

Manga School



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MANGA STUDIOS
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SWEATDROP STUDIOS' TIPS AND TRICKS ON CREATING YOUR OWN MANGA-STYLE ART

Calling all budding manga artists out there! Take a seat – the class is starting. Each issue in *REC* magazine, different artists from Sweatdrop Studios will be taking you through the stages of creating a piece of artwork. From pencil sketches, through marker pieces, to full pages of manga! Each will be offering not only hints and tips on creating your own artwork, but also an insight

into their own methods and techniques. This month, Hannah Saunders, one of Sweatdrop's youngest artists, takes you through the important process of costume design. The costume of a character can play a large part in displaying their personality. Creating a good original costume is a step towards creating a good original character!
Pencils of the ready? Class in progress...

1: THINGS TO CONSIDER – THE THEME

There are many things to consider when designing and drawing a costume (or costumes) for a character. How will it look from different angles? How is it put together? What materials is it made from?

Not only that, but you should also think about the setting that the character is in, and the theme of their story. Is it sci-fi fantasy? Or is it set in the normal world?

Whatever it may be, try and incorporate your story's theme into the costume.



2: THINGS TO CONSIDER – THE CHARACTER

The character's personality often comes through in their clothes. An evil character will most likely don an imposing outfit to emphasise their malevolent personality. In contrast, one usually feisty, and in case, brooding colour. Or there's the bubbly 'magical girl' whose costumes are frothy, fluffy and brightly coloured to display her vivacious. Think about your favourite character costumes and what you like about them, and try to incorporate that into your own work – but don't copy them outright.



3: DO YOUR RESEARCH

Your character's costume could be based on real clothes, or can be completely from your imagination. How decide? If you'd like to base your costume on an existing design, do some research – use books or the internet, or whatever you find the most convenient. For example, the Japanese kimono is a traditional costume that has to be put together in a very specific way. Researching into how it is assembled and worn can help you to draw it. Other examples of existing costumes include the national dress of a country, or everyday wear from a different period of history.



3: SKETCHING STUDIOS

As always, the most common mistake you can make when you start sketching your character is not doing your research. You may think you know a lot about a certain character, but you may not know all the details of his or her costume. Do some research on the character you're drawing, and you'll be able to create a more accurate and detailed sketch. You can also use reference photos to help you get the proportions and colors of your character's costume just right. You can find these photos on the internet, or you can ask your friends for help. Remember to always credit the original artist when you use their work.

4: MANUALLY SAUCING

Remember to manually sauce your sketches. This means to use a brush to add some texture and shading to your sketches. This can help you create a more realistic and detailed character. You can use a variety of brushes, including a soft brush, a hard brush, and a texture brush. You can also use different colors of paint to create different effects. Remember to always credit the original artist when you use their work.



4: USE YOUR IMAGINATION

Now, on to the most important part - drawing the costume! If you're doing your research, then now is the time to use it. Your research will act as your reference as you draw. For this tutorial, I will be drawing a boy and girl in an original costume that is based partly on reference material, and partly from the artist's imagination.

5: DON'T BE AFRAID TO EXPERIMENT

First, let's start with the basic design. If you're still not entirely sure how it should look, sketch it out roughly on another piece of paper before you begin. Don't just draw the costume from the front - experiment with different angles to get the overall look and feel. Remember experimentation is the key! Keep in mind how the costume is layered, and add colors and folds in the appropriate places (for example, in the back of a shirt, or a simple crease or fold on the front of a shirt). Detail can make a costume look more believable, but bear in mind you will have to draw it many times over in a comic, so that would be the case. Don't get caught up!



6: COLOURING

When colouring your costume, think about how the colour will convey the mood of the character. For a single example, using a dark or dull palette can make a character appear lonely, sad or menacing, whereas bright, cheerful colours will make a character look happy. When deciding on a colour scheme for a costume, draw a picture of it, make some copies of the image and try out different colours, experimenting until you get a scheme that works best.



7: CORRECT AND DEVELOP

You may find that you want to change small parts of the costume as you go along, so don't be afraid to make corrections. It's all about developing your ideas until you're completely happy. If you're drawing the character simply standing, then try drawing him or her in different poses, so you can experiment with how their movement will affect the clothes that they are wearing.

Here, I drew a rough sketch of the female character. This drawing may have quite a few mistakes in it, but it's perfect for getting the look and feel for the costume just right. You can always change parts that you don't like later on.

8: DRAW FROM ALL ANGLES

Drawing the male character's costume from the front and back view. The next step shows where I drew the simple contours of the body, so that I could see where the major weight fell on his figure. You can also draw separate, enlarged views of specific parts from the outfit to display extra detail. I did this with the boy's right hand glove.

9: YOUR FINAL DRAWING

When drawing completed, static poses such as these, you can really get a feel for the flow of the material and how it reacts with the body it covers. It also allows you to experiment with drawing the costume at more difficult angles, and gives you practice with shading, folds and creases! Remember that practice makes perfect, and experimentation and research can really help you see the best out of creating your own original costumes. Let your imagination run free!

