Design Course

Character Design for Animation
Designing Process
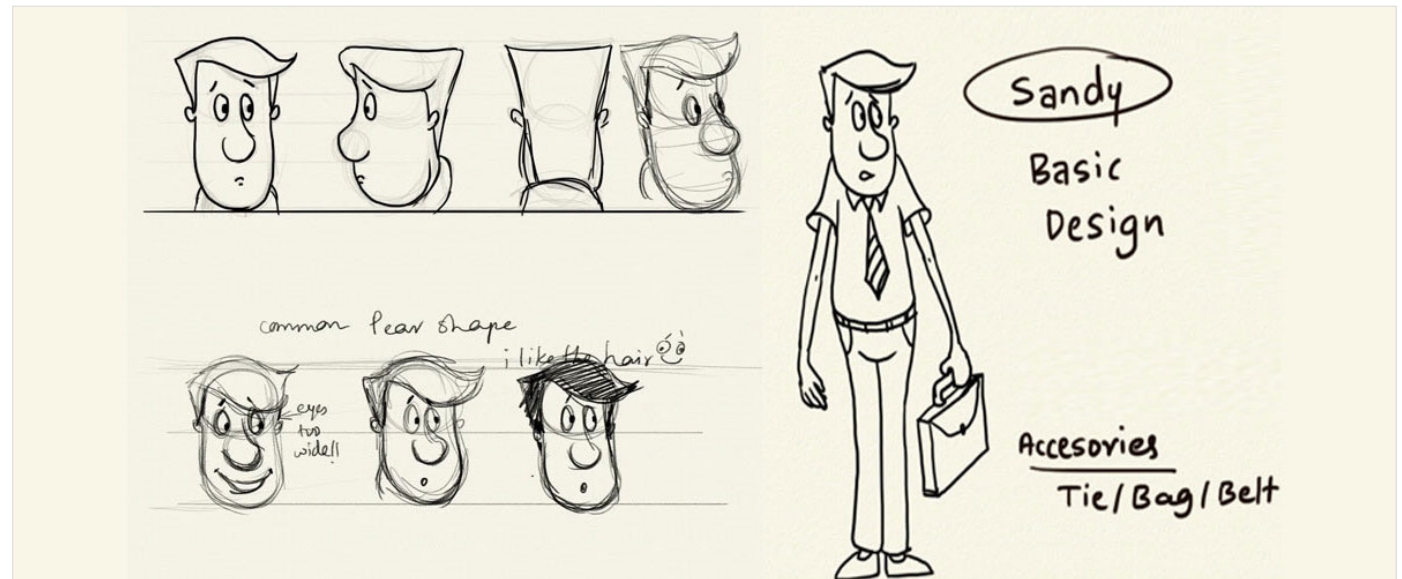by
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Introduction

Characters are the most important part of a story. They are the key elements in a film and the audience identifies themselves with them. Hence we need to keep in mind a few important things before designing a character.

• The most important thing about "Characters" is knowing the **WHO**'s and **WHAT**'s of your character.
• All the information about your character will be derived out of your story.

The **Character Designing** process can be divided as follows:

1. Attributes and Proportions
2. Expressions
3. Model Sheet
4. Poses and Gestures
5. Colors
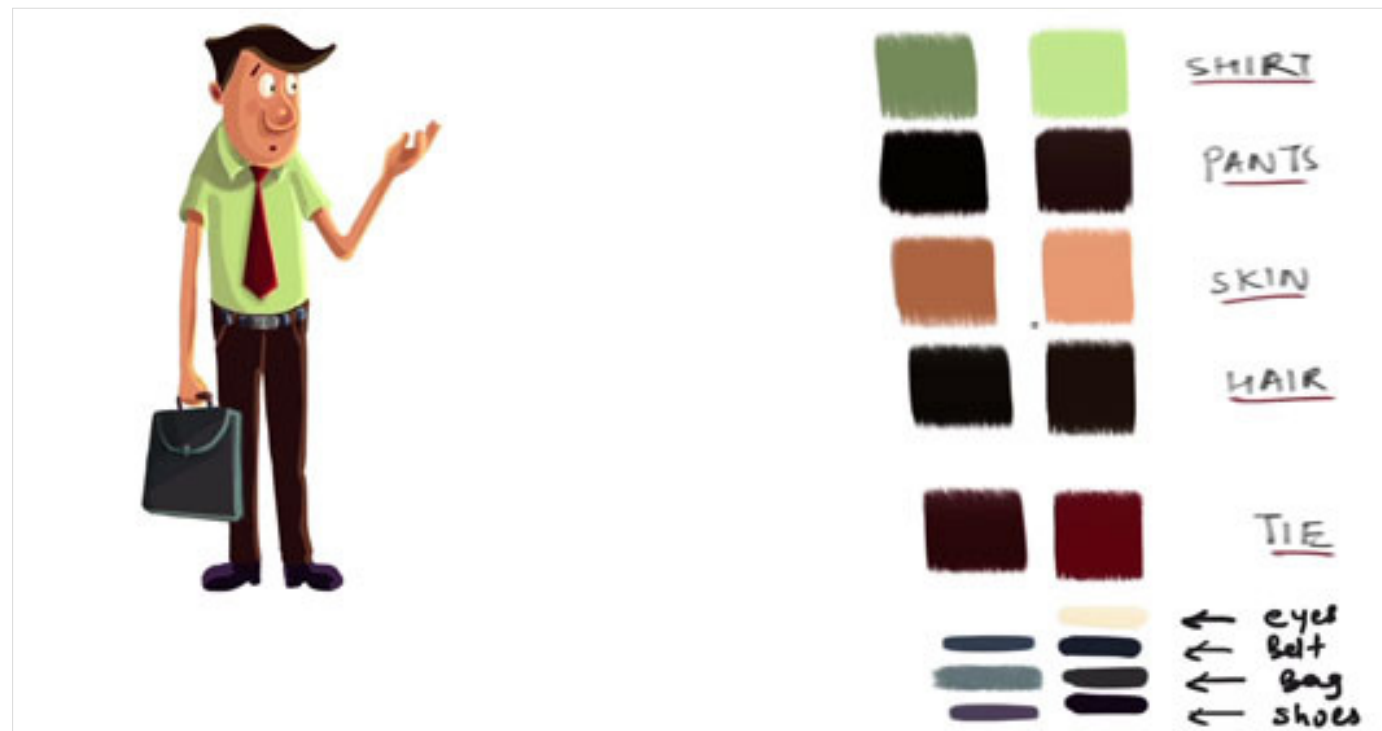
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Attributes and Proportions

Apart from the story aspect of a character, the design aspect plays a very important role. The shapes & volumes used while designing the character and the poses & expressions of a character; all this information helps us to create the right attitude for the character design.

An attribute of a character refers to its characteristics. One has to keep in mind how the character is going to perform in the film and its behavior in the story. Drawing a character, keeping the above things in mind; will add more life to the character.
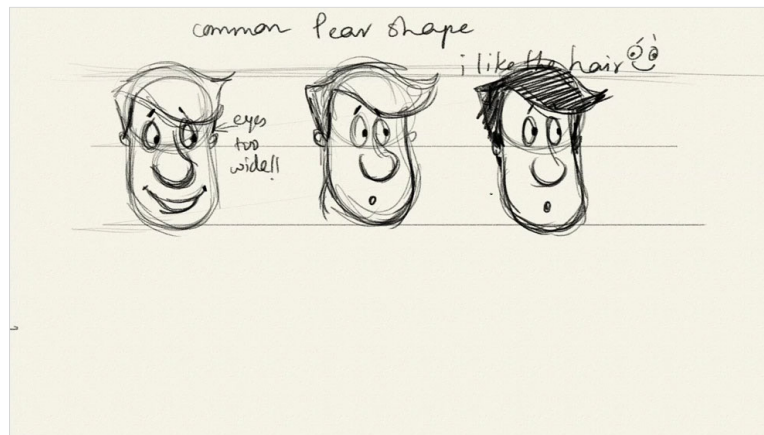
Some of the basic things that one needs to know about the characters are:
• Age,
• Moods and
• Behavior patterns (whether the character is happy, excited, sad or evil).

Once we know about this information we can make the audience connect with our character.
Few reminders:

• While drawing a character one of the most important aspects is its proportions.
  What is the proportion of your character in comparison to the world that he belongs to?
• The silhouette of a character and the shapes used to draw the character defines the volumes of   our character.
• Also the volumetric study of a character is very important from the animation point of view as   well as it becomes a reference for the animator to keep the consistency in his drawings   while designing the character several times.

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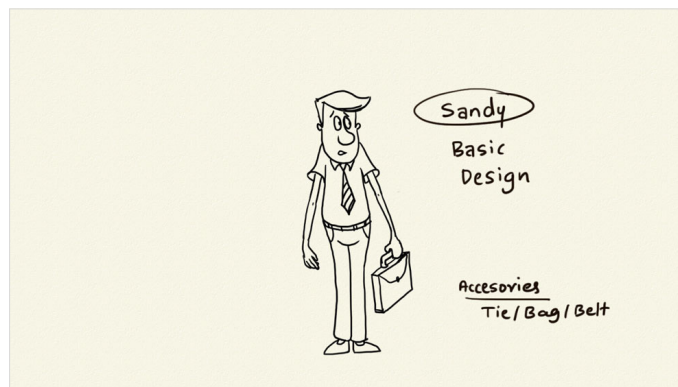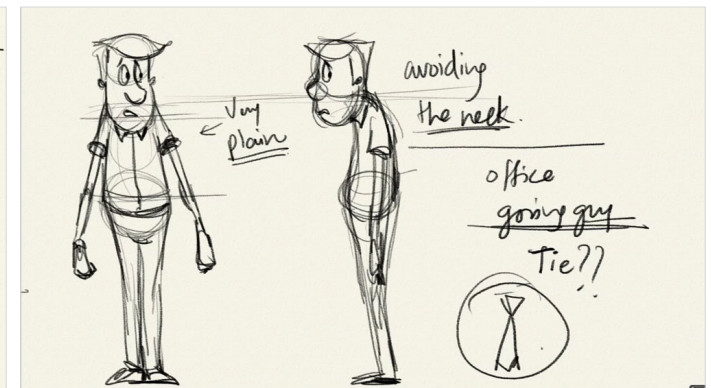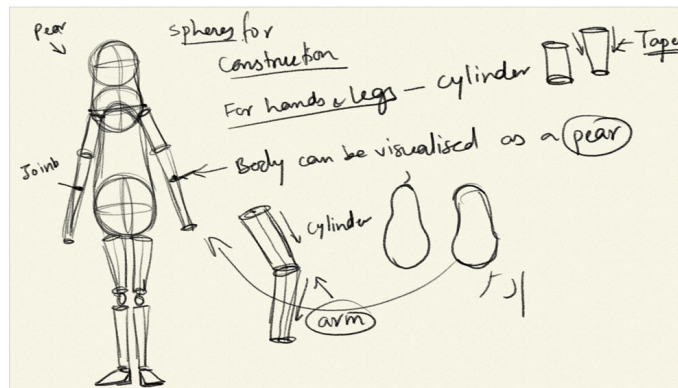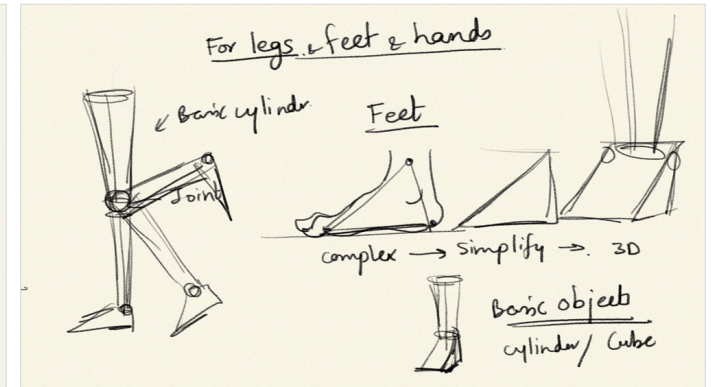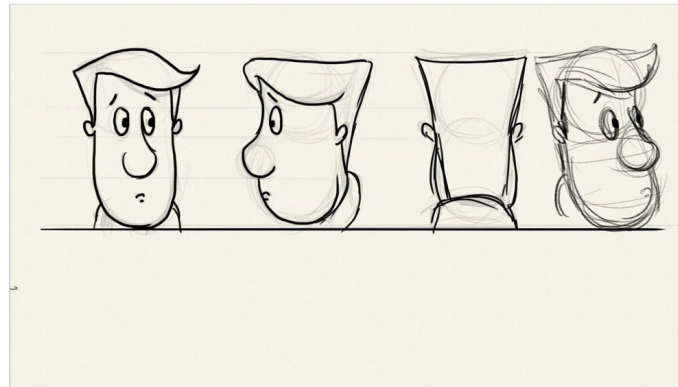# Character Design for Animation
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While creating the design its better to exaggerate the proportions as it is easy to stylize the character. This also helps animating the character efficiently as we can explore the extremes and exaggerations of the actions in a better way.

Kindly refer to the video for a detailed process.
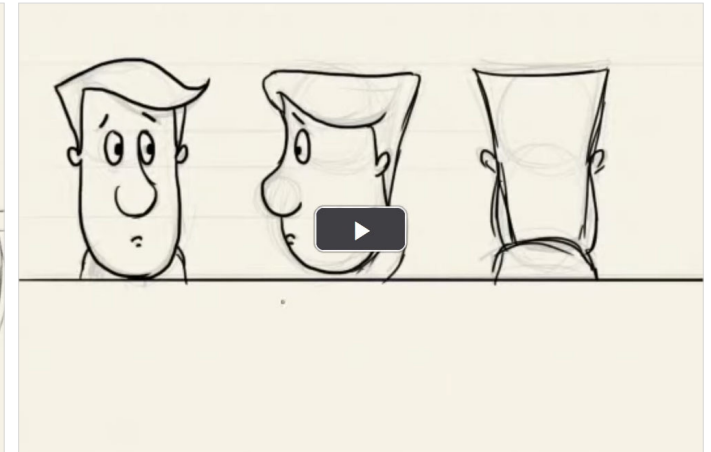
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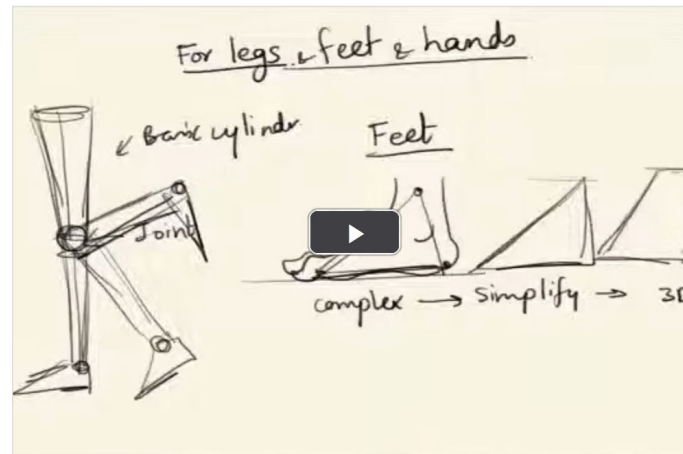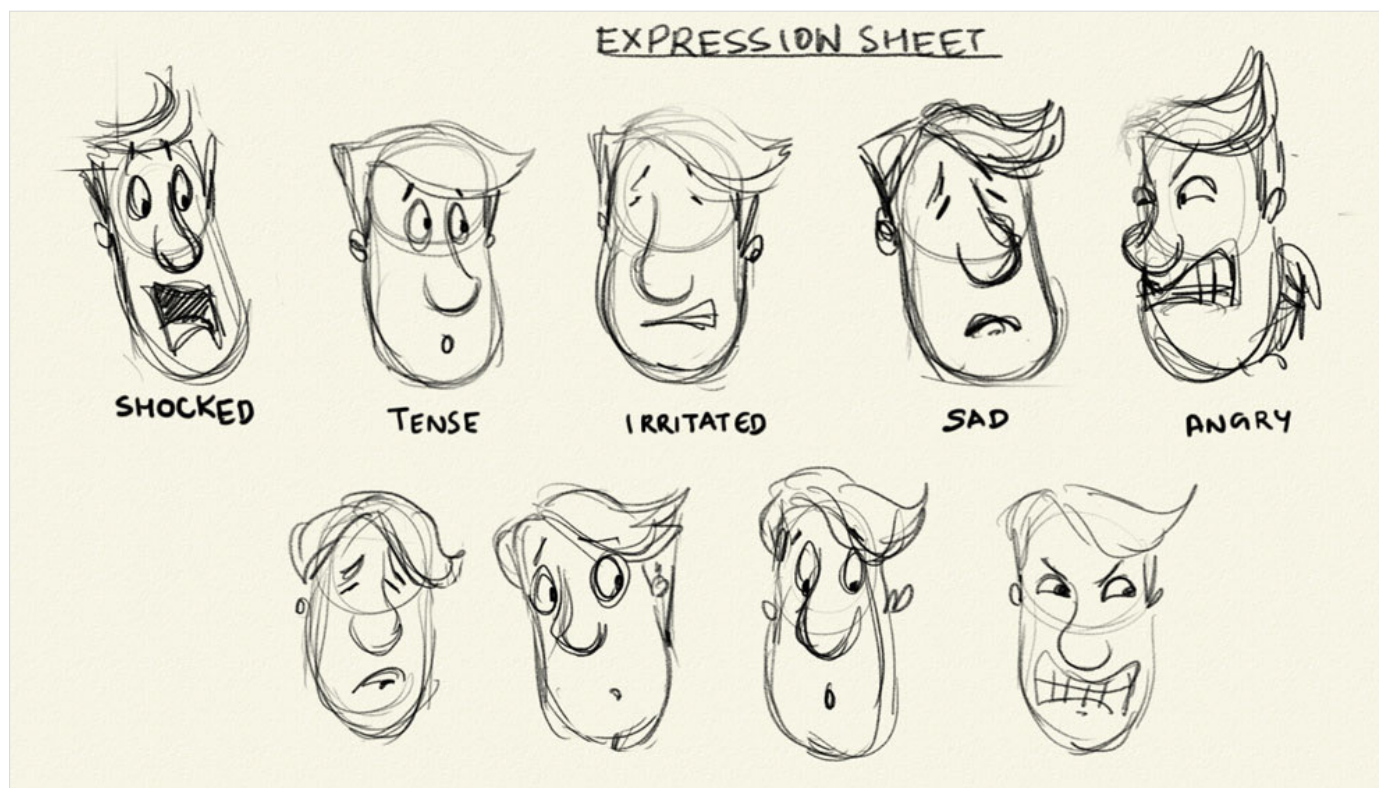by
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Expressions

A character's face is an index of his personality. Facial expressions are the key to express emotions apart from body language. Technically, the face has many numbers of muscles and combinations of these muscles make an expression.

When a character is happy, sad, cheerful, angry, scared or shocked the face literally morphs and creates those emotions using the combination of eyes and mouth shapes. In our face the three major elements that helps express an emotion effectively are eyes, eyebrows and mouth.

• While trying to draw a characters face we can accentuate the emotions by exaggerating the proportions and going to the extremes of one's face.

• Having a reference or a mirror by your side is always helpful for drawing the expressions correctly.

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Model Sheet

A 'Model Sheet' is a reference sheet of a character in which we draw a front profile, side profile, 3/4th view and a back view of the character. This chart helps us know the proportions, gestures, appearances and the way our character looks from various angles.

• It's a character designer's job to make a 'cleaned up' model sheet before it is given to the   animator.

• This character chart will help the animator draw his character several times keeping the size,   form and the volume of the character consistent throughout the film.
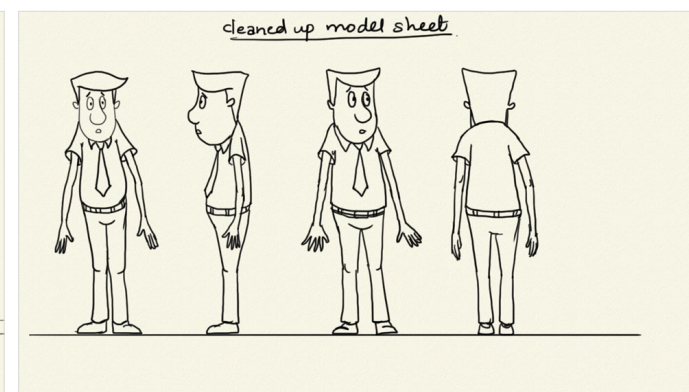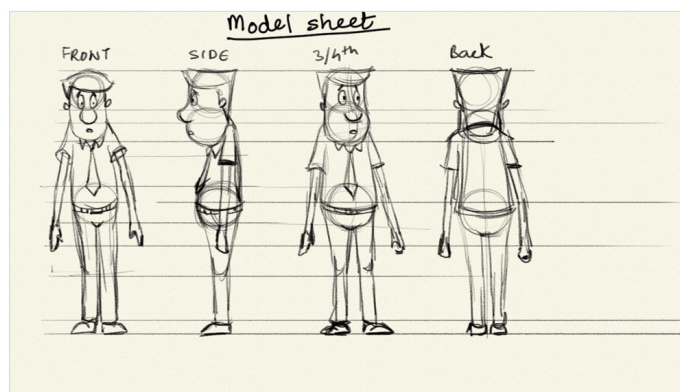
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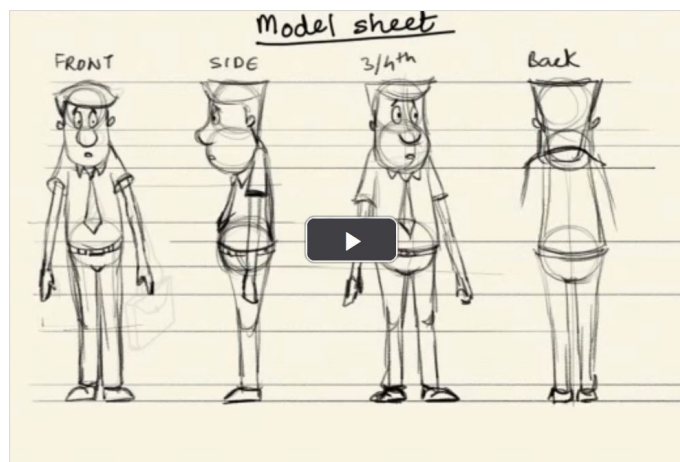
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Poses and Gestures

To draw a character and make it act is the most important and exciting part of the animation process. Before animating a character, one should know about the character's behavior which generally comprises of:

• How the character responds to various situations,
• How he poses himself and
• What are the gestures he makes to convey an action.

While drawing the poses and gestures keeping the following things in mind will help:
1. The line of action that follows his body.
2. The arcs while he is doing an action.
3. The balance and weight shift that happens while he pauses or does a small change in his gestures.

It's advisable always to act out the performance as it becomes a good reference for the posing.
• Knowing every detail of your character will help you spot small nuances while animating the character.
• A small change in gesture will speak a lot about the character's actions.
• Keeping an action pose in mind while drawing will help in knowing the body dynamics and then it becomes easier for the animator to know how the body of the characters behaves.
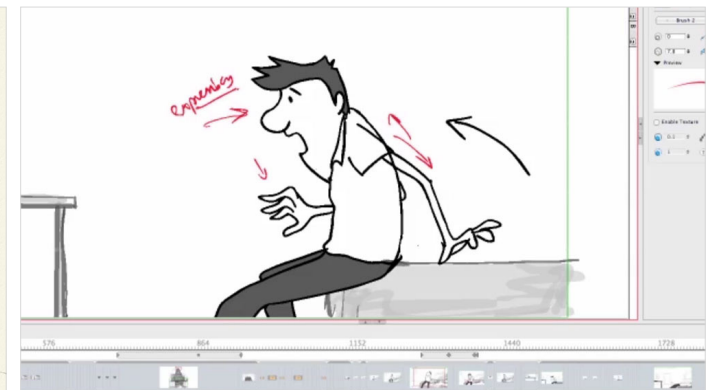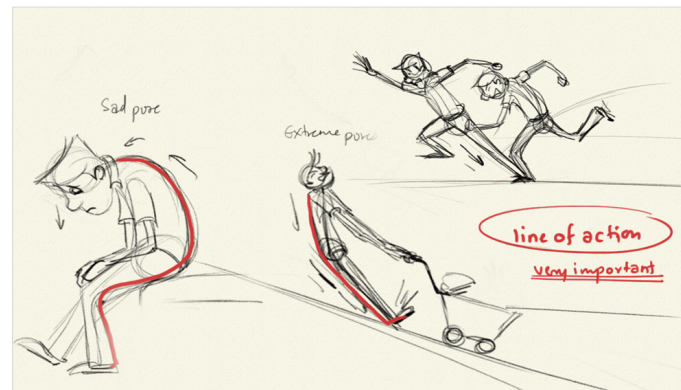
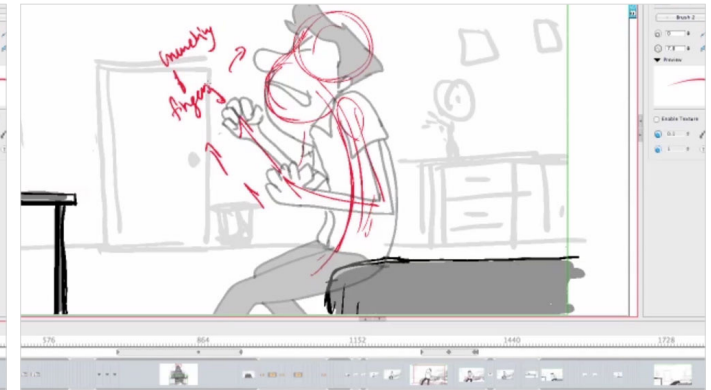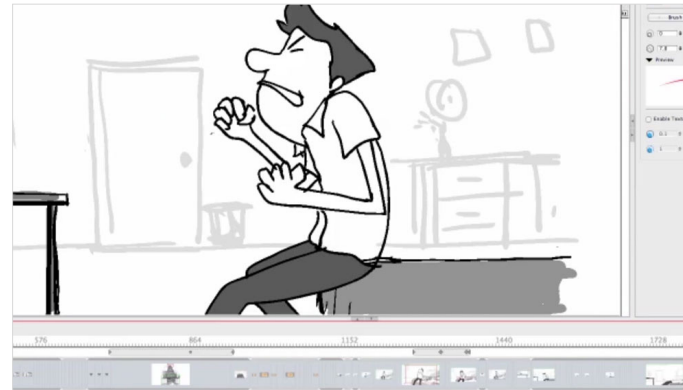Design Course
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Colors

Colors add life to a visual and deciding upon a color scheme for a character will indirectly decide the mood of the character and the scene.

So when we start with coloring a character we need to keep the following things in mind:

• **Our character's skin tone:**
  Which will be derived from the place he belongs to.

• **Color for clothes and accessories:**
  Situation dependent and also use reference for choosing the colors.

• **Swatches:**
  Once the colors for each element of the character are finalized a color swatch is made which   is a palette of colors of the character.

• **Time of the Day:**
  The color palette will vary according to the time of the day or lighting of the scene. Hence,   separate color swatches should be made according to the time and space of the shot.

Once this is done a color reference model is made which is basically a character completely filled with flat color tones. Also, there are three aspects in tonal values:

• Midtones,
• Shadows and
• Highlights.

So while deciding the color reference model, the colors for the highlights (lighter areas) and shadows (darker areas) are defined. Usually for cartoon animation two shades (Midtones and Highlights) are easier to work on while coloring.

The more detailed the coloring is, the tedious the process of ink and paint becomes. Once the color model is ready it is sent to the ink and paint department for coloring the cleaned up shots.

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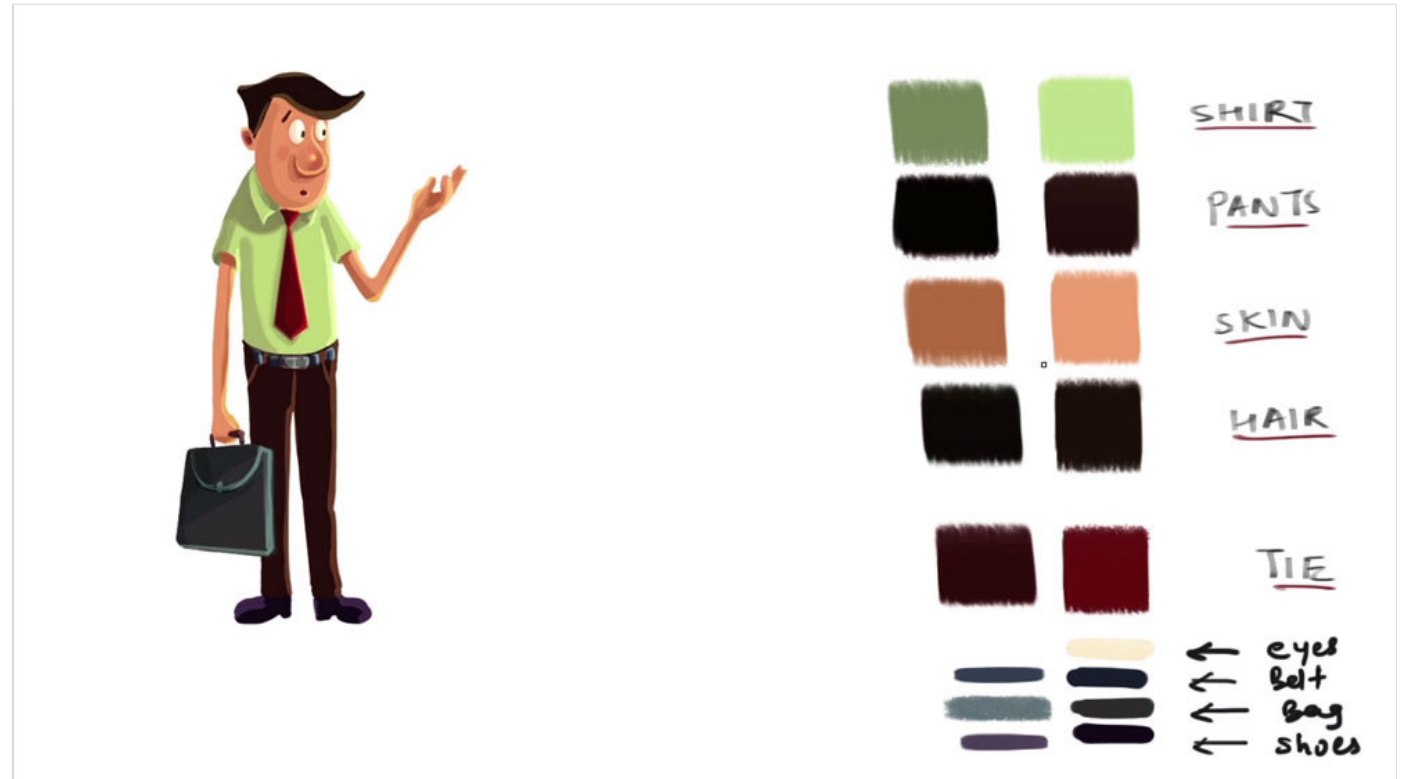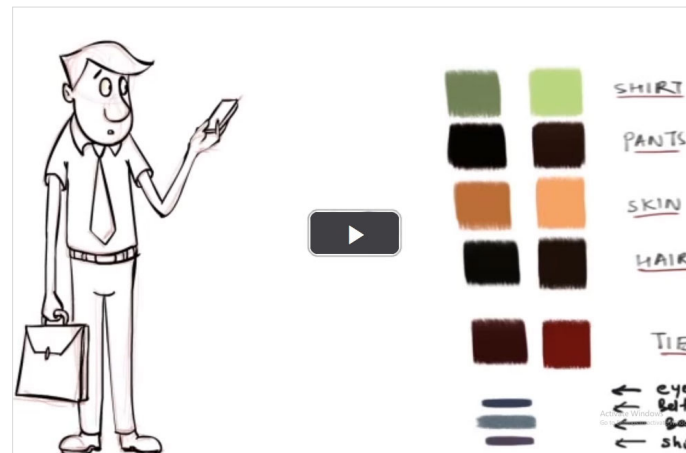
Exercies

Design the following characters on the basis of the given situations.
(One can illustrate the scene as well).

Reference information is provided for each character's trait.

Characters:
1. A BOSS
2. SECURITY GUARD
3. PET DOG
4. TEENAGER

Situations:
1. Boss:
An office scene. A meeting is going on and the Boss is shouting loud at the people around.

Boss Characteristics: Angry, Arrogant, Scary, Dominant, Irritated, Clumsy.
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Collin Farrell- Movie –"Horrible Bosses".

J. K. Simmons - Movie: "Spiderman".

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2. Security Guard:
A scene outside a bank. A security guard sleeping on duty as the robbers sneak out looting the bank.

Security Guard Characteristics: Lazy, Drunk, Sleepy, Clumsy, Dumb, Uncertain.
For Attitude Reference:

Rowan Atkinson (Mr. Bean).

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Saurabh Shukla (Oh My God).

3. Pet Dog:
A dog peeing on the roadside near a pole.
A dog barking hard on another dog.

Dog Characteristics: Cute, smart, proud and lovable.
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Milo from movie "The Mask".

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Marley from "Marley and Me".

4. Teenager:
A teenager standing near a bus stand listening to an I pod and blowing a chewing gum bubble.

Teenager Characteristics: Sporty, street smart, cool, Tec savvy and energetic.
Reference:

Eminem from Movie "8 Miles".

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Example

Character Design Explorations:
Done by students of First Year Animation, Batch 2011-2012 at IDC as a part of Animation Scripting and Methods course.

Faculty Incharge: Prof. Phani Tetali

Student Name: Character

1. Pranisha Shrestha: Drunkard - Ganpat Patil

2. Suraj Prasad: Music Teacher - Sharada Devi

3. Neha Kulkarni: Businessman - Shivkumar Swamy

4. Hemant Chappekar: Cashier - Mr. Shubhanand R. Joshi

5. Ali Hussainy: Waiter - SADDU

6. Cibi Chakrobarty: Housewife - Vasanthi Kamambedkar

7. Praveen Jude Brown: Politician - Mr. Jagass

8. Anaroopkerketta: Tapori - Hero

9. Gaurav Borse: Don - Bagga

10. Rahul Arya :   Pickpocketer - Monty

Examples:

1. Pranisha Shrestha: Drunkard - Ganpat Patil

GANPAT is a 45 year old overweight drunkard who is always jobless and disturbing the peace. This clumsy 'Be-wadaa' (hindi word for drunkard) doesn't care for the family, living off his wife's earning.

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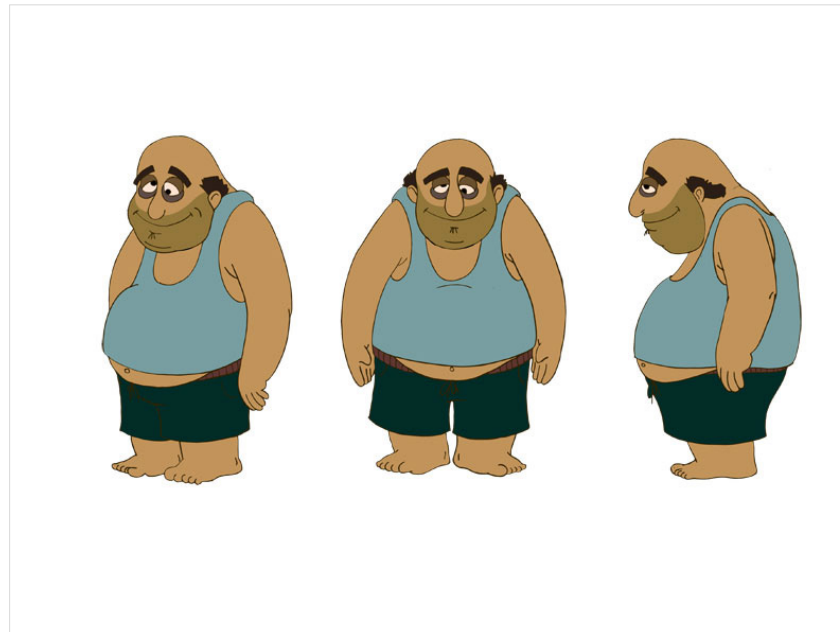Prof. Phani Tetali And Vajra Pancharia
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He is mostly seen on the streets during traffic jam creating more disturbances. He is not arrogant, but into his own world. Almost all the time he is dazed and high on alcohol.

Ganpat Patil:

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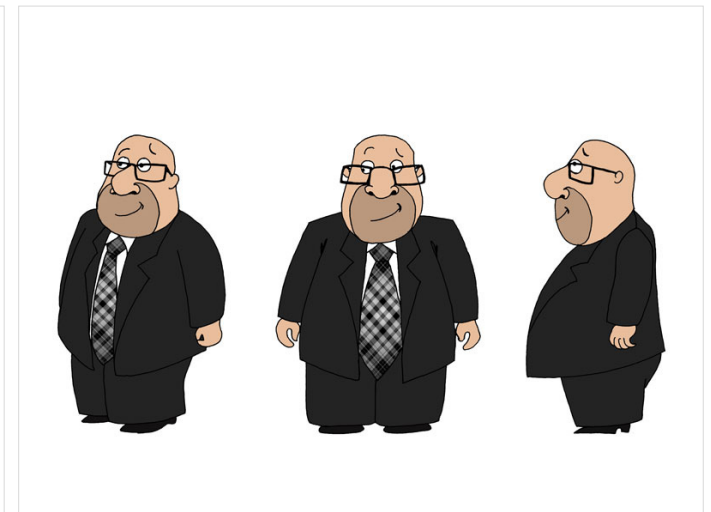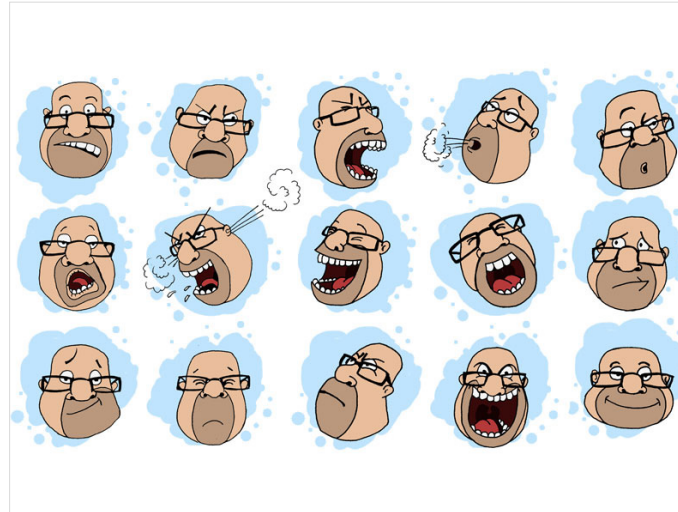**https://www.dsource.in/course/character-design-animation/example**

2. Suraj Prasad: Music Teacher - Sharada Devi

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SHARADA DEVI

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3. Neha Kulkarni: Businessman - Shivkumar Swamy
Swamy is from Kerala is 55 yrs old and a corporate businessman in an Multi National Company having experience of many years. He is brand conscious. He is selfish, clumsy, funny guy and he extremely is short tempered.

Shivkumar Swamy:

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4. Hemant Chappekar : Cashier - Mr. Shubhanand R. Joshi
Cashier by profession in a government bank. Age 42 year.
Special Skill - Counts Money very fast. Very precise about his work. Likes cleanliness a lot. Unmarried and little moody. Hobby is cooking and gardening. When things do not go well, he gets angry and shouts on his colleagues. but peaceful by nature. Always in his own world.

Mr. Shubhanand R. Joshi:
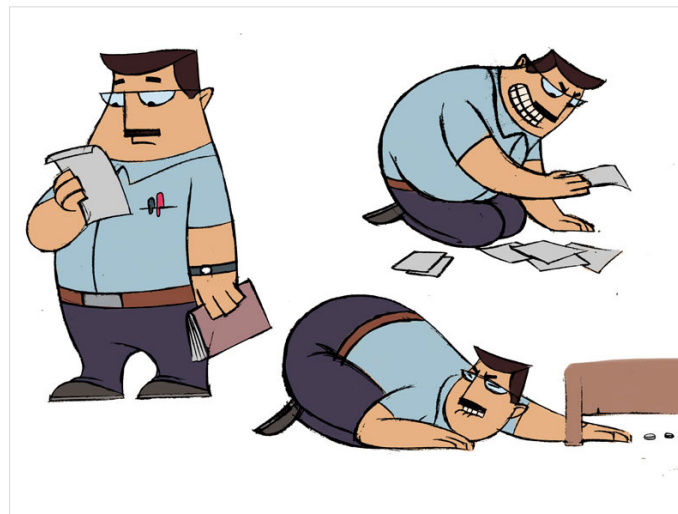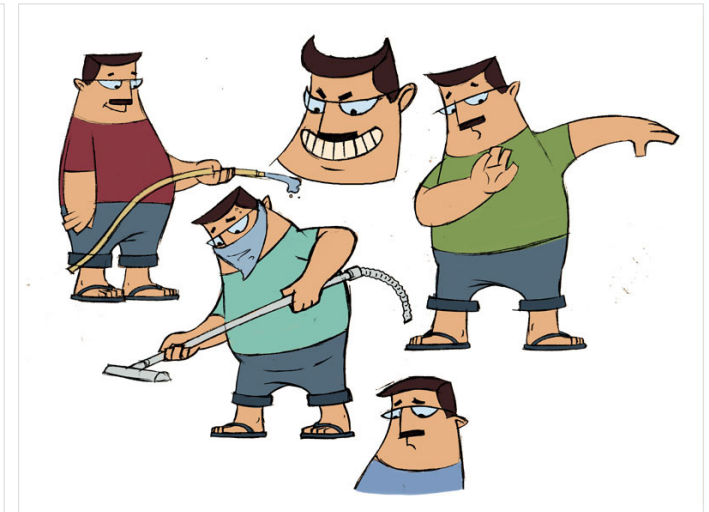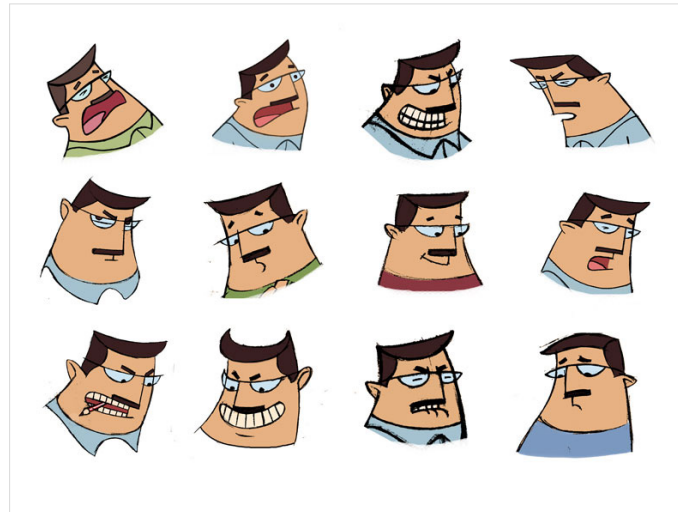
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5. Ali Hussainy: Waiter - SADDU

Saddu is a 25 year old man from a small village near the Maharashtra-Karnataka Border. His distant cousin is living in the city, running an 'Udipi' restaurant in a run-down locality and Saddu is working as a waiter in restaurant.

Because of work he is dirty, energy efficient, but very agile. He hates lousy tippers, now that he knows what tipping means. Occasionally one may find him digging into his nose and an unaware victim may have to taste some booger. He loves flicking his mundu up in style and folding it in half!

SADDU:

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Source:
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6. Cibi Chakrobarty: Housewife - Vasanthi Kamambedkar
Mumbai Housewife, Age 32, Children 2. Chintu (9yrs) and mintu (7yrs).
Husband- Ganesh Kamambedkar

Vasanthi Kamambedkar:

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7. Praveen Jude Brown : Politician - Mr. Jagass
Mr.Jagass is an abrupt Politician from the south who has this north Indian habit of chewing over Pan. He hates to be interrupted from anything that he does particularly his speeches.

Chubby and quick with his size but blast fully angry when interrupted . While the masses of people from the Town gather their ears to listen to what he has to stay, All he cares about is how well he chews his Pan and while the crowd glares in shock at his mouth in full swing with a 360 degree Pan rolling mouth.The World is " Meetha Pan " and he doesn't care how the crowds glare at him when he rotates his jaws chewing over it like a cow.

Mr. Jagass:
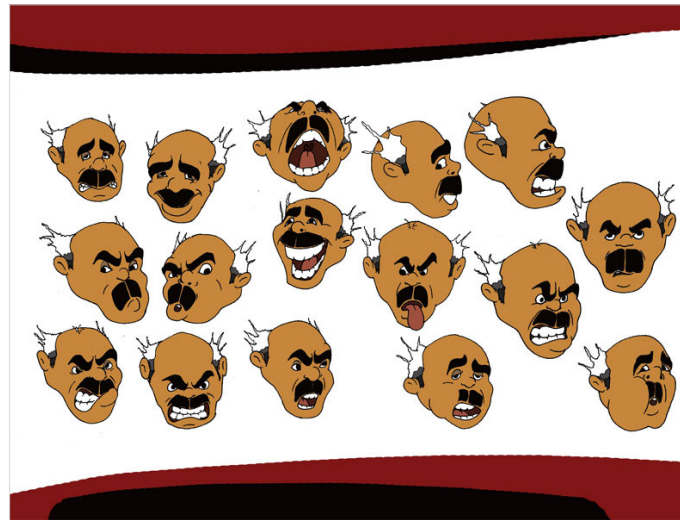
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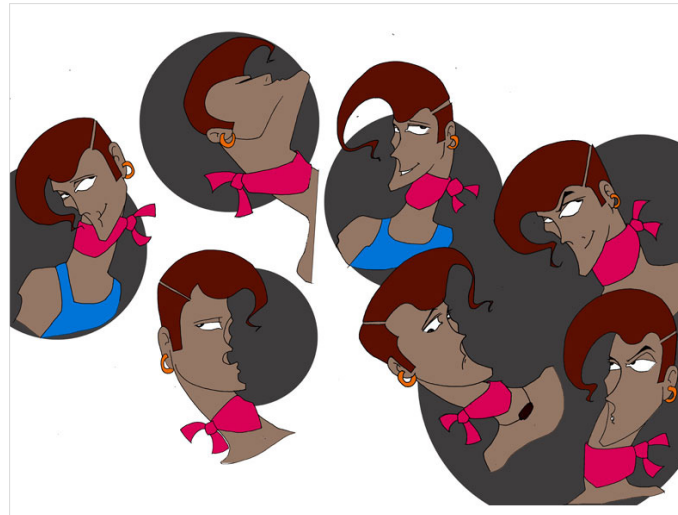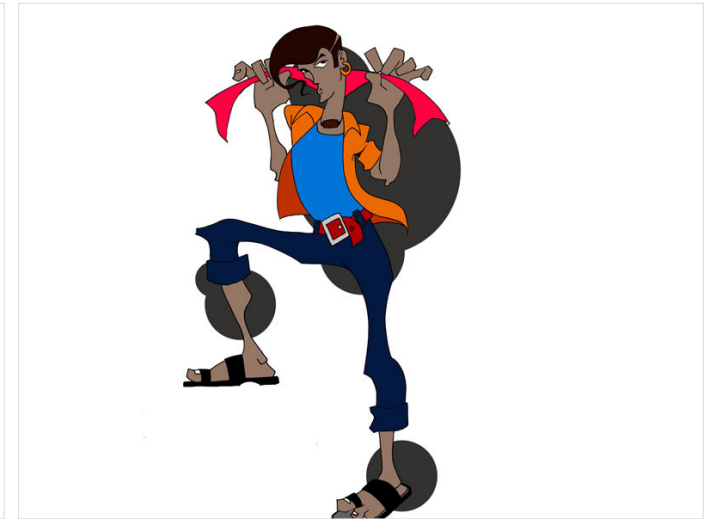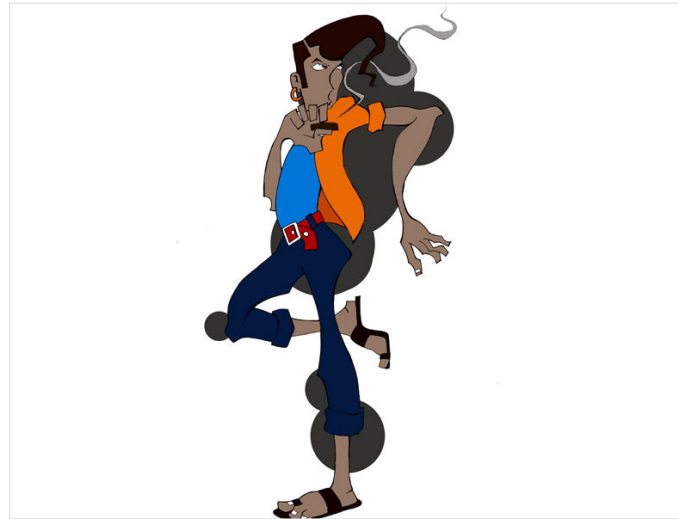Prof. Phani Tetali And Vajra Pancharia
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8. Anaroopkerketta: Tapori - Hero
Hero is a tapoori fro, Dharavi He is tall dark and very stylish, very much inspired from Bollywood. Peaple n friends call him hero not because of his dids but because of the way he does thing. His idle place is a pan shop where he spends major part of his day. he is basically known for his style.

Tapori - Hero:

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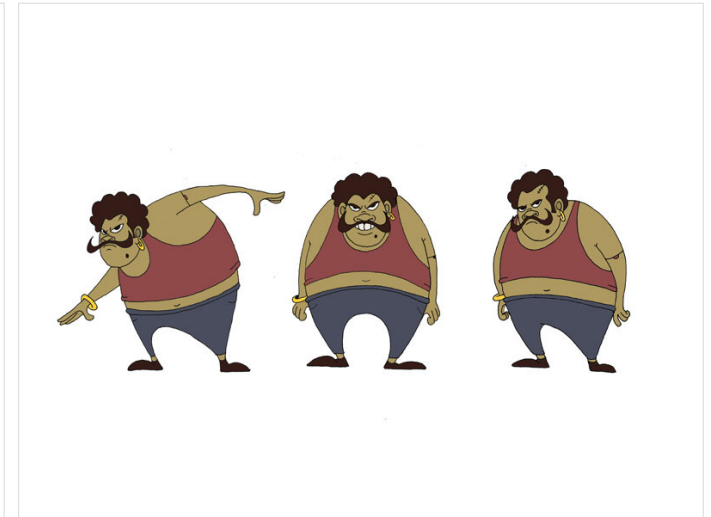# Character Design for Animation
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9. Gaurav Borse: Don - Bagga

Age-45 skin color-Dark Hight- 5.5 feet habite- aangryness..always watching bollywood movie lives like filmy character.. hence he wear pant banian type-tipical south indian don...(mind it). He is femouse about his different style. different way to talk, walk and smile.

Bagga:

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10. Rahul Arya: Pickpocketer - Monty
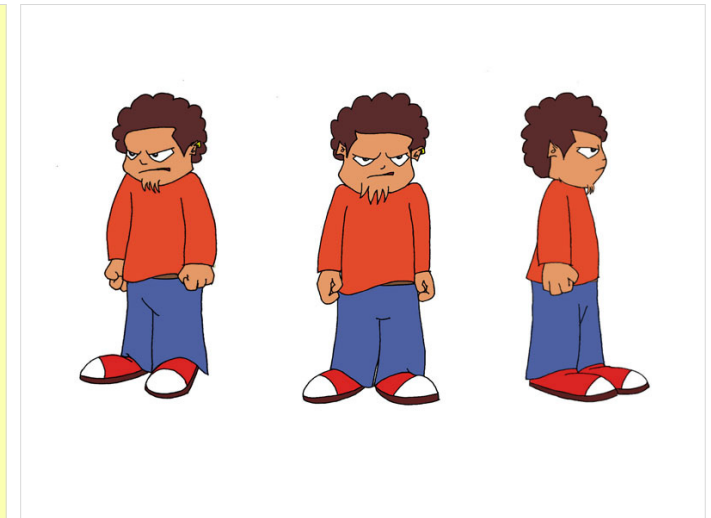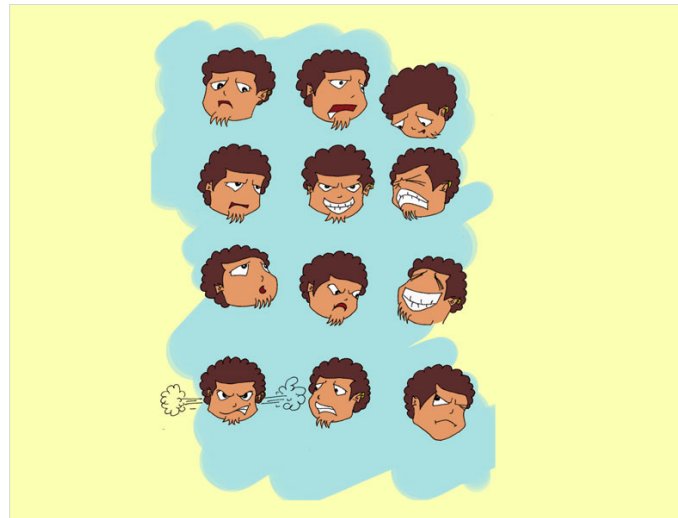Monty is a young boy, trieds to look like college boy, Always dressed up normal T-Shirt, Jeans n Shoes.
Skills: Brilliant Pick Pocketing skills have long fingers to fetch into others pocket easily,
Smartly steals mobile phones and wallets. Do not Run after stealing but tries to behave normal
Favourite Spot: Buses

Monty:

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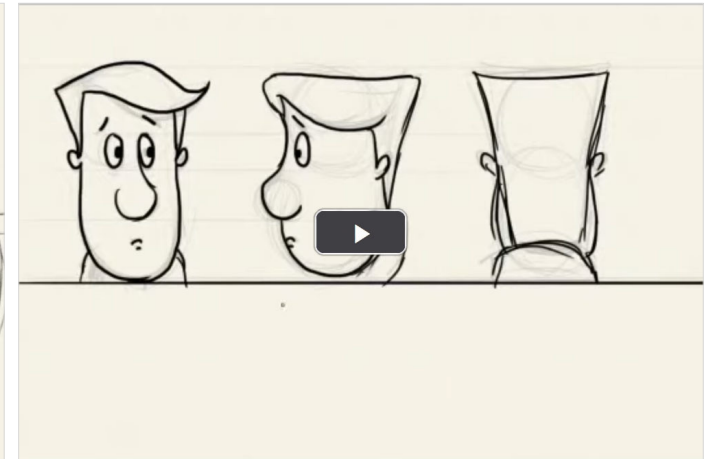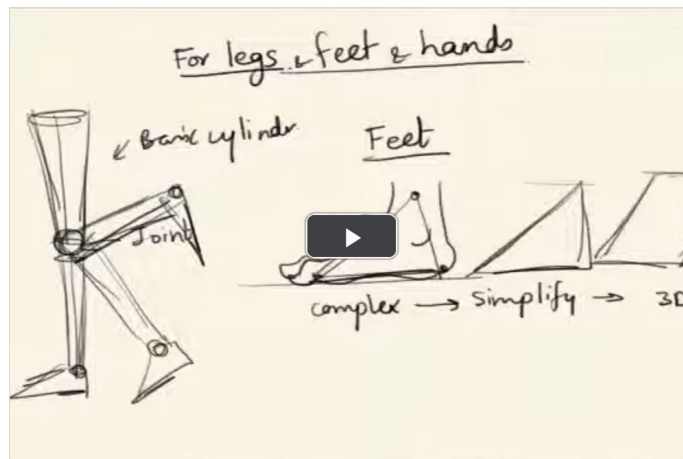Source:
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Video

Attributes and Proportions Part 1

Attributes and Proportions Part 2

Attributes and Proportions Part 3

Expressions

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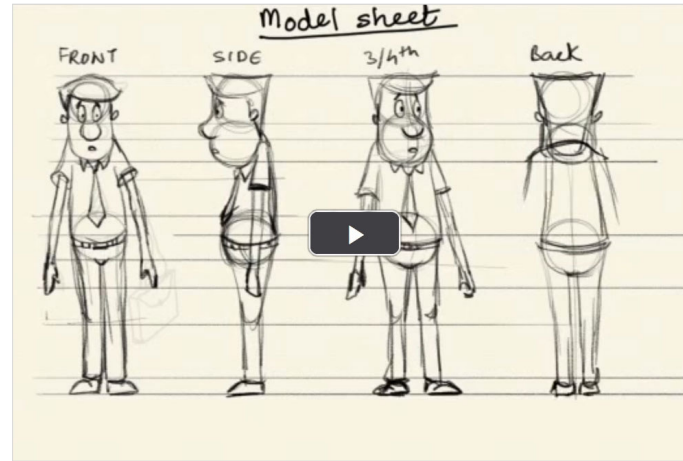
Model Sheet

Poses and Gestures

Colors

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Contact Details

This documentation for the course was done by Vajra Pancharia at IDC, IIT Bombay.

You can get in touch with Vajra Pancharia at pvajra[at]gmail.com

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