered "warm" and evoke excitement, passion, or anger. Green, blue, and purple are considered "cool" and suggest peace, calm, and melancholy.



COLORED PENCILS

Colored pencils can be used to replicate the look of oils, watercolor, acrylic, and more. They are fairly inexpensive and easy to transport, and they combine well with other media. Colored pencils smudge easily, though, so you may want to cover the areas of the drawing you aren't working on with a sheet of tracing paper. This medium also is difficult to erase, so plan out your color scheme before you get started. If necessary, use a kneaded eraser, as rubber or vinyl erasers can ruin your drawings.

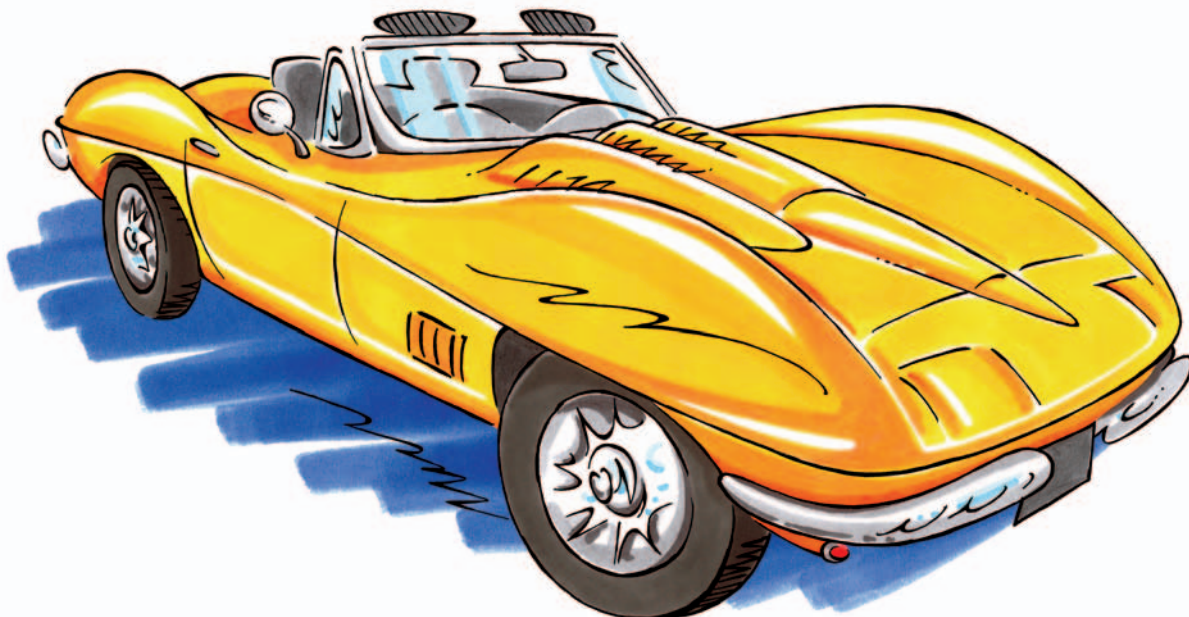


▲ BUILDING TEXTURE

For this Mercury Comet, I combine colored pencil and ink—but you can create your entire image using colored pencil. To blend the colors on the bumper, I add tone with different shades of gray; then I use a white pencil to add a layer over the grays to blend them. I also use this blending technique on the windows. I build up texture on the body of the car by crisscrossing lines (called “crosshatching”) with different shades of blue.

MARKERS

Markers are a quick, fun medium to work with, and they can be used to add a splash of bold color to your car illustrations. You can apply multiple layers of color for a flat, solid look, or you can use broken strokes for a painterly effect. Because markers produce bold, heavy lines, it's a good idea to use marker paper, which is similar to tracing paper but more substantial. “Nonbleed” or “bleed-proof” papers usually are the best choice for clean, brilliant results. These papers are treated on the back so the marker will not flow through to the underlying pages of the pad. These surfaces also reduce and control the continual flow (bleed) of the marker.

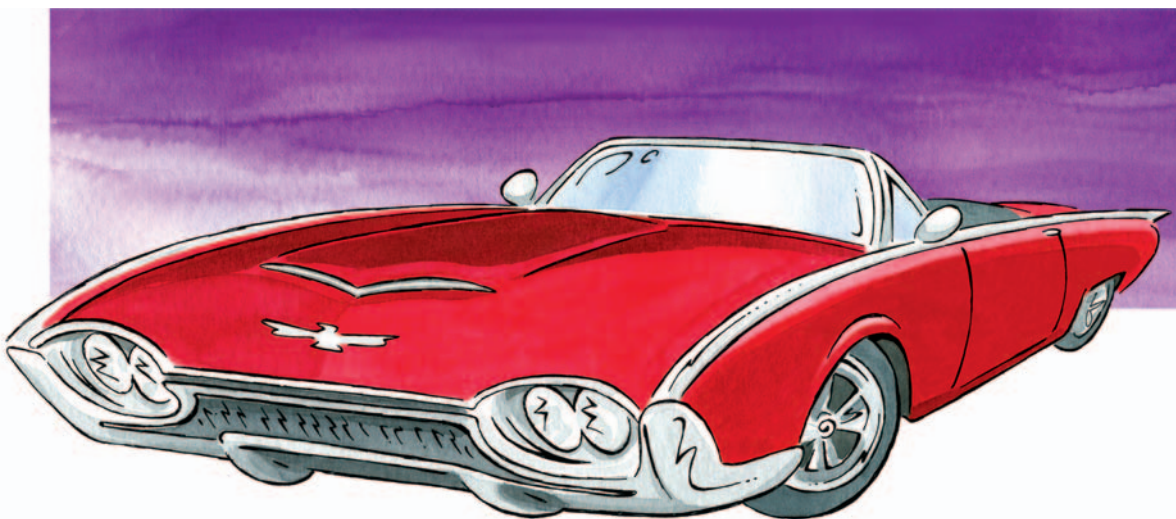


▲ LAYERING COLOR

I color the body of this Chevrolet Corvette with several layers of different shades of yellow and orange. I can't apply white on top of colored markers, so I plan where I want the highlights to be and work around these areas, leaving them untouched. (This applies to colored pencil and watercolor as well.)

WATERCOLOR PAINT

Watercolor is a very versatile medium and can be applied to your car drawings in many different ways. You can build up thin layers of translucent color or create texture with thick paint. You'll need a plastic tray for mixing paint, two containers (one for rinsing your brushes and one for adding clear water to your mixes), a large brush for broad areas of color, a small brush for details, and paper towels for cleanup. It can be difficult to control watercolor paint, but you may be pleasantly surprised by the unexpected visual effects that can result! (These are referred to as “happy accidents.”)



▲ CREATING FLUIDITY

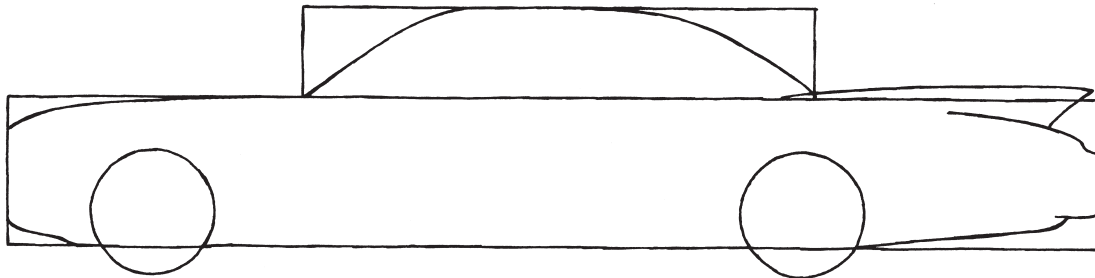
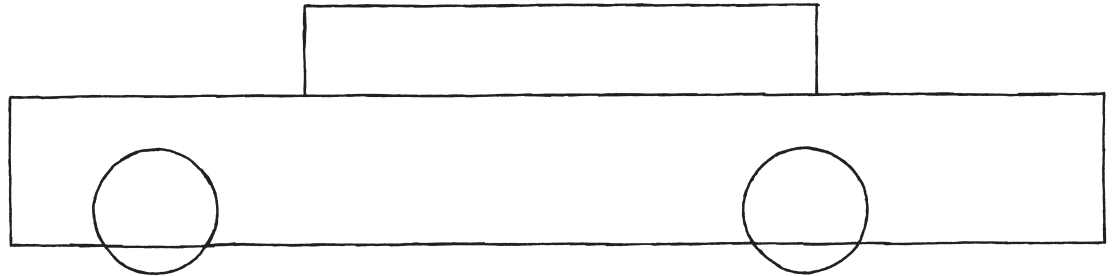
I dampen the area around this Ford Thunderbird before covering the background with purple—this helps the paint bleed and spread, creating a diffused look. For the body of the car, I build up thin layers of red paint on dry paper for a crisp look. I create various shades of gray with diluted black for the chrome, and I add diluted blue to the windshield and window.

Starting Simply

Before you start cartooning cool cars, you need to be able to draw the “real” thing. Once you have the hang of drawing cars realistically, you can start exaggerating, twisting, shrinking, and enlarging them! Start by breaking down the car into basic

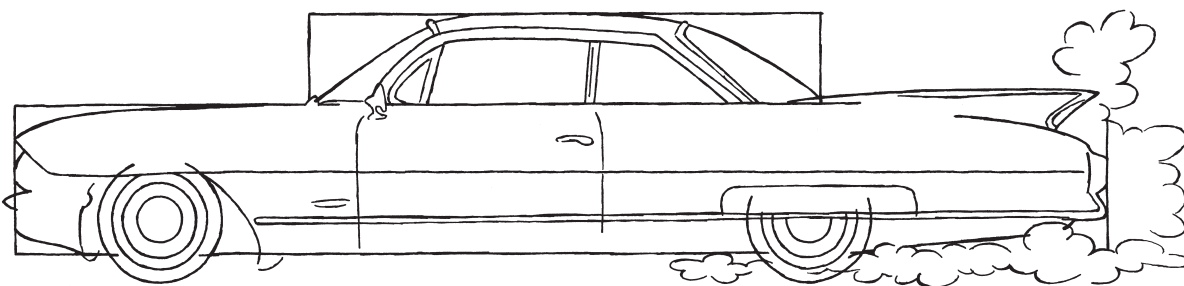
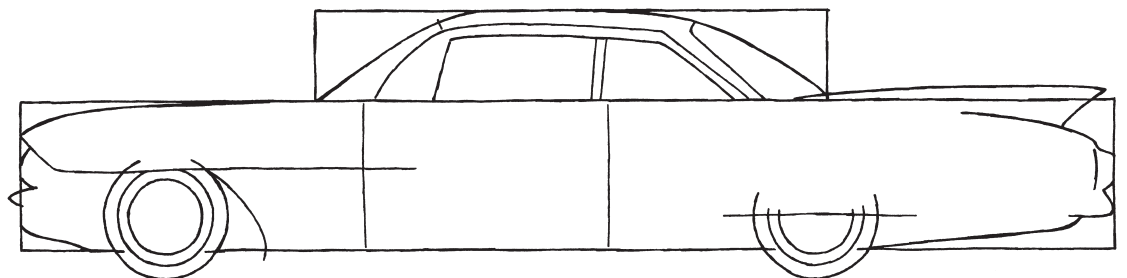
geometric shapes, such as circles, triangles, and squares; then build up and refine those shapes to give the car form and dimension. A side view is the easiest place to start as you don’t have to worry about perspective. (See page 8.)

1 I start by drawing a large rectangle for the body of this Cadillac Coupe de Ville. Then I add a smaller rectangle on top of it, as shown, for the roof. The rectangles will guide me in drawing the other parts of the car. Next I add two circles for the tires. Note where the tires are placed in relation to the rectangles.



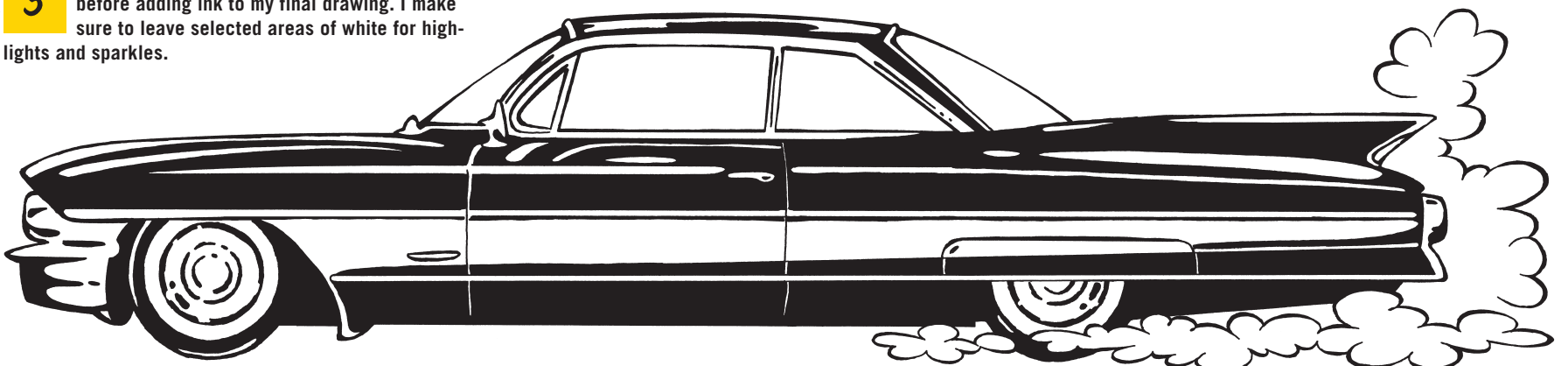
2 Now I draw the outline of the car inside the rectangles, adding the tailfin outside the lines. I look carefully at my reference to judge the size and position of the elements in relation to one another. In this case, the car is unusually long. In fact, it’s four times longer than it is tall, and there’s room to fit at least four more tires between the two shown here.

3 I begin adding details such as the windows, the head- and taillights, the wheel wells, and the contour lines on the body of the car. Then I draw two vertical lines to indicate the door.



4 Now I add the door handle, the side mirror, the base of the windshield wiper, and the light on the lower front side of the car; then I erase the guidelines. I also add dust clouds to put this long, lean machine in motion.

5 I clean up any stray lines with a kneaded eraser before adding ink to my final drawing. I make sure to leave selected areas of white for highlights and sparkles.



Sizzlin' Styles

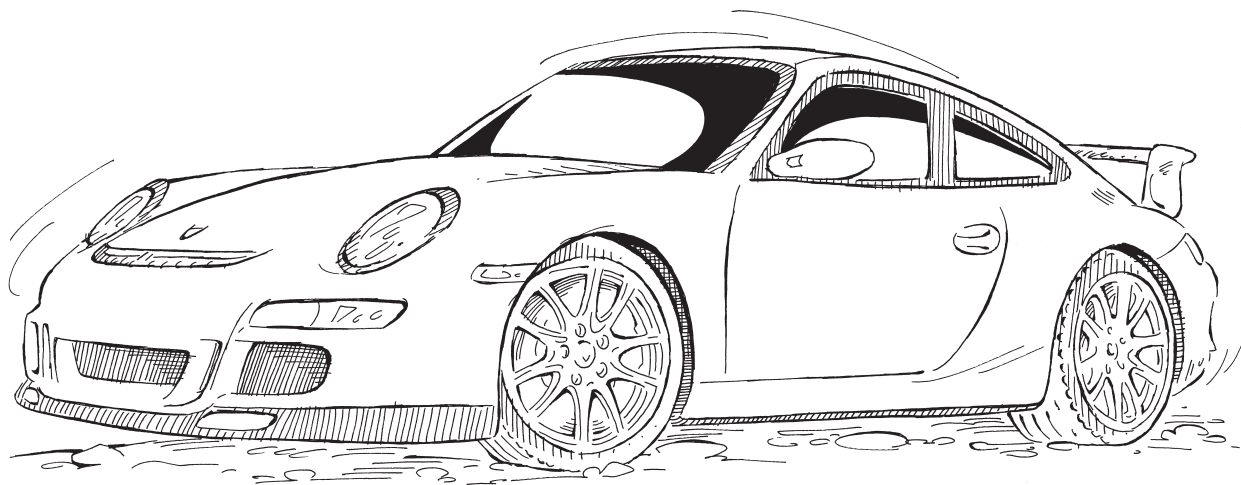
There's more than one route you can take when cartooning cars. Cartoons don't always have to be exaggerated—many animated cartoons that feature cars are more realistic. This book presents many different artistic styles, so test-drive them all and see which ones fit you best. As you continue to draw, you'll develop a style that's unique to you. Whatever style you prefer, remember that you can make your own rules—don't be afraid to break out of the mold. On a creative highway where limousines can be a mile long and hot rods can be “hot” enough to snort flames, anything goes!

► STARTING POINT

The three illustrations shown below are different interpretations of this Porsche 911 GT3.



Photo © Wesley Allison

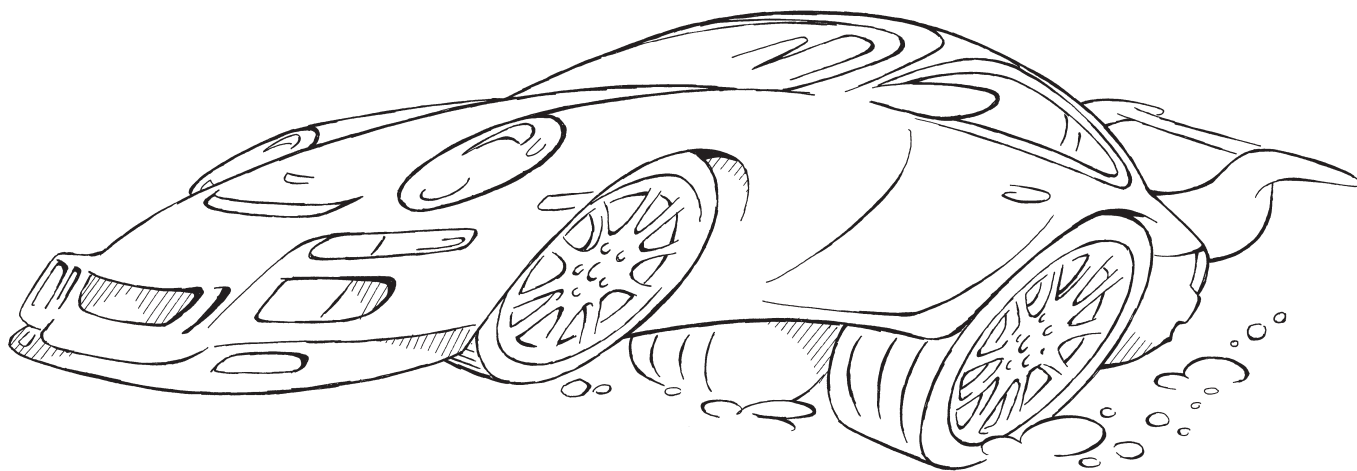
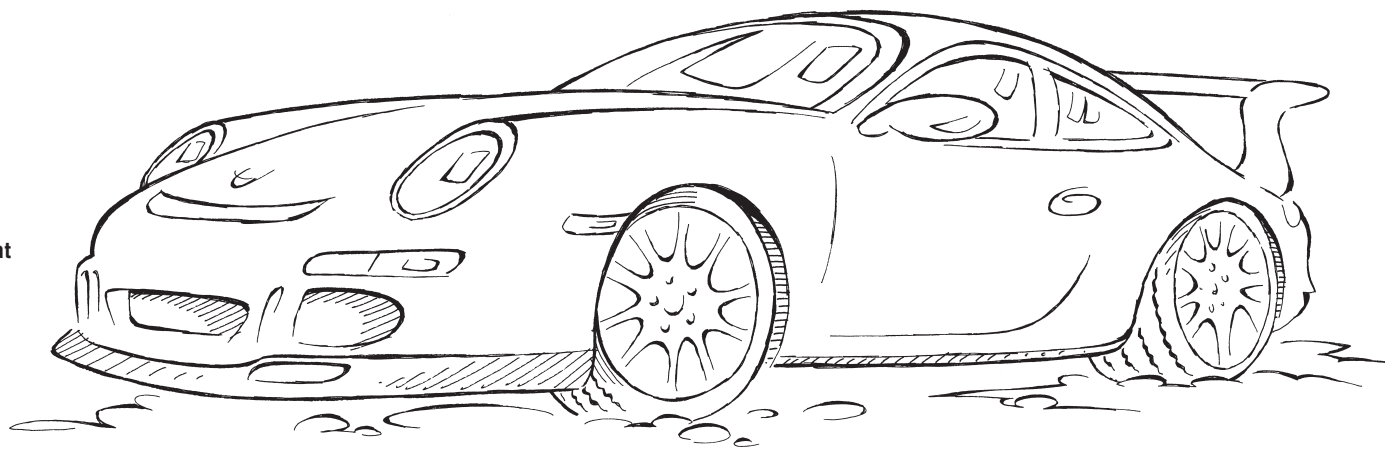


◀ REALISTIC DRAWING

In this realistic drawing, the proportions and details of the car are quite true to the photo reference. Nothing has been exaggerated or distorted.

► REALISTIC CARTOON

Here elements of the car have been altered and exaggerated, making it a cartoon. But nothing has been taken to an extreme, so the car remains somewhat realistic. The car has been stripped of extraneous details, and it is lower and longer than the original, emphasizing its racy personality.



◀ EXAGGERATED CARTOON

This exaggerated illustration presents a warped version of reality. The car is still recognizable as a Porsche, but it has been wildly distorted. The wheels and spoiler are way out of scale, and the entire body of the car flexes as it begins to burn rubber.

Perspective Basics

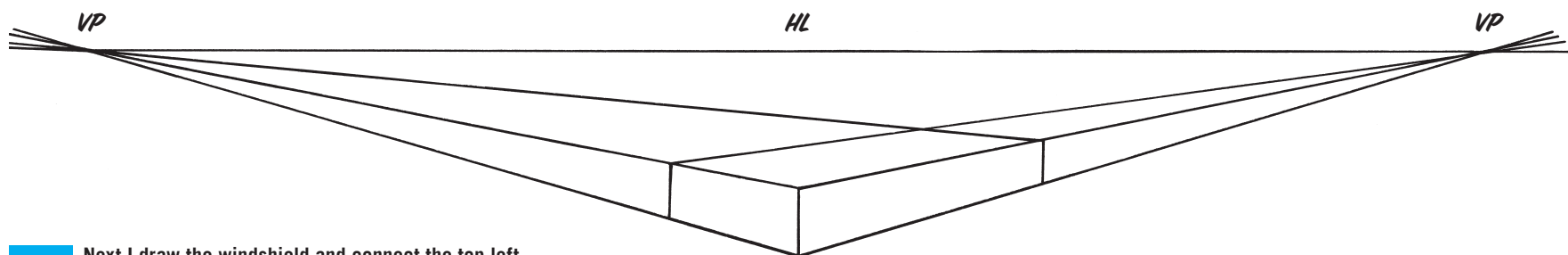
To draw cars (even cartoon ones), it's important to know the basic rules of perspective. These rules will help you create the illusion of depth and distance in your drawings, making them appear three-dimensional. The great thing about cartoons, though, is that you are allowed to bend (or even

break) the rules to generate humor or create visual impact. Here I'll cover the basics of two-point perspective so you can get started drawing cars at an angle, but for more information, see William F. Powell's book *Perspective* in Walter Foster's Artist's Library series.

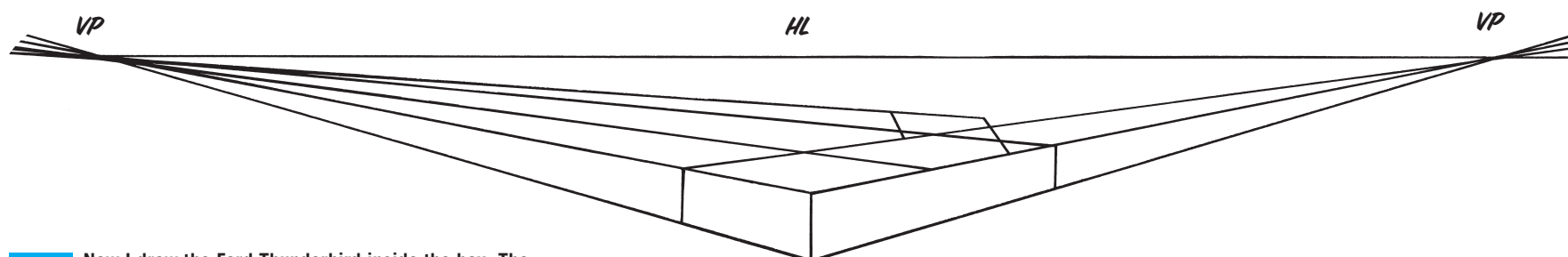
TWO-POINT PERSPECTIVE

1 I start by drawing a box in perspective. First I draw a vertical line to mark the corner of the box that will be closest to the viewer. Then I draw a horizontal line (HL) above the box to dictate the point of view (in this case, from above). Now I draw a vanishing point (VP) at each end of the HL. Receding lines (in this case, the sides

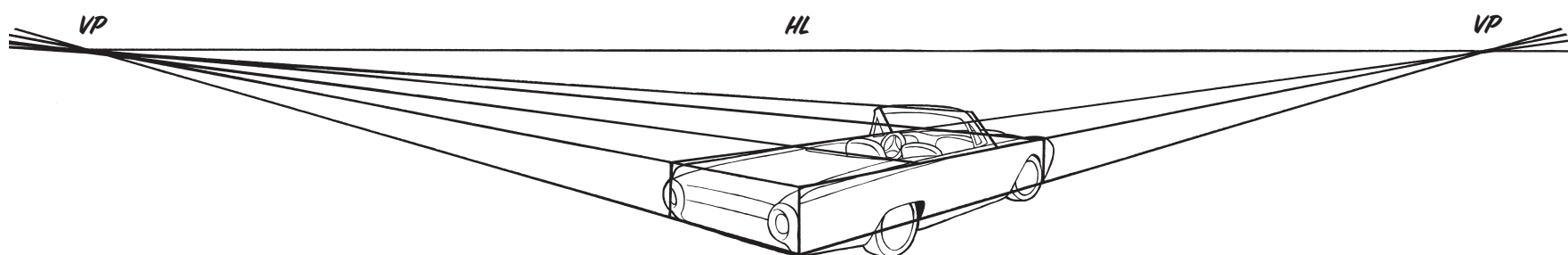
of the box) that are parallel in reality will converge at one of the VPs. I add four lines connecting the ends of the vertical line to each of the vanishing points. These lines form the sides of the box. Next I add two vertical lines to make the outer edges of the box, and I connect each to its most distant vanishing point to create the sides and top of the box.



2 Next I draw the windshield and connect the top left corner to the left VP. I also draw another line through the middle of the car and connect it to the left VP.



3 Now I draw the Ford Thunderbird inside the box. The tires, front end, windshield, and taillights will extend out of the box.

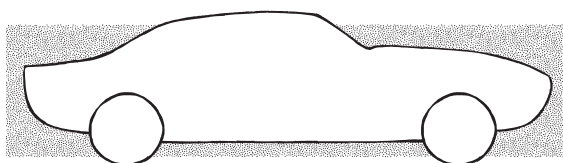


4 Finally, I erase all the guidelines and add color. Exercises like this one are especially helpful when trying to plan out a complex illustration showing multiple vehicles or a drawing of a car on a street lined with buildings.



FORESHORTENING

Foreshortening is an important method of creating the illusion of depth, and it works hand in hand with perspective in that the part of an object closest to you appears larger than the parts that are farther away. To create this illusion when drawing, shorten the lines on the sides of the object that are closest to you. For example, if you look at someone holding his hand straight down against the side of his body, the hand is perfectly vertical and looks in proportion to the rest of the figure. But if he raises his hand and points it directly at you, the hand is now angled, so it appears distorted. In other words, the hand looks bigger and the arm looks shorter. So you would draw a big hand and an arm with shortened sides. That's foreshortening! To get the hang of it, practice the exercise at right.



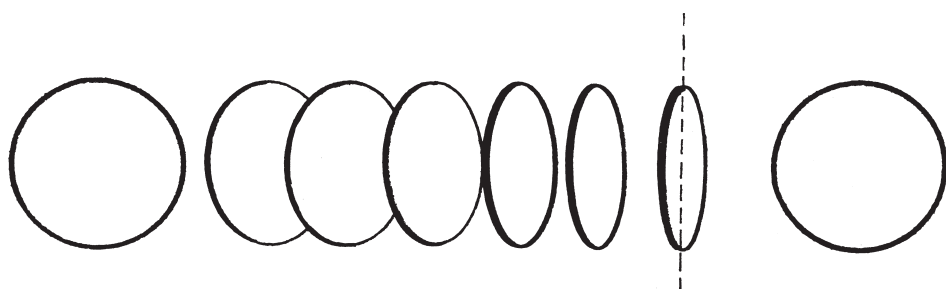
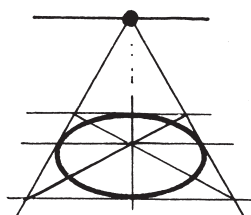
▲ THREE-QUARTER VIEW

When viewing a car from the side, you are aware of its entire length. But as the car turns toward you, the front end becomes more dominant and the back end is reduced in scale. The length appears to be compressed. Here the foreshortened car takes up less space on the page, but the proportions are much more impressive. To emphasize the effect of foreshortening, you can make the front and bottom of the subject jut out of the picture (see the final drawing below).



ELLIPSES

When drawing wheels at an angle, be sure to use ellipses rather than circles. An ellipse is a circle viewed at an angle. Looking across the face of a circle, it is foreshortened, and we see an ellipse. The axis of the ellipse is constant, and it is represented as a straight centerline through the longest part of the ellipse. The height is constant to the height of the circle. Below is the sequence you might see in a spinning coin.



FORESHORTENING SIMPLIFIED



▲ FINGERS STRAIGHT UP

Hold your hand in front of a mirror, palm forward. Notice that your fingers are the right length in relation to your palm. Nothing is foreshortened here.



▲ FINGERS ANGLED TOWARD YOU

Now tip your hand a little, and see how the length of the fingers and the palm appears shortened. This is subtle foreshortening.



▲ FINGERS POINTING FRONT

Now point them straight at the mirror. This is the most extreme foreshortened view; the fingers appear to be mere stubs.



▲ FINGERS ANGLED DOWN

The fingers appear longer now but still not full length, yet the fingertips are still visible. This pose shows some foreshortening; the fingers seem long and thick in relation to the back of the hand.



▲ FINGERS POINTING STRAIGHT DOWN

No foreshortening is at work in this position—another frontal view. The tips of the fingers can't be seen, and the length of the fingers and hand are not distorted at all.

Picture This

It can be very helpful to use a photo reference when cartooning cars, especially when you're drawing more realistic interpretations of them. Even if you're conjuring up an outrageous and totally unrealistic car, it can help to use a photo reference as a guide for drawing the body and basic elements. As an artist, you have the right to change or alter the photo reference in any way (called "artistic license"), so you should never be a "slave" to your photograph. But if you're creating a more realistic drawing and want to copy the car exactly as it appears in the photo, you may want to use one of two simple methods: the grid method (used for this illustration of a Saleen S7) or tracing and transferring a drawing (see the sidebar on page 11).



Photo © Wesley Allison

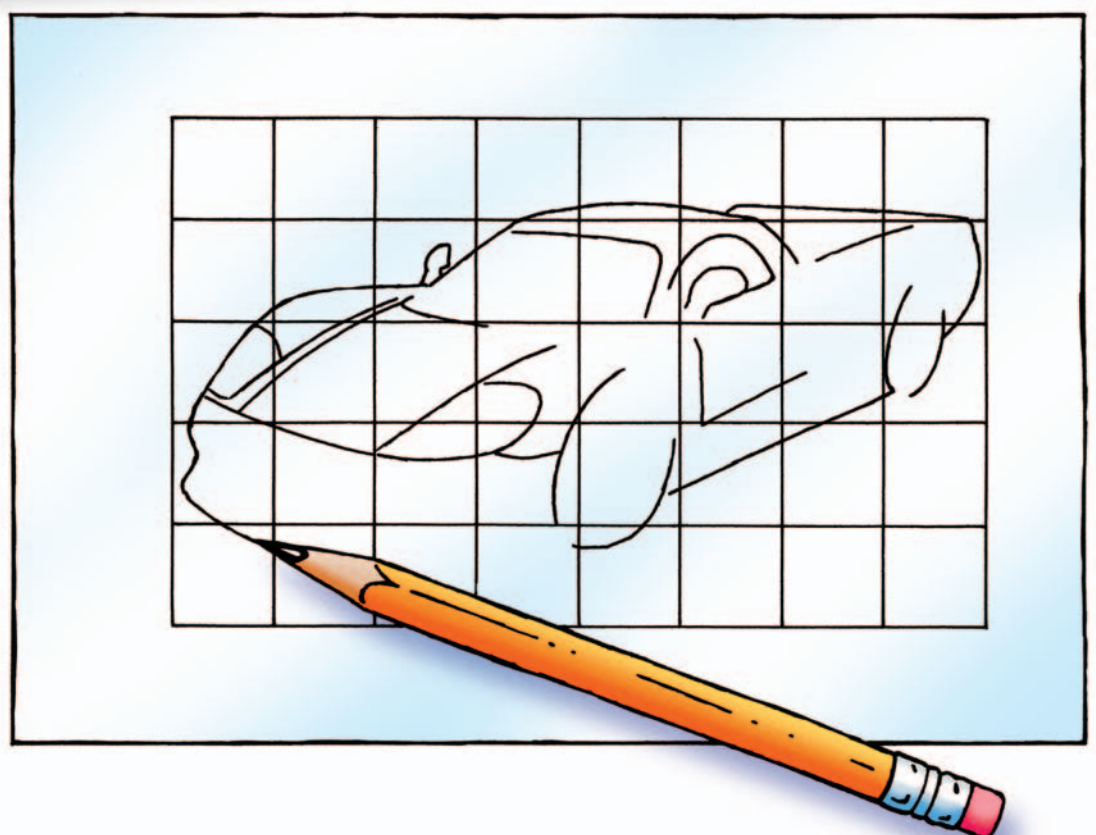
▲ CHOOSING A DYNAMIC PHOTO

There are many different elements to consider when choosing a photograph to use as a guide when drawing a realistic car. Is the image clear? Can you make out small details? Is the composition (or the arrangement of elements in the scene) pleasing? I chose this particular photo because I liked the way the car seems to be zooming out of the scene.

1 This project involves the grid method of transferring an image. First I trim a piece of tracing paper to fit the photo reference. Then I use a fine-tip black marker and a ruler to draw a grid of perfect 1-inch squares on the tracing paper. The squares can be any size, but the smaller the squares, the more accurate and detailed the sketch will be. (It helps to use a calculator to determine what size the squares need to be to perfectly fit the paper.)

As you create the grid on your drawing paper, remember to use light lines that will erase easily.

2 Using a pencil and very light pressure, I draw a grid on my drawing paper with the exact same number of rows and columns as the grid over the photo reference. If the original image is smaller than the drawing paper, the squares on the drawing paper will have to be larger than those on the tracing paper; if the original image is larger than the paper, the squares on the drawing paper will have to be smaller. Then, using a pencil and light pressure, I copy the lines I see in each square of the photo into each corresponding square on the drawing paper.





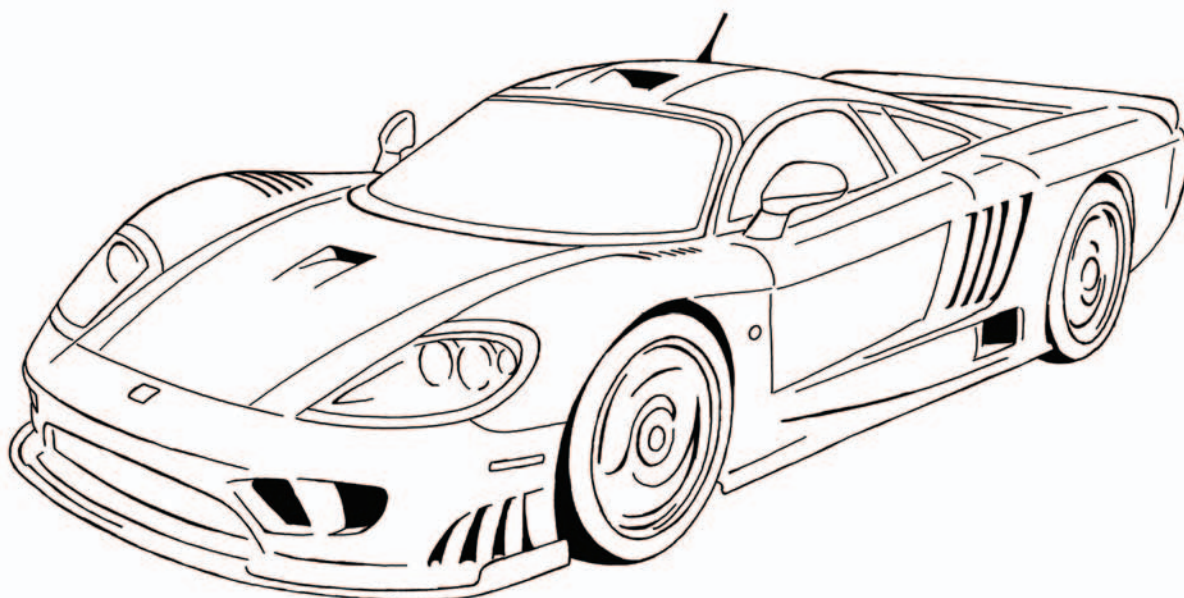
TRACING AND TRANSFERRING

The easiest method of transferring your photo reference to your drawing paper is to trace the image onto a sheet of tracing paper. Then coat the back of your tracing paper with a layer of graphite, pressing down firmly to create an even layer of coverage. Now place the tracing paper over a sheet of drawing paper, graphite-side down. Tape or hold the papers together and lightly trace your outline. The lines of your sketch will transfer onto the new sheet of drawing paper.

◀ CHECKING YOUR LINES

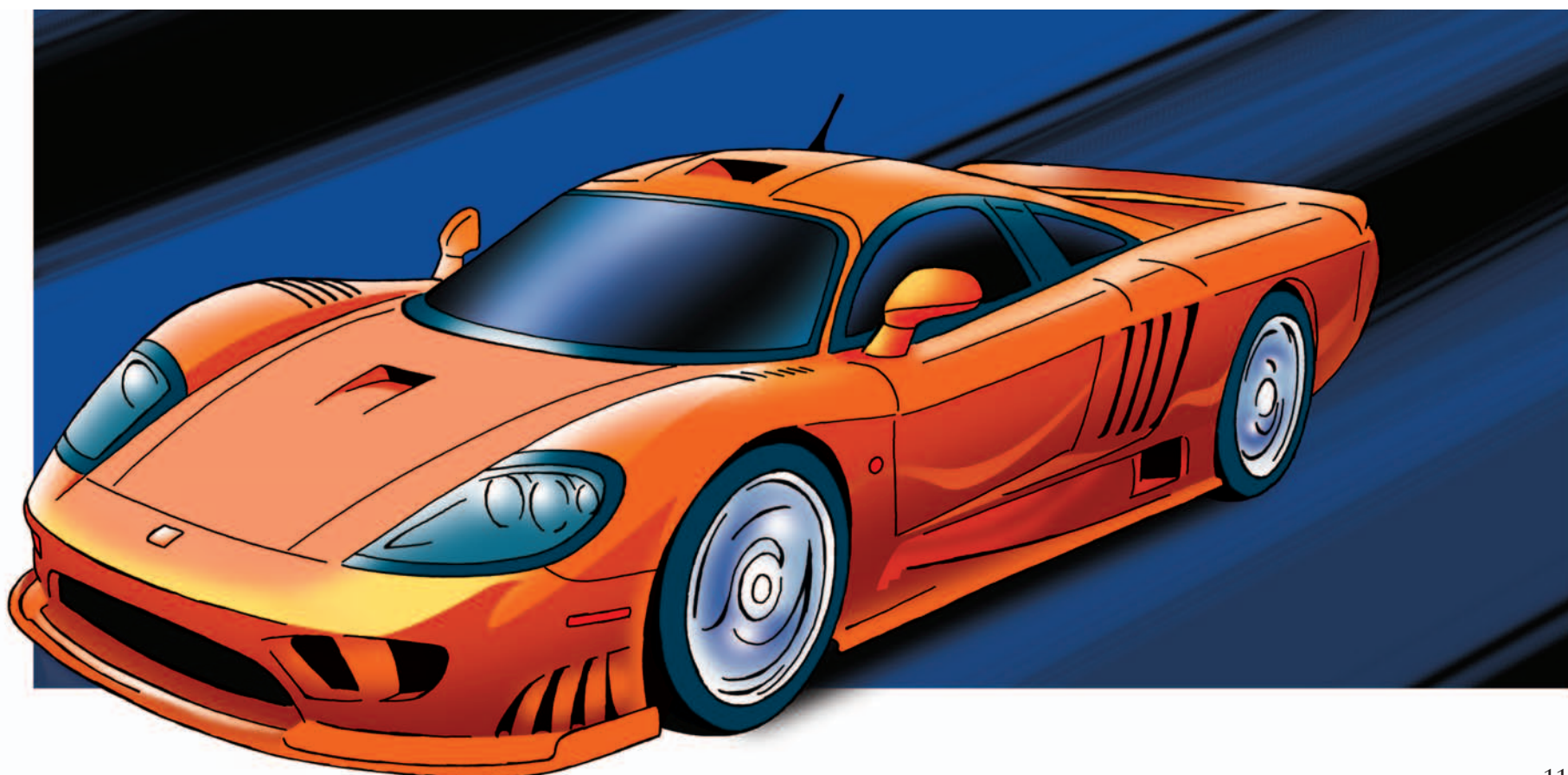
While tracing the lines of the sketch, occasionally lift the corner of the sketch (and the coated transfer paper) to make sure that the lines that have transferred to the drawing paper aren't too light or too dark.

3 As I copy the lines in each square, I pay careful attention to where the lines touch the sides of the square. Once I have transferred the lines in every square, I compare my drawing with the original image and make any necessary adjustments. (Notice that here I simplified the subject by eliminating the interior details and the windshield wipers.) When I'm happy with my drawing, I carefully erase the grid lines, being cautious not to smudge the lines I want to keep. I also try not to rub too hard, as I don't want to damage the surface of the paper. Next I use ink to go over the lines, shading the darkest areas.



4 Now I'm ready to add color. I scan my drawing and color it digitally using photo-editing software. I opt for a complementary color scheme of blue and orange—the cool blue background makes the complementary orange really stand out; as

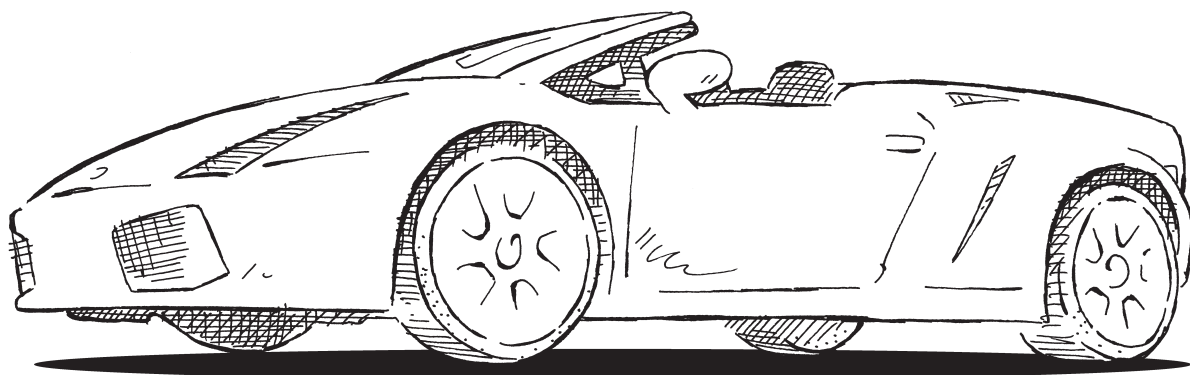
a result, the car seems to “pop” off the page. I also remove the scenery from the photo reference in favor of a striped background that emphasizes the trajectory of the sleek, speeding car.



Stretch and Squash

Cartoon cars often are involved in extreme situations that require fast getaways and abrupt stops. To get the most mileage out of these scenarios, cartoonists can employ the distortion techniques of *stretching* and *squashing*. Imagine the

car as a ball made of soft rubber—stretch it out so it appears to be speeding, or squash it together to make it screech to a halt. When employing these effects, don't hesitate to exaggerate—this isn't the time to be subtle!

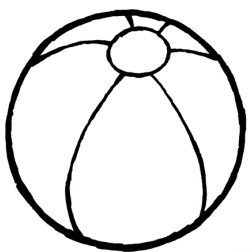


◀ START FROM SCRATCH

After referring to the images in the box below left, I use this drawing of a Lamborghini Gallardo as a starting point to practice stretching and squashing. See the results below!

NORMAL

STRETCH



SQUASH



▲ START SIMPLE

Don't get bogged down by the details—think about a simple object (like a beach ball), and visualize how it looks when pulled to stretch it or pushed to squash it.

► HUMANIZE IT

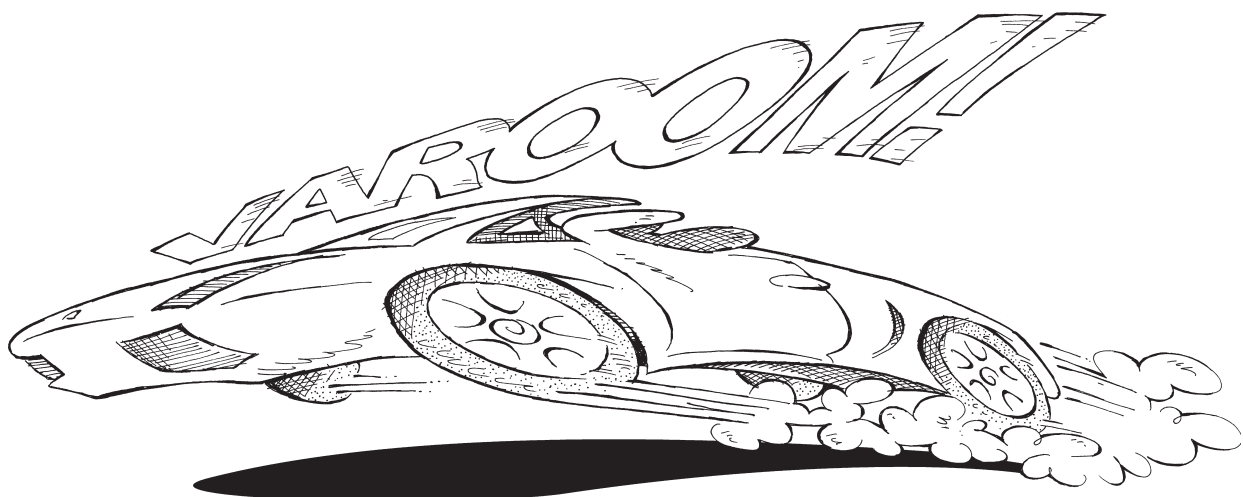
Stretch and squash works for human cartoons too! By stretching the head and making it longer, you can create a surprised or frightened look. Squashing the head down accentuates a pout or an angry expression.



STRETCH



SQUASH

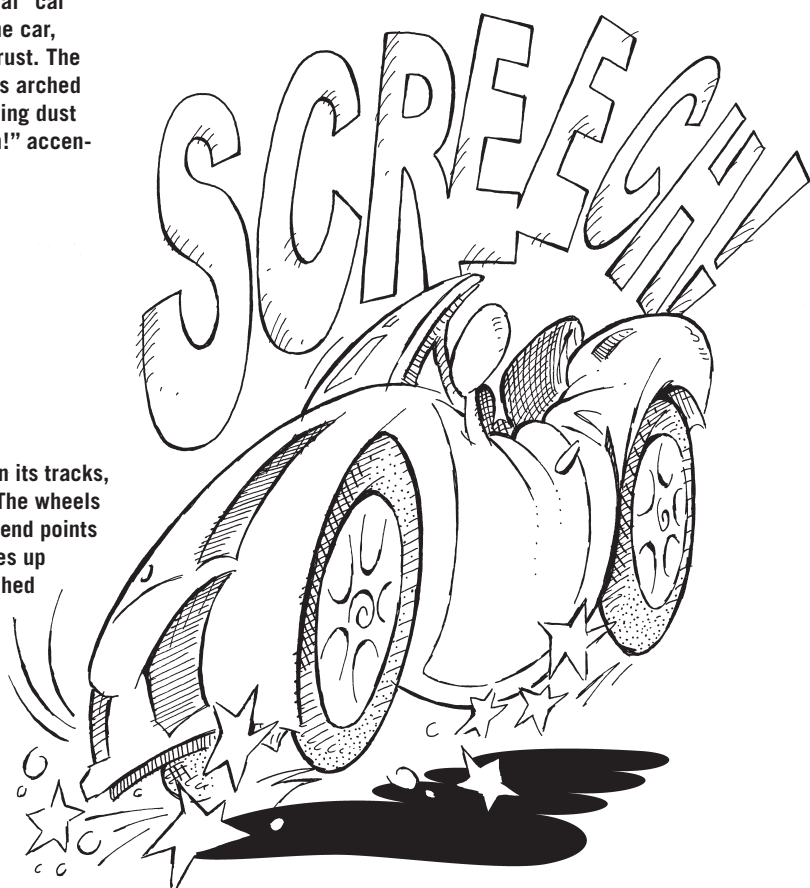


▲ STRETCHHHHHH

For this sporty car to really burn rubber, it needs to be stretched and curved. Using the “normal” car (at top) as a guide, I distort the body of the car, stretching it to accentuate the forward thrust. The front end is off the ground, and the body is arched forward in acceleration. Speed lines, trailing dust clouds, and the lengthened word “Varoom!” accentuate this effect.

► SQUASH!

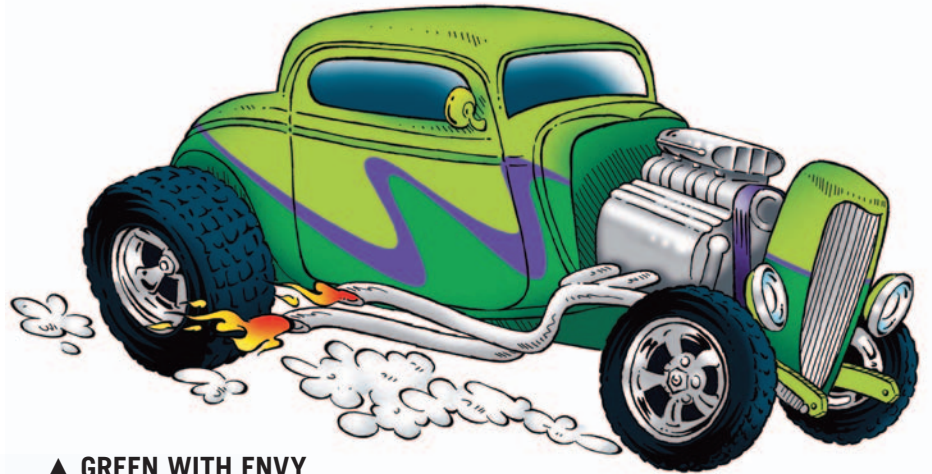
To depict the same car as if it's stopping in its tracks, I squash and shorten the body of the car. The wheels appear much longer and thinner, the front end points toward the ground, and the back end angles up off the road. Sparks and the equally squashed “Screech!” add to the illusion.



Customizing Cars

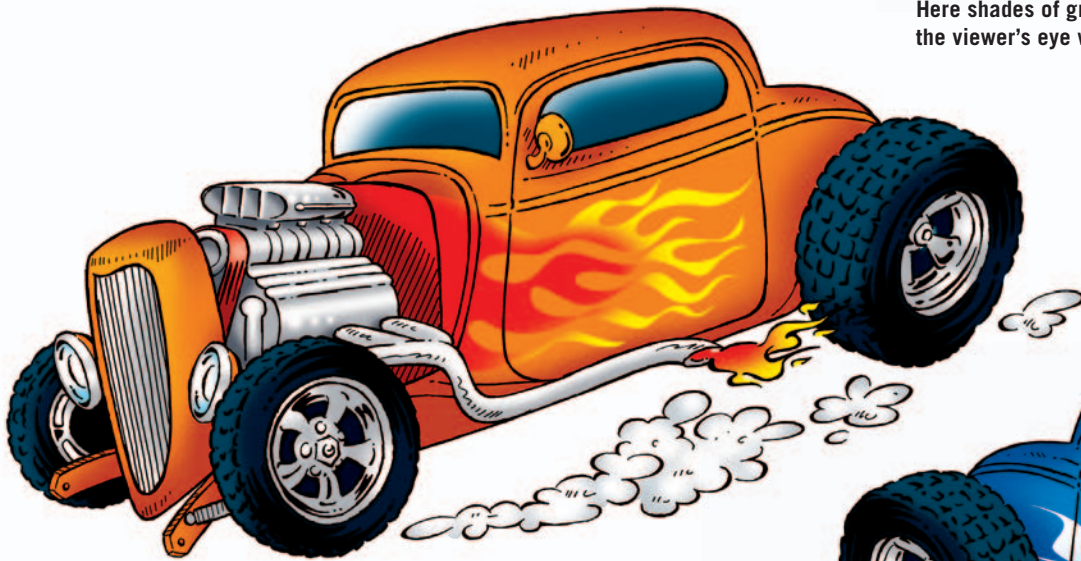
Whether it's sizzling flames, elegant curves, or any other design you dream up, customizing your car-toons with vivid color and eye-catching graphics enhances the image and pumps up the car's personality. There are endless options you can consider, from numbers and geometric patterns to animal images and slogans.

Here are four versions of the same Ford Coupe hot rod with different paint jobs. I drew the cars with a technical pen and scanned the images; then I experimented with color and designs using photo-editing software.



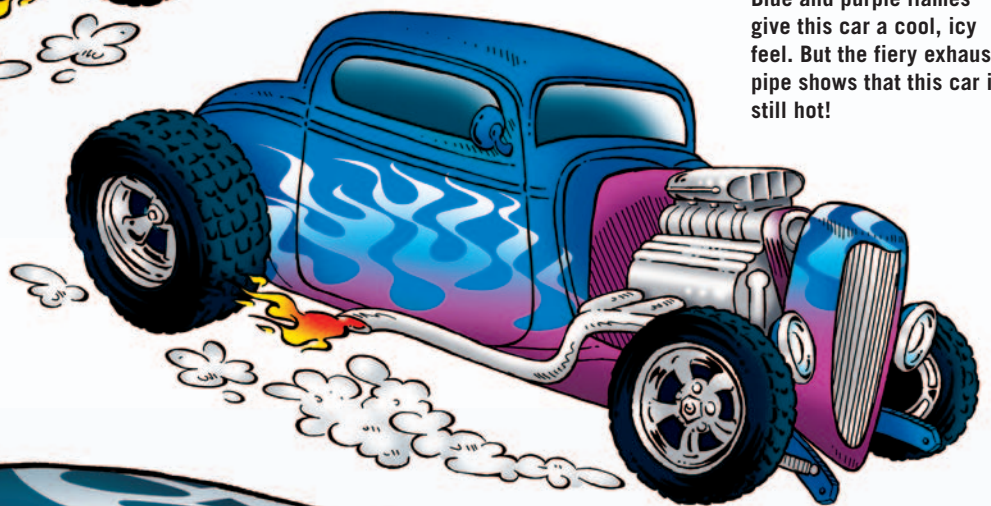
▲ GREEN WITH ENVY

Here shades of green and a curvy band of purple catch the viewer's eye without being over the top.



▲ HOT ROD

This scorchin' car looks hot to the touch with warm colors such as orange, red, and yellow.

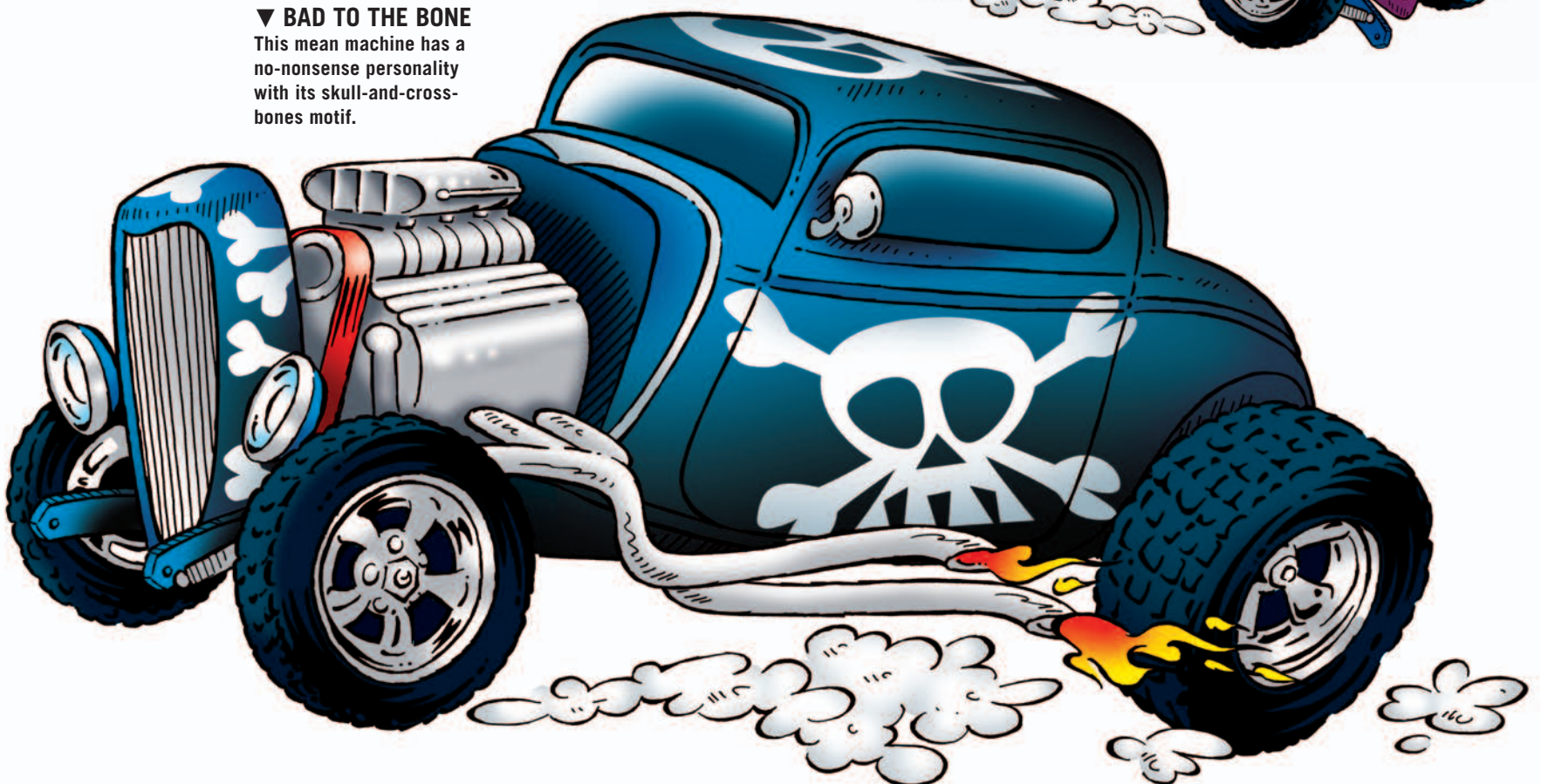


▼ COOL DOWN

Blue and purple flames give this car a cool, icy feel. But the fiery exhaust pipe shows that this car is still hot!

▼ BAD TO THE BONE

This mean machine has a no-nonsense personality with its skull-and-cross-bones motif.



Exaggerating Details

When drawing cartoon cars, you can throw all logic out the window in favor of humor and visual impact. Pump up the details, exaggerating the scale to stress speed and power. With back tires this big, can you park this baby? Who cares? We aren't planning to slow down!

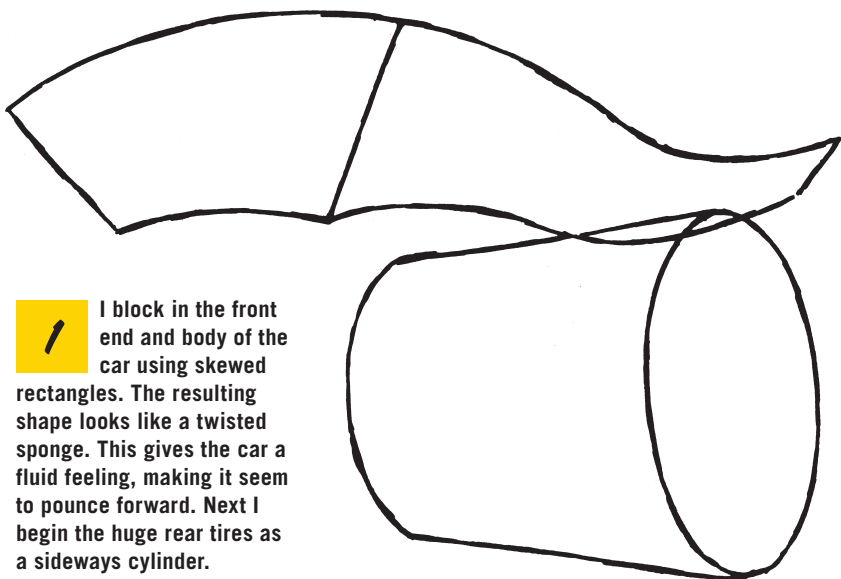
Be sure to keep background and supporting elements as simple as possible when exaggerating details on a car. Your image should be about the ride, not the road!

► PUMPING IT UP

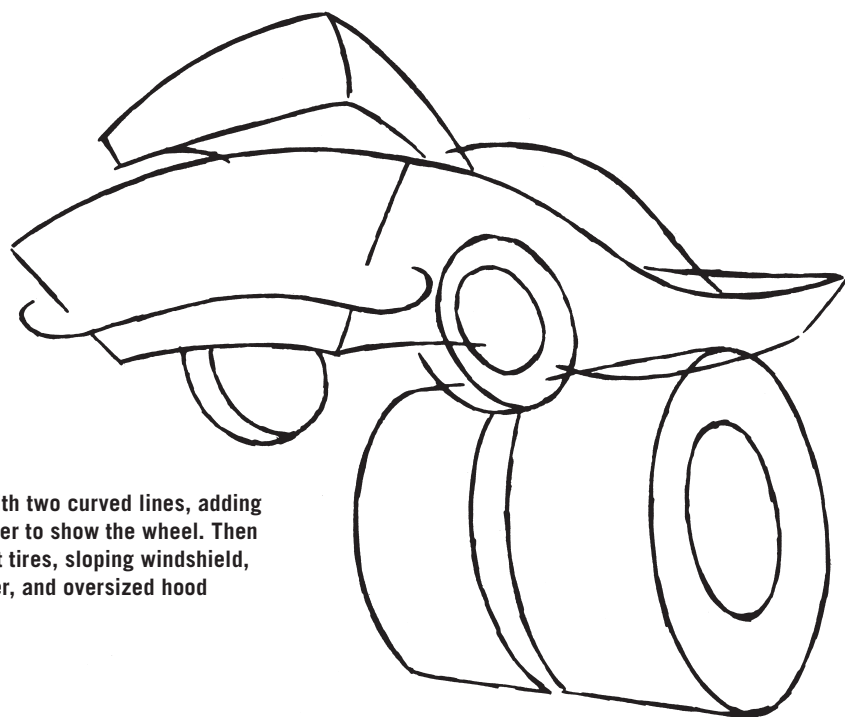
For this extreme machine, I start with this photo of a Plymouth Barracuda but change the angle, environment, and attitude of the original, retaining just enough detail to keep my drawing a recognizable echo of the original.



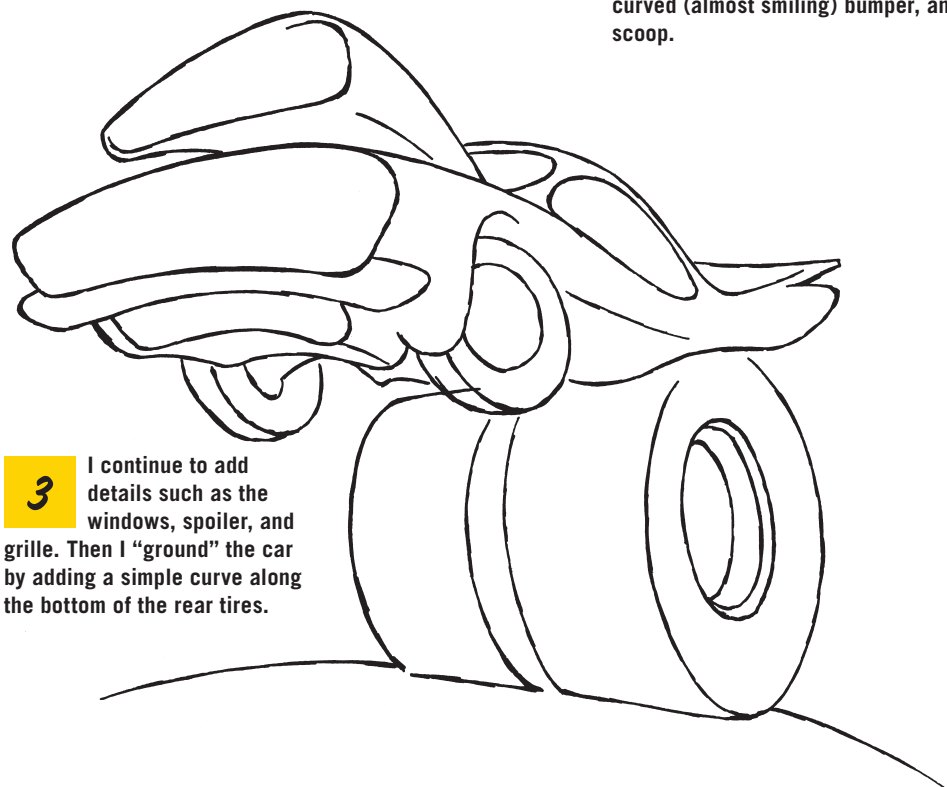
Photo © Wesley Allison



1 I block in the front end and body of the car using skewed rectangles. The resulting shape looks like a twisted sponge. This gives the car a fluid feeling, making it seem to pounce forward. Next I begin the huge rear tires as a sideways cylinder.

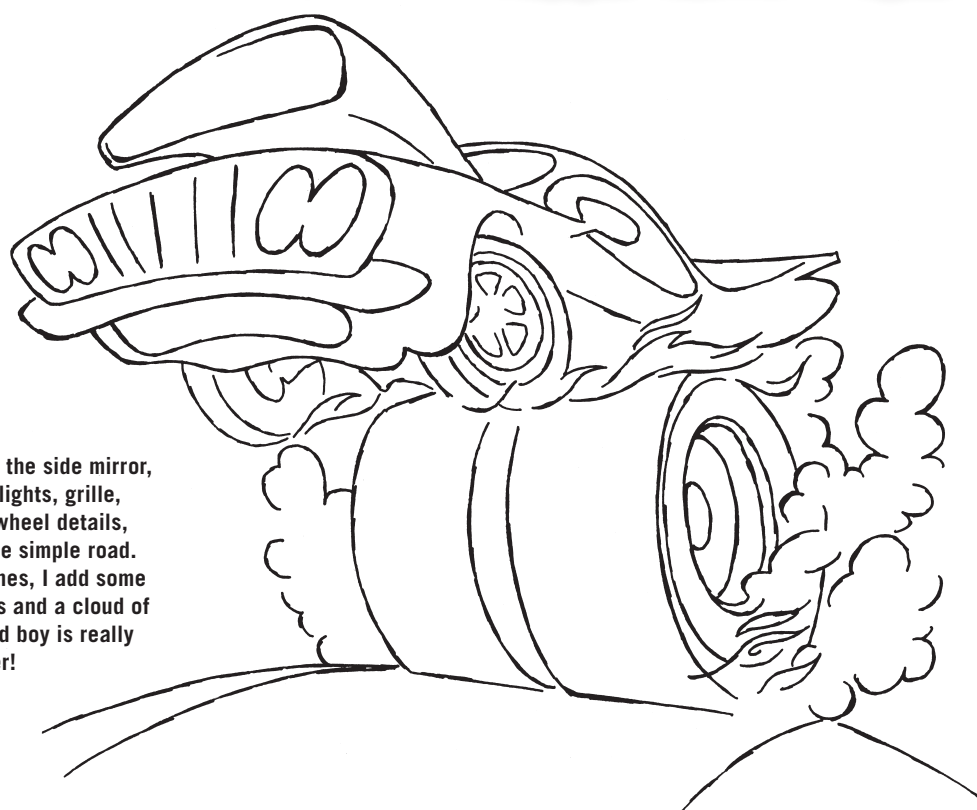


2 I separate the tires with two curved lines, adding the ellipse in the center to show the wheel. Then I add the smaller front tires, sloping windshield, curved (almost smiling) bumper, and oversized hood scoop.



3 I continue to add details such as the windows, spoiler, and grille. Then I "ground" the car by adding a simple curve along the bottom of the rear tires.

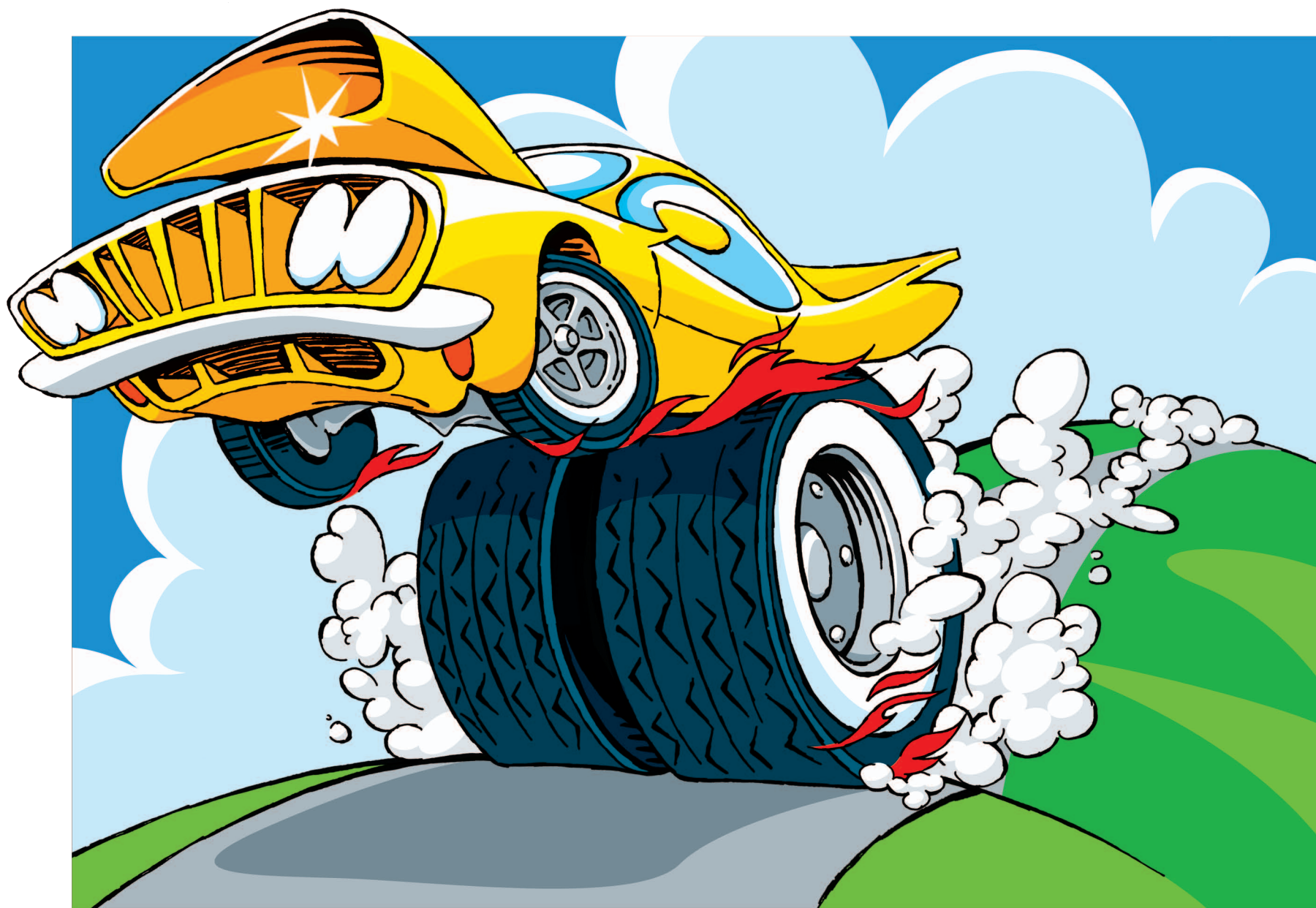
The angle of the car shown here, with glimpses from both below and above, would be impossible in real life. But this just adds to the exaggerated feel! Also, none of the wheels are actually round. Using ellipses instead of circles creates a more exaggerated, forward thrust.



4 I add the side mirror, headlights, grille, and wheel details, and I finish the simple road. For final touches, I add some trailing flames and a cloud of dust—this bad boy is really burning rubber!

SILHOUETTES

When drawing exaggerated cartoon cars, it's important to make the details distinct, noticeable, and memorable. A good way to see if you're on the right track is to draw your exaggerated car in silhouette—if you can tell a lot about the car without any details, you know you're getting it right!



5 Now I add vibrant color to my drawing. I choose cool colors for the background to make it recede, so the yellow hot rod bursts forward and out of the picture. Because I'm using photo-editing software, I juxtapose solid blocks of color—if

I were using watercolor paint, I would try to avoid blending the tones for a bolder look. Unblended colors give the image the visual snap of a "pop art" painting or a frame from an animated film.

What a Character!

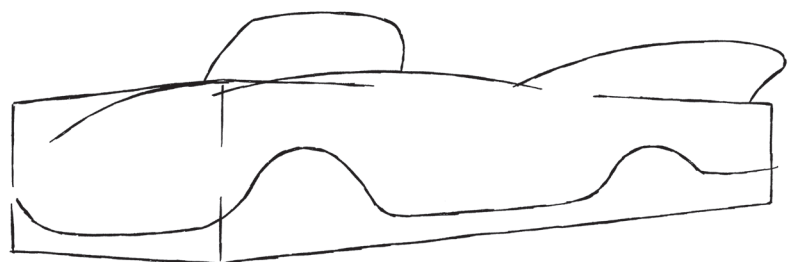
To give your car more personality, try adding a cartoon driver. How do you come up with a good character? Hit the road and look around—there are millions of cartoons driving around out there. Take a sketchbook outside and make some quick studies of the people you see; then match your

characters with the appropriate vehicles. Determine the personality of the car you want to draw, and then design a driver to complement it. For example, add a sophisticated-looking driver to a sleek, elegant car. Or mix it up and place a timid, meek driver in an oversized, rugged vehicle!

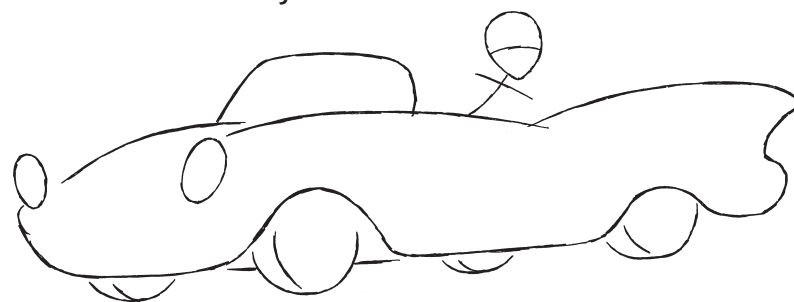
VIVACIOUS VICKI

Classic convertibles and glamorous girls are an archetypal combination. This vivacious vixen is driving a Chevy Bel Air convertible with an expression that matches her own. The large

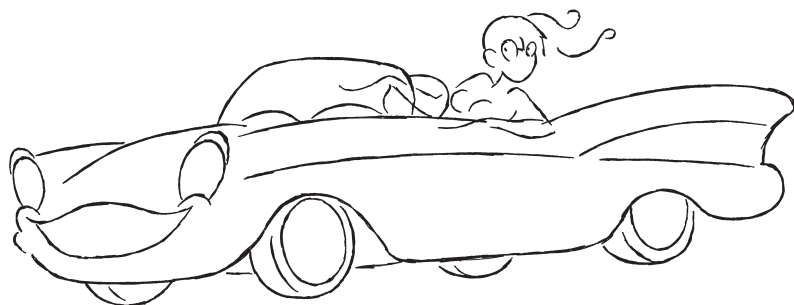
headlights mirror the driver's wide-eyed stare, and the grille curls into a smile with rosy cheeks. The car's jaunty angle makes it seem to bounce along the road.



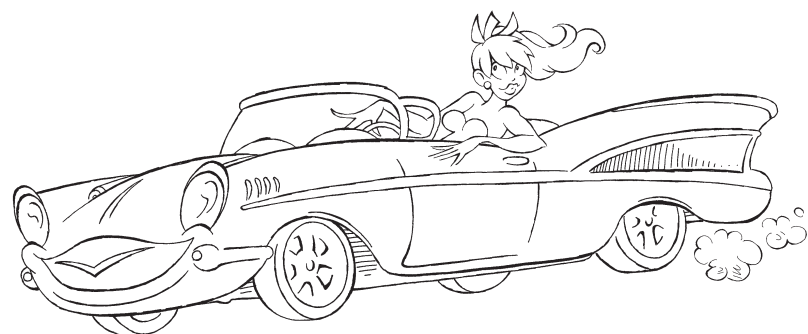
1 First I draw a rectangle in two-point perspective (see page 8). Then I add curved lines for the body of the car, including the wheel wells, windshield, and sharklike tailfin.



2 Now I draw the wheels, headlights, and guidelines for the driver's body. I fine-tune the shape of the car by closing the gap between the tail and the rear bumper and erasing any unnecessary lines.



3 I draw contour lines along the body of the car, and I add lines around the headlights and grille to create the car's "eyes" and "mouth." I also add the dashboard and steering wheel and create the driver's body, face, and windblown hair.



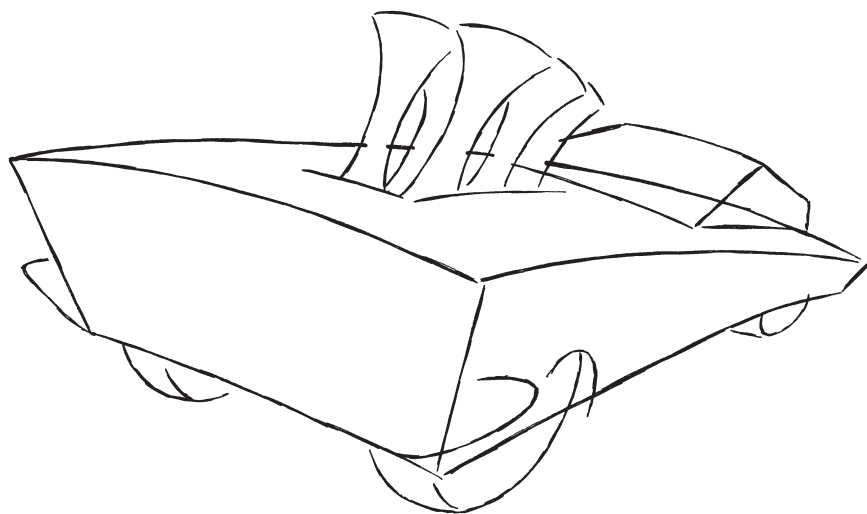
4 I continue to refine the details of the driver's face, arms, hands, and hair. I add the details of the windshield, door and handle, wheels, tail, and body. Then I draw more lines around the "eyes" and "mouth" to give the car expression.

5 To connect the personalities of the car and driver, I use a vibrant color that openly communicates the driver's vivaciousness. I also match the driver's hair to the color of the car for added effect!

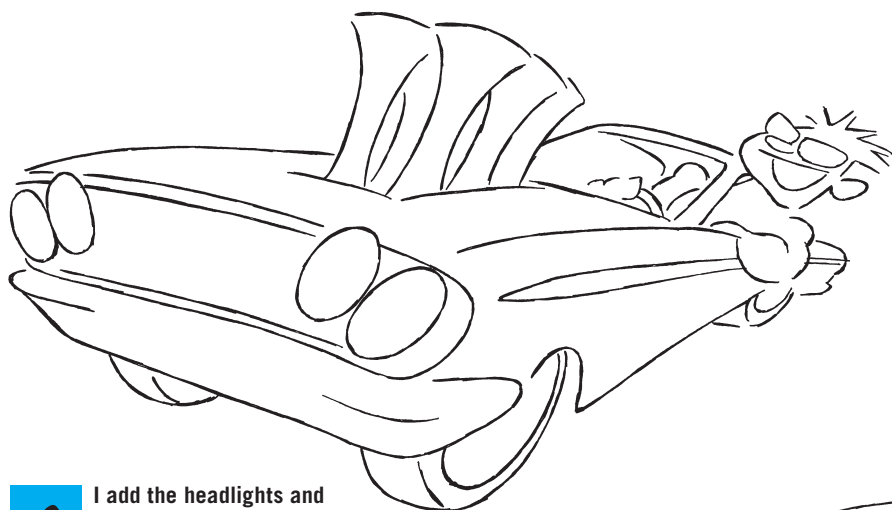


ZANY ZACH

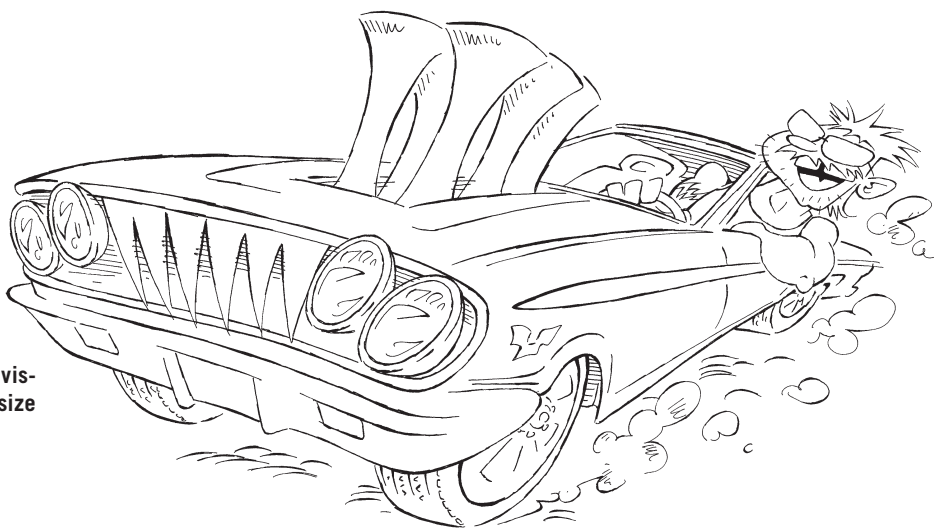
This muscle car packs a zany punch with the help of extreme perspective and distortion that puts the shark-toothed grille a mile ahead of the taillights. This wacky ride requires an equally wacky driver, and this tattooed dude fits the bill. His mullet, muscle shirt, and shades add to his macho swagger, but the gap-toothed grin lets you know that he's an okay guy.



1 To capture the zany aspect of this Ford Thunderbolt, I start by foreshortening the grille, making it appear larger than any other part of the car. (See page 9.) This also gives a sense of forward motion as the car moves toward the viewer. Then I begin adding details such as the windshield, wheels, and larger-than-life headers (the pipes coming out of the hood).



2 I add the headlights and the windshield, as well as contour lines around the grille and along the body of the car. Then I draw the driver, positioning him so he appears bigger than the interior of the car. I also exaggerate the eyes, ears, and mouth for maximum effect.



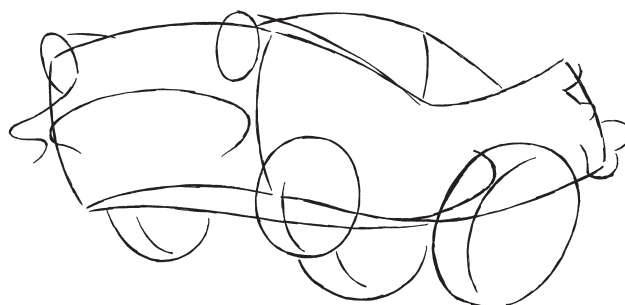
3 Now I fill in the car's details—the zanier the better! I add razor-sharp teeth to the grille and give the driver a tattoo and visible whiskers. I also overemphasize the gap between his teeth.



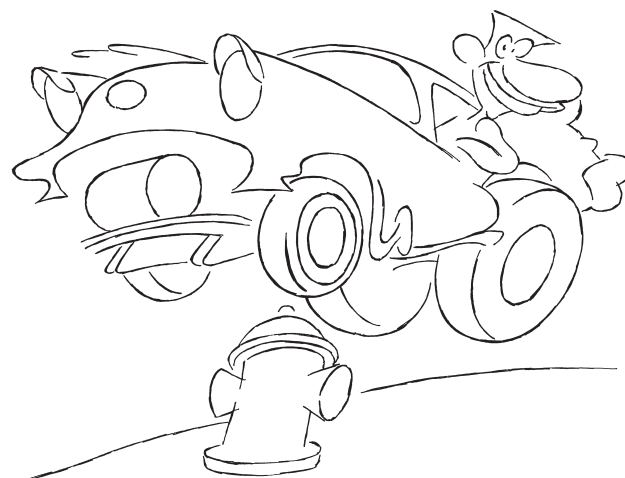
4 Now I add “loud” color and a license plate that complements both the car's and driver's overboard personalities.

GOOFY GUS

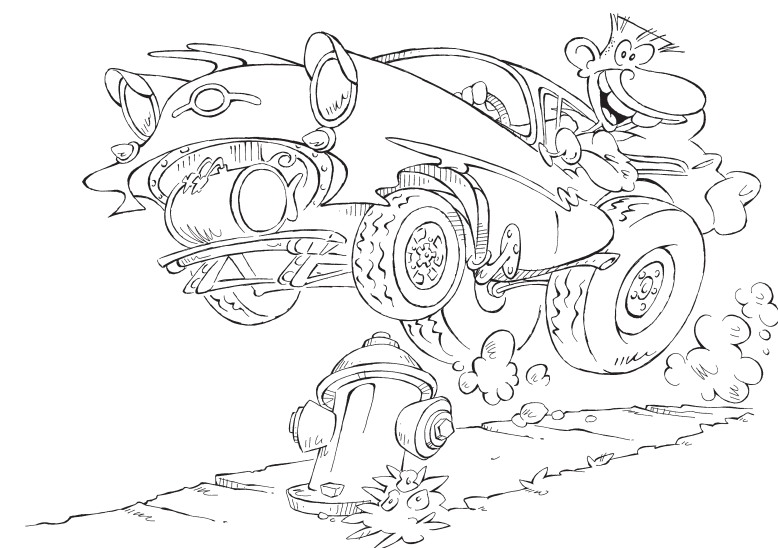
This screwball car has been contorted like a big, soft sponge; details like the oversized rear tires and the snakelike exhaust pipes add to the madcap mood. The road hog behind the wheel may be in for a shock if he doesn't start watching the road! His huge snout, orange flattop, and buckteeth accent his wild-eyed demeanor.



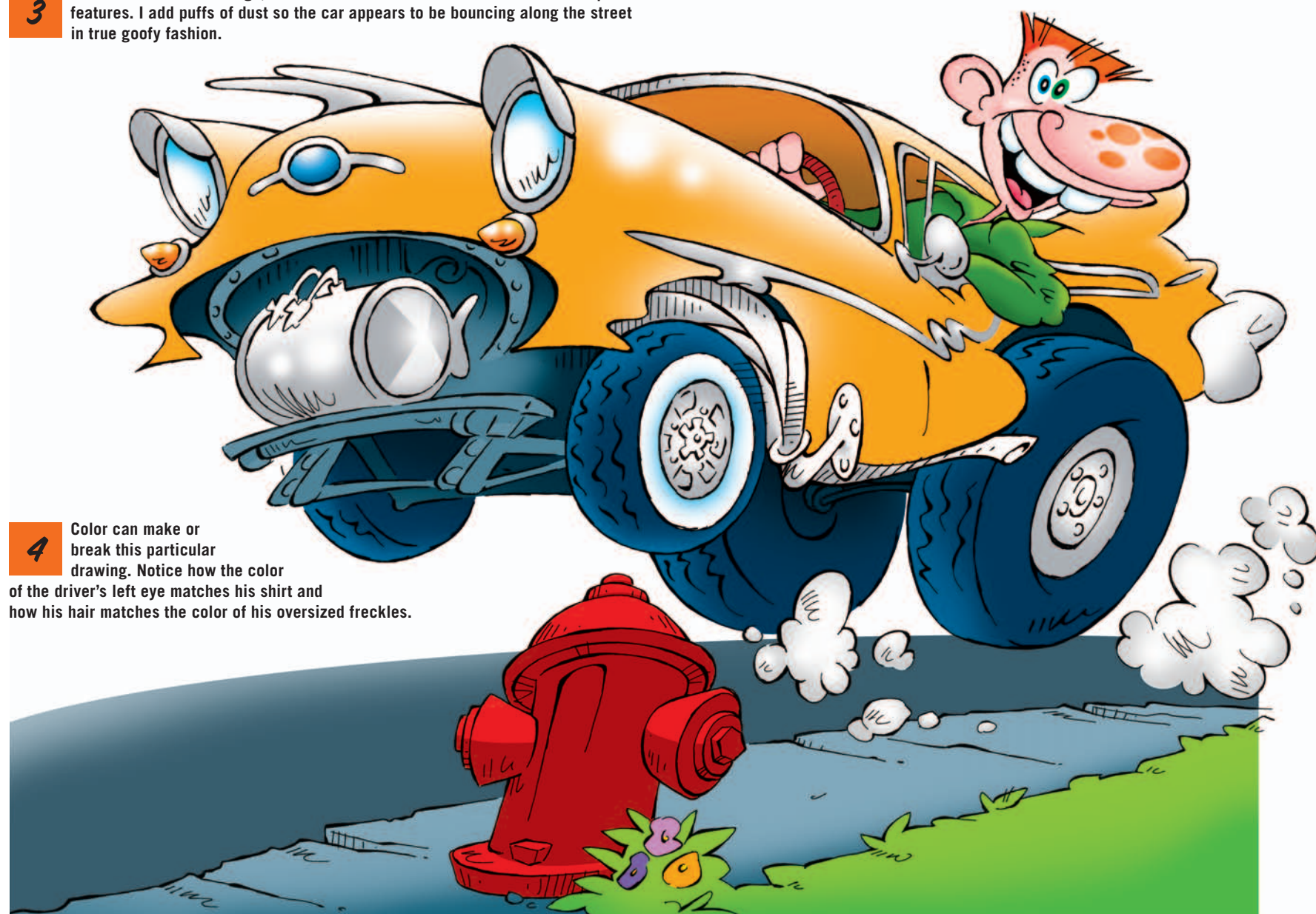
1 I draw the basic shape of this Oldsmobile 88 as a three-dimensional rectangle with curved lines. Then I draw the headlights, windshield, rear bumper, and tires. I make the rear tires larger than the front tires to make the car seem as if its front end is lifted up off the ground.



2 Now I add details, including the road and fire hydrant, and I add a goofy driver with exaggerated features, such as a gigantic nose, big ears, bug-eyes, and an extra-wide mouth.



3 As with the other drawings, I embellish the car and driver with over-the-top features. I add puffs of dust so the car appears to be bouncing along the street in true goofy fashion.

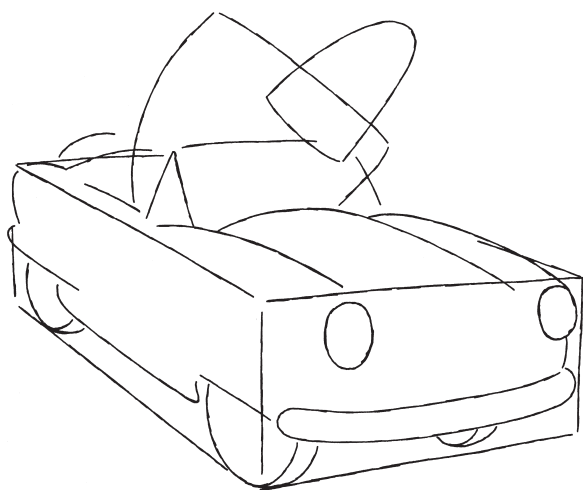


4 Color can make or break this particular drawing. Notice how the color of the driver's left eye matches his shirt and how his hair matches the color of his oversized freckles.

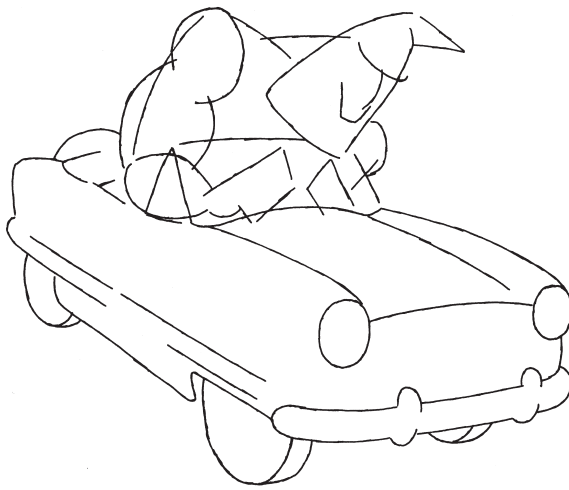
Small Wonders

The well-loved Nash Metropolitan is so micro that it seems impossible that an adult could be shoehorned into it. Its subcompact size and irresistibly perky appearance make it

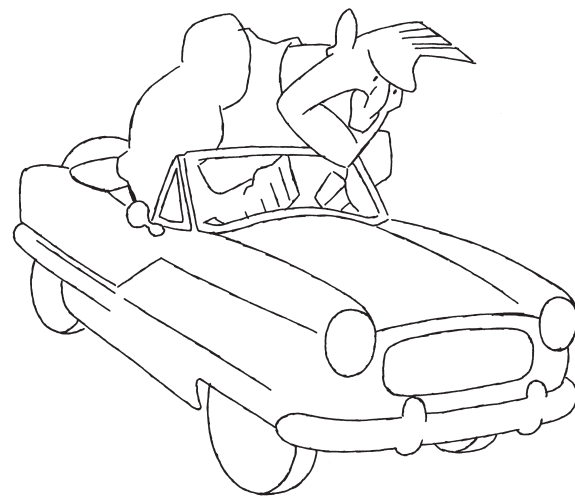
the perfect vehicle for comedy, and it's fun to fabricate an improbable motorist. I decide to make the driver a big bruiser to further contrast with the diminutive car.



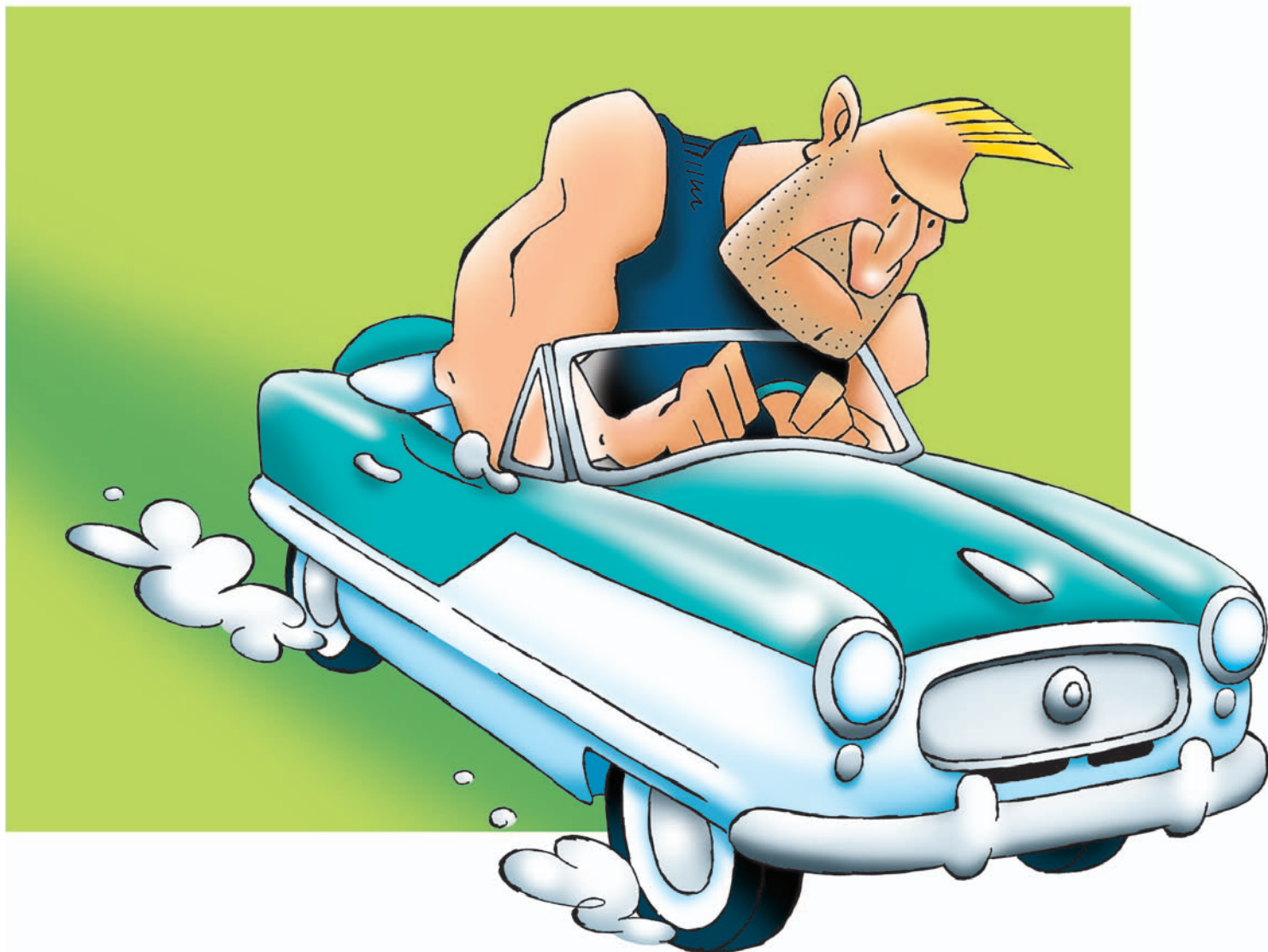
1 I draw a simple box in two-point perspective (see page 8). Using the box as a guide, I draw the windshield, bumper, and tires. Then I add the curve of the hood and the spare tire, erasing the lines of the box that I no longer need. Next I refine the bumper and tires and add the headlights. I start drawing the driver with two bell shapes behind the windshield. I make sure that the driver is disproportionately large when compared with the car; that's the look I'm striving for!



2 Now I add a few details to the car, and I erase any remaining lines of the box. Then I return to the driver, roughing in the shapes of the shoulders, biceps, forearms, and hands. I also add a sharply pointed flat top and a pickle-shaped nose to create his tough yet comic persona.



3 I create the driver's big ear and add two small eyes and a slightly frowning mouth. Then I add the drooping curve that reaches from the nostril down past the mouth. I separate the fingers and strands of hair and draw a curved line below the neck for the shirt. I add a few more details to the car, including the contour line, the grille, the side mirror, and the trim around the windshield. Then I clean up any unneeded lines.

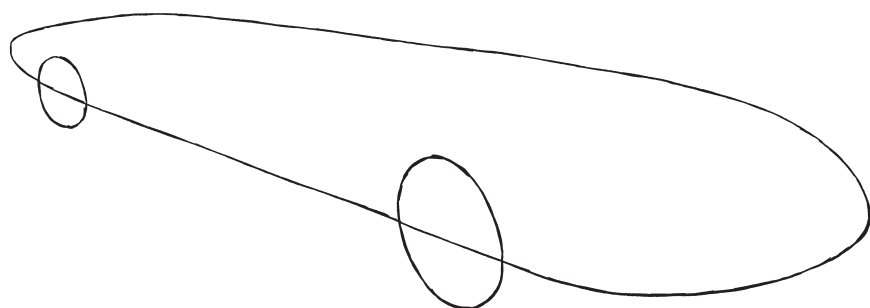


4 Now I apply color, adding details such as the door handles and some extra chrome as I go. For good measure, I give my tough driver a permanent five o'clock shadow. I add the tiny, thin steering wheel between his gargantuan hands. Then I draw some smoke around the tires, and he's off!

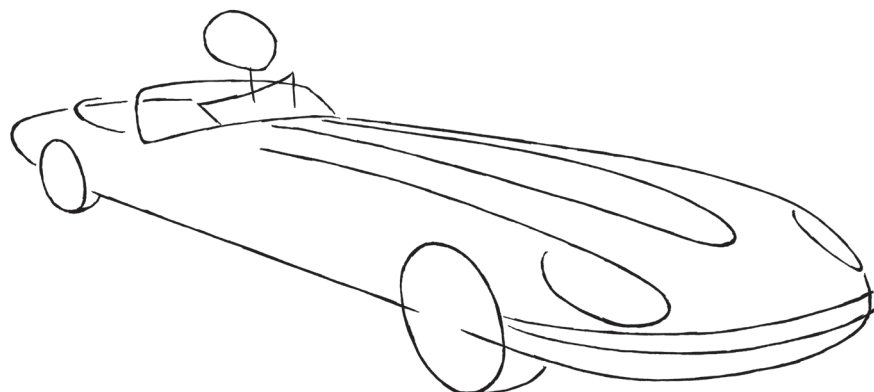
Going To Great Lengths

The Jaguar XKE has an elegant feline quality. To maintain this look while going for laughs, I take this quality to an extreme. Although the basic structure of the car is somewhat

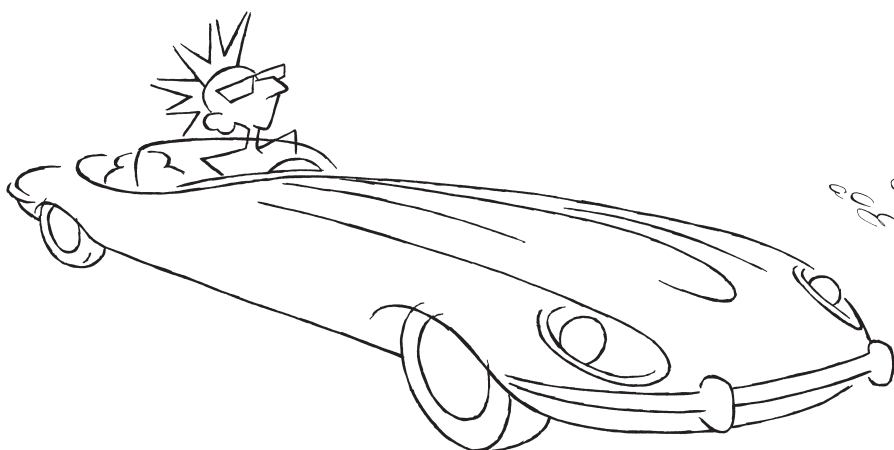
true to form, it has been stretched like taffy. The back of the car remains short and rounded, but the front end seems to stretch for miles.



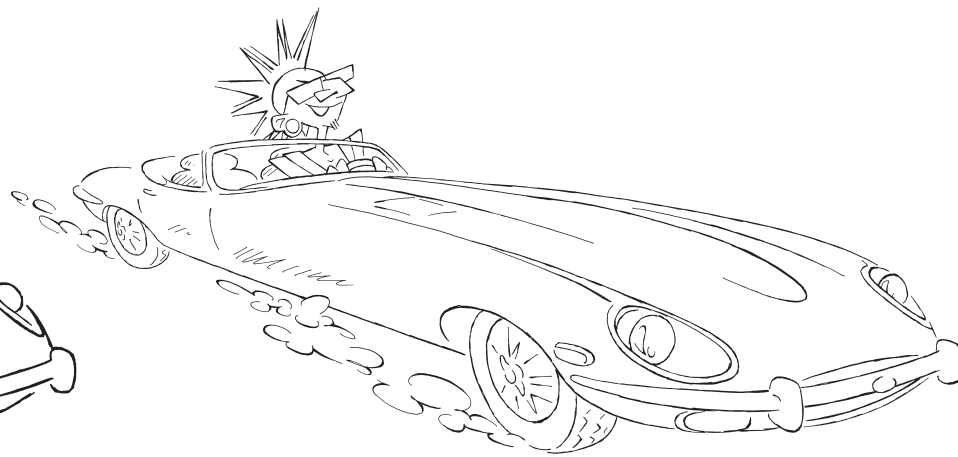
1 I begin this drawing with a softly tapered and elongated oval that is foreshortened to create dimension (see page 9). I position the tires in a somewhat realistic relationship to the car's front end, and I dramatically lengthen the car's hood.



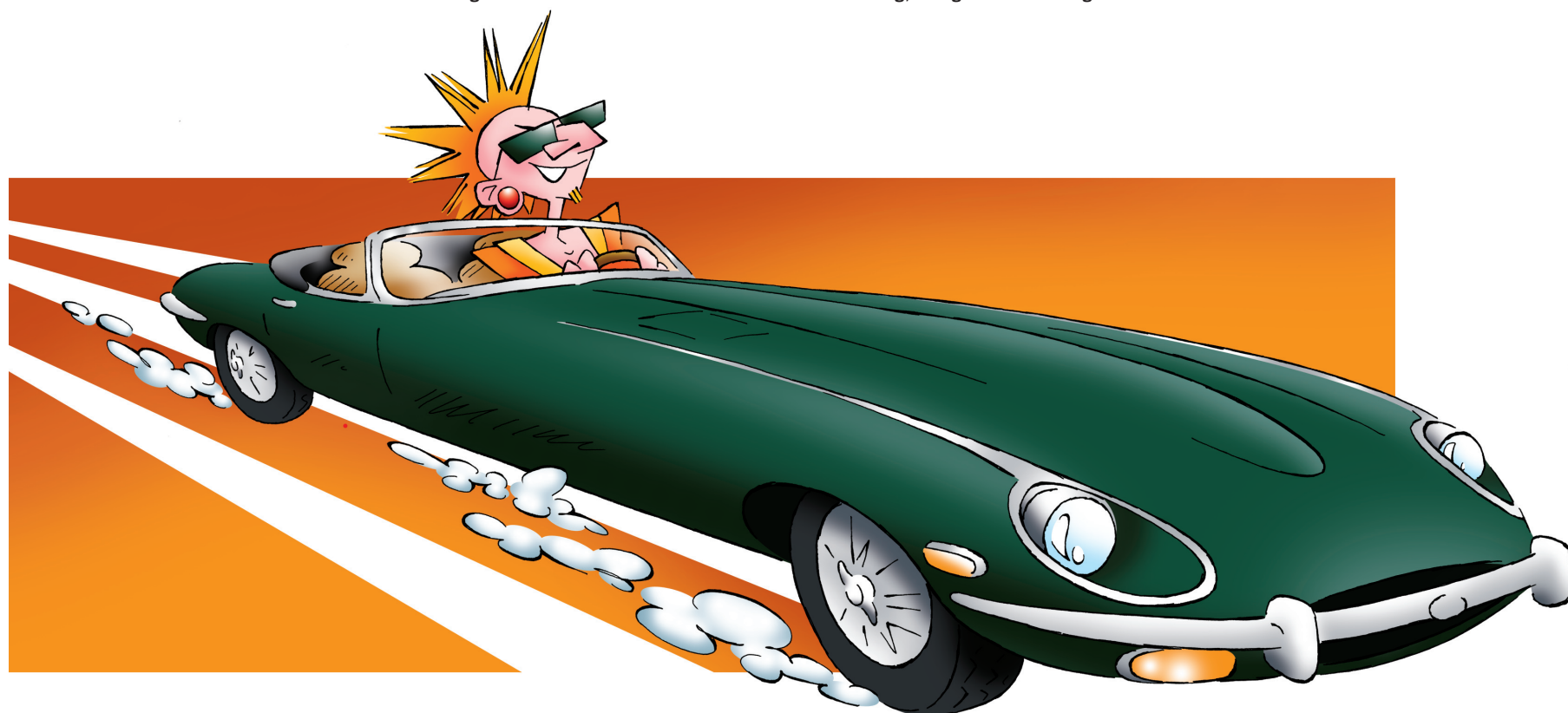
2 I give the tires a little dimension with curved lines; then I add a few more curves to establish the grille, the lights, and the hood details. I also draw the windshield and the line of the convertible top, then block in the position of the driver.



3 I continue adding details to the car, developing the forms and erasing lines as necessary. Then I draw the driver's spiky hair, pointy nose, round ear, and cool shades. I also add a curved line for the steering wheel.



4 I add finishing touches to the car, including wheels and long dust clouds. Then I move to the driver: I finish his face, build up more spikes, draw the large earring, and give him a fitting outfit.

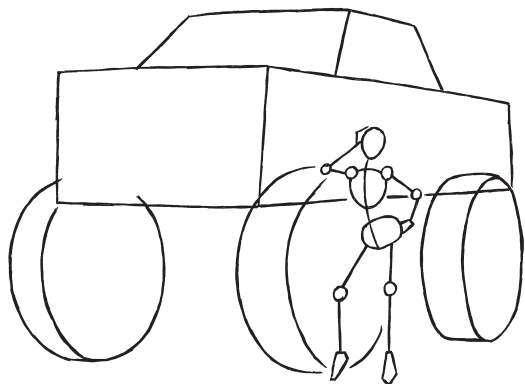


5 Now it's time to add vibrant color and a background. I make the background stop short of the front of the car, emphasizing its length and making it seem to speed forward and out of the picture. I also color the driver with tones

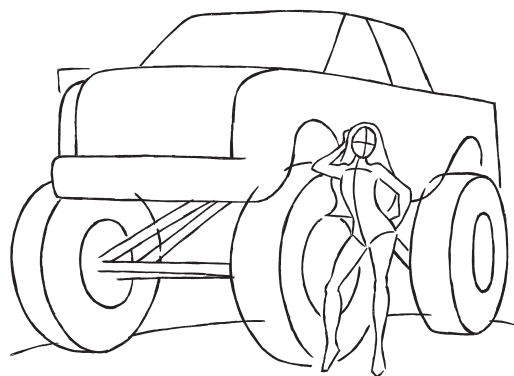
that blend into the background so the focus remains on the car. The long, white lines underneath and behind the car underscore its forward momentum and add to the long, lean quality of the car.

Larger Than Life

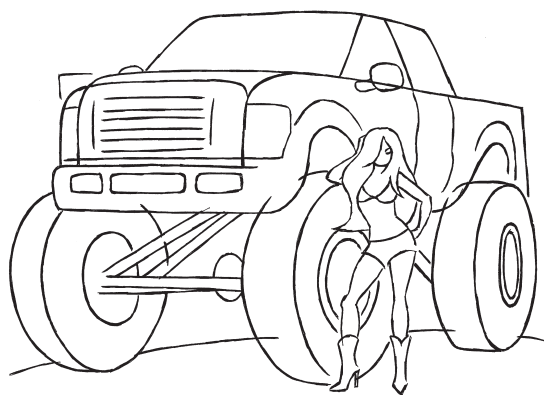
This big, bad machine has been jacked up sky high. A monster truck like this Ford F-250 has tires that are extremely large relative to the truck's frame, giving the vehicle a larger-than-life impact. Adding other elements to a scene like this helps convey the truck's hugeness; this scene is complete with a voluptuous vixen who hardly can reach the door.



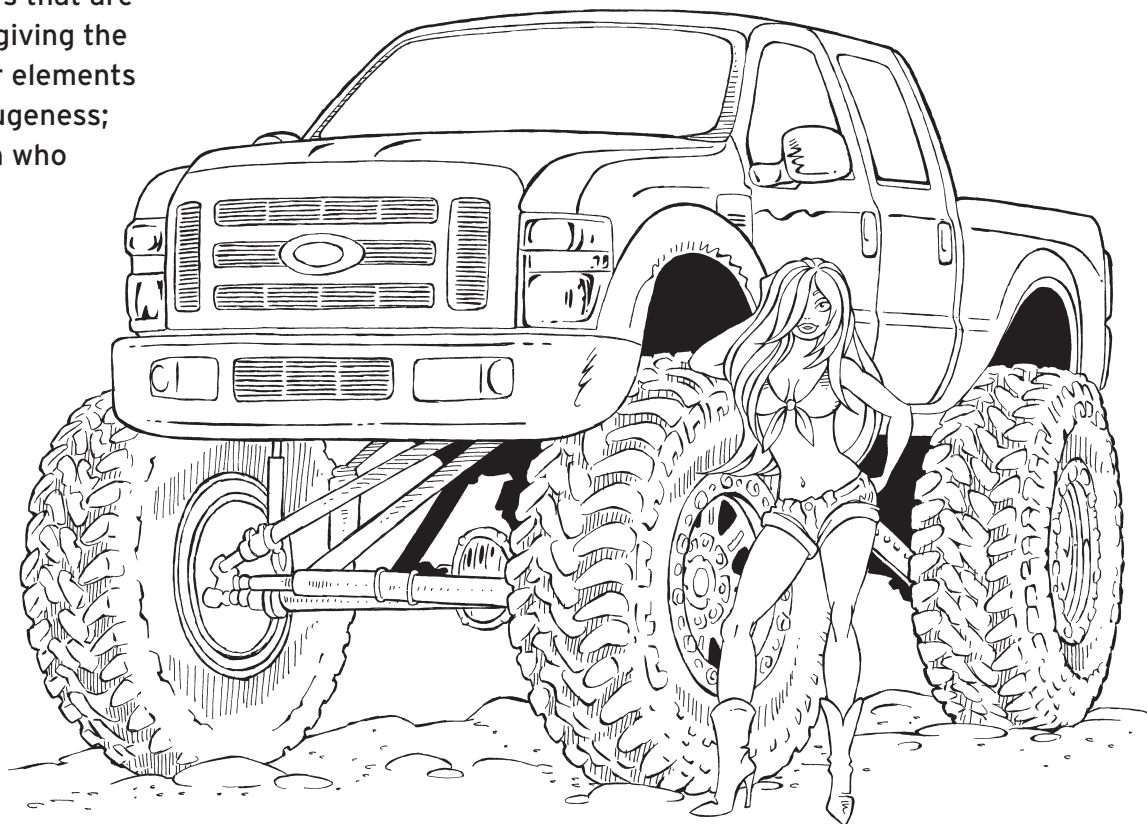
1 First I draw a box in two-point perspective (see page 8); then I add a second, smaller box on top for the cab of the truck. I draw the enormous tires and rough in the figure of the driver. Curving the line of the driver's spine and tilting the pelvis provides a little feminine swagger.



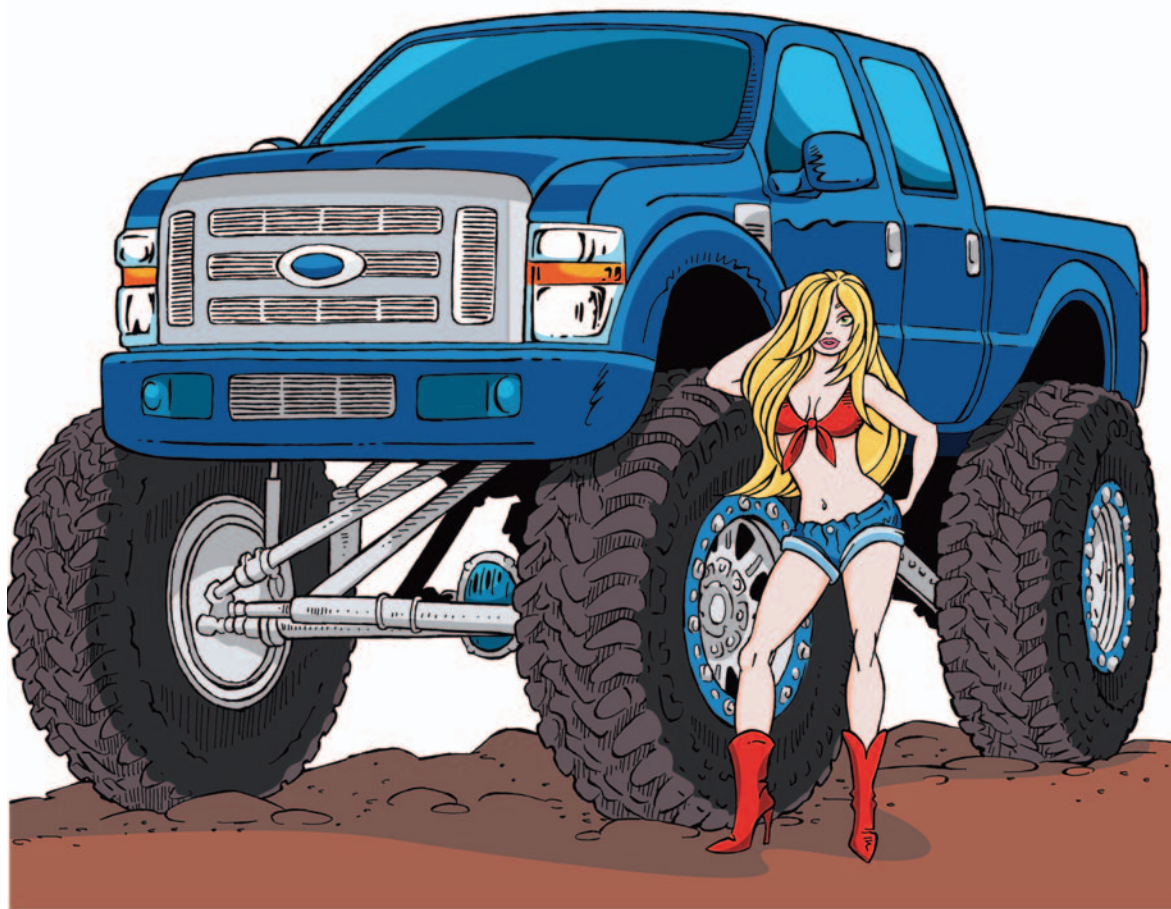
2 Now I round off the hood and the top of the truck. Then I start adding details, such as the support structure, bumper, and wheel wells, curving the lines as I go. I also give the driver her own curves by developing her legs, torso, and arms. I indicate the hair with a few wavy lines.



3 I add more details to the truck, such as the headlights, grille, side mirrors, and door. Then I add curves over the wheel wells and indicate the wheels. Next I add the driver's details, including her boots, outfit, eye, and sweeping bangs.



4 It's time to go hog wild with the details! After fully developing the windows, doors, headlights, and grille, I create the texture of the tires with a combination of wide shapes and short lines. I add some contour lines to the body of the truck and finish developing the support structure. I also add solid shading to the underside of the truck to give it dimension. I finish the driver's face and hair and I develop what little clothing she has on, including her boots. Now this cowgirl is ready to ride!

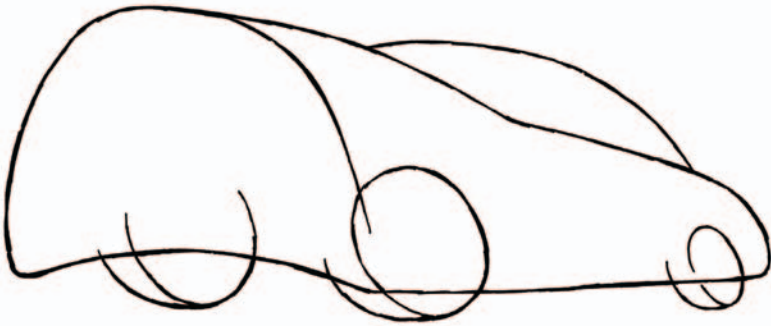


5 Now I give my drawing life by adding vibrant color with photo-editing software. You can achieve a similar look with markers. If you take an ink drawing to a copy center and have several copies of the drawing made on card stock, you can experiment with markers without damaging the original. To get flat colors, you may have to apply several coats with the markers.

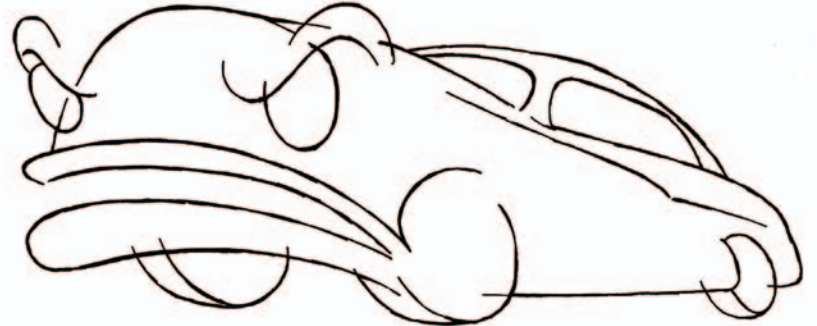
Car-Toons

Anthropomorphism is the cartooning convention of giving human attributes to animals and inanimate objects. This allows dogs and cats to talk and gives the dish the ability to literally run away with the spoon. From glamorous sports cars to tough off-road vehicles, cars have so much personality to start with that it's hard to resist anthropomorphizing them.

Just imagine what the car would look like as a real person. Many cars already resemble people, so there aren't too many alterations to make. For example, headlights often look like eyes, and bumpers and grilles can look like mouths. So just start with what's already there! Remember to keep it simple—too many details will detract from the car's personality.



1 To give this Mercury Coupe an angry disposition, I analyze the form of the “normal” car and start sketching a softened, more pliable version. (I think of the car as being made out of rubber instead of steel.) Then I exaggerate the size and shape of the car's front end to create the “face.”



2 Next I draw the windows and add a contour line along the body of the car. I refer to the original guidelines to create the car's “mouth” and “eyes” (instead of the headlights and grille), exaggerating as much as possible. I create angry eyebrows for added emphasis and then erase any extra lines.



3 I continue adding details to the wheels, windows, and body of the car. I add more curved lines for “bags” under the “eyes,” making them appear to bulge out in aggravation. Then I add braces to the grille that look like teeth.



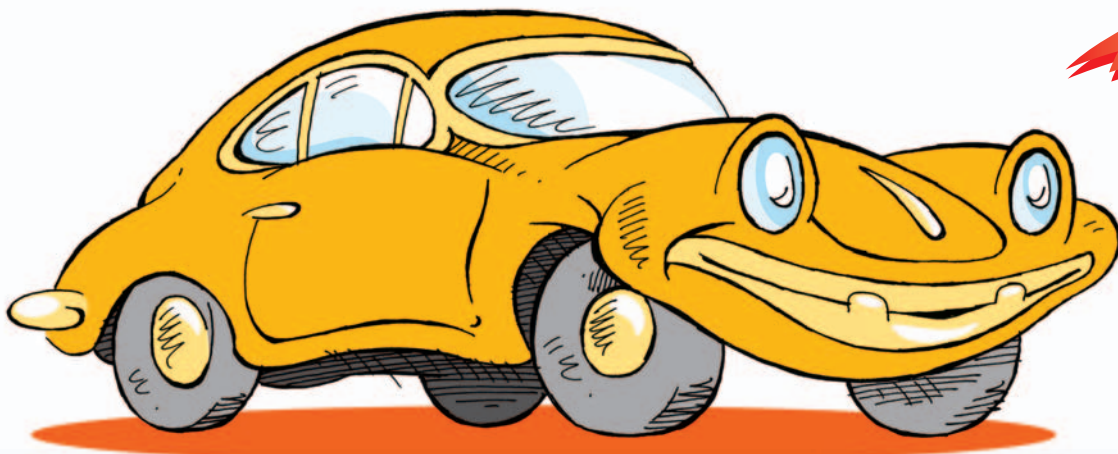
4 I draw pupils and individual teeth, adding to the “human” aspect. Drawing the pupils to the side makes it seem as though the car is looking directly (and angrily) at something in particular. Then I add more details to the tires, wheels, and door. To finish, I add clouds of smoke around the bottom of the car.



5 After allowing the ink to dry, I scan the drawing and add color with photo-editing software. I use cool blues and purples for the background to make the green car “pop” forward. The white areas on the eyes and teeth draw attention to the car's face. Scale, perspective, and color work together to make this tough urban vehicle surge forward.

► MOOD SWINGS

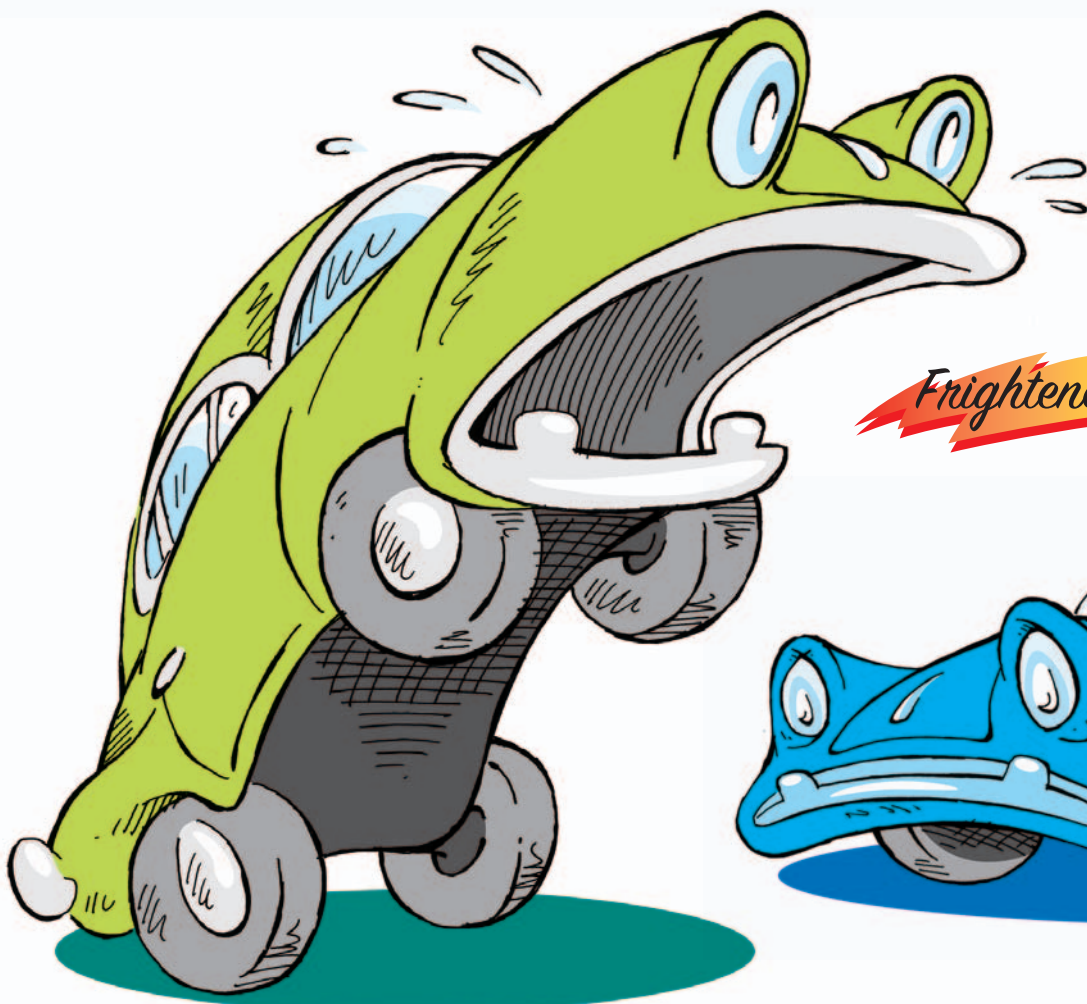
To better understand anthropomorphism, start by thinking about a human face—what makes a person look happy, frightened, or sad? Then compare the eyes, eyebrows, and mouth of each human face here with the headlights and grilles of the corresponding cars below. Color also can help convey attitude, as shown here.



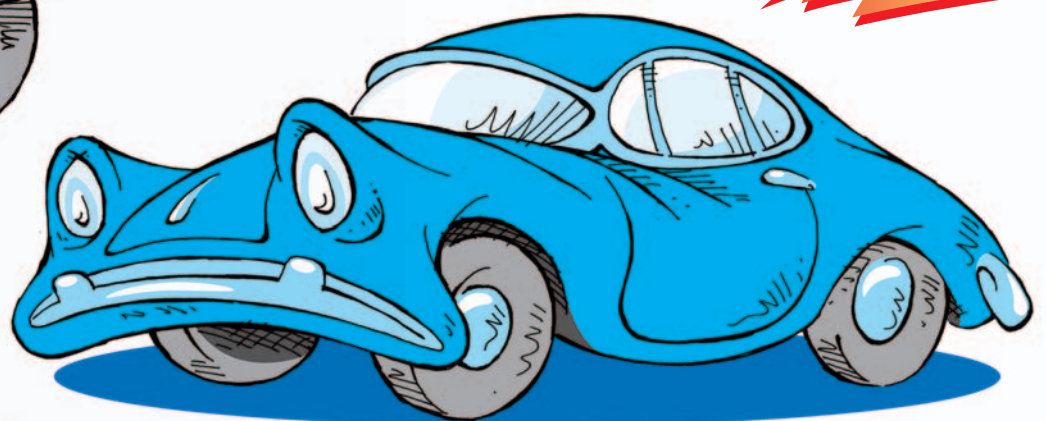
Happy

BODY LANGUAGE

When drawing people, the position of the body can communicate volumes—the same goes for cartoon cars. As you can see here, the lines on the happy car arch and curve up optimistically. As the frightened car rears back, the lines curve away from whatever has scared him. His headlights pop with surprise, and his froglike mouth gapes open in shock. The sad car gets his blues from more than his color scheme—his lines all droop down, and worried creases appear in the metal.



Frightened



Sad

Location, Location

As in real estate, location is everything when it comes to cartooning. Backgrounds tell a story and set the stage for the action. Remember to keep your backgrounds fairly simple—include just enough detail to make it clear where the action is taking place. Backgrounds should accent the action, not overshadow the star of the scene.

► USING PHOTO REFERENCES

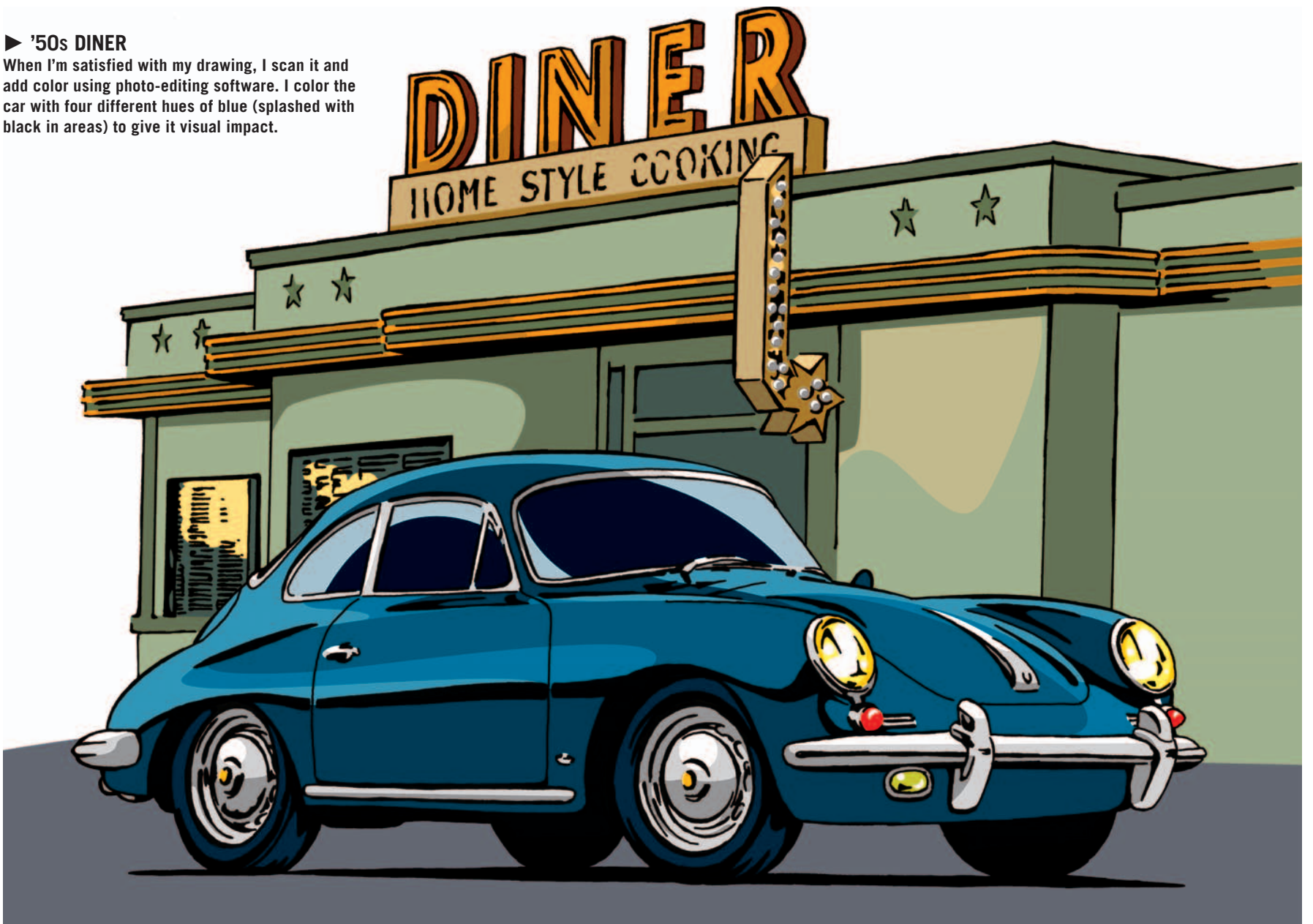
Photo references can be helpful, but don't feel obliged to duplicate every detail. For example, in the illustration below I omitted elements such as the lamppost and the truck to the far left, as well as the details on the right side of the building. I felt these objects would detract from the foreground.



Photo © Wesley Allison

► '50s DINER

When I'm satisfied with my drawing, I scan it and add color using photo-editing software. I color the car with four different hues of blue (splashed with black in areas) to give it visual impact.





◀ SPACED OUT

Cartoonists often create memorable images by placing their subjects in unlikely contexts. Placing a lion on the subway or a sea serpent in a kitchen sink adds humor and a jolt of the unexpected. Here I rocket the car to the top of a mountain on a distant planet. The free-form rocks and the nighttime color scheme add to the drawing's surreal quality. It's the same car that appears in the diner scene, but the color has changed and the line-work appears casually scribbled.



▲ CREEPY CHATEAU

Now I whisk the car to a spooky old castle. The cracked stone and the spidery tree branches enhance the ominous mood of this illustration. By limiting the color palette of the background to cool blues, the scene appears moonlit and a bit sinister. Changing the paint to red makes the car really "pop" off the blue background.



▲ TROPICAL BEACH

Here I transport the same car to a tropical setting. The natural forms of the palms soften the lines of the car, and the way they lean slightly to the left hints at a strong, sultry breeze. Allowing the trees and the moon to break the confines of the picture plane gives the entire image an appealing silhouette.

Go, Speed Racer!

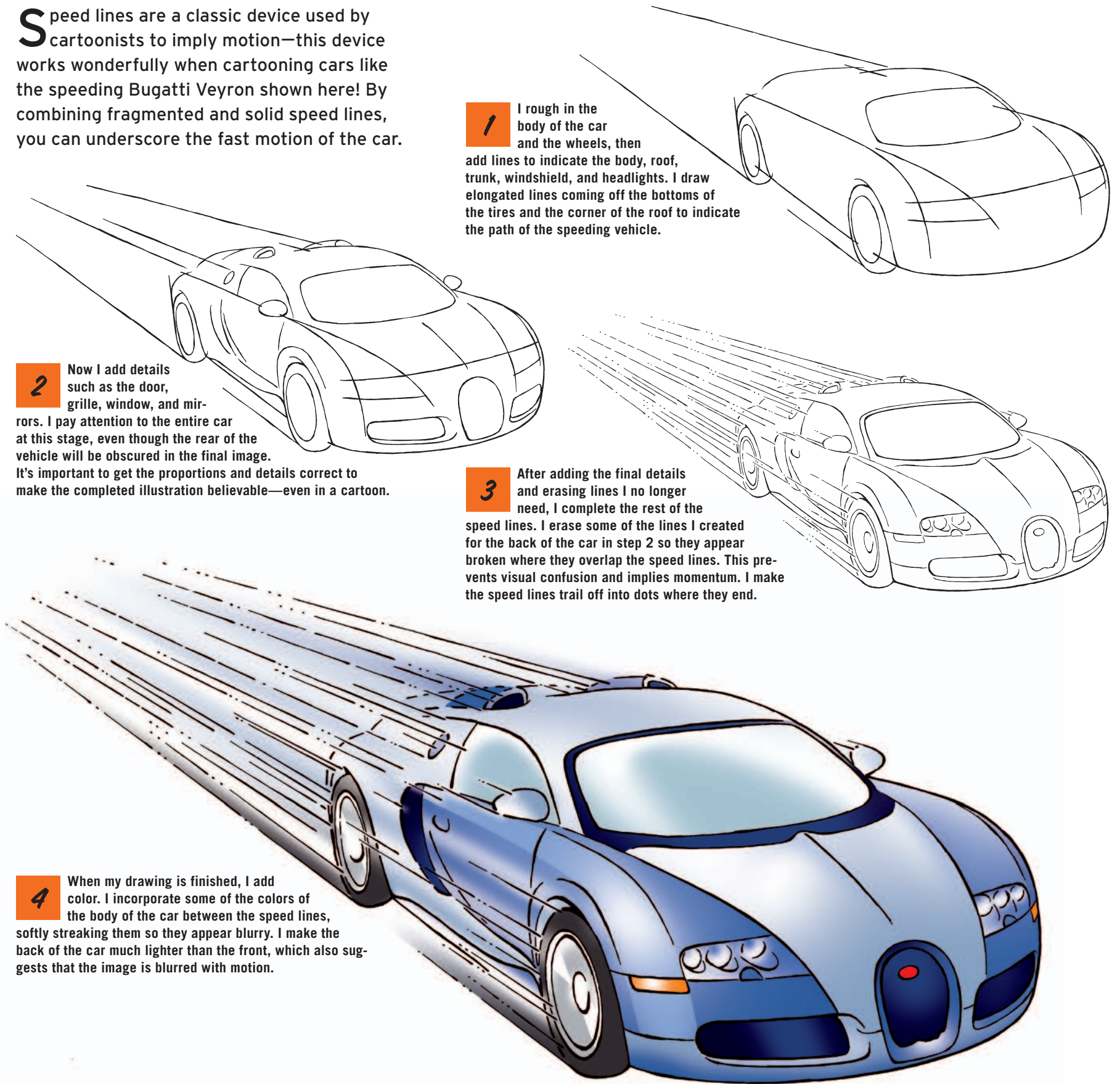
Speed lines are a classic device used by cartoonists to imply motion—this device works wonderfully when cartooning cars like the speeding Bugatti Veyron shown here! By combining fragmented and solid speed lines, you can underscore the fast motion of the car.

1 I rough in the body of the car and the wheels, then add lines to indicate the body, roof, trunk, windshield, and headlights. I draw elongated lines coming off the bottoms of the tires and the corner of the roof to indicate the path of the speeding vehicle.

2 Now I add details such as the door, grille, window, and mirrors. I pay attention to the entire car at this stage, even though the rear of the vehicle will be obscured in the final image. It's important to get the proportions and details correct to make the completed illustration believable—even in a cartoon.

3 After adding the final details and erasing lines I no longer need, I complete the rest of the speed lines. I erase some of the lines I created for the back of the car in step 2 so they appear broken where they overlap the speed lines. This prevents visual confusion and implies momentum. I make the speed lines trail off into dots where they end.

4 When my drawing is finished, I add color. I incorporate some of the colors of the body of the car between the speed lines, softly streaking them so they appear blurry. I make the back of the car much lighter than the front, which also suggests that the image is blurred with motion.



► DEPICTING SPEED

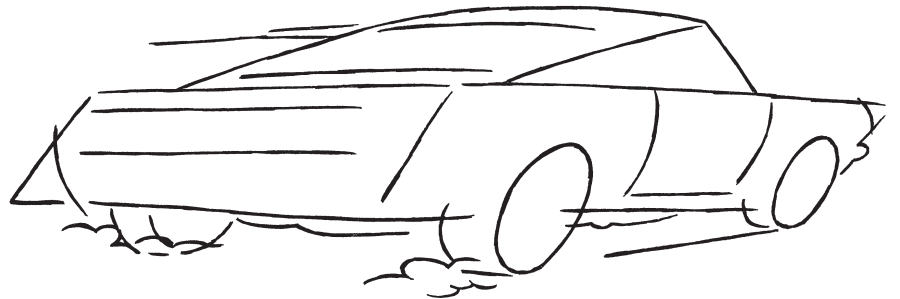
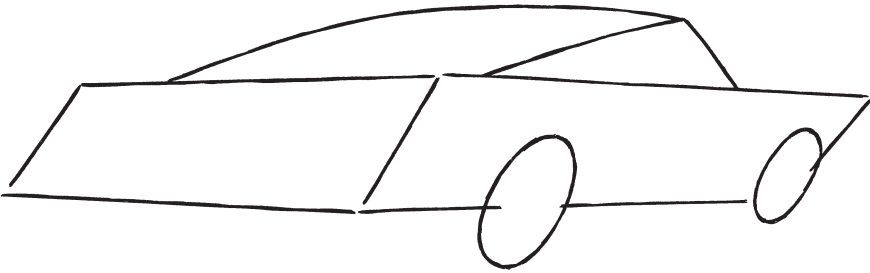
Study these illustrations of a football soaring through the air. Short, curved lines make the ball appear to be soaring in slow motion; whereas straight, long lines dramatically speed up the football's trajectory.



Burn Out

With its wheels spinning fast, this Ford Mustang is really burning rubber. This drawing is designed to call attention to the car's speed and movement. It also has been distorted to emphasize thrust—it's angled away from the viewer, the front end is pointing into the wind, and the tires are skewed

into ellipses (see page 9). In the minimal background, a stripe indicates a road and offers a frame of reference without detracting from the vehicle. Allowing the Mustang and smoke to break out of the background rectangle heightens the action and propels the car forward.



1 I start this drawing with some simple geometric boxes to block in the basic shape of the car. I draw ellipses to indicate the tires, and I angle all of the lines to the right to emphasize speed and direction.

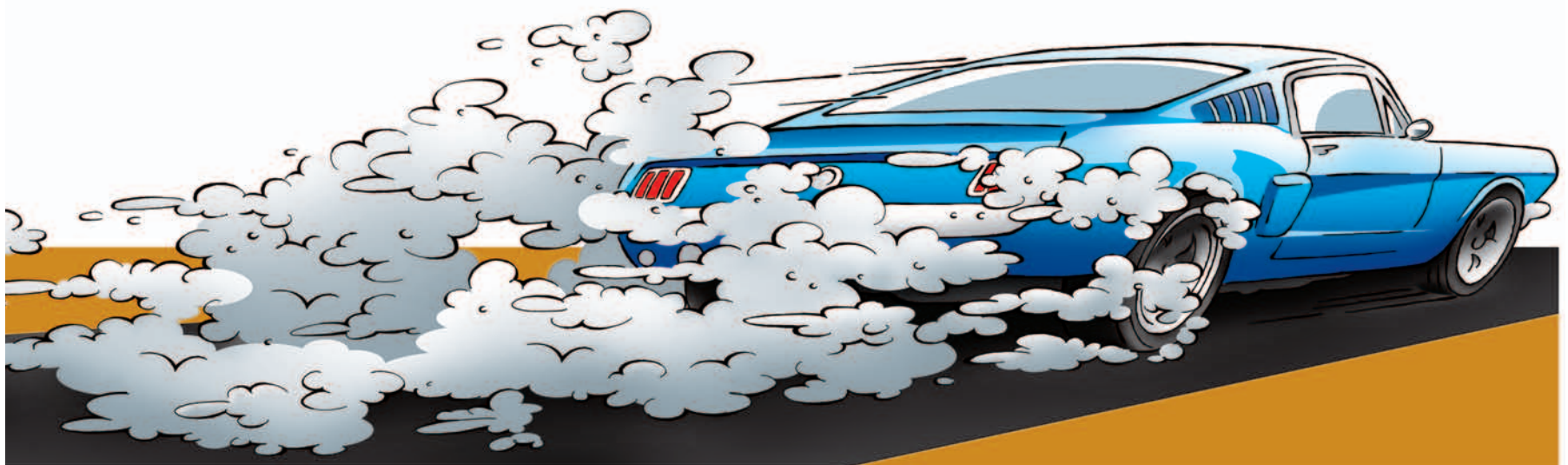
2 I add more details to work out the proportions, and I curve off the hard edges of the initial box. Although some of this area will be covered by smoke, it helps to work out the dimensions of the vehicle this way.



3 I sketch the basic cloud of smoke here and eliminate the sections of the car that will be concealed by smoke. Then I draw the windows, doors, and other details.



4 Finally, I sketch the remaining identifying elements. I eliminate interior details so that the emphasis stays on the action and movement.



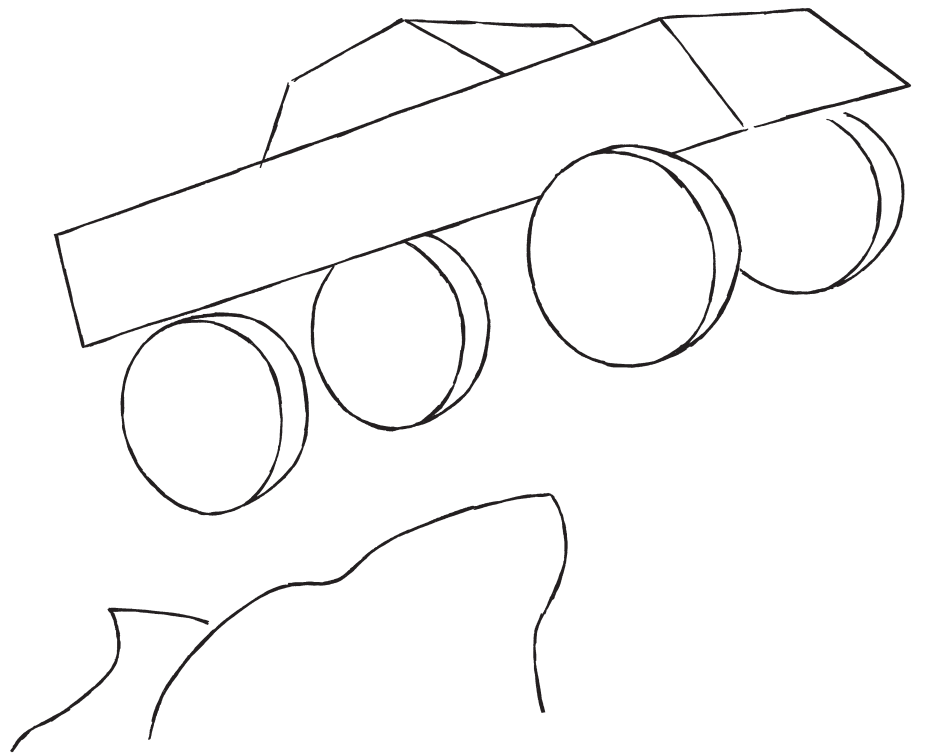
5 Now I scan the image and drop in color digitally. I build up color on layers, using crisp, hard lines for some of the reflections on the car windows and exterior.

Softer shadows in other areas (especially in the smoke) offer contrast. The cool colors of the car and smoke nicely contrast with the warm tone of the road.

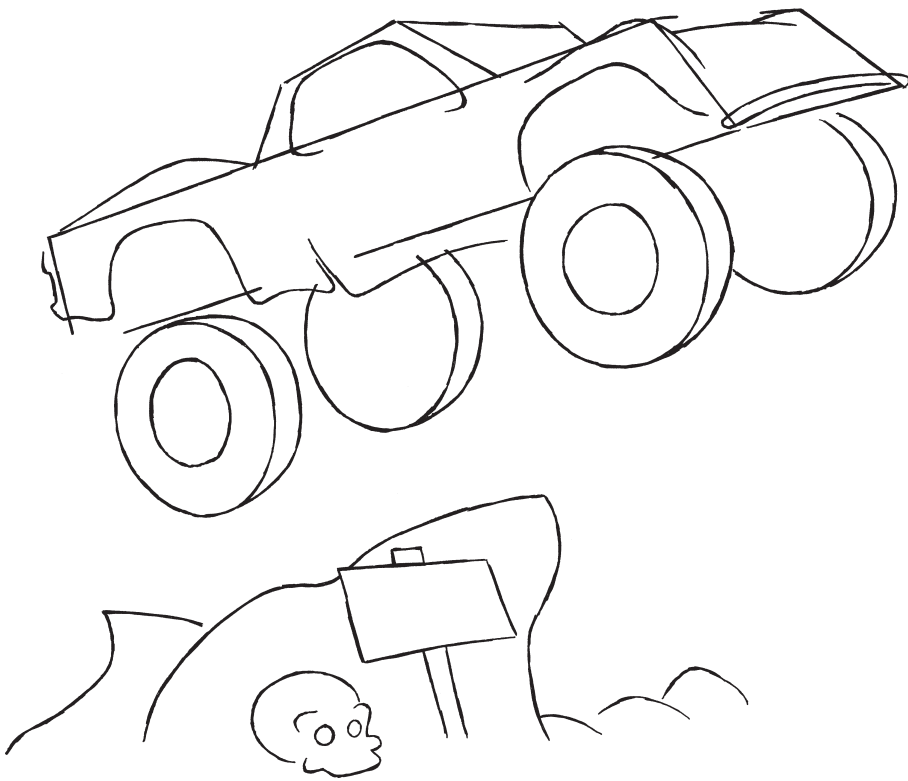
Offroading

The sign that says “Keep Out” clearly means nothing to the off-road rebel roaring through this rugged terrain. When concocting the scenario you want to draw, don’t be ruled by your reference materials. Although a photograph inspired this cartoon, virtually everything has been changed, from the color and position of the truck to the details of the environment. The original image showed a hot Ford Ranger sailing over a hill, but I decided to turn it into a rough-and-ready ride, emphasizing dings and dents and even adding a couple of bandages.

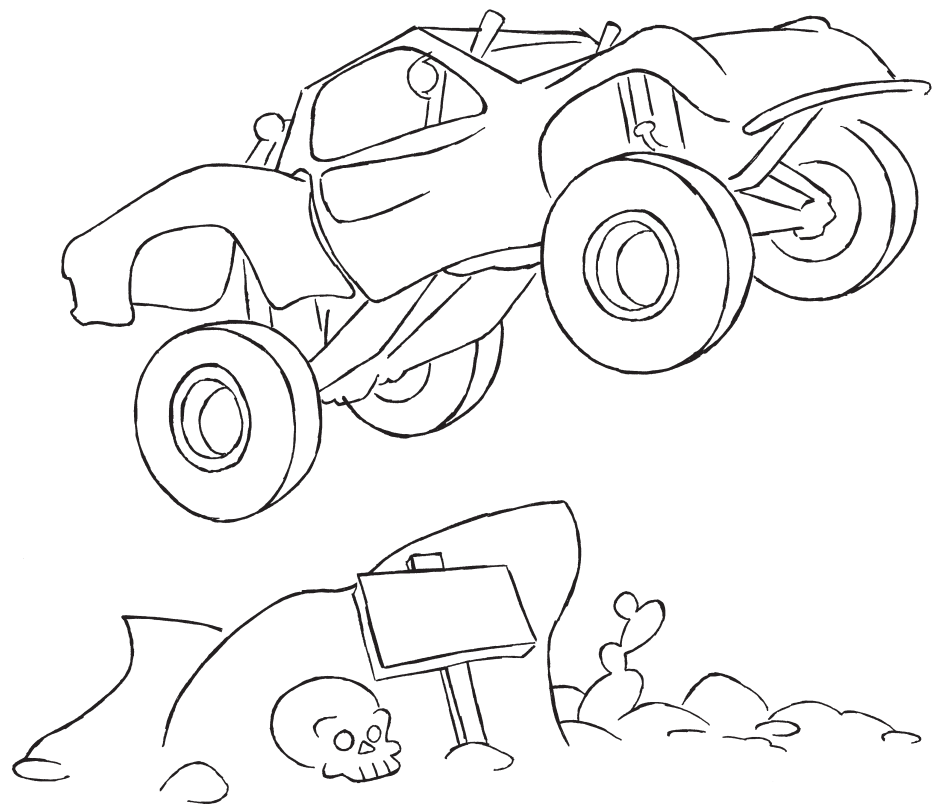
The proportions echo the original photo to some extent, but the details have been exaggerated—especially the tires, which are drawn about 30 percent bigger than they are in real life. The truck in the photo was aiming down, but here it angles up, ramping up the action and turning the truck into a rattling rocket on the verge of blasting off. Rather than a sandy dune, a bunch of boulders accented with a warning sign and grinning skull set the scene.



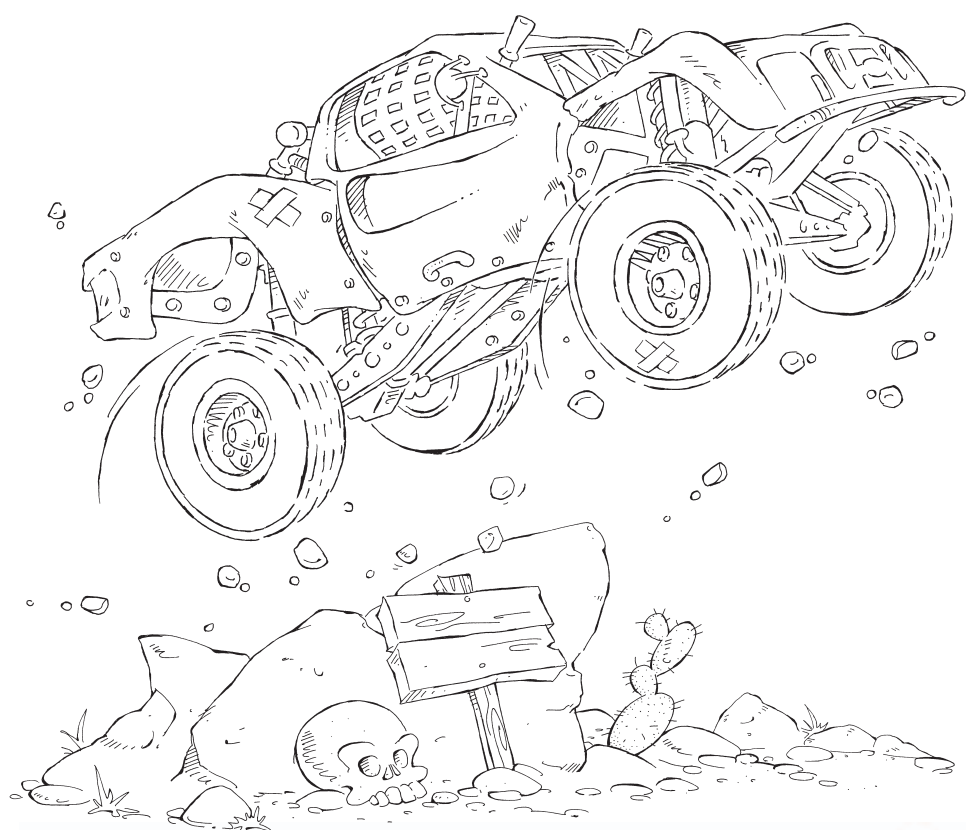
1 I block in the rectangular body of the truck at an angle so it appears to be soaring through the air. Then I add the tires and start indicating the largest rocks on the ground.



2 Now I begin adding details such as circles for the wheels and curves to indicate the lines of the hood and fenders. The angles of the body are intentionally extreme to emphasize the beat-up quality of the truck. Next I draw outlines for the window, the skull, and the sign.



3 When planning a complex composition like this one, be aware of the relationships among the elements. For example, I place the skull near the sign to create a grouping. I even consider the position of individual rocks and the relationship of the truck to the largest rocks. Placing some elements tightly together and others with a lot of space between them creates visual interest.



4 I complete the structure of the truck, and I rough in the landscape. Then the real fun begins—I add detailed linework, from dents in the metal to needles on the cactus, to emphasize character and highlight the action.

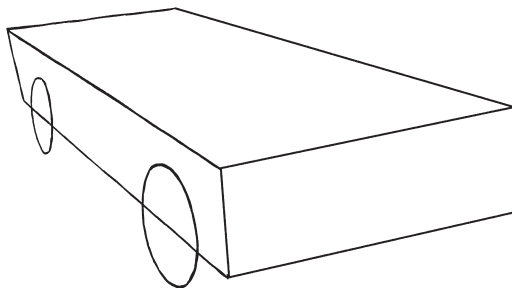
5 As usual, I scan my pen-and-ink drawing and digitally add color. I build up layers of color for all the basic areas (paint, chrome, rubber, rock, etc.) and then add shading. I also allow my color choices to guide my eye. For example, bright yellow-orange focuses attention on the truck; sandy browns and bleached grays define the desert, sign, and skull without distracting attention away from the truck; and the cool, contrasting green of the cactus offers a visual accent.



Get Graphic

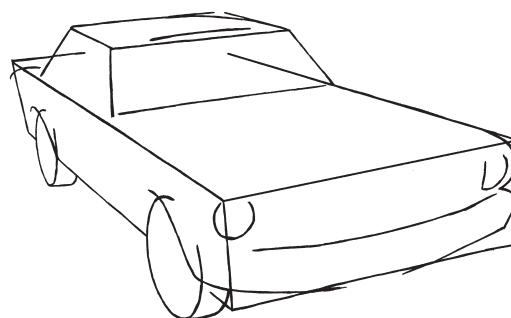
As the hardboiled hero pulls up outside an abandoned warehouse rumored to be the hideout of a notorious criminal mastermind, the white-hot flash of an explosion throws his dark Mustang into sharp relief. Meanwhile, under the cool, white glow of a full moon, a sleek El Camino streaks through the outskirts of the big city, heading toward a mysterious rendezvous.

The two scenes shown here easily could have been pulled from the pages of a graphic novel. As graphic novels rose to popularity, the storylines became increasingly dramatic and adult in nature. This type of storytelling requires an equally dramatic style of art, including high contrast between light and dark (called "chiaroscuro"). The illustrations shown here are based on innocuous daytime photos, but the use of extreme contrast creates excitement and interest, and the images become energized and theatrical.



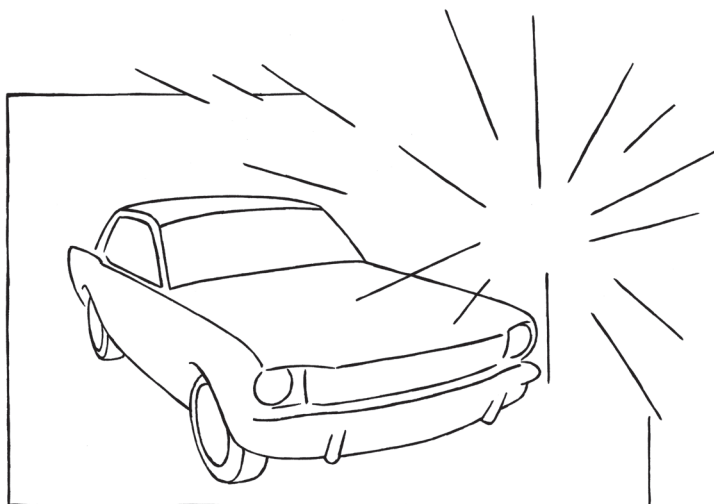
1

I start this Ford Mustang by drawing an angled box in two-point perspective (see page 8), and I add two ellipses for the tires.



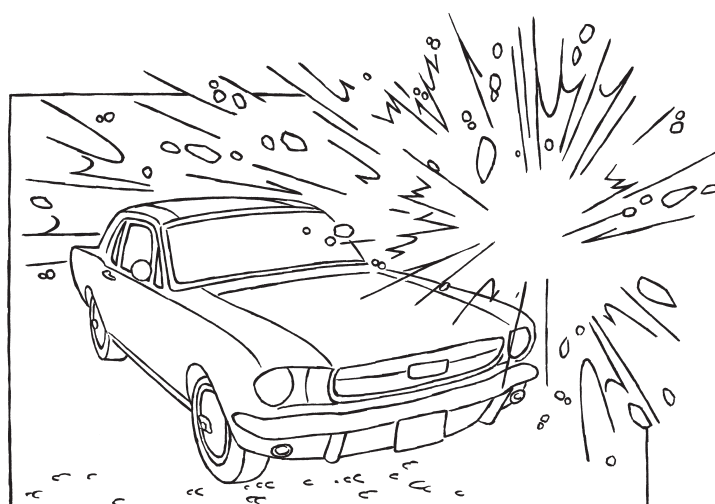
2

I draw a second, smaller box for the upper portion of the car, adding a few curved lines to the tires to give them form. Then I indicate the bumper, headlights, and trunk.



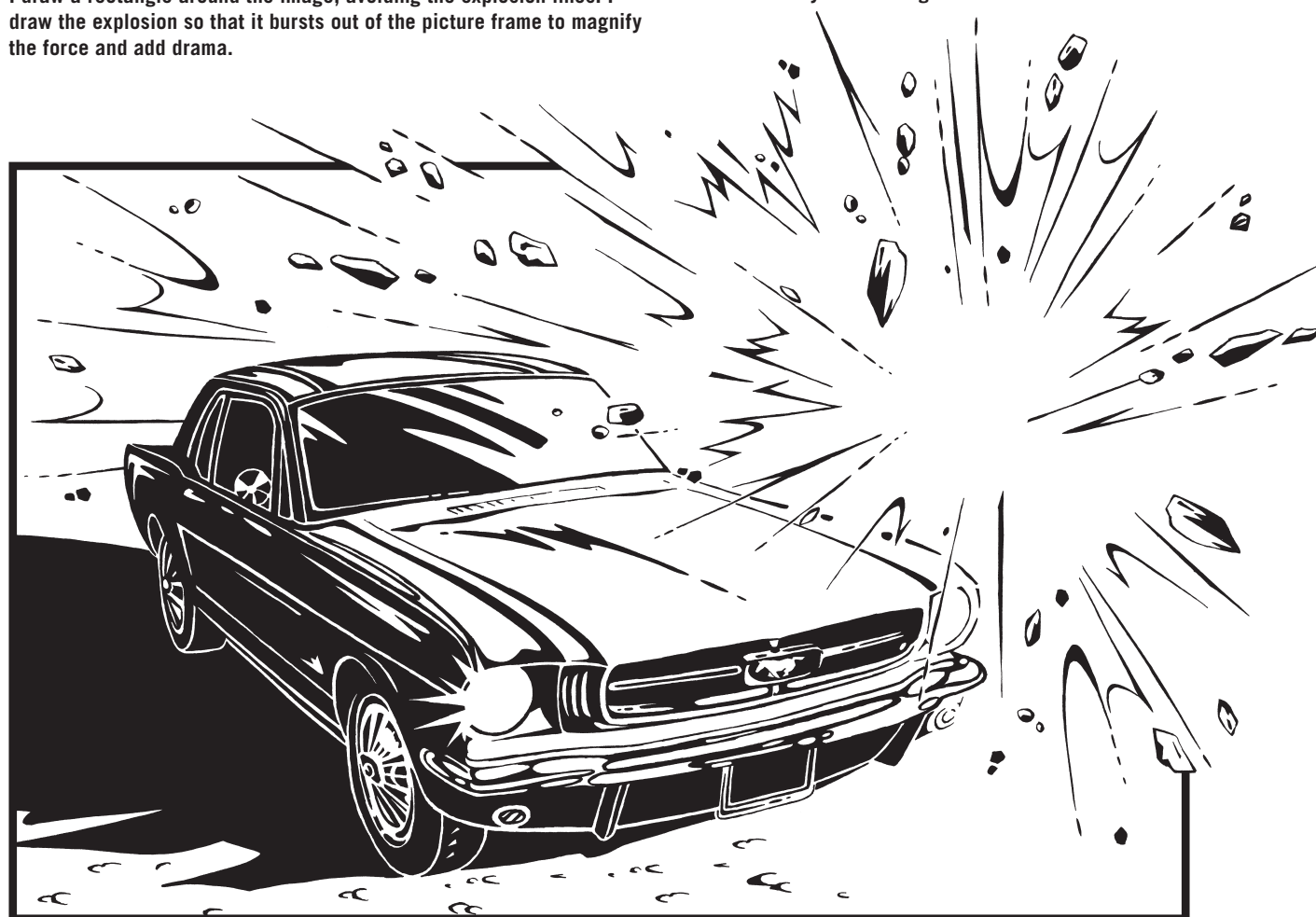
3

I continue developing the car by adding details and erasing lines I no longer need. Then I add lines radiating out from a center point to the right of the car for the explosion. Now I draw a rectangle around the image, avoiding the explosion lines. I draw the explosion so that it bursts out of the picture frame to magnify the force and add drama.



4

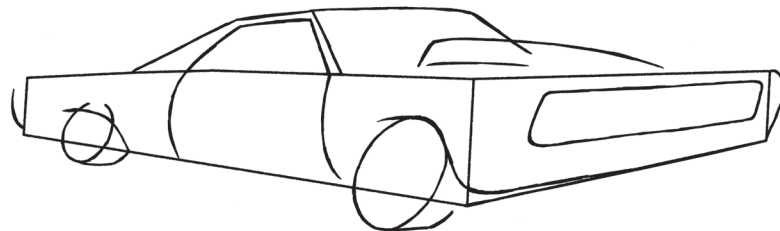
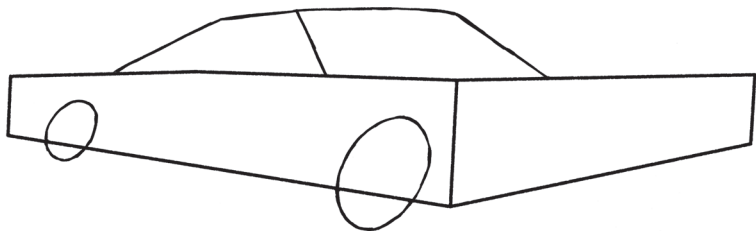
Now I add details, such as the side mirror, wheels, grille, license plate frame, and door handle. Then I develop the explosion, adding jagged lines, rocks, and other debris. I also erase any unneeded guidelines.



5

Now it's time to create contrast by adding darks. I keep the hood and right side of the car mostly white to show that they're being illuminated by the blast, and I darken the left side of the

car. Then I add shadows to the rocks and debris. Minimizing the setting and props like this implies a location but keeps the viewer's attention focused on the action—in this case, the explosion.



1

I start this Chevy El Camino by drawing a stretched-out box with another, smaller box on top. Then I indicate the tires with two ellipses, which are deliberately skewed to emphasize speed.

2

I add lines to give form to the tires, window, door, grille, and hood. I also round out the front end of the car, and I suggest the back of the car with a curved line. Then I erase any lines I no longer need.



3

I continue adding details to the car, such as the side mirror, windshield, and headlights. Then I add the simple buildings in the background. The background shouldn't be very detailed, as the focus should remain on the car. I also add a line for the road and some dust clouds around the tires.



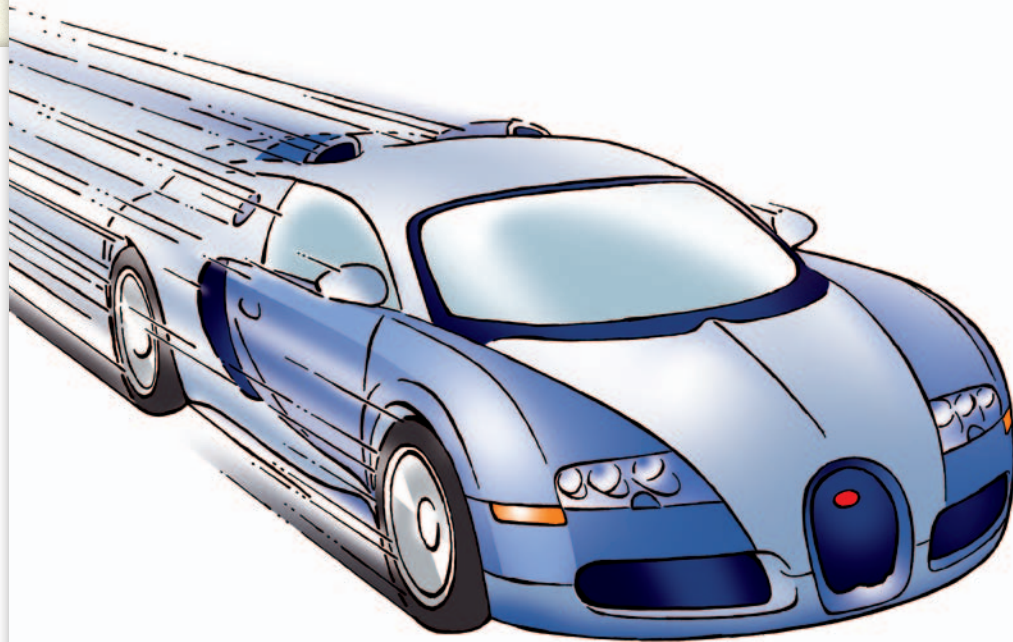
4

I draw a rectangle around the image; then I add finishing touches to the car and erase any unneeded guidelines. Next I add long, slightly wavy lines to the sky to indicate wispy clouds. I further develop the dust clouds around the tires and at the rear of the car, and I add some rocks to the ground.



5

Now I switch to ink and shade the side of each building that is facing away from the moon, leaving the right side bright white for contrast. I make the buildings in front of the moon completely black. Then I shade the clouds to add weight, and I stipple tiny dots to suggest the night sky. I leave an immense circle of white free from stippling to suggest the moon. Next I heavily shade the car, leaving areas on the hood and windshield white to show that the moon is illuminating the front of the car. Then I shade the ground to the left of the car and directly underneath it, leaving the dust clouds and rocks white. Now this car has an ominous, dramatic setting!



About the Artist

Jack Keely grew up in Binghamton, New York, where his interest in illustration and art began at a young age. He spent much of his childhood drawing from comic books and inventing his own characters. He credits his parents for encouraging and cultivating his skills and talents. Jack went on to obtain his B.S.A. in illustration at the Rhode Island School of Design and his M.F.A. in design at the Cranbrook Academy of Art. To share his knowledge of these areas with others, Jack taught at North Carolina State University's School of Design and Ohio University. He also worked as an advertising art director for six years. In 1994, he moved to Los Angeles to concentrate on freelance illustration. In addition to illustrating more than 20 popular children's books, Jack has been commissioned to create artwork for magazine articles, book covers, greeting cards, and shopping bags. His cartoon characters have been translated into plush toys, plastic figures, puppets, and rubber stamps.



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