

Space

Actual space is a three-dimensional volume that can be empty or filled with objects. It has width, height, and depth. Space that appears three-dimensional in a painting is an illusion that creates a feeling of actual depth. Various techniques can be used to show such visual depth or space.



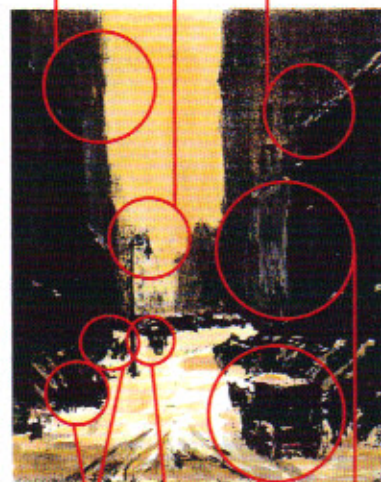
Robert Henri, *Snow in New York*, 1902. Oil on canvas, 32 x 25 1/4 in. (81.3 x 64.1 cm). Chester Dale Collection. Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Robert Henri (*Hen-ree*) painted this snow scene in New York City with careful attention to the feeling of space. Henri uses several basic techniques to show space: perspective, values, overlapping, and size of shapes.

Lamp post overlaps distant buildings.

Light values and soft edges in the distance; dark values in the foreground.

One-point perspective lines lead to focal area.



Different sizes of coaches and horses emphasize recession of space.

Sizes of people diminish as they go back in space.

Buildings overlap each other and graded values recede into space.



Sculptures, architecture, and various craft pieces occupy **actual** or **real space**. You are aware of actual space in a large room, in an open landscape, or looking at a sculpture.

Martha Mans, *Saturday Anglers*



In two-dimensional art, the feeling of space is an illusion. Size can help us sense space. If people (or other objects) are large, they seem close, and we sense space between them and smaller people who seem farther away.



If objects or people overlap in a painting, we sense space between them. If overlapping is combined with size differences, the sense of space is greatly increased.

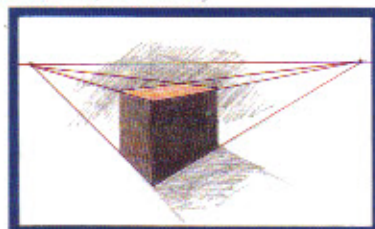


Linear perspective is a way of organizing objects in space. **One-point perspective** is used in this painting.



Atmospheric or aerial perspective is a way of using color or value (or both) to show space or depth.

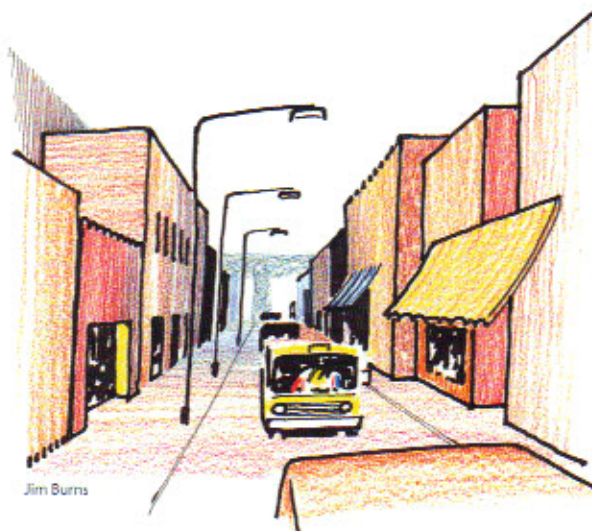
Gerald Brommer, *Monument Valley*



Two-point perspective is used when looking directly at the front corner of a box, building, automobile, or other form.

1. Linear Perspective

Develop a drawing of a cityscape using one-point perspective. Draw a horizon line and place a vanishing point on the horizon line. Draw a street with buildings with lines receding to the vanishing point to create depth in the drawing.



2. Atmospheric Perspective

Paint a series of mountains receding in space. With watercolor or tempera, paint the farthest mountains with the lightest values and the closer mountains with progressively darker values. Atmospheric perspective is often used in paintings to create a feeling of space.



3. Overlapping Objects

Make a collage of a still-life or a group of figures by cutting out shapes from colored papers and overlapping them with the larger objects or figures in the foreground. Overlapping creates a feeling of actual depth with space between the objects.



4. Actual or Real Space

Make a three-dimensional piece of pottery or make a clay sculpture. These occupy actual or real space.



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Robert Henri, American, 1865–1929. *Snow in New York*, 1902. Oil on canvas, 32 x 25¾ in. (81.3 x 65.5 cm). Chester Dale Collection. Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Martha Mans, *Saturday Anglers*. Watercolor, 22 x 30 in.

Rolland Golden, *October Road*. Watercolor and acrylic, 30 x 22 in.

Gerald Brommer, *Monument Valley*. Watercolor, 22 x 30 in.