

Water

Figure 17 is a stormy ocean. Notice how the shape of the waves are defined by light against dark.

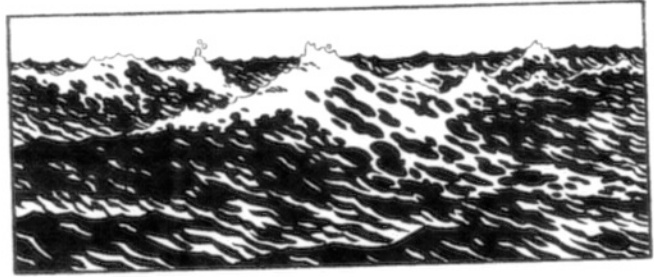


figure 17

Figure 18 is a calmer ocean. The waves taper into the distance at a diagonal pattern. Again, use light against dark to define the waves.

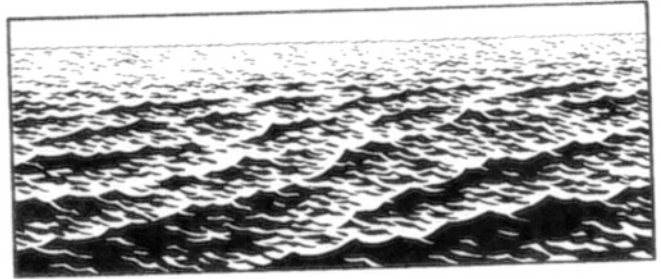


figure 18

Figure 19 is the ocean from a distance. Depth is created by fading the detail into the horizon.

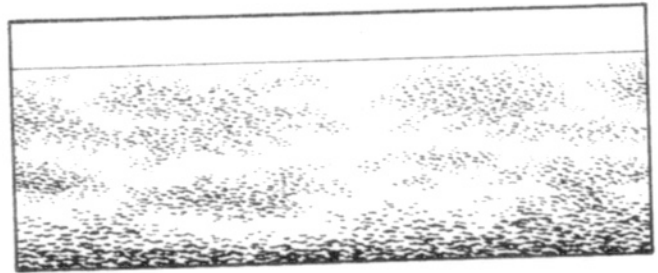


figure 19

Figure 20 is a river or stream. The waves flow in a horizontal direction.

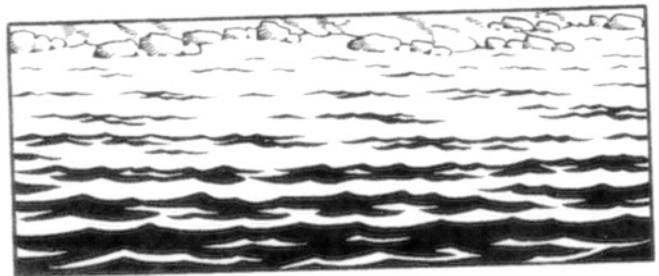


figure 20

Fire and Smoke

Even though fire is used often in comic-book art, it is frequently poorly drawn, probably more than any other texture. But fire is easy to master when you know this simple technique.

Figure 21 is a common example of how some pencillers draw fire – tentative and undefined. To make this fire look more threatening, figure 22 is inked with a series of thin lines that are concave and convex. Use lines that are connecting, because the colorist needs a continuous holding line to fill in with bright colors. Disney is a great resource for awesome fire.

*figure 21**figure 22**figure 23**figure 24**figure 25**figure 26*

Smoke can be heavy and black, especially when its source is an oil fire. Figure 23 is an example of dark, billowing smoke, where the light source radiates from the fire. Figure 24 is the same smoke pattern but done with dry brush. Figure 25 was done with the old splatter method. Figure 26 shows what I call the “Kirby energy ball” technique (named after Jack Kirby, of course). The key to this cool looking smoke is not where you place the black circles, but how you use the negative space around them.

Rocks

Rocks are another ordinary background item you see often in comics, but sometimes they're not drawn with much detail. Figure 27 is just such an example. Figures 28–31 are several texture choices all done with the same system. First I establish the light source. Then I lay in

the texture pattern on the shadow side. Next I ink the rocks' contours, leaving out redundant lines. This helps mass them together. Lastly, to roughen them up I might add a few more texture details, not forgetting the surrounding dirt.



figure 27



figure 28

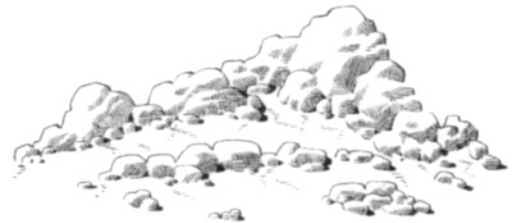


figure 29



figure 30



figure 31

Wood

is another texture that is taken for granted when given a little attention, really add to your backgrounds. Figure 32 is a good example of this. The first board could be made of

anything. The second board is definitely made of wood and could probably give you a splinter! Figure 33 is an example of several techniques that show off the great textural qualities of wood.



figure 32

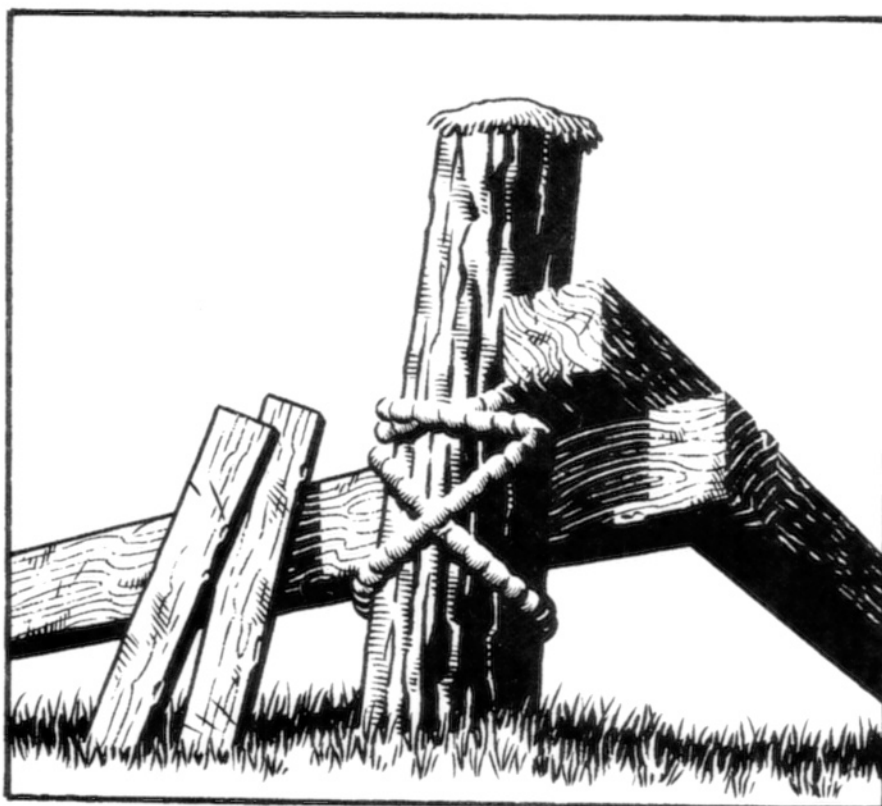


figure 33

Trees and Bushes

The texturing most artists use on their trees can be quite distinctive, almost creating an artistic signature. (A fan once identified a background I inked by the tiles on a roof!) In the first volume of this series, (pages 90–109) in the second panel of the Sundra and Jil pages, there is a tree limb that is inked by seven different artists. The excellent texturing approaches used are characteristic of those individual artists – you can identify each artist's work by the tree limb alone! The point is, you should experiment with different techniques. You may find a distinguishing texture of your own! Use figures 34–38 as a starting point.



figure 34



figure 35



figure 36



figure 37

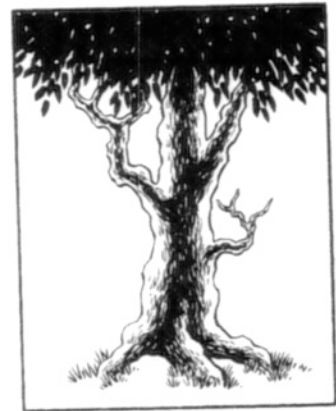


figure 38

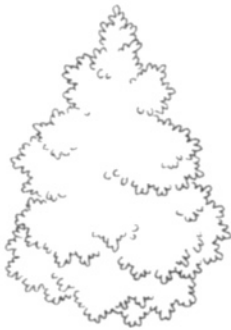


figure 39



figure 40



figure 41



figure 42

Adding detail to the foliage of your trees and bushes is easily accomplished if you use a layering system. It's also a great way to build up their tonal values to create depth within the panel. Figures 39–42 are the four basic layers I used to build up the flat pencilled tree, (figure 43) into the full, lush tree (figure 44). You can use any number of these layers depending on your depth or detail needs.



figure 43



figure 44

Metal

When I first started working in comics there wasn't much metal reference out there, except maybe Bob Layton's *Iron Man*. Bob was the first to realize that Tony Stark would spend most of his spare time polishing up that suit of armor, because it always had a high sheen! Nowadays there's an abundance of metal-clad characters sashaying around the comic-book universe, so the need to command the look of metal is imperative. Creating metal texture is simply adding reflections and highlights to create the appearance of a shiny

surface. The type of reflective patterns you use can also establish a stylistic signature.

Figure 45 is a warrior dude wearing armor without metal texture. Figures 46–49 show a variety of reflective patterns that help his armor look like metal. Adding a few highlights makes it extra shiny, but be careful! You can easily get carried away and add too much reflective texture, as in figure 49. With metal, sometimes less is more.



figure 46



figure 45



figure 48



figure 49

Putting It All Together

Figures 50 and 51 use all the textures in this chapter. I wanted to show how depth is created by layering values and diminishing detail as objects fade into the background.



figure 50



figure 51