



HEY WOH! ISN'T HALLOWEEN ALREADY AGAIN?

IT'S JANUARY.

YOU SURE? YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO BE THE TIRE MASCOT TIRE TUBES GUY?

SABLY, IT'S JUST A SWEATER.

OR A PARTIALLY DETACHED CLOUD?

IT'S WRINKLY.

NO. NO. NOPE.

THOSE AREN'T WRINKLES, I KNOW WRINKLES.

THOSE ARE TRASH-SACK AWKWARD-LUMPS.

YOU THINK I JUST MAKE UP LOOKING LIKE THIS?

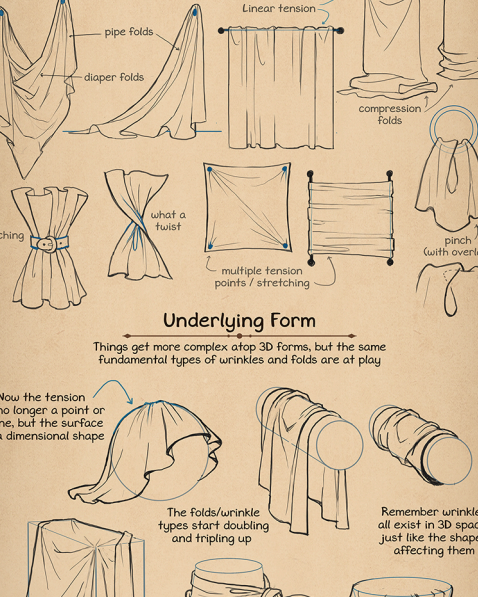
...WELL, I DO.

LIKE WRINKLES INCARNATE?

YEAH, WRINKLES INCARNATE.

C'MERE, LET ME TELL YOU. I'M GONNA TELL YOU... ABOUT WRINKLES.

OKAY.



THE ILL TELL YOU ABOUT WRINKLES SON

HAPPY HOUR DRAWING TUTORIAL

Are you ranked by wrinkles? Fighting with folds?

For all their banality, they're a messy, shapeshifting subject to grasp and even trickier to imitate on paper. I've compiled some thoughts and suggestions here, though, that might help to iron out some kinks...in your...wrinkles

The pun didn't really come together.

ANATOMY

Of A Wrinkle

Behold this majestic specimen - the kitchen dishrag. Wrinkles are its very nature

In cross section, those wrinkles are like hills and valleys (wobbly, disordered ones)

Topographically, wrinkles might be rounded, squarish, peaked, or some combination thereof

While drawing, it may help to think of wrinkles like tubing following the surface contours of the subject's shape...

...then think of the tubes merging together, forking apart, and varying in size, depth and orientation

When it comes to line art, you'll typically be drawing the outer edges of the extrusions/indentations

As such, open loops, closed loops and lines tend to be the most common shapes

...But what's their origin story?

CLOTH BEHAVIOR

Tension and Flow

Where does it come from, where does it go?

Take any unassuming, Joe Shmoes swath of fabric, add a tension point of two and...

Presto! Instant personality

Gravity, drag or other tension sources acting on the cloth pull it away directionally.

Common Tensions, Common Wrinkles

pipe folds, diaper folds, cinching, what a twist, multiple tension points / stretching, Linear-tension, compression folds, pinch (with overlap)

Underlying Form

Things get more complex atop 3D forms, but the same fundamental types of wrinkles and folds are at play

Now the tension is no longer a point or a line, but the surface of a dimensional shape

The folds/wrinkles types start doubling and tripling up

Remember wrinkles all exist in 3D space just like the shapes affecting them

DRAWING CLOTHES

Practical Application of the Rote Fabulum Above

The purpose of dryly discussing fold types and 3D objects is because **WITH THEIR POWERS COMBINED** they are clothing wrinkles

Thinking of the character under the clothes as a collection of basic 3D shapes will help demystify the wrinkle situation

The volume contours wrinkles will adhere to are all laid out in simple terms

So are the major tension sources, compressions, pinches...

Reposition the shapes and then recalculate

Keep it simple - focus on volumes and the largest wrinkles first

Hinge joints often create those overlap pinch loops

Tension of the knee - think of the sphere

The shoulder at rest has some basic shapes in common with the bent knee - similar wrinkles appear

When the arm lifts, the formerly taught cloth atop the shoulder compresses and the underarm pinch becomes a stretch

Those diaper and pipe folds again, coming from the two tension surfaces of the shoulders

Tighter cloth tends to wrinkle horizontally

compression, cinching - accessories play by the same rules

That pinch loop again

Fabric twists between shoulder and hip rotations

Folds: Where do they do?

They happen almost anywhere, but they do have some favorite hangouts - the bendy parts

The shoulders, elbows, knees, waist and top of the thigh are prime wrinkle real estate

Many fabrics have some "memory". Even when an elbow or knee joint is extended, the cluster of wrinkles persists to an extent

Clothing Design

The cut of the cloth influences how and where it'll wrinkle and fold

Pants that stretch across the hips will have horizontal wrinkle patterns

...but the pleats here create a more vertical pattern

Shoulder seams usually sit just beyond the peak of the curve of the shoulders

...but the seam sits further out on a suit jacket, squaring off the shoulders and creating a smooth drape of cloth over the breast

Buttons, Seams, Cuffs

They don't just sit on top of the fabric...

Buttons shining up tensions

Seams can direct the flow of wrinkles and act as an anchor around which bunching and stretching occurs

Seams also help sell the dimensionality of wrinkles

Boob Sleeves

Perhaps this is common knowledge at this point, and this phenomenon is just a "stylistic choice" ...

...but most clothing doesn't vacuum wrap breasts individually

(Though you can get partly there and make an impressive show of dominance by stuffing the front of your shirt under each boob)

Generally, cloth stretches across or drapes over the breasts, obscuring individual shape...

...unless it's specifically designed to distinguish

FABRIC TYPE

Different fabrics, Different Wrinkles

There are exceptions, but you can generally use the gamuts of **Thick-to-Thin** and **Loose-to-Tight** to determine what kind of eccentricities wrinkles you're dealing with

Characterization

Invoke the Wrinkle Astrology above to conjure clothing character

Thin, fitted cotton - numerous acute, narrow wrinkles

Loose knit - long, vertical, swoopy wrinkles

Leather/denim - stiff, wide wrinkles

With few wrinkles, it'll start looking like leotard material

puffy sweatshirt - large, rounded wrinkles

Some things are rigid enough that they have almost no wrinkles

UNSOLICITED ADVICE

Randomness with Rhythm

Non-uniformity looks more natural

As part of the same smooth, wrinkles aren't really separate entities - they're contiguous

So, never go full random

Try to avoid mirrored outer edges and parallel or evenly spaced wrinkle lines

I find it helpful to map out a rhythmic wrinkle formation

Note how these partially converge back at a tension point

Wrinkle-Angles (Wrinkles)

Be careful of drawing all of your wrinkles as curves

If your wrinkles are looking a little lumpy, try sharpening them

Even loose fabric will tend to exhibit some angles where the crease of a wrinkle changes direction

Hemtricks

For some articles with complex ruffles and wrinkles, it helps to map out the hemline or edges first...

...then draw the creases of the hem to the fabric's origin or tension point

Try allowing some folds and wrinkles to be implied rather than fully connected

Hot Wrinkle Action

Wrinkles respond to motion, obviously, but you can also think of them as a tool for communicating the direction and drama of a given action

A fist-bump or a punch? The more vigorous react (or counter-react) to movement, the more emphatic the movement will appear

There will be tension between fabric close to the body and trailing fabric that falls behind the motion

When the dancer stops spinning, the fabric's momentum continues, folds wrapping around the form in the opposite direction

Motion will often make existing tensions more pronounced

Think of all the types of motion affecting the fabric. Running involves not just forward motion, but bobbing up and down and side to side, and shoulder rotation

Dynamism

When the predominant flow of the wrinkles corresponds with the line of action/posture, it lends extra life even to characters at a standstill

Give some consideration to the nature of your drawing and the level of detail it calls for

Wrinkles in clothing are multitudinous, from large creases to minuscule ripples

Unless you're aiming for exacting realism, it's probably unnecessary to draw them all

It doesn't take many lines to convincingly portray fabric, and often "less is more"

LEARNIN'

Self-educate...Yourself

Life Drawing

Tackling the perennial inert folds as a subject can teach you some useful things about structure and rendering light and shadow. (Try not to get distracted drawing cats instead.)

Reference

Hunt for free roaming clothing in the wild. Gain its trust. Study it. Learn its secrets. Or, you know, look at pictures on the internet

Thumbnail your way to success

Use those references. Make quick thumbnail sketches. Focus on overall character - tension, form and flow defining wrinkles

See how much you can communicate with minimal detail

It's difficult to convey how learnin' this can be

And Remember...

In the end, The Wrinkles will come for you. They'll get you right in the face. You might as well learn to enjoy them.

Have fun!