

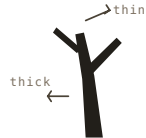
A tree is a line *before it is a shape*.

Most beginners draw the outline of a tree and fill it in. That is why it looks flat. Build it the way it grew — one line of growth, then thickness, then mass — and it stands up on the page.



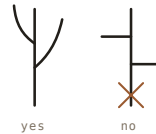
01 Find the line of growth

One unbroken stroke from the root to the highest tip. Let it lean and bend. Everything else hangs on this line, so draw it light and draw it first.



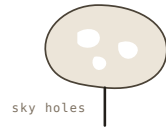
02 Taper, and conserve

A trunk narrows as it climbs. At every fork, the branches leaving add up to roughly the thickness of the limb below them. Nothing gets thicker going up.



03 Y, never T

Branches leave at a narrow angle and sweep upward toward the light. A branch that meets the trunk at a right angle reads as a telephone pole every time.



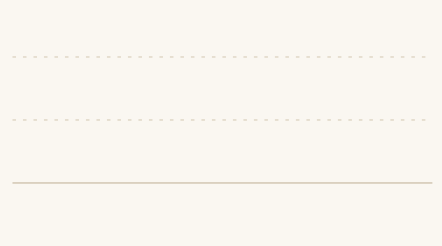
04 Draw the sky, not the twigs

Twigs read as one soft grey mass. Don't draw them. Draw the gaps of sky showing through, and the mass appears on its own.

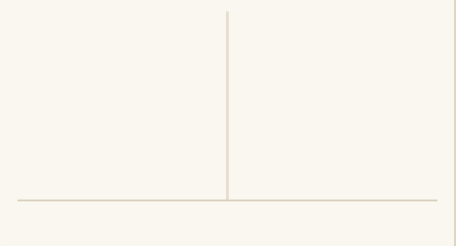
A · SIX LINES OF GROWTH



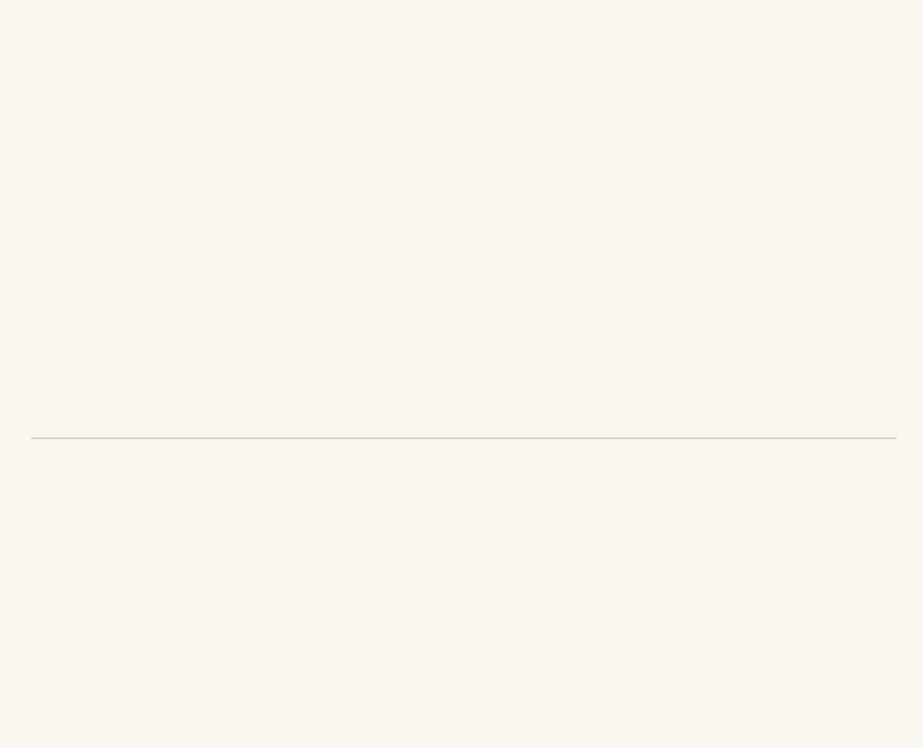
B · TAPER & FORK



C · ANGLES – TEN BRANCHES



D · ONE WINTER TREE – GESTURE, TAPER, BRANCH, THEN THE SKY HOLES



E · THE SAME TREE, MASS ONLY

