

Tips on Drawing Dragonball Z Style Bodies

In this tutorial, I will attempt to go over how to draw DBZ style bodies. I don't have much experience with drawing figures, though, so just bear with me. You should be able to use a lot of the stuff here for drawing the bodies of other styles of characters, too.

I didn't make up these poses, I took them directly from other DBZ pictures, so you may recognize a few of the more common ones. ^_^

If you have any questions, please [email me](#).

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Arigatou gozaimasu!

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Step 1:



We shall begin with a basic, Dragonball-ish pose, and then work our way up to more complicated poses. Start off with the head, torso, and waist. The head is the same shape as in my other DBZ tutorials, just a circle with the lower half of the face added. If you like, you can draw the face first. The only reason that I didn't draw the face first here is because I didn't want to retrace the face that many times. ^_^

The torso is usually relatively large, and wider than the waist.

As shown in this picture, the distance from the top of the head to the bottom of the neck is the same as the distance between the bottom of the neck and the bottom of the torso. Also, the distance from the center of the head to the edge of the head is about the same as the distance from the edge of the head to the tip of the shoulder. Hopefully that will help you get the proportions right. I usually add extremely basic muscle definition, just

to get a more three-dimensional look and help with the placement of the other forms. **Make sure you draw all this very lightly**, because you'll be erasing it and drawing over it later.

Step 2:

Next, sketch in the basic shape of the arms and legs. Don't worry about the muscles or clothes yet, we'll add those later. Right now, just use sketchy ovals, circles, and cylinders to get the proportions. Use cylinders for the arms, ovals for the legs, and circles for the shoulders, joints and hands. This method may seem awkward at first, but it is a great help in determining the proper length and size of the various parts of the body. In this picture, the arms don't go straight down. The elbows are pulled back behind him, so that his forearms are level with his waist. Thus, the arms will not be drawn as long as if they were hanging limply at his side. Foreshortening the arms isn't all that difficult, if you think of them just as cylinders. Notice here that with both arms, the top part of the arm slants inward, since it is moving away from you. The lower part slants back out, since his fists are coming towards you. These angles are further exaggerated by the little arrows on the sides of his arms. DBZ legs tend to be short and stumpy and don't really taper down as much as other characters' legs. Just be careful not to make them too short, or they will look weird. ^_^



Step 3:



Once the arms and legs are in place, you can begin drawing the details over your rough sketch, such as clothing, hair, and muscles. Folds in clothing can be difficult, but just try to see which way the cloth is being pulled. For example, his pants are very loose and baggy, so it bunches up around his knees and ankles; the folds curve inward and down towards his feet. The material of his belt is stretched around his waist, so the folds are more horizontal. The way Dragonball Z muscles are drawn reminds of a normally proportioned person with flesh-colored water balloons stuck to his arms. ^_~ The muscles are always very big and round, and are shaded to look like they protrude a great deal, like balloons. This is more prominent in Super Saiyajin characters. The point of this is that it might help you to think of the muscles as individual ellipsoids when drawing them. ^_^

Step 4:

Erase all the unnecessary lines, leaving only the outline. Add the face and hands, as well as extra details on the muscles and clothes. Clean up your sketch as best as you can.



Step 5:

You may now color or shade your picture with a medium of your choice. Make sure to make the muscles look very round, and make the shadows on the clothes very dark and contrasting.



1.



2.



Step 1:

Now lets try a similar pose, except from a 3/4 view. I'm going to move a little faster this time. Draw the same head, torso, and waist as before, except now turn it a 3/4 angle. Use the center line that runs from the top of his head to the bottom of his waist to guide you. Notice that it should follow the contours of the forms rather than moving straight down in a straight curve. Also notice that the back is arched slightly (indicated by the red line). The same proportions as in the tutorial above should apply, but it will be harder to judge since the forms are at an angle.

Step 2:

Once the main body is positioned, draw in the arms and legs. Again, in this pose the elbows have been pulled back and are foreshortened. For the right arm, the upper section slants inward since it moves away from you, and the lower section slants outward since it moves towards you. For the left arm, both sections are moving away from you, so they both slant inward (make sure the lower half is at an angle from the top half, since his arm is bent, not straight). The legs in this picture are more tapered than in the last drawing, so make them a little thinner near the bottom (but not too thin).

Step 3:

Lightly draw the outlines of the clothing, hair, and any accesories (like the sword). Like other DBZ characters, his pants are very baggy and should gather around the ankles. His shirt is sort of tight and shouldn't look too baggy (in other words, don't have it hang down over the belt and bunch up too much), while his jacket is very thick (the material should look loose and bunch up around his joints).

3.



4.



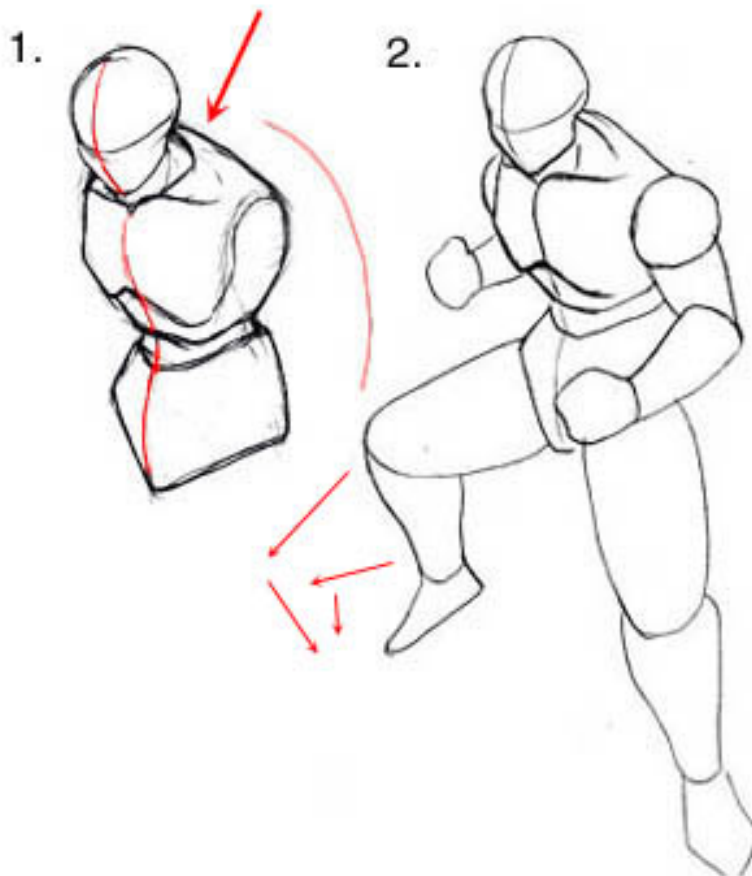
Step 4:

Erase all unnecessary lines and smooth out your final outline. Draw in his hands and face.

Step 5:

You can now take your finished picture and color or shade it however you choose. As always, I used Adobe Photoshop, but you can use whatever you want, as long as it is shaded and has some depth to it. Notice that since the pants are so dark, you can hardly see the wrinkle lines that were drawn in earlier; instead, the highlights define the shape.





Step 1:

Our next pose is similar to the last one, but now one of the legs is foreshortened in addition to the arms, and the upper half of the left arm isn't visible at all since it's hidden behind the torso. Start again with the head, torso and waist at a 3/4 view, but now tilt the forms so that it looks like he is leaning over. When a character leans over, you'll notice that the back of the ribcage is large enough that it begins to surround the head. There is a better example of this further on, but I'll get to that in a moment. For now, just take note that the neck isn't going to be as visible when the character is leaning forward, since the head blocks the lower part of the neck, and swell of the muscles on the back hide the upper part of the neck.

Step 2:

Next, draw the arms and legs. You will foreshorten the legs the exact same way as you did the arms; if the forms are moving away from you, slant them inward; if they are moving towards you, slant them outward. Make the right leg a little short, since it is bent slightly forward towards you (look at the other pictures to see what I mean).

Step 3:

Now you can start adding the details, like the hair, clothing, muscles and hands. Since his legs are bent, there are going to be a lot more folds on the pants. Just remember to draw the folds in the direction that the cloth is being pulled. If you look at the left leg, you'll see that the material is stretched across his knees, so there are horizontal folds near the waist.

Step 4:

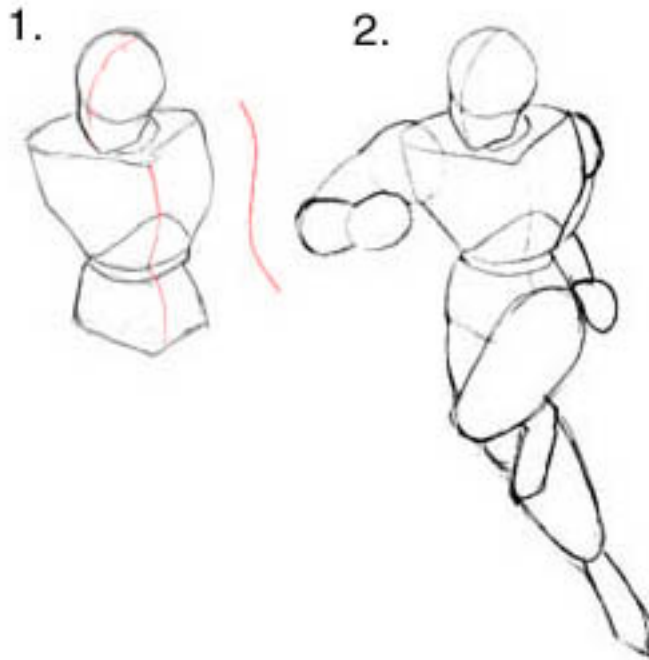
Draw the face and the rest of the details, then erase all the unnecessary lines and smooth over the finished outline.



Step 5:

You can now color or shade your picture.





Step 1:

This pose is similar to the others, as well, except the foreshortening and positioning are more complicated. Draw the head, torso, and waist as usual, except tilt the body more to the right. Notice how the waist is much smaller than the torso, and is located further to right; don't make it too far to the right, though, you don't want him to look too swishy. - _ ^

Step 2:

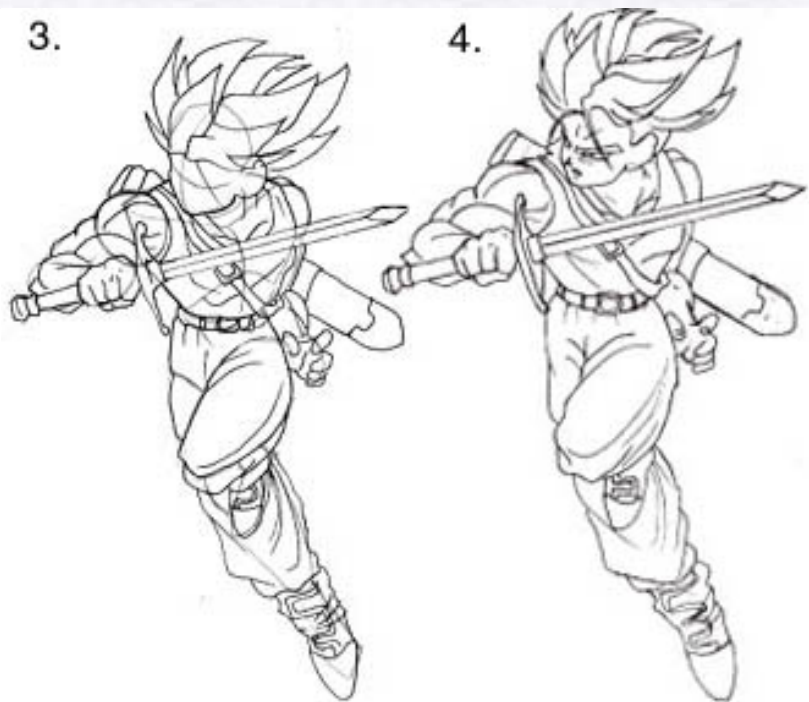
Draw in his arms and legs next, using just ovals and cylinders. Now, you will notice that since his right leg is bent back, the lower half of the leg is not visible. All you see of the lower half is his foot. Draw the right thigh as you would for any other figure, just don't include the

lower half of the leg. For the left leg, make sure it is slanted to the right rather than going straight down, so it will look like he is starting to run rather than standing on one foot (unless you want to do a pose like that). ^ _ ^

The arms may be difficult, as well. The left arm is bent forward towards you, so the front half of the arm should cover up a great deal of the back half. Keep the arm up high and level with the center of the chest, because it is going to be holding a sword. The right arm is almost completely hidden behind the torso. Just make sure the hand isn't any lower than the hips.

Step 3:

Now, add the hair, muscles, clothing, sword, and hands. Use a straight edge or ruler if necessary to draw the sword straight and to make sure it's at the proper angle. Make the muscles on the arms very round; make the ones closer to you overlap the ones further back to make them look more three dimensional. The shoulder muscles on both sides should be rather prominent. The shirt is relatively tight and shouldn't be drawn too baggy. The pants are tight around the waist, but loose around the legs, so draw most of the folds around the knees and ankles. Make his hair look like it is flowing back somewhat, so it looks more like he is in motion.



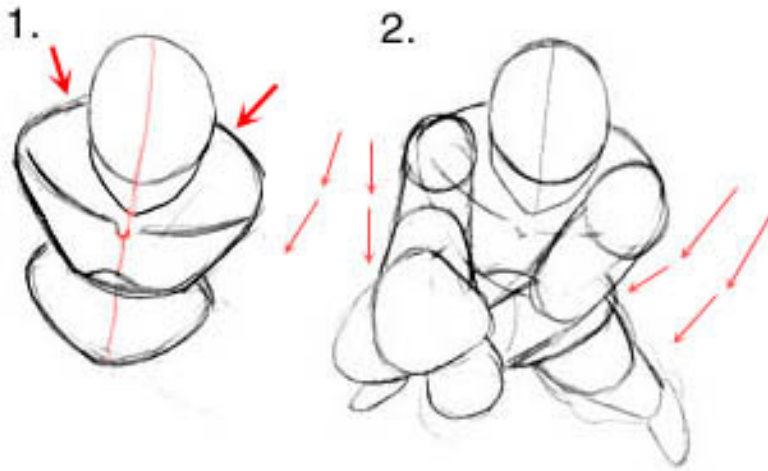
Step 4:

Erase all the lines you don't need, add the face, and smooth out your sketch. Retrace it onto a clean piece of paper if necessary.



Step 5:

Shade or color your picture as you see fit. Hmm, this one turned out pretty good. ^_^



Step 1:

Now, we will move on to examples of more exaggerated foreshortening. In this picture, the figure is leaning forward a great deal, looking like he's going to use some chi attack or something. Remember what I was saying before about the ribcage enveloping the head when the figure is tilted forward? Well, here is a better example of that. The head completely covers up the neck, and the head is almost completely surrounded by the torso. The chest muscles are hardly visible because of the angle, and some of the waist is hidden, as well.

Step 2:

Next, draw the arms and legs. Both arms stick straight out towards you, which can be a difficult angle to draw them at. Just remember to draw them shorter than normal, and to make them slant outwards. The left hand is straighter than the right, and slants outward more, because it's closer to you. The little arrows show you an exaggerated view of the movement of the arms.

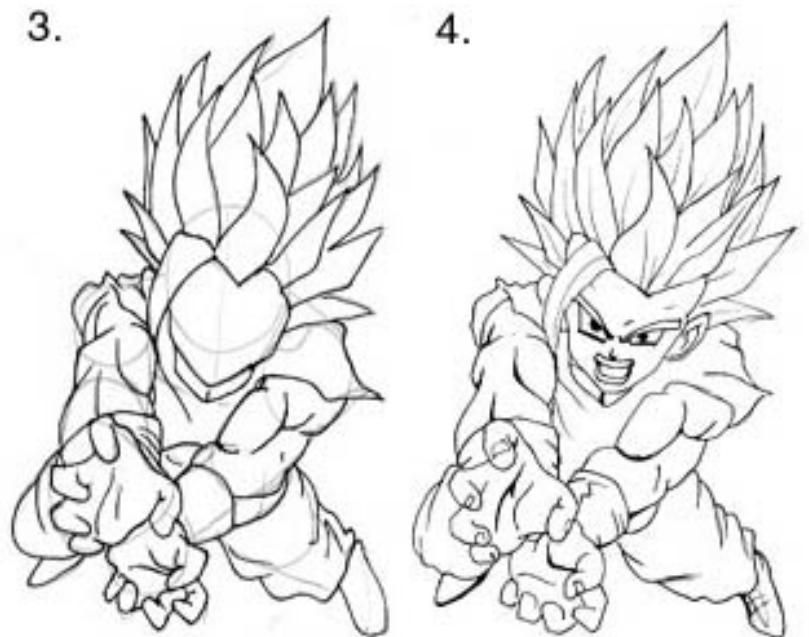
The legs are very far back behind the body. Thus, they will be drawn very short. They will slant inwards, since they are moving away from you. Only the top part of the left leg is visible, since the lower half is hidden. Keep the figure very compact; the arms and legs shouldn't be drawn too far out from the main body.

Step 3:

Now for the fun part, adding in all the details. ^_^ Draw the hair, muscles, hands, and clothes. The hands really aren't as difficult as they may seem at first. The palms are very large and circular, and the fingers are all short and curve inwards towards the center of the palm. The muscles are, as always, very large and water-balloonish (^_~) so make sure they look round and protrude and everything.

Step 4:

Erase all the extra lines and draw in the face. Smooth out your sketch, and add some extra definition to the muscles and clothing.

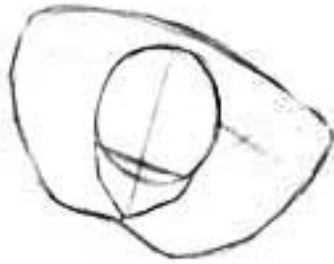


Step 5:

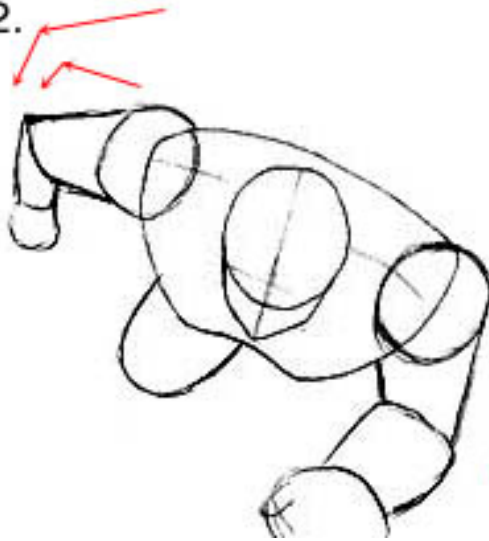
Color or shade your picture however you want.



1.



2.



Step 1:

Okay, this is the last pose. ^_^ The view is the most awkward, in my opinion, so I saved it for last. In this picture, the character is leaning so far forward that his torso blocks out most of the lower half of his body. The ribcage completely encircles his head

now.

Step 2:

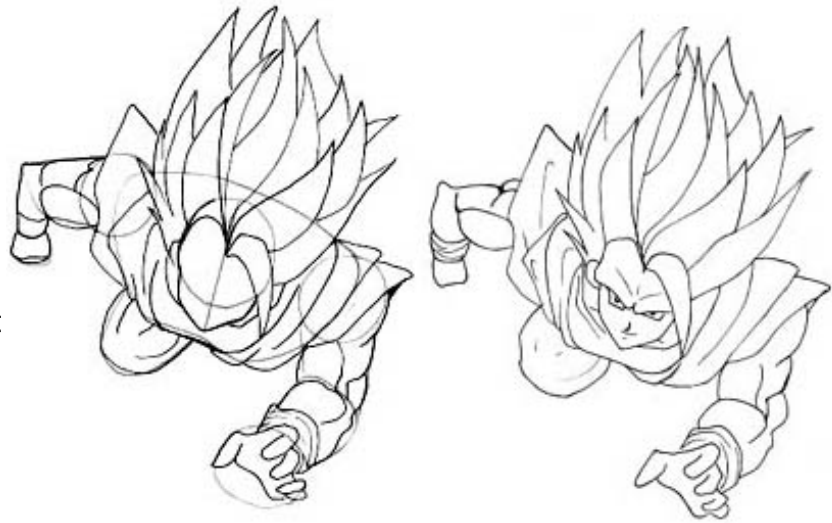
Now, add the arms, and the one leg that is visible. ^_^ Just assume that the other leg is pointed straight backwards. All you see of the left leg is the edge of the knee, so don't make it too long, it is not going to be sticking out from the body that far. The left arm curves away from you, so make sure it slants inward. The hand on the right arm should be almost as big as the head, since it is much closer to you than the head.

Step 3:

Add the major details, like the hair, clothes, and muscles.

Step 4:

Add the face, erase the unwanted lines, smooth out your sketch, and you are almost done. ^_^



Step 5:

Color or shade your picture. Try to make the light source consistent; that is, have the light come from the same side so that the highlights and shadows seem more consistent. Well, that about wraps things up. Whew... That took longer that I thought it would. ^_^;



That completes my section on Dragonball Z style bodies. I hope this was of some help to you. :) If this tutorial has helped you in any way, I'd love to see your finished work.