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HI JOSHUA! I AM HOPING I CAN ARTICULATE MY QUESTION A LITTLE BETTER, HERE GOES!

WHEN DRAWING MY OWN CARTOONS (@CACKPHRASE), I'VE ALWAYS WONDERED ABOUT THE CLASSIC ANIMATION FEET.

MY MAIN QUESTION IS:

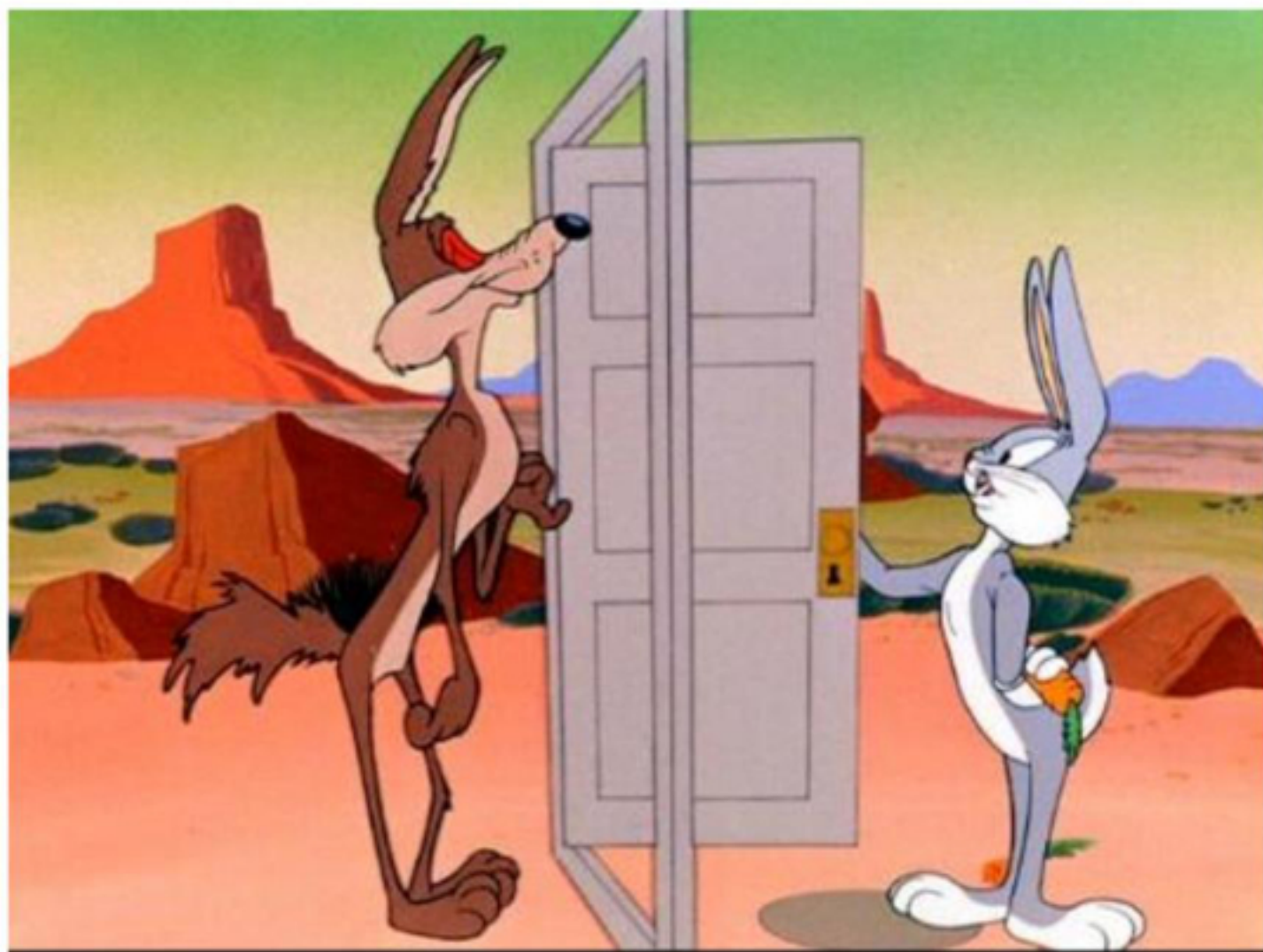
HOW DO YOU DECIDE WHICH WAY A CHARACTER'S FEET SHOULD FACE? IS IT JUST A STYLISTIC CHOICE OR DOES IT IN SOME WAY HELP THE PROCESS OR CONVEY SOMETHING IN THE CHARACTER PERFORMANCE?

AND WHEN IS IT APPROPRIATE? IT SEEMS MORE COMMON IN CLASSIC CARTOONS LIKE THE WB SHORTS, I WAS JUST WONDERING WHY THEY DID IT! HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES...

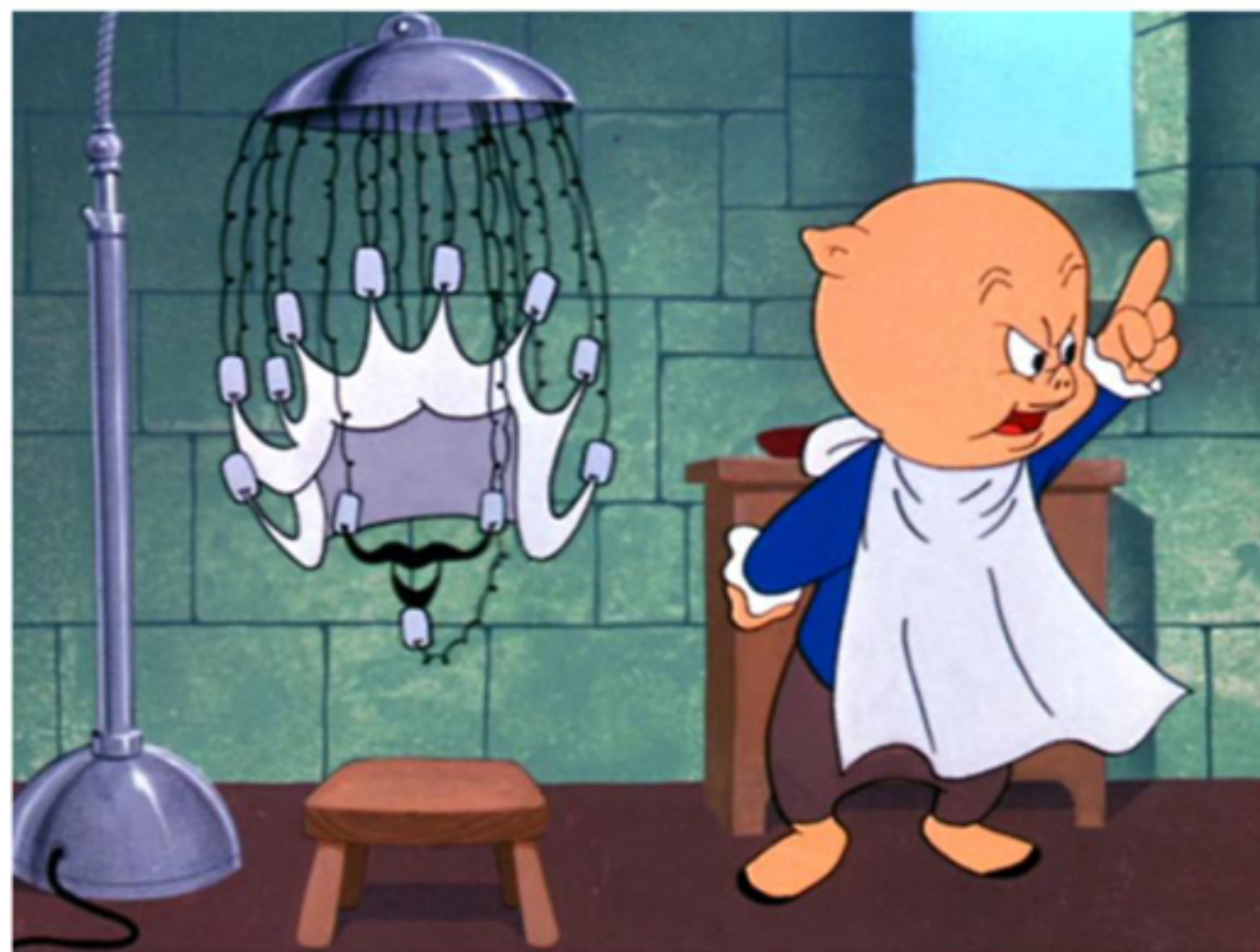


SO THE FEET ARE FACING FORWARDS HERE FOR BOTH CHARACTERS, BUGS SLIGHTLY OUTWARD..

AND HERE YOU CAN SEE THAT BOTH CHARACTERS ARE SIDE ON, BUT THEIR FEET ARE BEING TREATED DIFFERENTLY.



I KNOW IT WILL DIFFER BETWEEN DIFFERENT DIRECTORS BUT I JUST WONDERED IF THERE IS SOMETHING THAT CAN BE COMMUNICATED BY HOW THE FEET ARE PLACED. THERE JUST DOESN'T SEEM TO BE A PATTERN FROM WHAT I CAN SEE.



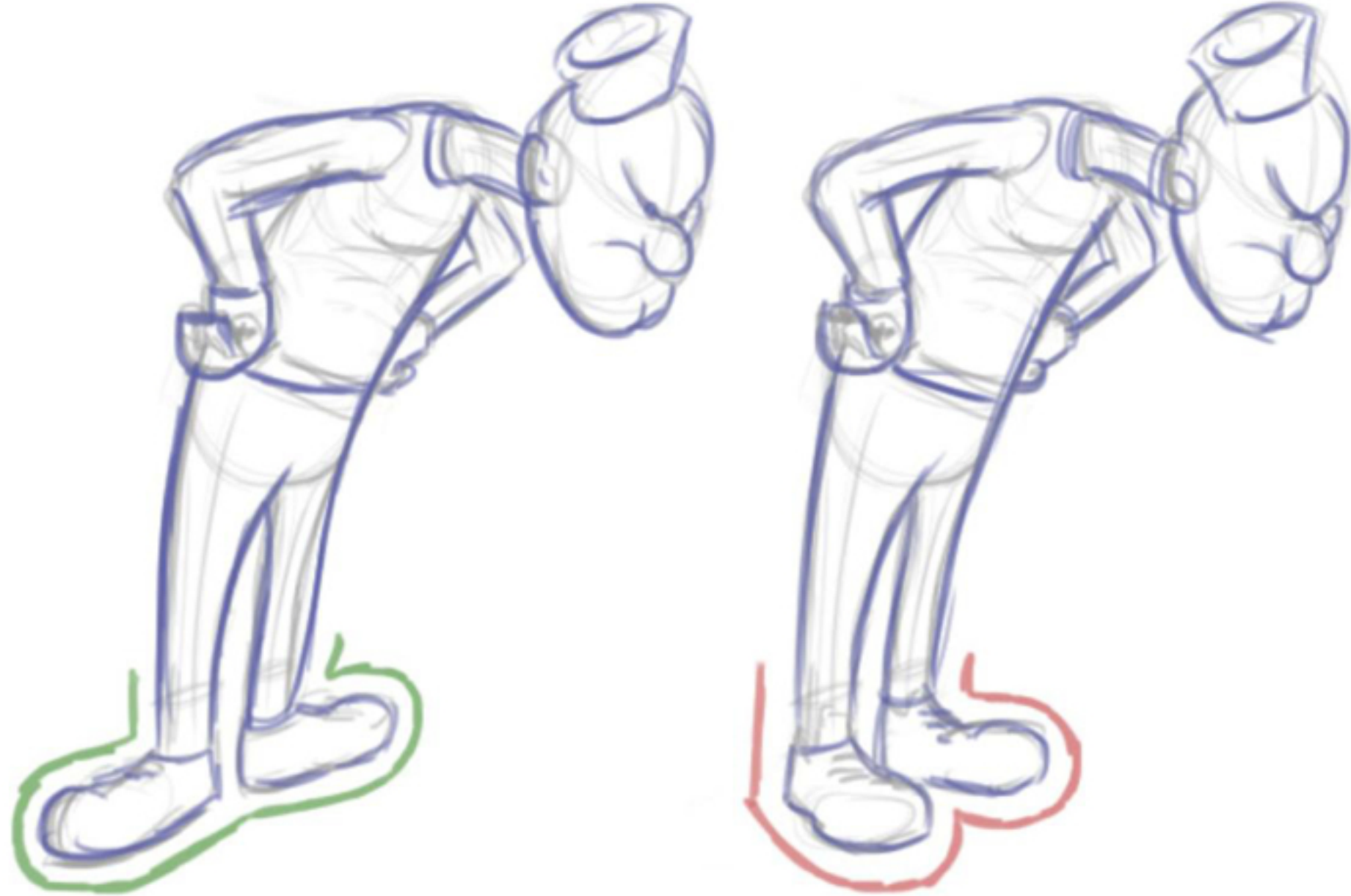
SO WHAT'S THE FORMULA? IS IT STYLE, OR IS THERE A REASON?



AS FOR SOMETHING I'M STRUGGLING WITH - THE FEET IS DEFINITELY SOMETHING I COULD USE A FEW POINTERS ON. I HAVE STUDIED PRESTON BLAIR'S BOOK WHICH DOESN'T GIVE MUCH INSIGHT, AND THERE'S A LITTLE IN RICHARD WILLIAMS' BOOK BUT I COULD DO WITH A FORMULA, SOMETHING LIKE YOUR EXCELLENT LESSON ON HANDS!

I DIDN'T HAVE ANY SPECIFIC WORK TO POST, AS IT'S SOMETHING I HAVE BEEN MUSING UPON... SO HERE'S AN EXAMPLE OF SOMETHING I'VE JUST QUICKLY SKETCHED UP - I CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHICH IS MOST EFFECTIVE! I KNOW THERE ARE OTHER THINGS TECHNICALLY WRONG WITH IT - I AM STILL LEARNING, BUT AM REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO HEARING BACK FROM YOU ON THE FEET!

-KEV



KEV,
BEFORE I GO ON TO EXPLAIN BUGS'S FEET, I'LL GO OVER SOME POINTS ABOUT THE DRAWINGS YOU SENT.

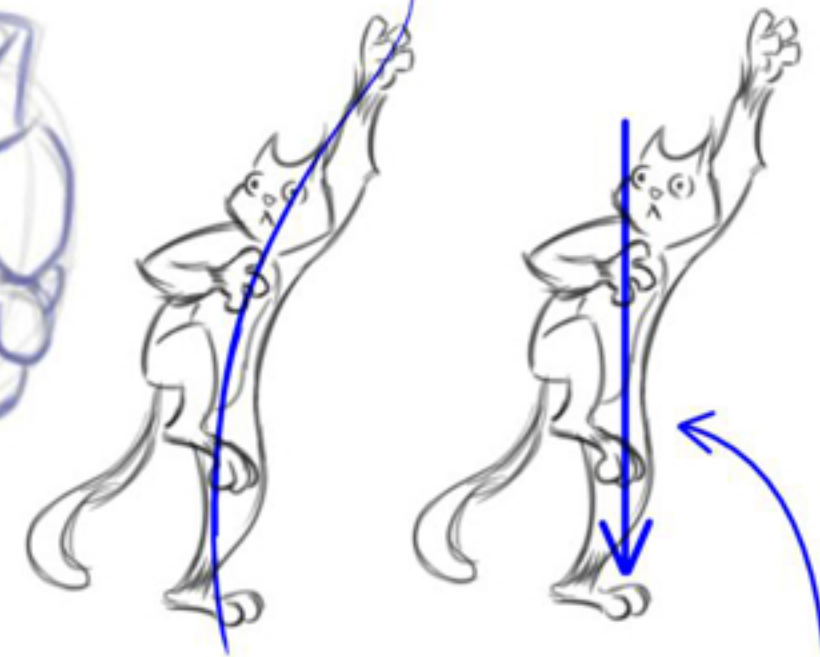
I CAN SEE YOU UNDERSTAND STRUCTURE PRETTY WELL AND I GET THAT YOU DID THE SKETCHES TO REPRESENT THE ISSUE YOU ARE ASKING ABOUT.

FOR THE MOST PART, THE CHARACTER HAS SOLID STRUCTURE AND A GOOD LITTLE BIT OF PERSONALITY IN HIS GESTURE. BOTH OF WHICH YOU SHOULD BE PROUD THAT YOU ARE ABLE TO CONVEY.

BUT THERE ARE A COUPLE MAJOR ELEMENTS MISSING... THE FIRST IS **GRAVITY**.

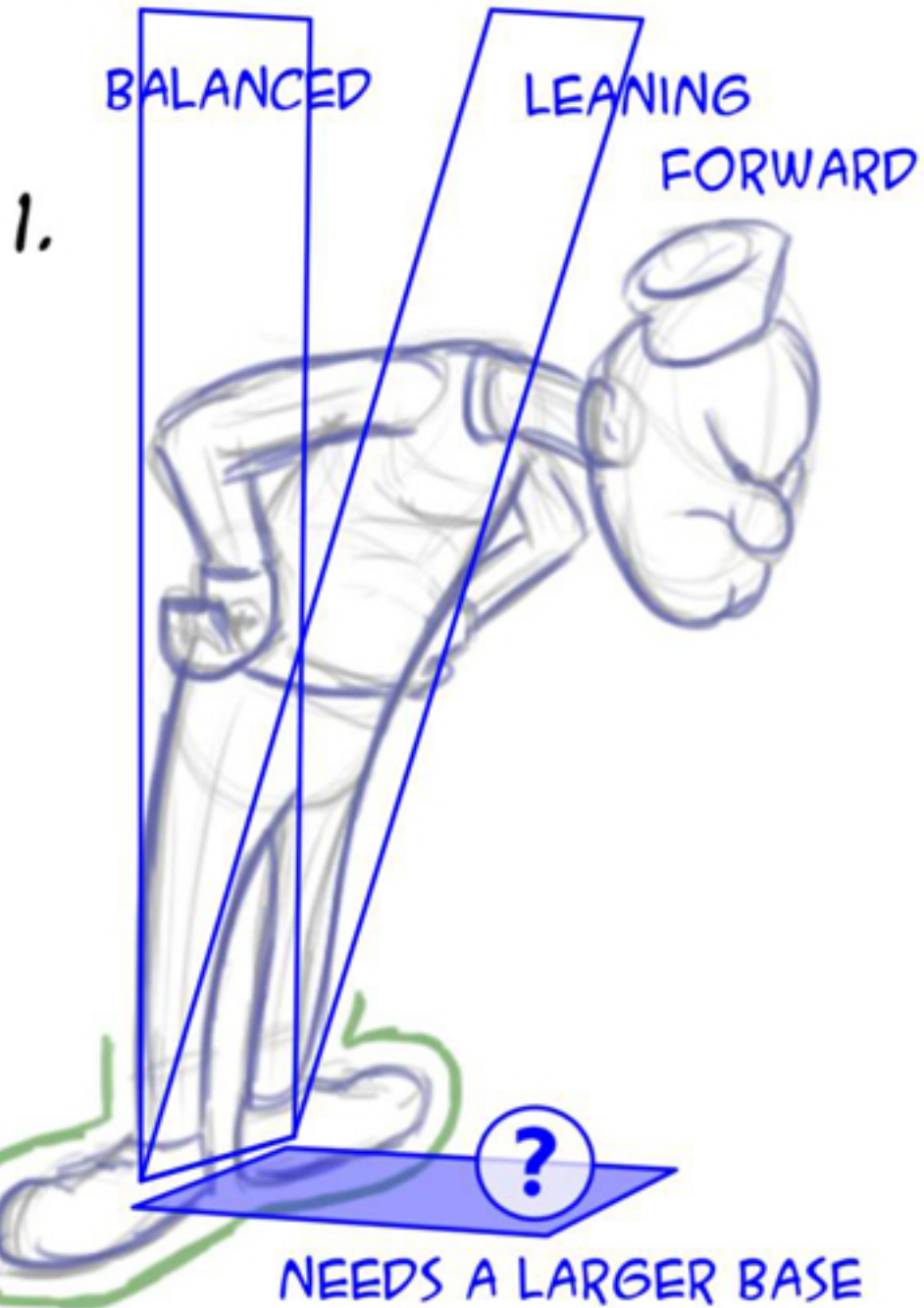
HALF OF WHAT MAKES A GOOD DRAWING GOOD IS WHAT ACTUALLY ISN'T DRAWN.

YOU MENTIONED PRESTON BLAIR'S BOOK. IN THERE HE TALKS ABOUT **LINE OF ACTION**.

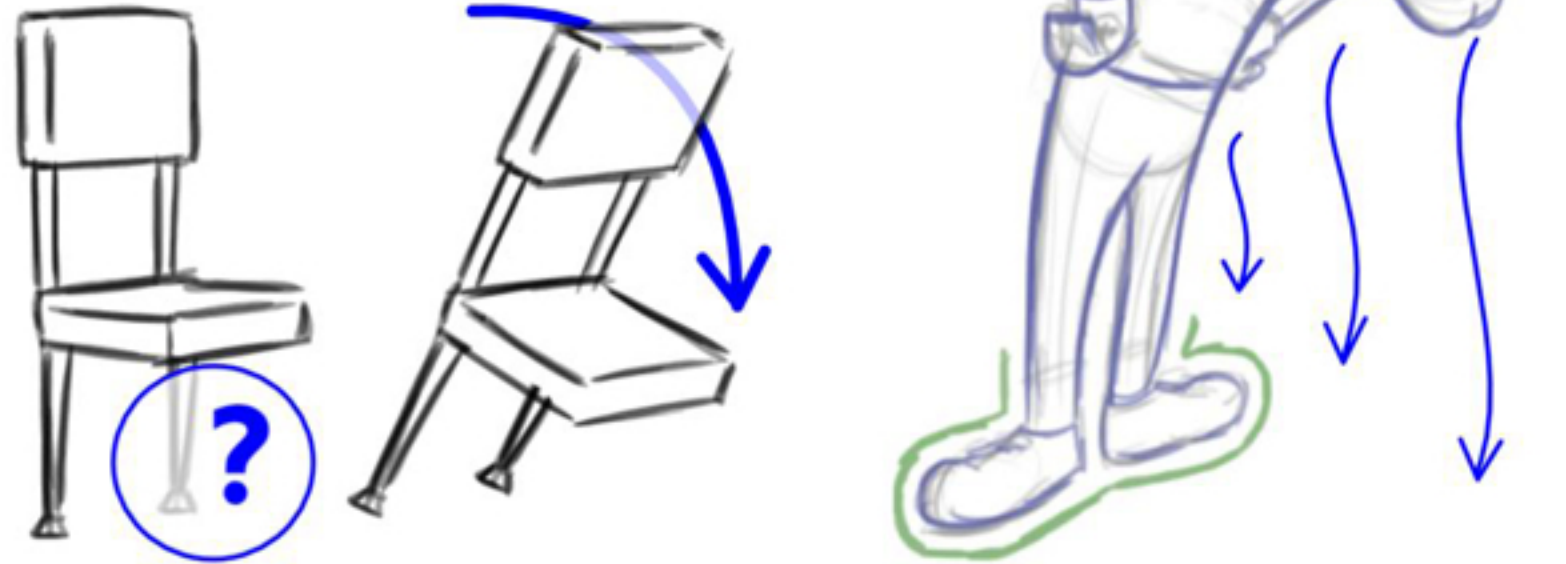


THE SIMILAR COMPONENT THAT I' M TALKING ABOUT IS **CENTER OF GRAVITY**.

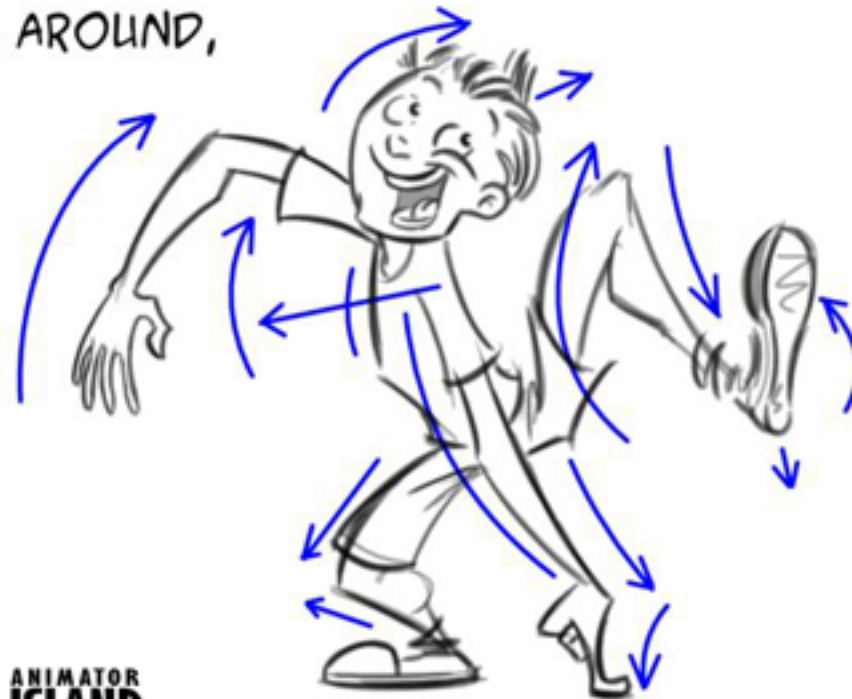
YOUR POPEYE-LIKE GUY IS LEANING FORWARD. IF YOU LOOK AT DRAWING # 1, THERE ISN'T ENOUGH OF A BASE TO HOLD HIS WEIGHT AND KEEP HIM FROM FALLING OVER.



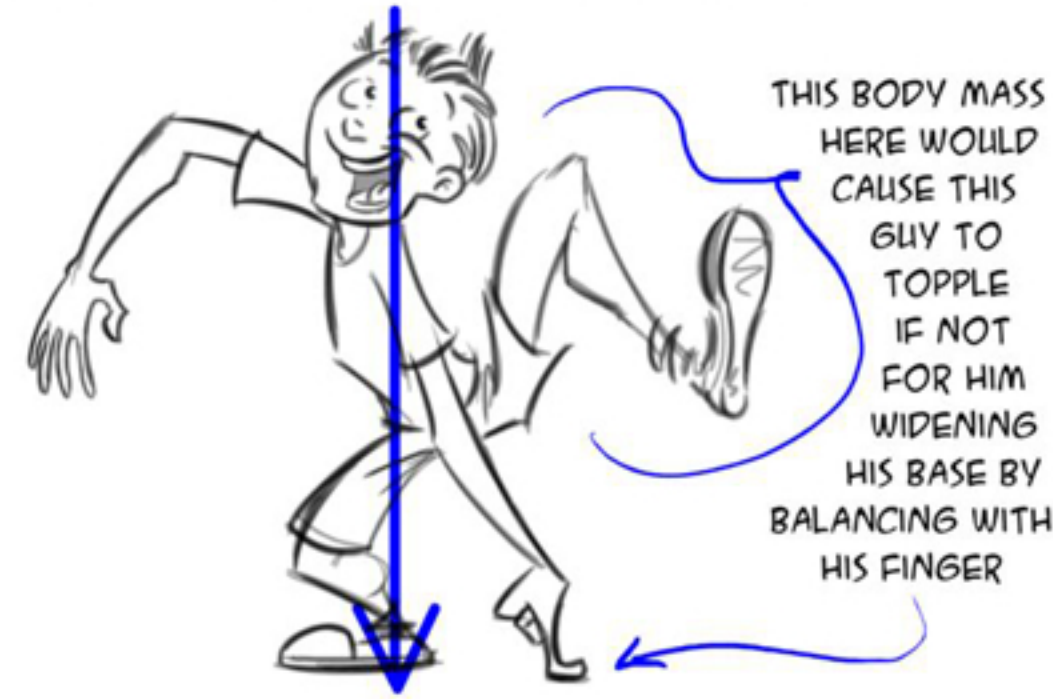
THINK OF A CHAIR WITH THE FRONT TWO LEGS MISSING



THE ENERGY OF A CHARACTER CAN BE THROWN ALL AROUND,



BUT GRAVITY IS ALWAYS TRYING TO PULL THAT CHARACTER DOWN TO THE GROUND.



WE DON'T REALIZE IT, BUT USUALLY WHEN WE LEAN FORWARD, OUR BOTTOM HALF LEANS BACK.

SO WE ARE NOT ACTUALLY LEANING AS FAR FORWARD AS WE THINK.

THE MASS ON ONE SIDE OF THE CENTER SHOULD JUST ABOUT EQUAL THE MASS ON THE OTHER



OUR HEAD ONLY GOES FORWARD A LITTLE, IT STAYS PRETTY MUCH ABOVE OUR FEET,

OUR BUTT GOES BACK

OUR FEET STAY IN THE SAME PLACE,

CREATING A BALANCED CENTER OF GRAVITY.

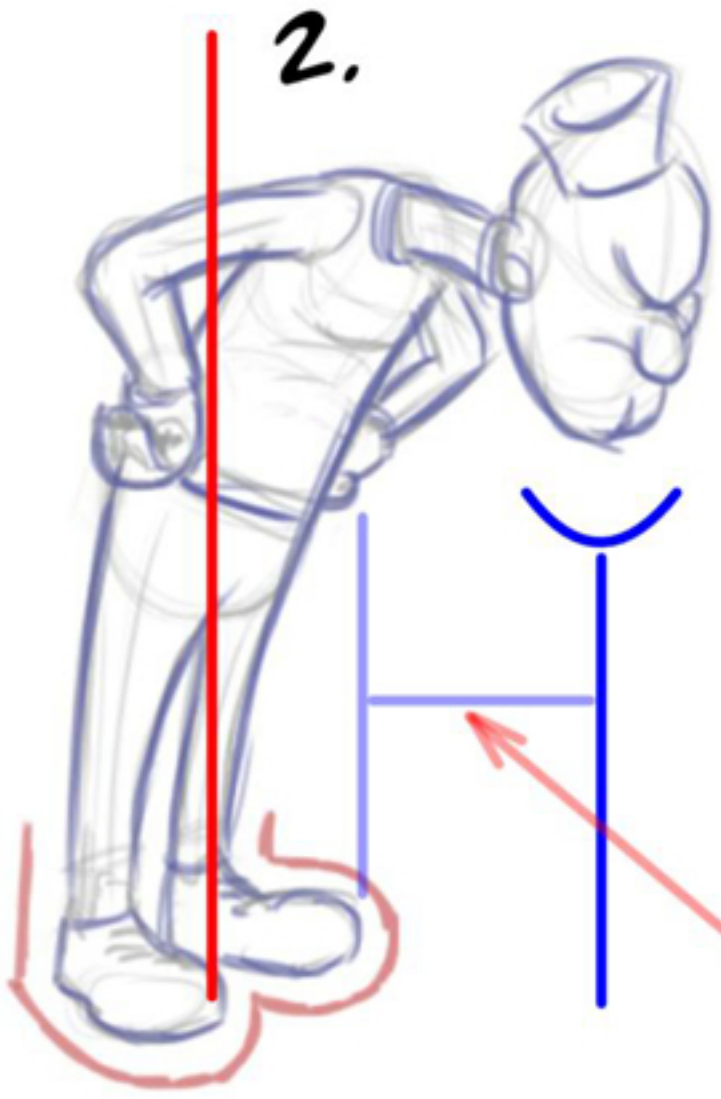


AND IF NOT, THEN THERE NEEDS TO BE SOMETHING TO HELP PROVIDE BALANCE

DRAWING #2'S FEET ARE SOLIDLY ON THE GROUND, BUT THE BODY IS STILL GOING TO TOPPLE OVER.

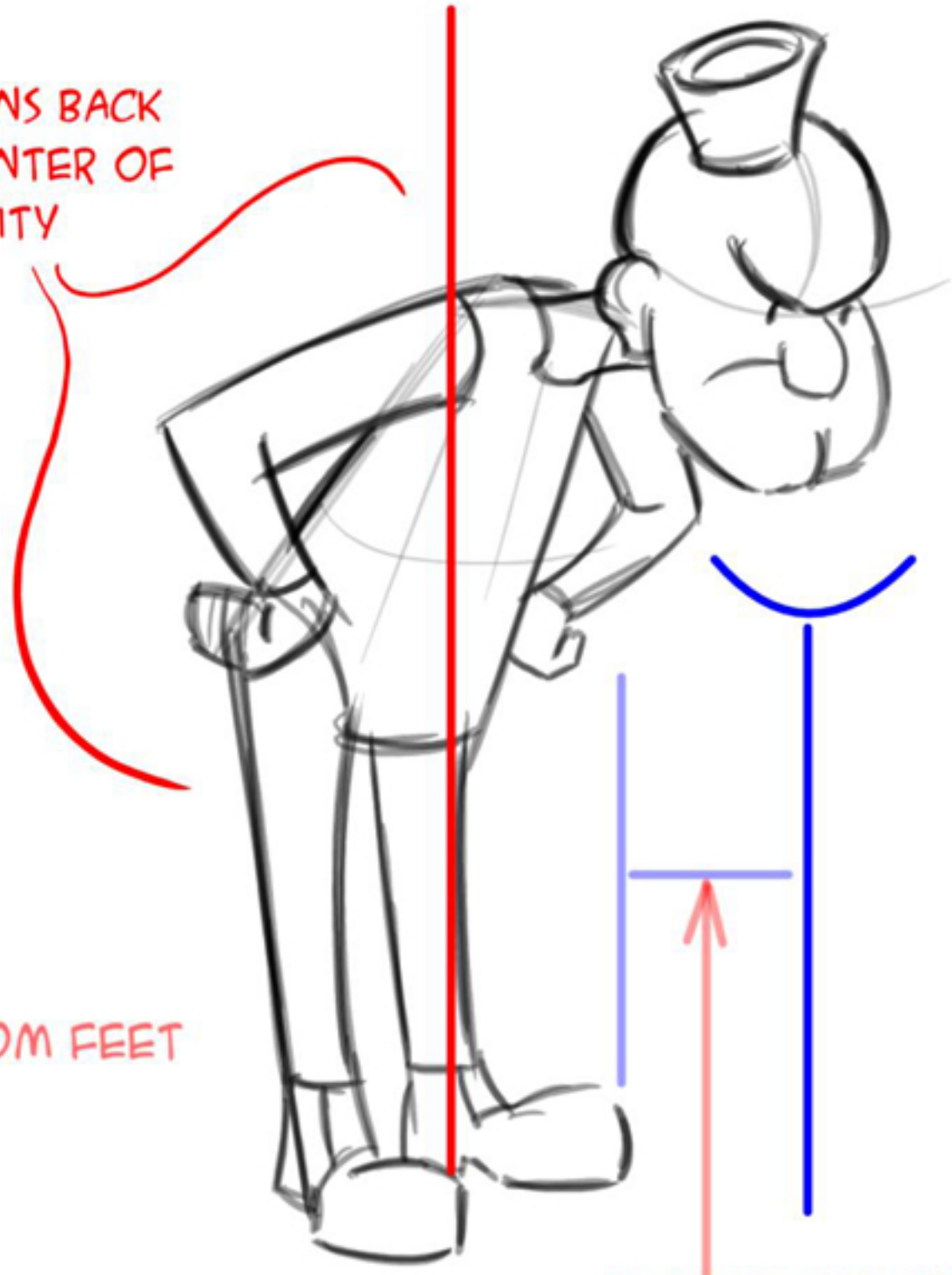
BODY LEANS BACK BEHIND CENTER OF GRAVITY

EVEN IF HIS SHOES ARE GLUED TO THE GROUND, HE'S GONNA FALL



QUITE FAR FROM FEET

AND HE'LL HAVE TO BEND HIS KNEES AND PROBABLY STRAIN SOMETHING IN THE PROCESS. LIKE A SKIER WHO HAS FALLEN AND THEIR BOOTS + SKIS KEEP THEIR FEET PLANTED. PAINFUL - BEEN THERE.



NOT SO FAR FROM FEET

8.

TWO THINGS HAPPEN WITHOUT US EVEN REALIZING IT. OUR FEET ALWAYS WANT TO MOVE TO STOP US FROM FALLING OVER, AND OUR HEAD ALWAYS WANTS TO BE ABOVE OUR FEET.

IF YOU WATCH SLOW MOTION FOOTAGE OF A PERSON WALKING STRAIGHT AT CAMERA, YOU'LL NOTICE THE THE HEAD

SWAYING FROM SIDE TO SIDE TO BE OVER THE FOOT ABOUT TO BE PLANTED.



AS THE OPPOSITE LEG PASSES, THE MIDDLE OF THE BODY BOWS OUT (LIKE THE BUTT MENTIONED EARLIER)



AND THE HEAD PRETTY MUCH STAYS OVER THE FOOT ON THE GROUND, UNTIL IT STARTS TO MOVE OVER THE FOOT GOING TO BE ON THE GROUND.



NOW, YOUR DRAWING ON THE LEFT, WITH THE CHARLIE CHAPLIN FEET, HAS THE SAME BALANCE PROBLEM.



BUT EVEN IF HE CORRECTED HIS BODY, HE STILL WOULD FALL BECAUSE HIS BASE IS TOO NARROW. IT'S NOT NARROW SIDE TO SIDE, BUT HE'S NOT IN DANGER OF FALLING TO ONE SIDE OR ANOTHER.

HE'S LIKE A SHEET OF CARDBOARD. HIS BASE IS NOT BIG ENOUGH "NORTH TO SOUTH" LETS SAY.

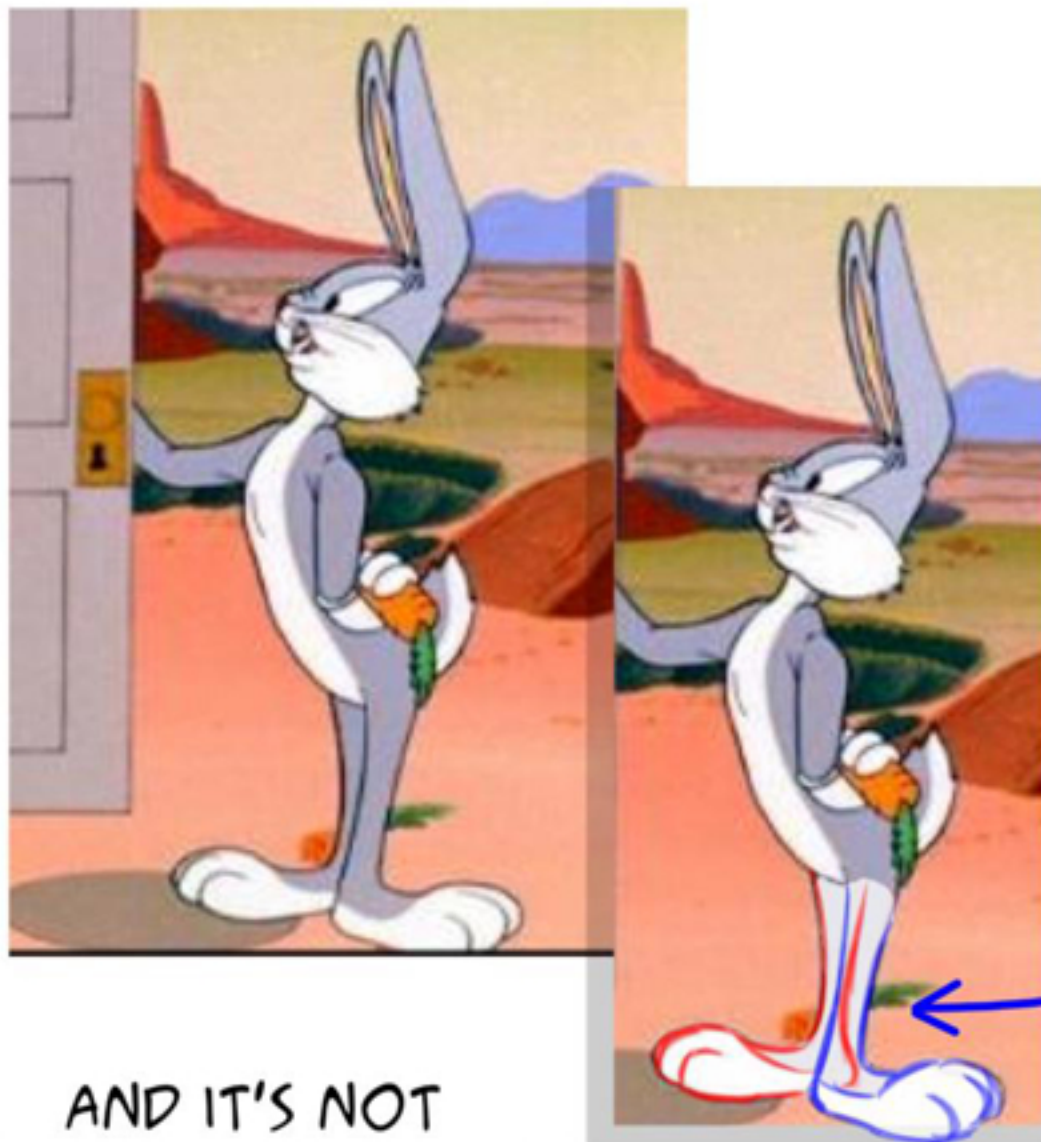


WE STAY UPRIGHT BECAUSE OUR FEET PUSH DOWN WHEN WE START TO TILT TOO MUCH. HERE THE FEET CAN ONLY PUSH TO THE CENTER. THERE NEEDS TO BE ENERGY PUSHING UP IN FRONT

FEET SHOULD BE PUSHING DOWN IN FRONT



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"BUT BUGS IS STANDING THAT WAY!" YOU'RE PROBABLY SHOUTING. NO, HE'S NOT. NOT REALLY. YES HE'S DOING THE CHARLIE CHAPLIN THING, BUT IF YOU'LL NOTICE, ONE FOOT IS DEFINITELY BEHIND THE OTHER THAT IS IN FRONT.

GRAVITY LOSES.

YES, HIS LEFT FOOT IS KIND OF EXAGGERATED, BUT HEY, IT'S A CARTOON, EXAGGERATION IS KEY.

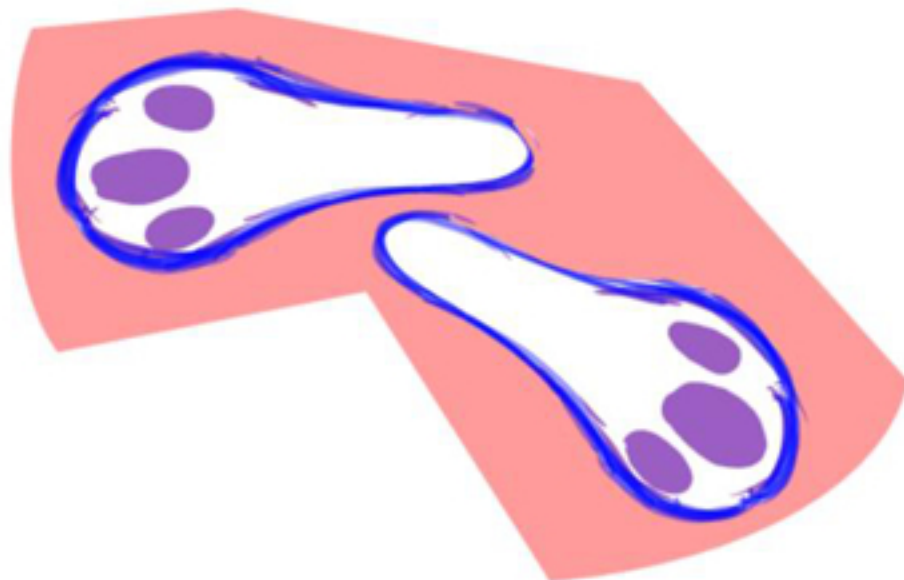
AND IT'S THAT EXAGGERATION

THAT BRINGS US TO THE 2ND ELEMENT MISSING:

PERSONALITY.

AND IT'S NOT AT SUCH A 180 DEGREE ANGLE AS IT MAY HAVE SEEMED.

IF WE LOOK AT HIS FOOT PRINTS FROM THE TOP, WE CAN SEE THAT THE **BASE** HE IS STANDING ON IS ACTUALLY A GOOD SIZE.



"WHAT?" YOU SAY. "I THOUGHT YOU SAID EARLIER THAT THIS POPEYE GUY HAD GESTURE AND PERSONALITY?"

YES, I DID. FROM THE BELT UP.

BUT THERE IS JUST AS MUCH BODY LANGUAGE IN OUR BOTTOM HALF AS IN THE TOP HALF. USUALLY THEY FLOW TOGETHER. THIS IS ONE OF THE GREAT BENEFITS OF GOING TO FIGURE DRAWING CLASSES OR SESSIONS. YOU SEE THE FIGURE FROM TOP TO BOTTOM AND SENSE THE FLOW FROM HEAD TO TOE.

SOMETIMES OUR LEGS AND FEET CAN SAY JUST AS MUCH AS OUR ARMS AND HANDS.

STRAIGHT
LEGS
AND
BUTT
THROWN
BACK

FEET FIRMLY
PLANTED ON
THE GROUND

ALL THIS
SAYS HOW ANGRY
AND STERN
HE IS





NOW, THAT BEING SAID - ANOTHER REASON BUGS CAN STAND WITH HIS FEET SO OPPOSITE IS BECAUSE THEY ARE SO BIG. IF HE HAD LITTLE FEET, HIS ANKLES WOULD HAVE TO BE FARTHER APART TO BALANCE - LIKE PORKY IN THE OTHER DRAWING.

PORKY HAS SMALL FEET, SO HE HAS TO COMPENSATE BY HAVING A WIDE STANCE. WHY ARE PORKY'S FEET OPPOSITE IN THAT DRAWING? IT COULD BE FROM A FEW REASONS. MY FIRST THOUGHT IS ANATOMY. EVEN THOUGH THEY HUMANIZED HIS ANATOMY A LOT, IT'S STILL REMINISCENT OF A PIG, SO HE STANDS MORE



ON HIS TOES AND THAT PART OF HIS FOOT/LEG IS BOWED A BIT. BUT ALSO TOO, REMEMBER THIS IS FROM AN ANIMATED SCENE AND NOT A STILL DRAWING. IT LOOKS TO ME AS IF PORKY WAS FACING SCREEN LEFT AND TURNED TO THE RIGHT, LEAVING HIS RIGHT FOOT WHERE IT WAS WHILE LEADING WITH THE OTHER.

WE ALL STAND WITH OUR FEET SLIGHTLY SPLAYED, FOR THE VERY REASONS I MENTIONED, TO KEEP US BALANCED. ONLY BARBIE + KEN'S FEET STICK STRAIGHT OUT. TRY STANDING ONE OF THOSE DOLLS UP.

ALSO, IF YOU LOOK AT ATHLETES, I BET YOU'LL SEE A LOT OF "SPLAYING" AS WELL AS THE BALANCE PRINCIPLES I DESCRIBED.

IN THE BUGS DRAWING IN QUESTION, YOU'LL NOTICE HOW HIS RIGHT FOOT IS ACTUALLY POINTED STRAIGHT. IT'S HIS LEFT FOOT THAT IS SPLAYED. MOST LIKELY, HIS WEIGHT IS PLACED ON HIS RIGHT LEG, AND HIS LEFT IS JUST KEEPING BALANCE. AS FAR AS WHY HE'S DOING THAT... IT'S JUST THE ATTITUDE THAT THE ARTIST FELT. THERE ARE TIMES IN WHICH THINGS LIKE THAT ARE SUBJECTIVE. THERE'S NO FORMULA TO IT. WHEN CHARACTERS GET FORMULAIC, THEY GET BORING.



THE OTHER BUGS DRAWING HAS HIS FEET FACING FORWARD, THERE HE'S MORE MATTER OF FACT AND ADDRESSING ELMER, IN THE OTHER DRAWING, HE'S MORE LAID BACK AND COCKY, MOCKING AND TEASING WILE E. COYOTE, WHO IS ADDRESSING HIM