**Foreshortening**



Two different projections of a stack of two cubes, illustrating oblique parallel projection foreshortening ("A") and perspective foreshortening ("B")



[Andrea Mantegna](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrea_Mantegna), [*The Lamentation over the Dead Christ*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lamentation_of_Christ_%28Mantegna%29)



[Epimetheus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epimetheus_%28moon%29) (lower left) and [Janus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Janus_%28moon%29) (right). The two moons appear close because of foreshortening; in reality, Janus is about 40,000 km farther from the observer than Epimetheus.

Foreshortening is the [visual effect](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visual_effect) or [optical illusion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Optical_illusion) that causes an object or [distance](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Distance) to appear shorter than it actually is because it is [angled](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angle) toward the viewer. Additionally, an object is often not scaled evenly: a circle often appears as an ellipse and a square can appear as a trapezoid.

In painting, foreshortening in the depiction of the human figure was perfected in the [Italian Renaissance](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italian_Renaissance), and the [*The Lamentation over the Dead Christ*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lamentation_of_Christ_%28Mantegna%29) by [Andrea Mantegna](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrea_Mantegna) (1480s) is one of the most famous of a number of works that show off the new technique, which thereafter became a standard part of the training of artists.



