

3/4 WALK CYCLE 1: PERSONALITY TUTORIAL

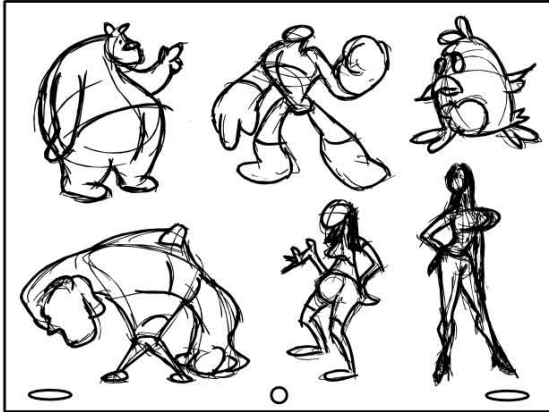
ASSIGNMENT:

- Create a character walk cycle of 8 frames or more with personality in 3/4 perspective.

DESIGN

Just like the practice walk cycle, we want to stick to basic shapes that represent our character.

Here are some examples:



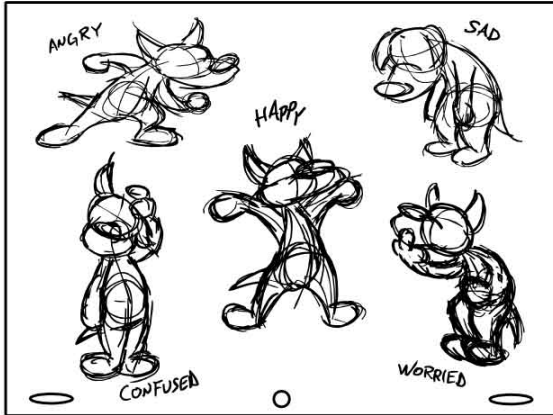
Now, there's more to a character than just its shape. What is its personality? Is it tough, snooty, timid, confident, a goofball, etc?

Try out various attributes using the same character:



Once a personality is established, try to evoke an emotion. What kind of day is your character having...angry, confused, happy, worried, sad? Since facial expressions have little to do with a walk, express emotion through body language.

Something like this:



Try to make the characters personality and emotion evident in the walk cycle. This is achieved at the key framing stage.

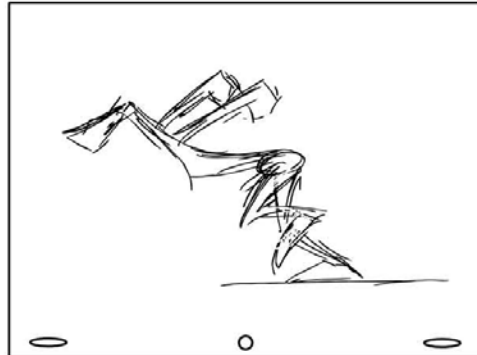
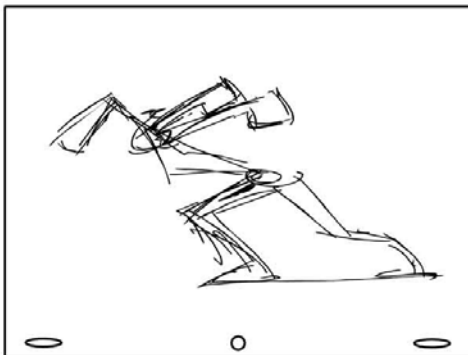
KEY FRAMING

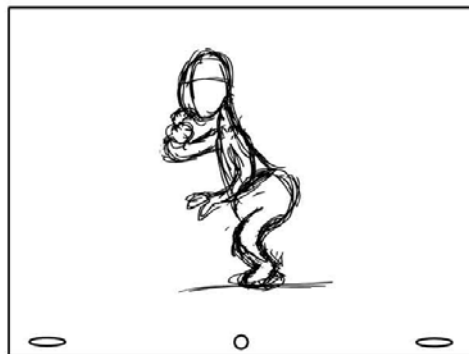
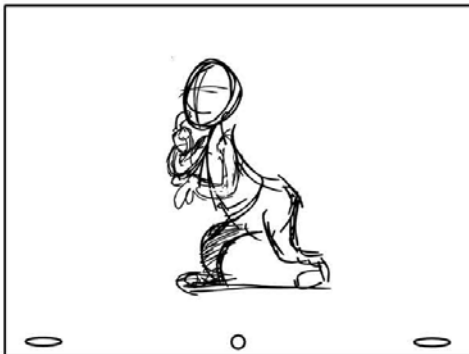
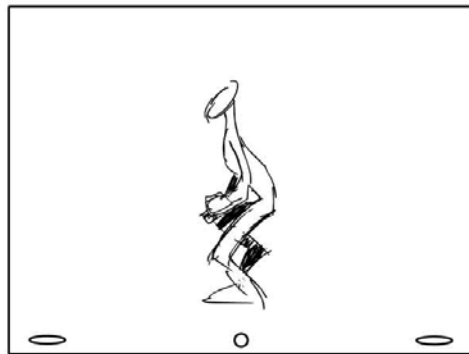
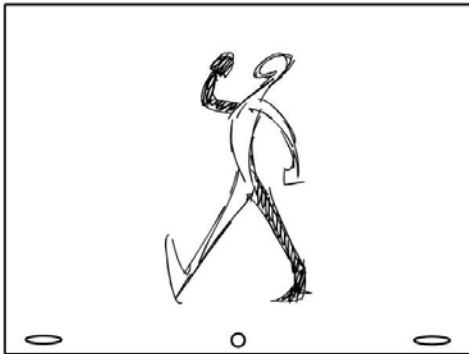
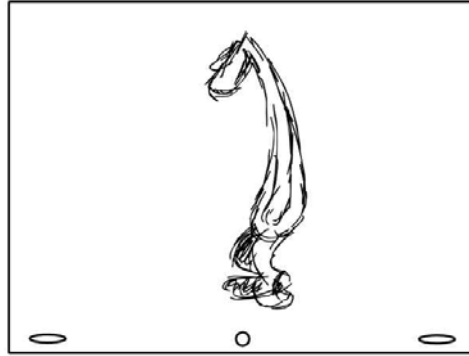
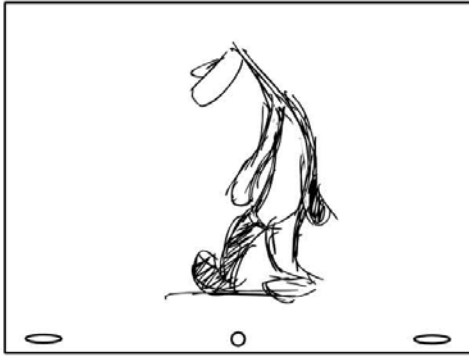
Now we can start animating!

Follow the same rules for the practice walk cycle. Remember, the extreme stride and mid stride are our first goals. After that, everything else will fall into place much easier.

Before attempting the 3/4 walk, I usually do some profile test keys until I find something I like. I will then use reference points to help transfer them to a 3/4 perspective.

Here are some Extreme and Mid Stride practice keys:





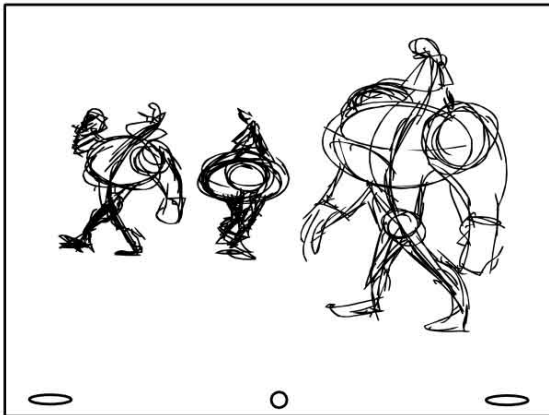
ANIMATION

Now let's look at some character walks!

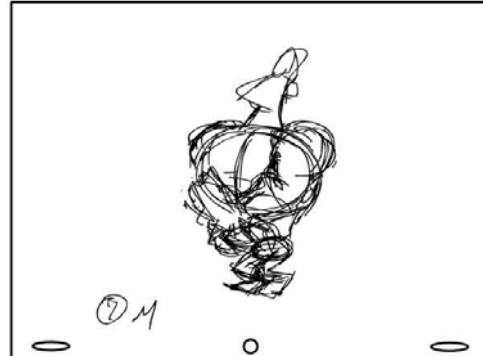
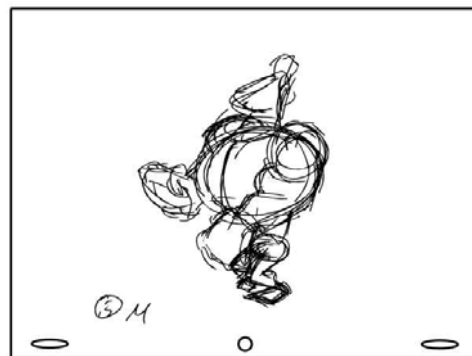
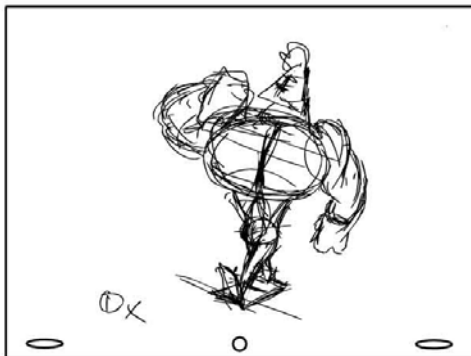
The first two are similar characters that have both subtle and extreme variations in their key frames that make their walks very different.

1) The Strong Guy:

Here is my design and some practice keys for the walk-

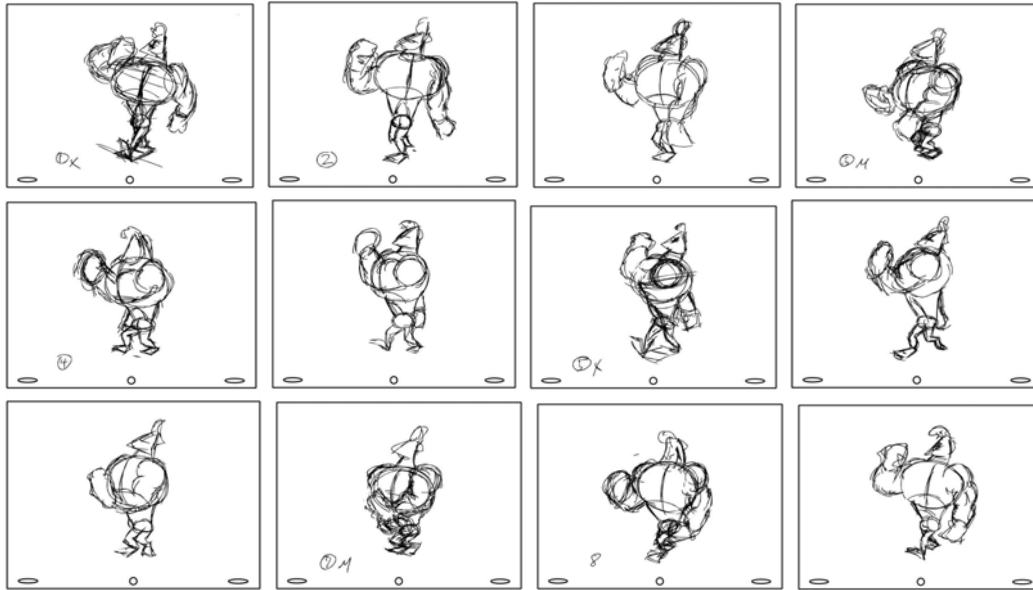


And here are the actual key frames-



Notice how his knees bend and his body lowers on the Mid Stride. This creates a "strut" in his walk, lending arrogance to his personality.

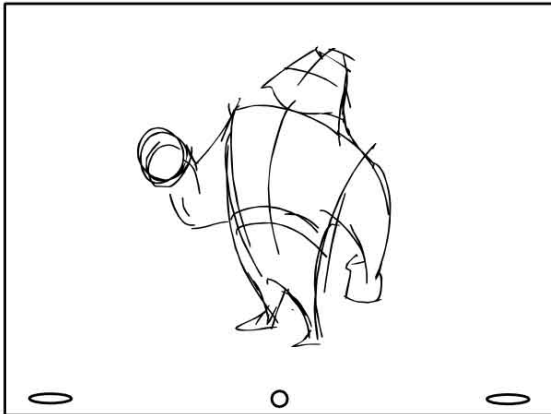
The finished walk-



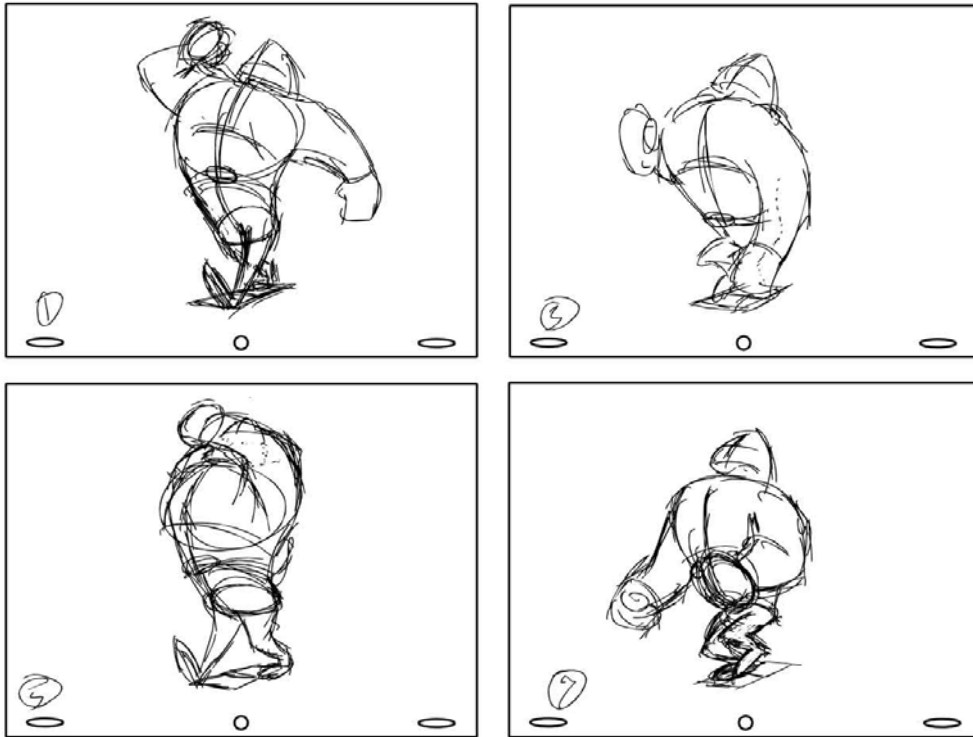
There are 12 frames in his walk. Notice how his chest and shoulders rotate back and forth while also bending forward and backward with his spine. The hands, head and hair all act as secondary action due to the heavy and wide swing of his huge upper body.

2) The Tough Guy:

Very minimal design makes it easier to animate-

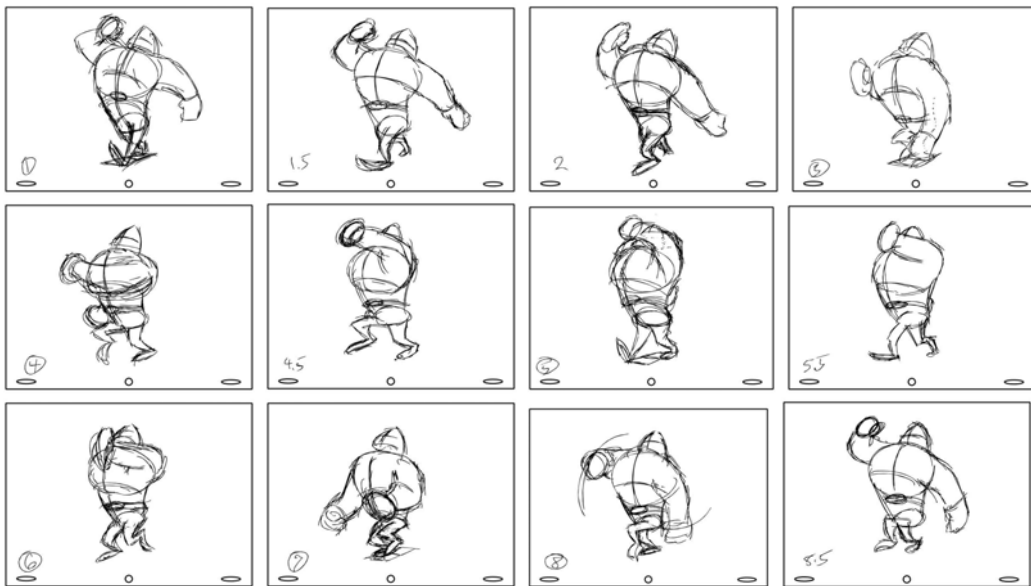


His key frames-



Again...down on the Mid Stride! His chest is stuck out farther and his reach is higher than the first walk. This simple change makes a big difference.

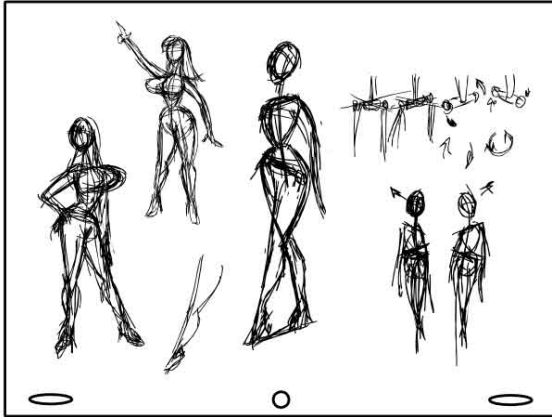
The finished walk-



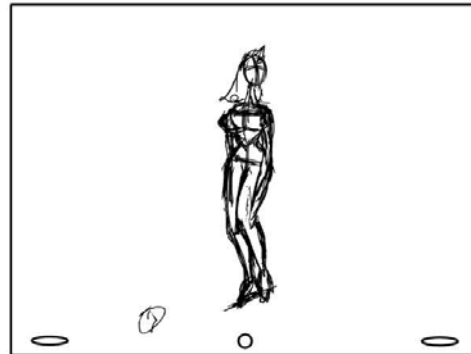
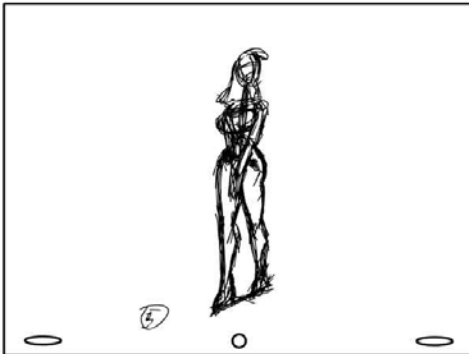
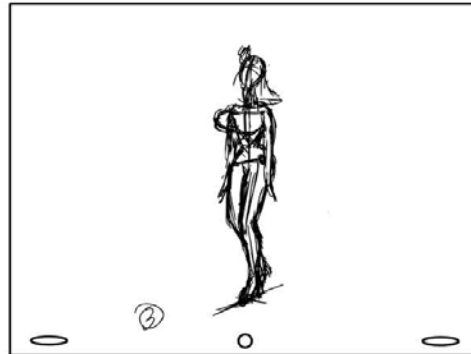
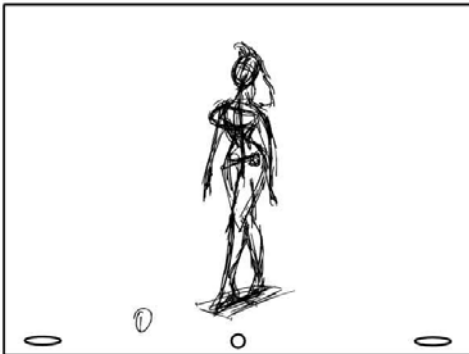
Just like his buddy above, there are 12 frames, only the timing is held longer on his Extreme Stride keys. His step is also higher so that he plants his heel hard on impact. Notice how his head sways side to side, being left behind slightly as his body rocks back and forth. Finally, observe how his abdomen stretches up on his Extreme Stride as evidenced by his belt buckle.

3) The Snobby Flirt:

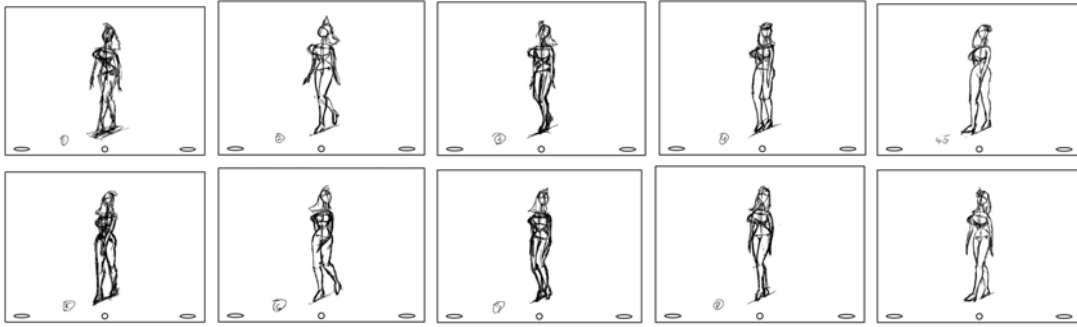
Once I had her design, I sketched some practice keys to figure out how the shoulders and hips would move in a sexy walk-



That helped me get these keys-



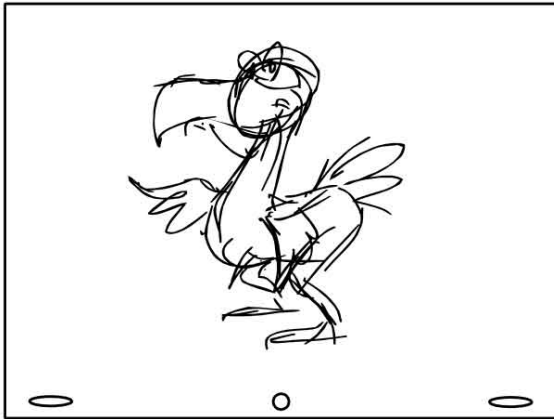
Her finished walk-



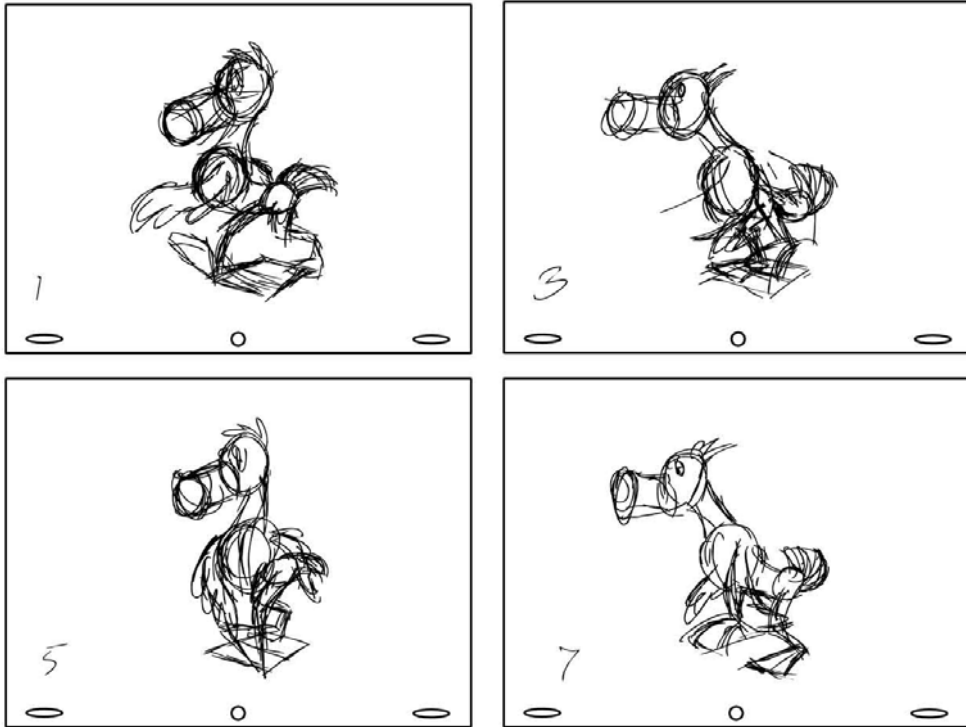
In these 10 frames, notice how she is walking in a straight line. This helps her to look feminine. The visible reference points in her shoulders and hips aided me in getting them to pivot. The nose in the air makes her stuck up yet her head flipping back and forth gives her a flirting quality. The secondary action of the hair and breasts were added last- *only* after the rest of the body worked.

4) The Goofy Bird:

Most of these walk examples happened as a result of my lecture demos. I'll sketch up a bunch of different characters, then let my class choose which one they want to see me animate. For some reason, birds seem to be the majority favorite...so here's the first of many-

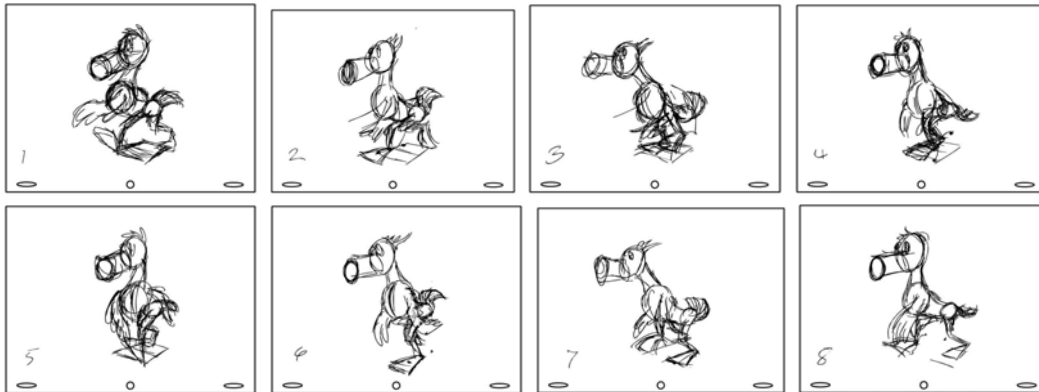


Key frames-



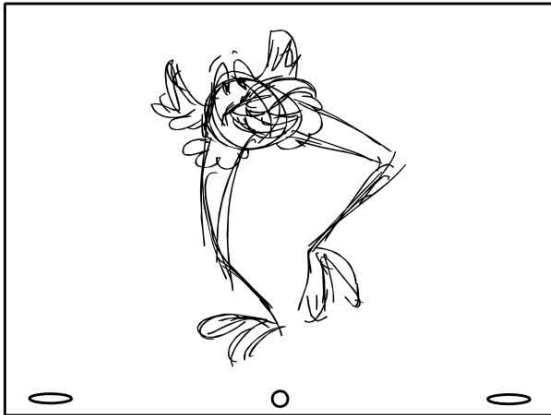
Notice how extreme the head positions are. Ducks in particular are guilty of this movement.

The finished walk-

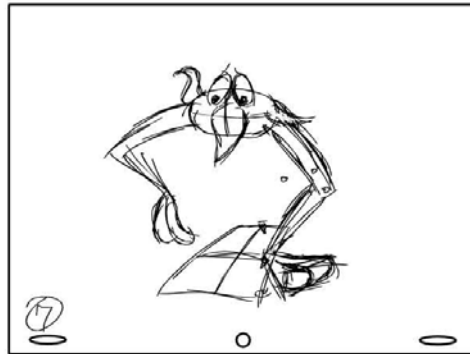
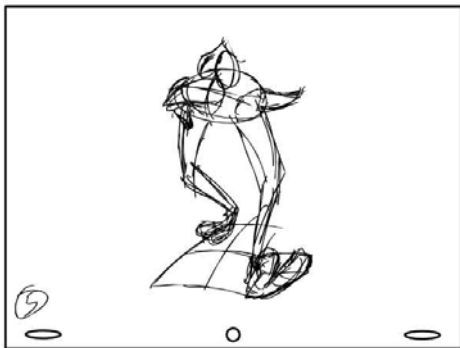
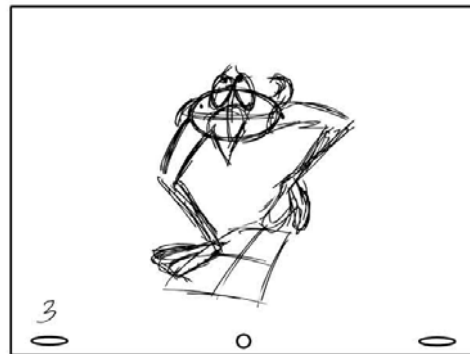
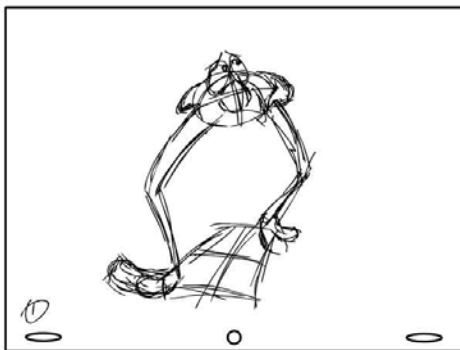


This was a tricky little 8-frame walk. First, the butt moves from side to side as it gets pushed up on the Extreme Stride. The chest rotates back and forth...but from the pelvis. And the neck not only has to move in and out but also stay lined up with the chest.

5) Birdy Long Legs:
Long legs can be fun!

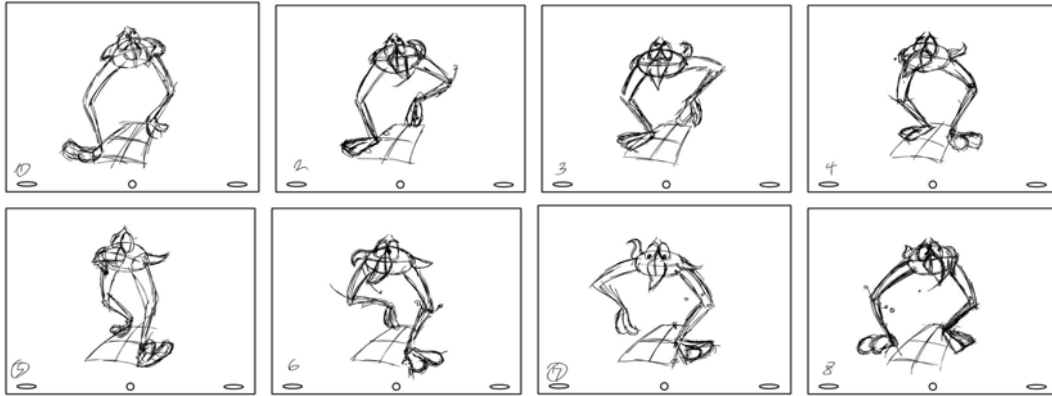


Key frames-



Notice how body types can change everything. Down on the Mid Stride makes this guy look goofy instead of strutting...especially when his knees stick out to the sides.

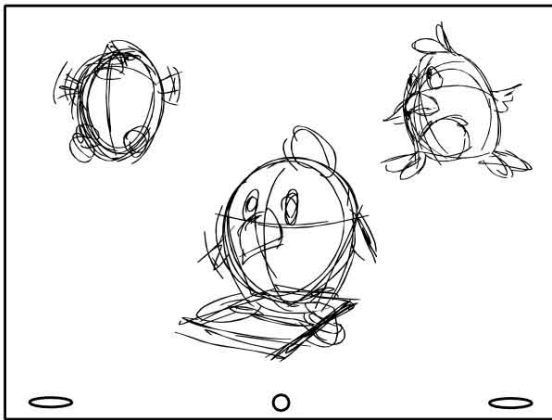
Finished animation-



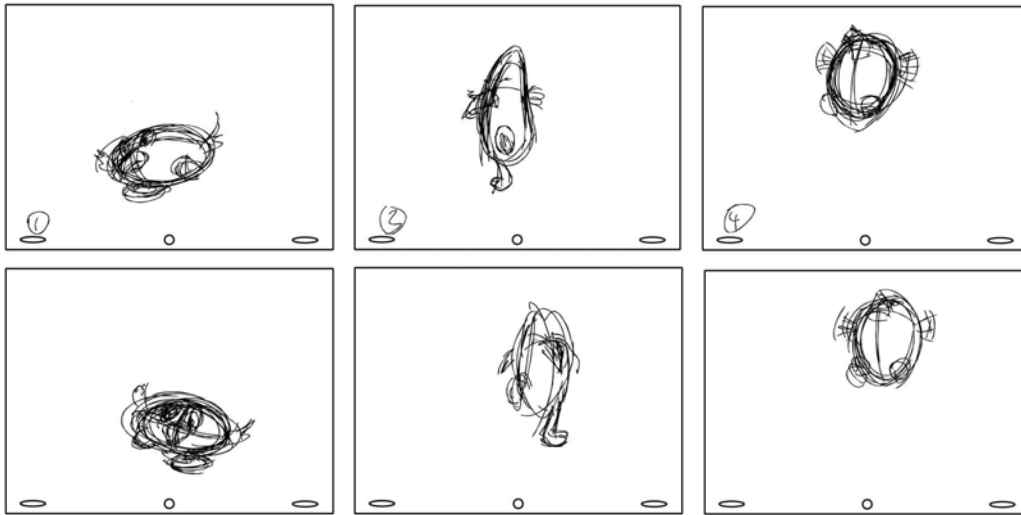
Arcs and reference points were a must for the legs in this 8-frame walk. Check out the secondary action on the feet!

6) Peeps Can Fly...Sort Of:

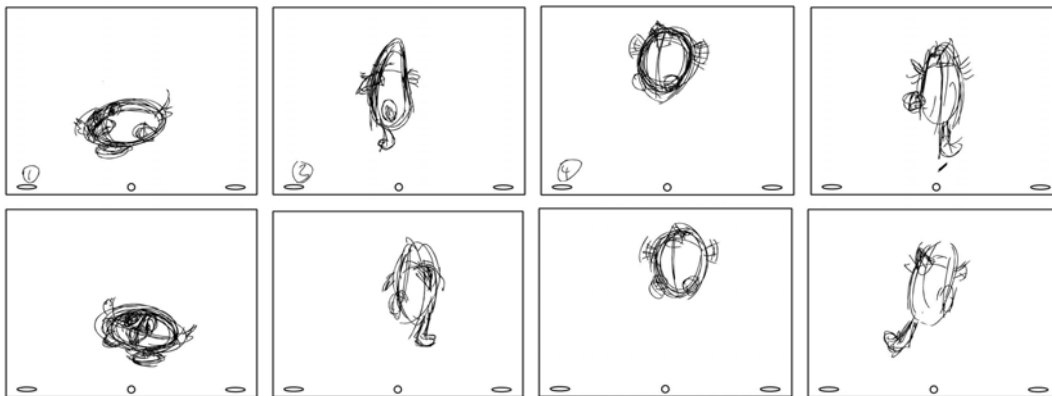
This one follows the general techniques for a run cycle- each foot touches the ground one at a time- but you can break the rules with a little change in timing. The little chicken is trying to fly...so between each step it leaps and flaps vigorously, never quite getting off the ground. Some quick sketches to get the feel of placement and motion-



Then the keys...only more this time-



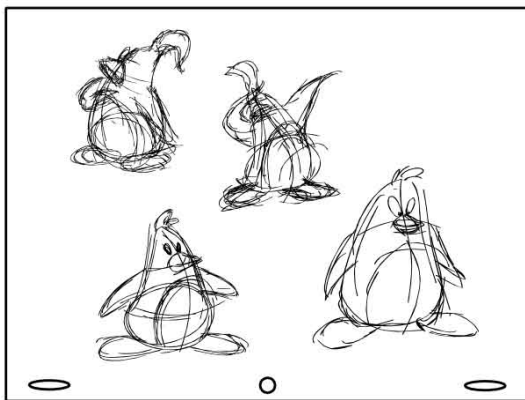
And the final animation-



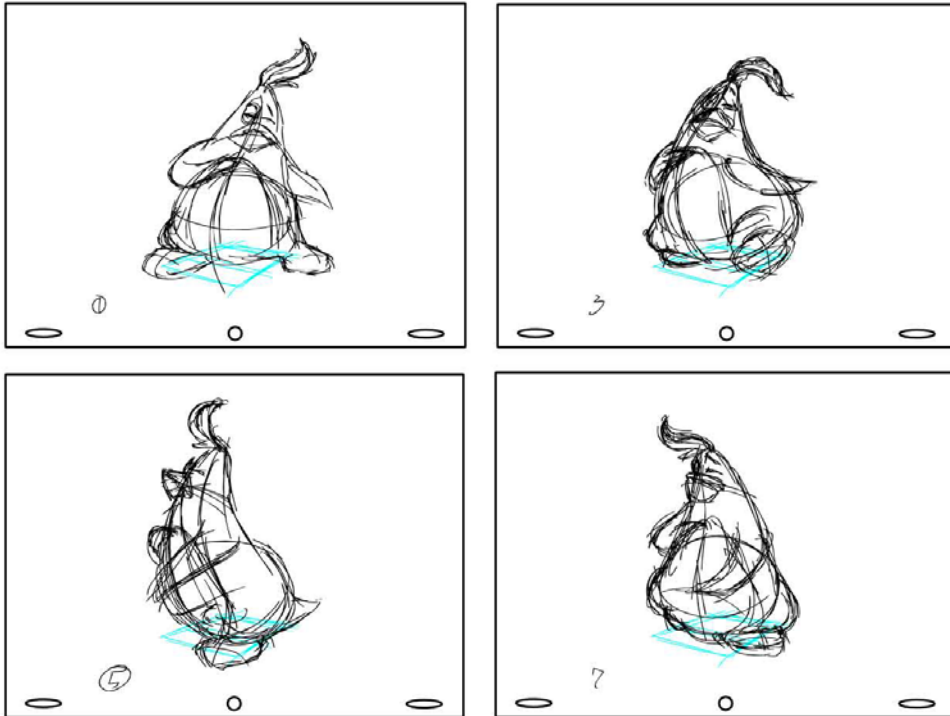
He takes such a long time to land after leaping in the air that I can't really see this as a run...especially since there are 16 frames in the final animation (only 8 are shown here). His spherical body demands that the squash and stretch be very predominate and his little wings flap so fast they turn into a blur. All this needs is a few more tweens to smooth out the apex of his jump and we've got a cute little walk that actually tells a story.

7) Sir Penguinton:

He started out as the drawing at the bottom right and quickly evolved into the personality on top-

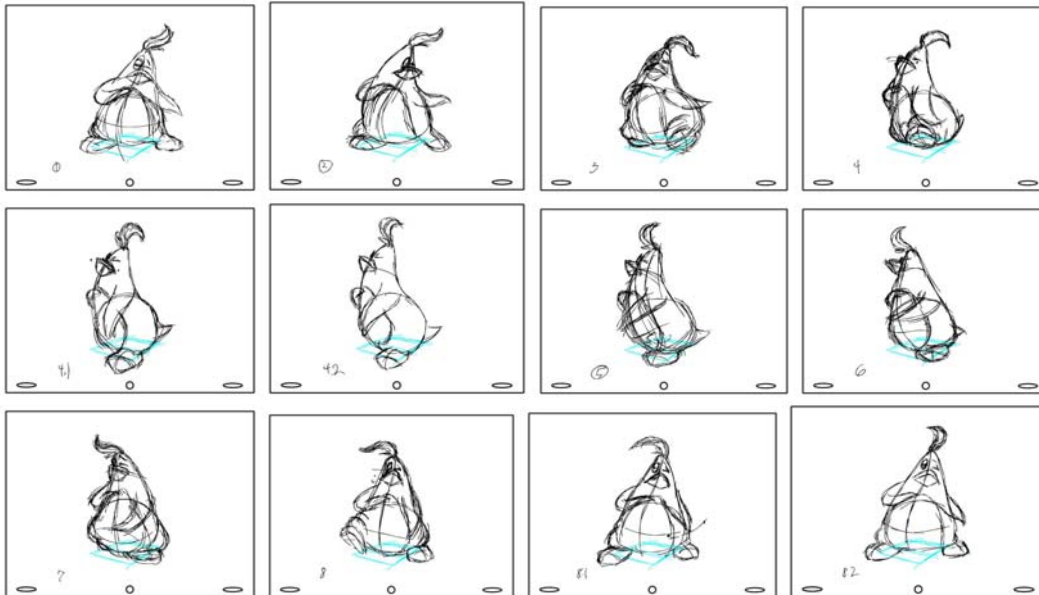


Key framing this body type can be challenging but still a lot of fun-



To get anywhere, this character needs to really stretch its Extreme Stride...and the Mid Stride forces you to lean the body into that familiar penguin waddle.

Here's the finished animation-



12 frames evenly timed out give us a nice result. The body's center reference line was imperative to getting the angle of his face...and knowing where to snap his beak back and forth. Notice how the feet have a floppy squash and stretch and his fat gets pushed up into a roll when he lifts his leg. Finally, his arm and hair have some seriously fun secondary action going on!