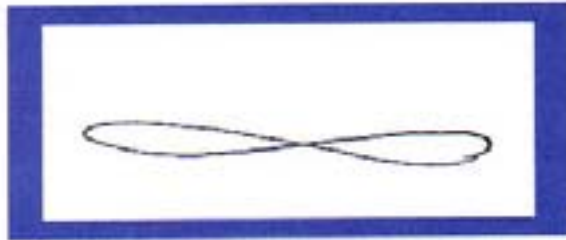


# *How to draw boats*

A lot of people have problems drawing boats. But there is a simple system, which can help the beginner and for that matter the more experienced artist to easily capture the shape of boats. I use this system all the time when I draw boats.

The system which I will show you can only be used for drawing boats from special angles. It cannot be used for drawing boats seen from the side or completely 'head on'. Boats seen from the side and 'head on' should not give any problems!

So what is this system? It's very simple. It's based on the figure "8", not 'standing up' but 'lying down'.



This figure "8" mustn't be too round. If it is, it cannot be used for a boat, spectacles or a bra perhaps, but not a boat! So make sure it's reasonably flat!

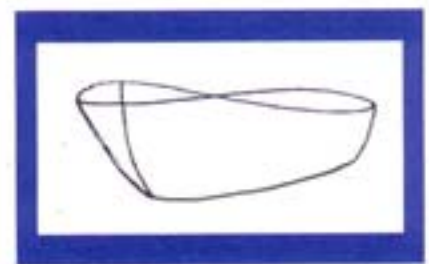


I will also suggest that one starts by using a 'figure eight' which is drawn around a horizontal line and the two 'eyes' are of equal size.

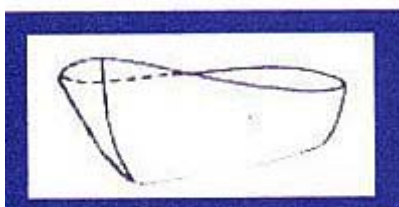


We can now begin building the boat. First we need the 'pointed end'. This is shown as a vertical line, starting at the highest point of the forward 'eye' of the figure eight, curving slightly towards the bottom of the boat.

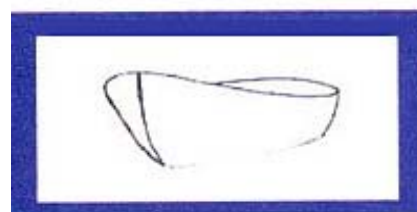
The back end or the 'stern' of the boat is another shorter curved line from the end of the furthest eye, again towards the bottom of the boat. The 'keel' or bottom of the boat joins the two lines and the left side of the boat is drawn by joining the keel to the end of the left eye. Sometimes small adjustments have to be made to some of the lines in order to get the boat to look right!



The dotted line in the upper drawing (a) is now rubbed out and the hull of the boat is seen as in drawing (b).



(a)



(b)

The keel is the widest piece of timber in the boat, so show it as such by drawing it with a double line. If the boat we are drawing is a wooden rowing boat, then we have to draw the planks, which should not be too wide and follow the profile of the top line of the boat!

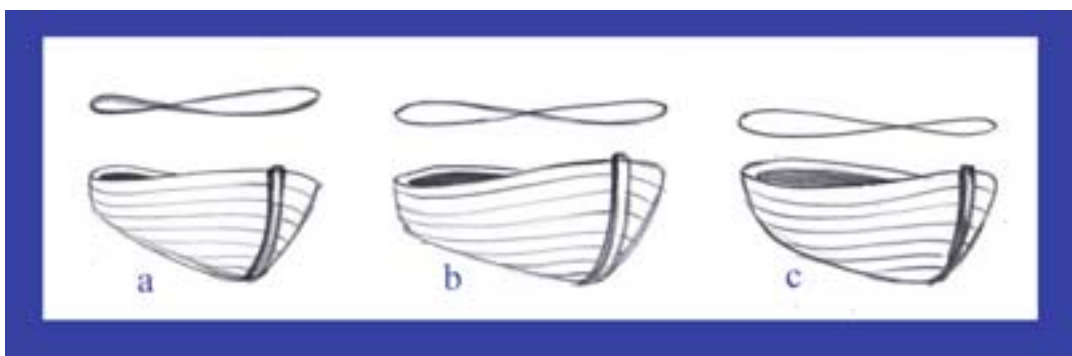


We finish off by shading the boat. When shading it is important not to use too much shadow or the planks will disappear or merge into one. Always make sure that there is a light line between the planks. Note also that the lowest planks are mostly in the shadow and the upper planks are mostly in the light!

If one wants the boat to point the other way, draw the line showing the forward keel from the 'other' eye of the figure eight.



I mentioned before that the two eyes of the figure 8 should be equally large. We can now see what differences, if any, result from varying the size of the two eyes.



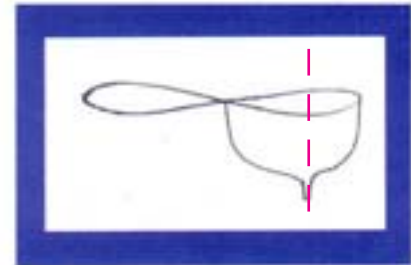
In the figure above, boat (b) has been drawn using a 'figure 8' with equally large eyes. Boat (a) is drawn with the left eye smaller. It appears that the boat in (a) is turned a little bit more to the left than boat at (b). The third boat (c) is drawn around the 'figure of eight' above it. Look at it and decide if it can be used!

But we're not finished yet! We can use the same principles to draw boats from the back!

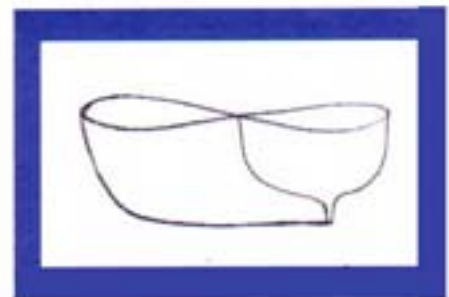
We start with the same flat horizontal figure 8 again.



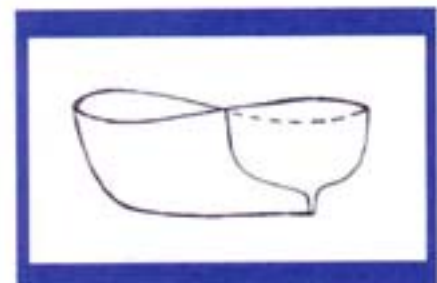
Next we draw the back of the boat. Here we start in the middle of the figure eight, where the lines cross. Here it will help if the two lines marking the shape of the back of the boat are symmetrical about a central line (here shown in red).



The bottom of the boat is then added. Note the shape of this line. A common mistake here is to draw the boat too shallow!



In this case the lower line (stippled) is rubbed out.



The planks of the rowing boat are now drawn as before, following the top line of the boat. Some rowing boats have a 'hole' cut out, where an outboard motor can be attached. We can easily show this. Notice the thickness of the back board, shown with a little perspective.



The last thing to do is to shade the drawing. The light is coming from the right, so the cast shadow on the ground is shown to the left of the boat. Because the shape of the boat is oval, the shape of the shadow has the same shape. The left side of the boat is shown in shadow and again the shadow is darker at the bottom of the boat than at the top.





Two boats from 'real life'. Can you see the 'figure eight'?



All these boats were drawn using 'figure eight' system.