

This tutorial is meant to help you get started with sketchnoting.

Once you get going with the basics, don't be shy to try out newly learned skills by sketchnoting about Django!

If you have any questions don't hesitate to ask me on slack [@Sara Peeters](#)

If you create sketchnotes during Djangocon Europe, please consider sharing them on the workshop channel on the Djangocon Europe Slack for others to learn from or share them on Twitter using the #Djangocon and #SketchnoteChallenge hashtags.

## Preparation/Materials

Before you start, prepare the following materials:

- Paper (Printer paper works fine) or notebook.
- Pen or pencil (Some people recommend a pen that cannot be erased. This may help to not overoptimise your drawings. But I prefer to work with an erasable pencil myself.)
- One or more color pens or pencils.
- Internet (optional but handy for researching.)

## Introduction: What is sketchnoting?

Sketchnoting is a form of notetaking where symbolic illustrations and text come together to form a visual representation of a talk, meeting, book, workflow, ...

Being able to draw well is not a requirement to be able to sketchnote, as we will see, simple shapes and forms can build up recognisable images.

## Internet searching

A first thing you want to be good at when starting a new hobby or learning a new skill is finding help and inspiration. The internet is your best friend here, but the thing is to know how to make search engines cough up useful results.

For easy (symbolic) representations of things the keyword to use is “**icon**”. So search for “conference icon”, “code icon”, or even “diversity icon”.

If you find the “icon” representation too simplified, you can try other keywords such as “**clipart**” or “**cartoon**”. Cartoon is also useful if you want to draw famous people or politicians, but don't know how to characterize them.

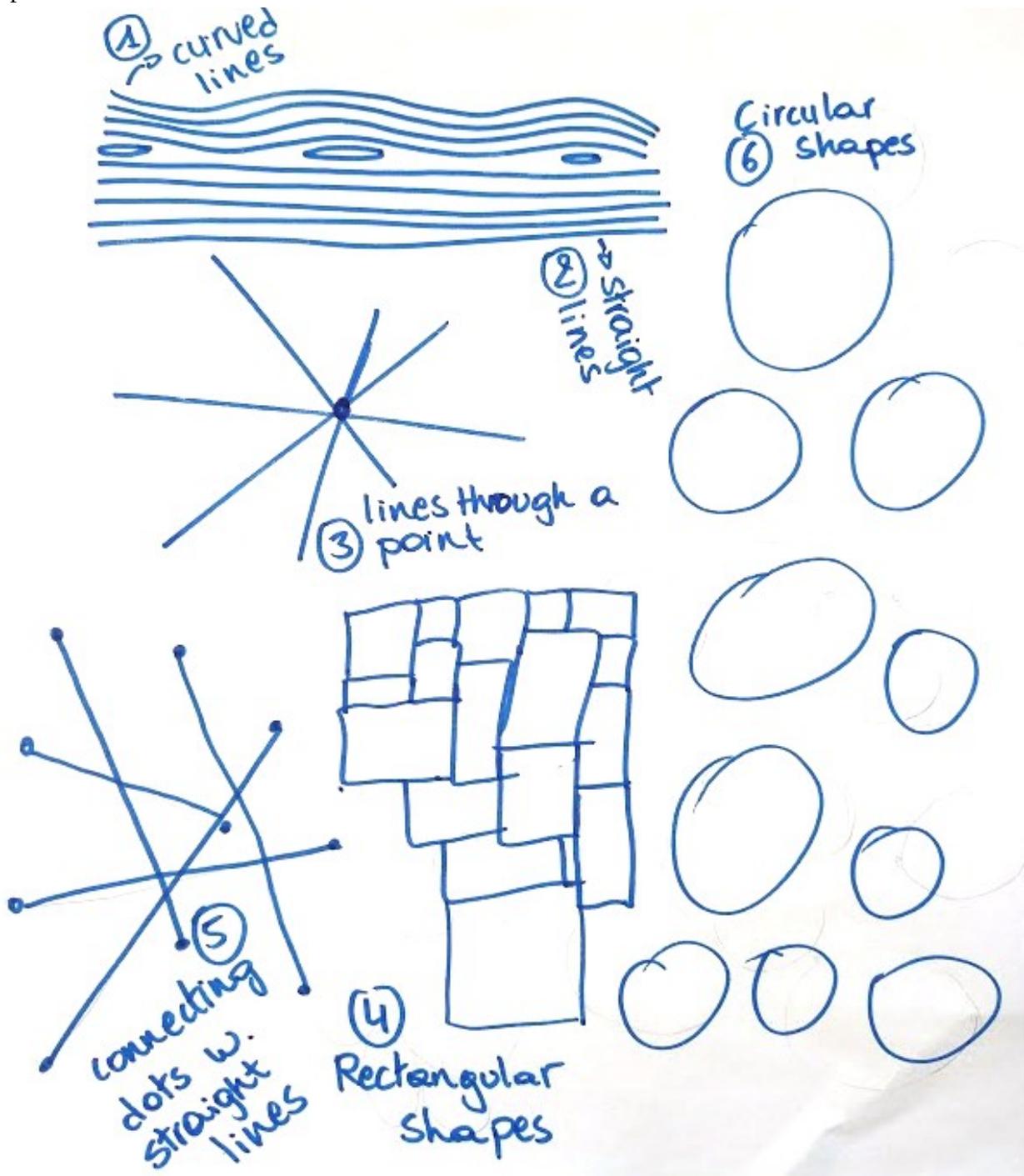
The keyword “**drawing**” often delivers much more realistic (as opposed to the symbolic results above) drawings, and images from “how to draw ...” tutorials.

# Warming up

To warm up, draw some of the following shapes on a piece of paper:

- Lines ( straight and/or curvy lines)
- Circular shapes (circles, ellipses, ...)
- Rectangular shapes (rectangles, Parallelograms, ...)

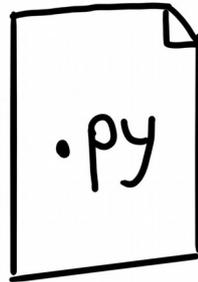
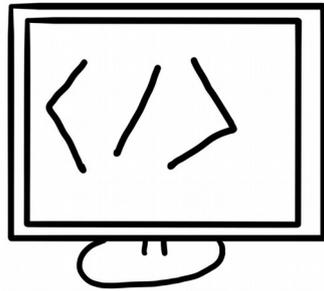
Example:



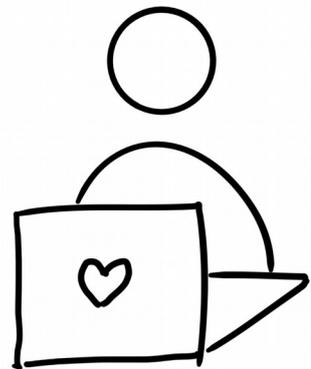
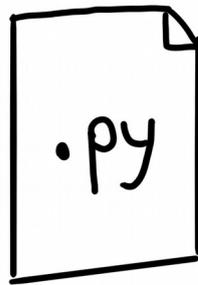
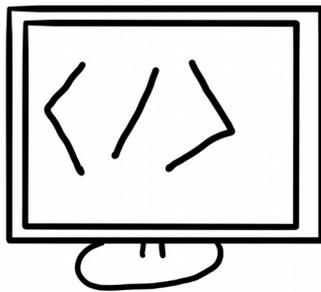
# Building things up from Circles and Rectangles

In this section, we will build up a visual vocabulary around coding, based on merely circular and rectangular shapes.

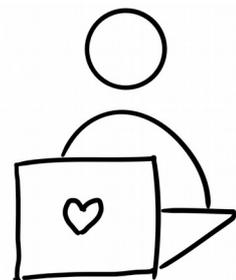
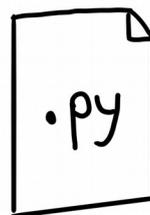
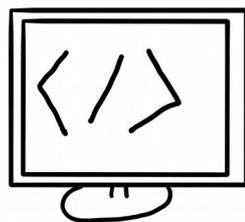
Let's start with 2 representations of code.



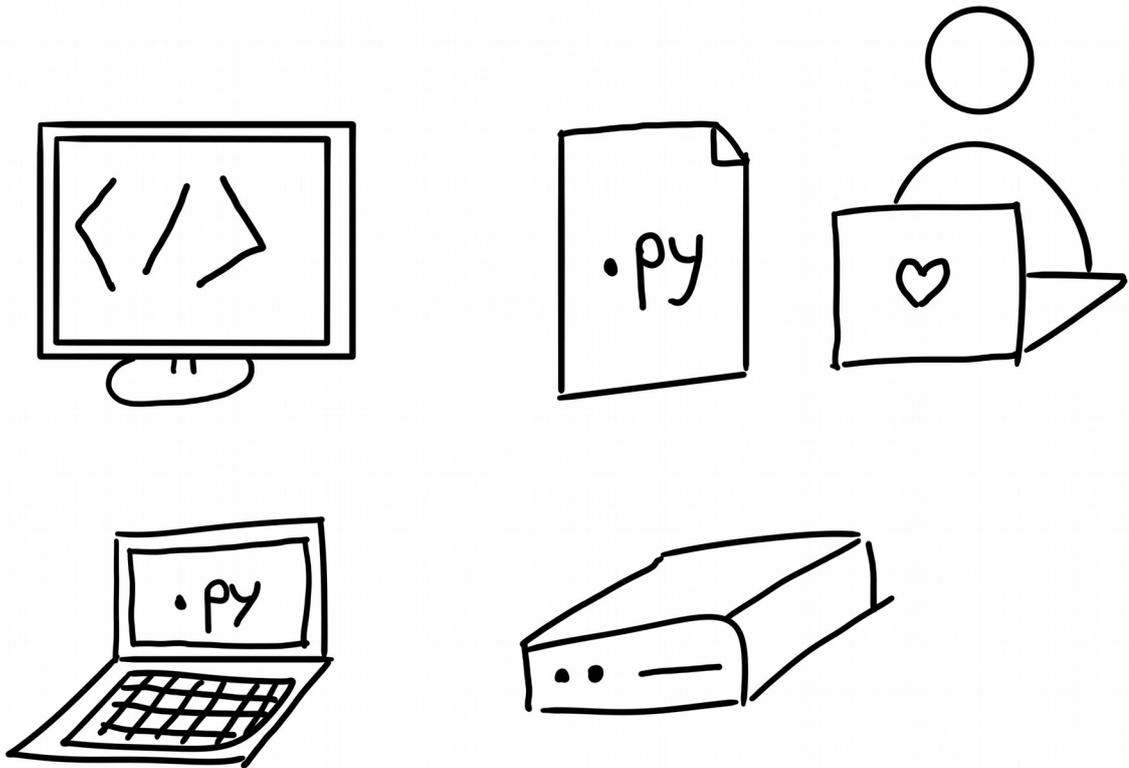
Then let's add the verb coding.



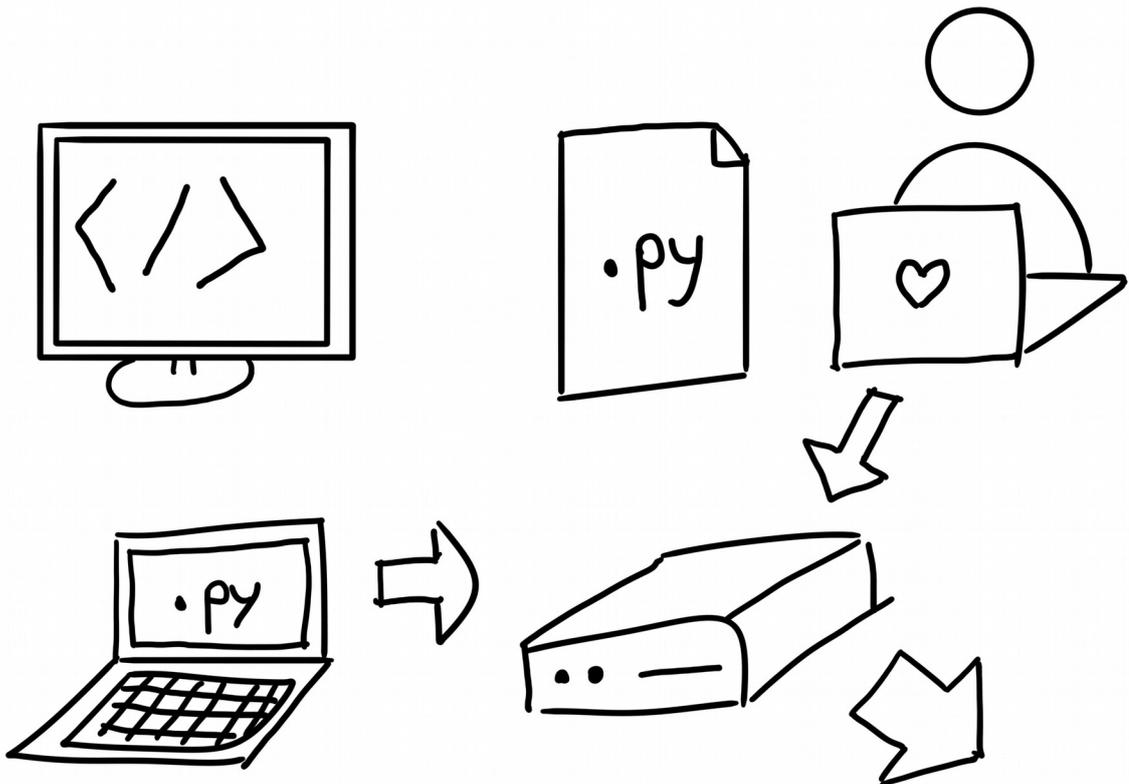
Note that we can also easily draw a laptop from the other side.



Next let's draw a server.



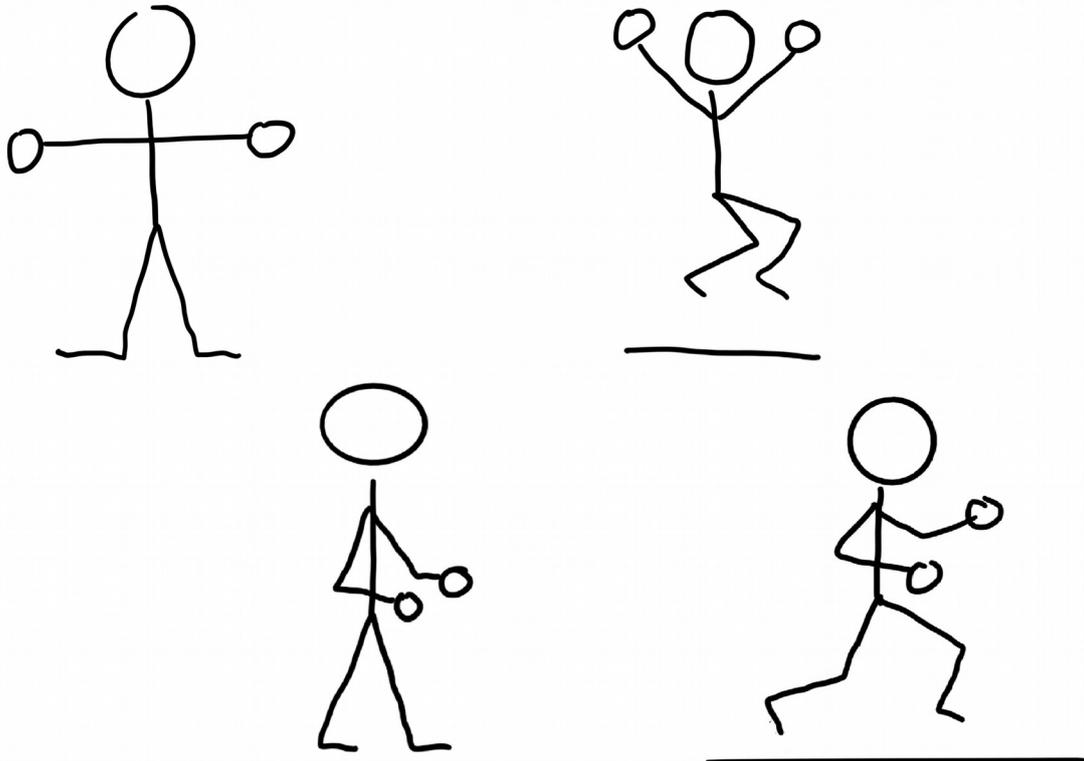
Finally, send stuff to the server from your laptop and publish it on the internet with a few simple arrows.



## Drawing people

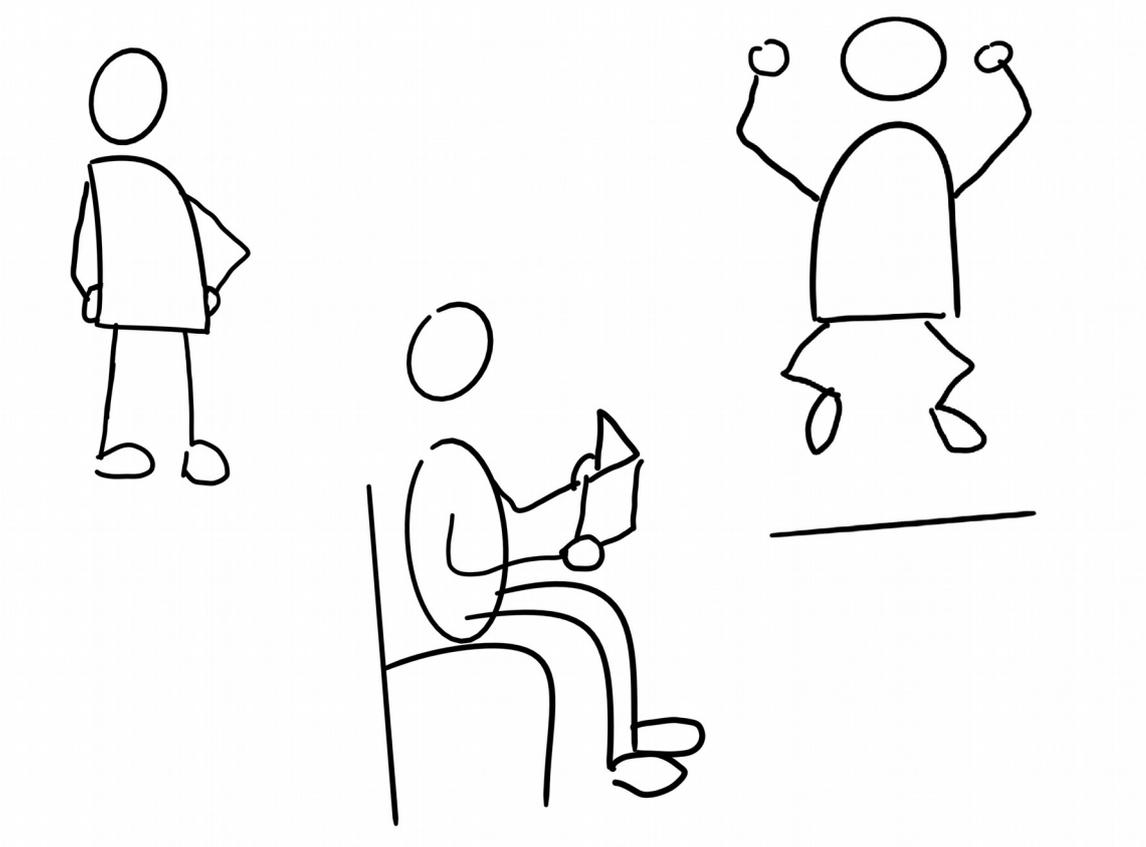
In this chapter we will draw people in lots of different ways. You might end up liking one way more than the others, or use different representations for different occasions. Be sure to try out putting the people you draw in different situations and positions.

### Stick people

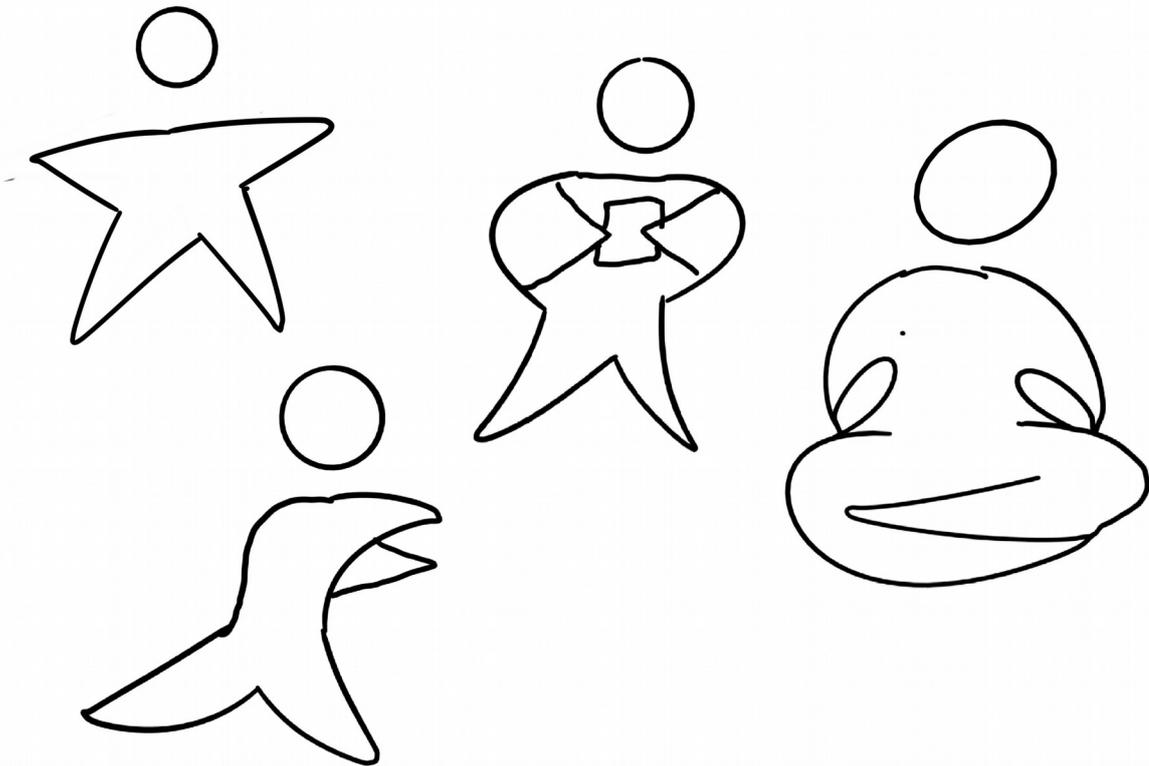


Note: Not all people feel well represented by stick people, as they can be seen as very very thin people, the next types of people help overcome this problem.

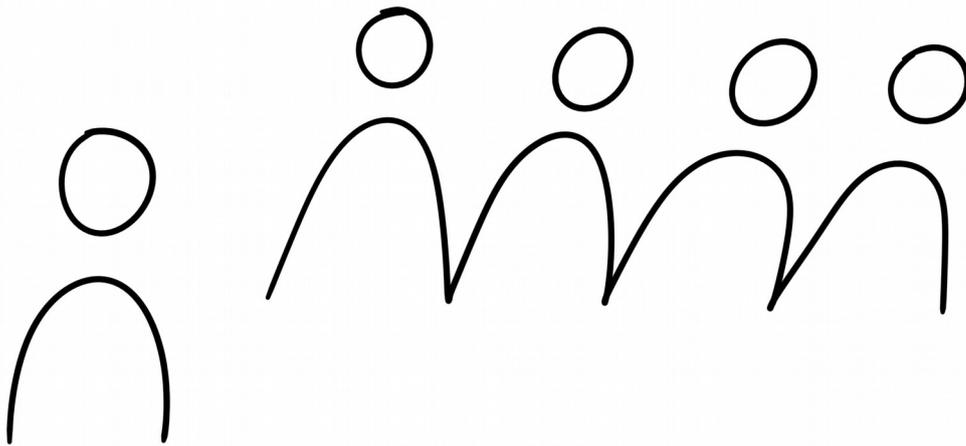
People with a body



Star people



## Tooth people



## Adding text

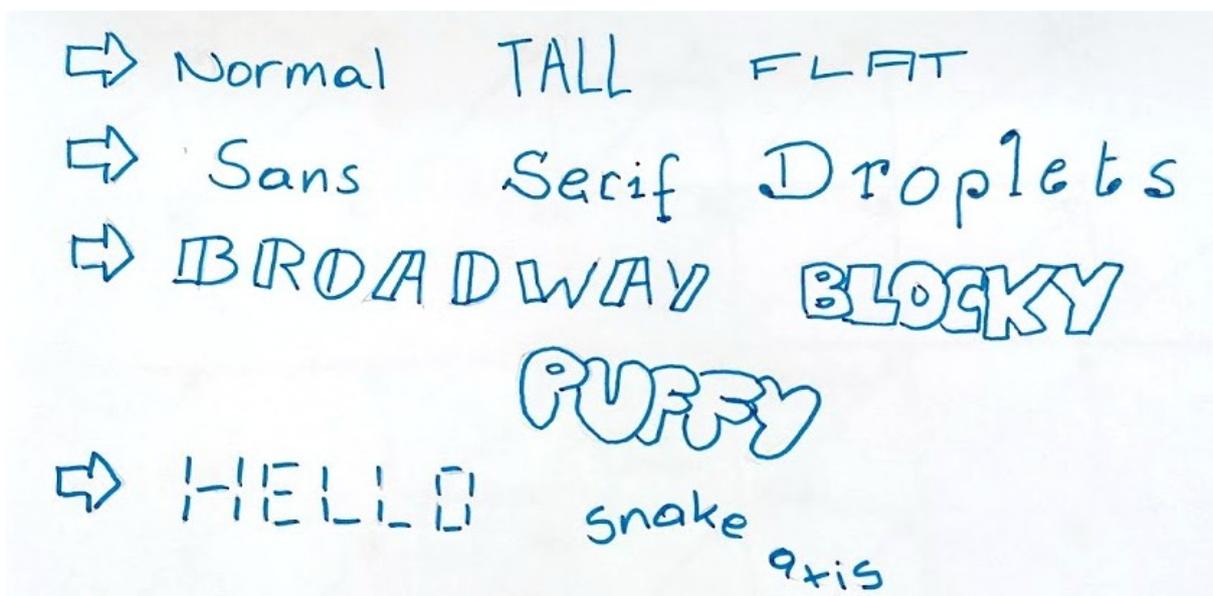
Text adds more meaning to our illustrations. Sketchnoting relies on the combination of text and images.

### Text

There are lots of different fonts or writing styles you can use. Below are a couple of examples. Important is to be consistent within one font, so that s'es look the same through your whole title, for example.

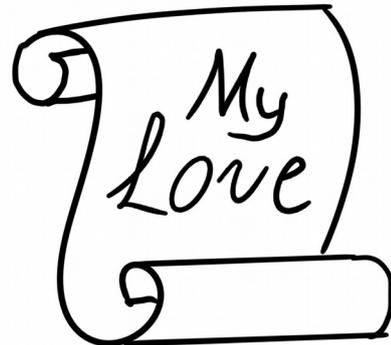
If you think your handwriting is ugly, don't worry, lots of people feel that way. You can try the following tips to make it look better.

- Add 1 or 2 helper lines, to keep your font size more consistent.
- Try to slow down. Slower writing often looks better.



## Boxes around text

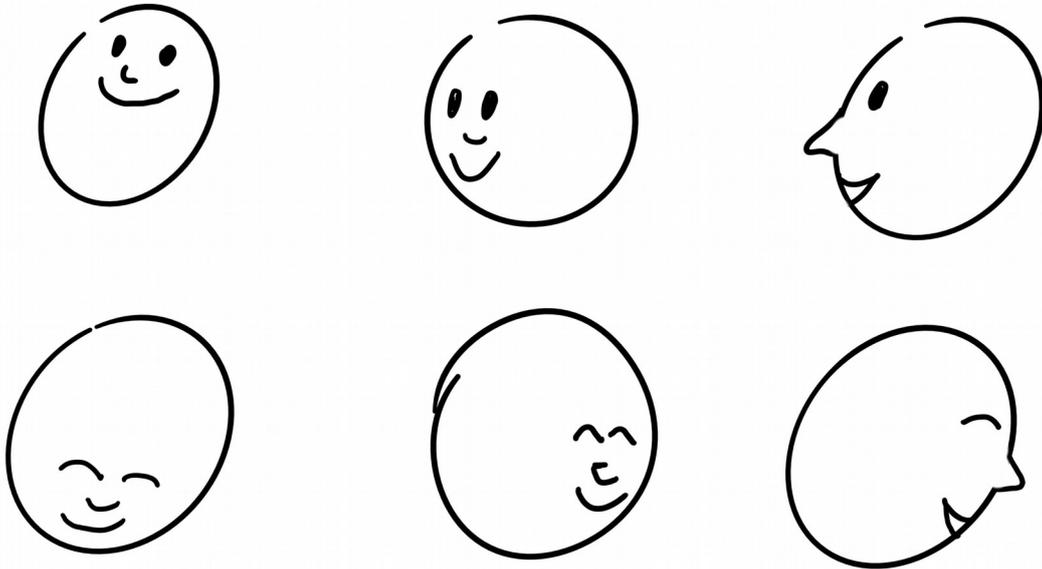
Decorative boxes help your text stand out. However it is not always easy to fit your text into a box. A better idea is to write your text first, and add the box afterwards. This way, it is easier to make everything fit in nicely. Try out some of the examples below.



# Faces and emotions

## Looking around

You can make a character look around by drawing the whole face in the upper, lower, left or right half of the face. Having the whole face visible as in the middle images below, often looks better than showing only half of the face (images on the right). And it makes it easier to show your characters emotions.

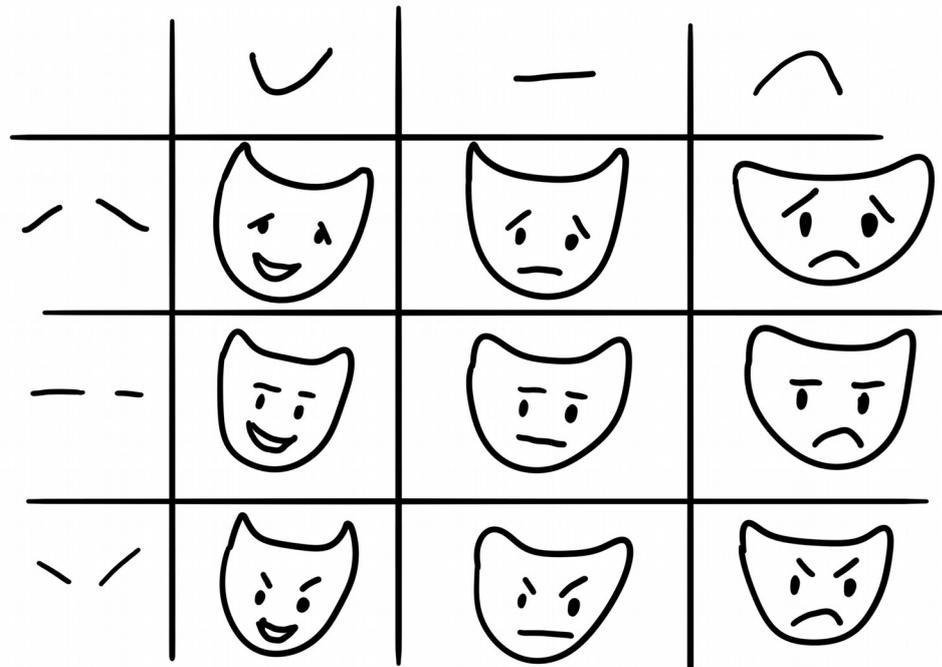


## Emotion matrix

The emotion matrix is a way to help you draw different emotions by combining 3 mouth shapes and 3 eyebrow positions. The empty matrix is shown below. The mouth shapes are at the top, the eyebrows at the left.

	∪	—	∩
∖ /			
— —			
∖ /			

Now you can repeat the eyebrows left to right and repeat the mouth shapes top to bottom. Add eyes and a nose, and your emotion matrix is ready. The filled emotion matrix is shown below.

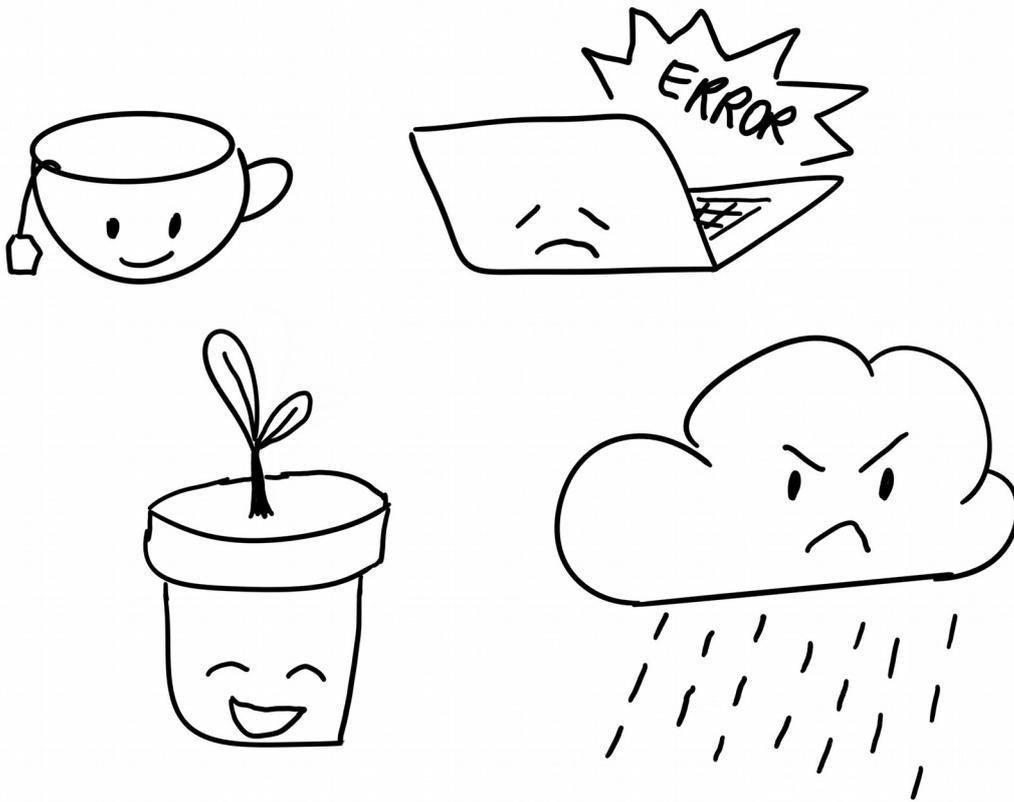


It is not necessary to be able to name all the emotions in there. I'll try just a few:

- Upper left: scared laughing
- Lower left: angry laughing
- Middle: worried
- Upper right: very sad
- lower right: very angry

## Things with a face

You can sometimes make your sketchnotes more appealing by giving things you draw a face. This way you can also let objects have emotions. Below are some examples.



## Shadows

Shadows can add more depth to your images. Here are some examples of different shadowing techniques:



## Part 2: Django Drawing Challenge

I hope you've been drawing along so far and tried things out as we went through the tutorial. If not, feel free to go back and try it! It is great fun.

With everything you learned, I think you can now go on and sketchnote your ideas on a Django related topic of your choice. For example you could:

- Sketchnote of a Talk from this conference (Advanced, as you need to be quick to draw real time)
- Sketchnote of a Talk on Youtube (Easier, as you can pause the video)
- Virtual conference tips and tricks
- Illustrating a part of the Django Docs (which parts of the docs?)
- A visual summary of a blogpost or podcast

### Examples:

Sketchnotes of talks from previous Djangocons:

- <https://twitter.com/aspigirlcodes/status/1115906053605085185?s=20>
- <https://twitter.com/aspigirlcodes/status/1306881441624715264?s=20>

Me sketchnoting along with the Django Riffs podcast:

- <https://youtu.be/zkdhp1apX1w>
- [https://youtu.be/w\\_9zRTVAhNY](https://youtu.be/w_9zRTVAhNY)

### Notes:

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