

# Japanese Anime

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## **History**

The history of anime begins in the XXth century, when Japanese filmmakers began the first experiments with animation techniques developed in the West. The founder of the modern traditions of anime was Tezuka Osamu. He was often called the "king of anime and manga" - he laid the foundation for what later was transformed into modern anime series. For example, Tezuka borrowed from Disney and developed a style of big eyes of characters to transmit emotions, it was under his leadership that there were created the first pieces that could be attributed to as the early anime. For almost a century anime has come a long way of development from early experiments in movie animation to the current immense popularity around the world. Over the years anime themes originally intended for children became more complicated the issues were discussed as serious.

There appeared anime serials designed for teenage audience: young men and women over the age of fourteen. These serials have found fans among adults, in rare cases up to old age. In its development the anime was slightly behind the manga that began several years earlier and had already gained popularity among all circles of Japan's population. Today, anime is a unique cultural layer that combines serials for children (genre code) - anime in its original sense, and teenage work, often quite serious to be shown to adults

– “shonen” - anime for boys, “shoujo” - anime for girls and even full-fledged "adult" anime. In a separate line stands out “hentai” - anime of pornographic orientation, “yaoi” and “yuri” - anime telling about the relationship (usually romantic) between persons of the same sex - men or women, respectively. The peak of the anime is considered to be the work directed by Hayao Miyazaki. His "Spirited Away" became the first and only animated film to have received the award at the Berlin Film Festival as "The Best Film" and not "The Best Cartoon".

Animation in Japan is different from the animation of other countries primarily because of the fact that it represents a closed-paced cultural stratum which includes many unique storylines and ideological symbols, stereotypes and typecasting. The simplest examples are specific to the anime genre such as “fur” living under its own laws and frequently finding reflection in the anime elements of Japanese culture.

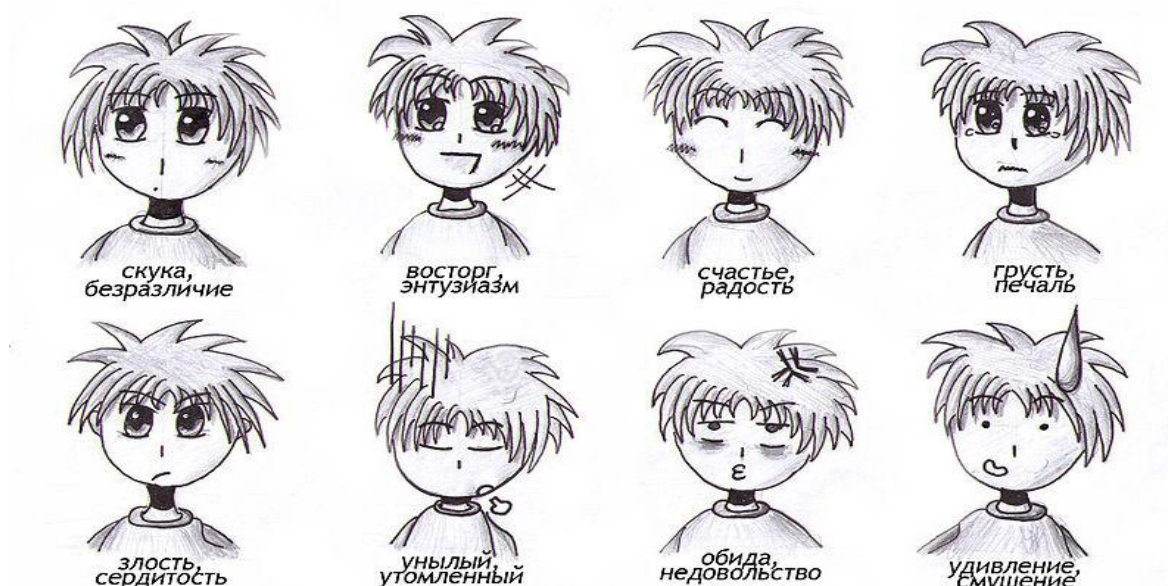
Anime animation stands out among other countries' cartoon animation by its relevance to the peculiarities of Japanese society.

Most of the anime is created with the expectation of a specific, sometimes fairly narrow target audience. The criteria for division may be the sex, age, psychological type of the viewer. Selection thus sets the general thrust of the product, affecting its plot, ideas and even the manner of images.

## **Features**

"Realistic" features in the anime may seem monstrous to people unfamiliar with anime. Among the signs of anime usually the first place should be given to unnaturally large eyes of the characters. In fact, the existing style emerged under the strong influence of Western traditions of cartoon making and anime characters stand out against the background not so much to the size of the eyes than to the attention paid to detail of the eyes relatively in comparison with the rest of the face. Nose and mouth are usually portrayed by several wavy lines, except for moments when a character speaks.

Nevertheless, there are works that use "realistic" picture - the nose, mouth and cheeks as well with other facial features are depicted and shaded with greater precision, for example, in an anime movie in 1998 "Werewolves» («Jin Roh: The Wolf Brigade ").



Characters in anime are quite symbolic. The nature of each character in a literal sense is reflected in his eyes often it can be concluded about the character in general. They usually reflect the age and the openness of character. Positive, cheerful, friendly main characters are often depicted with large, shiny, full of life eyes; closed, gloomy or negative have eyes narrowed, sometimes semi-enclosed or shaded fringe - they are often painted like eyes of some sharp-eyed predatory bird or snake; sneaky, or stressed-friendly characters have fox's eyes - as though all the time closed, though the character is constantly smiling, but roughly the same shape may have common dormouse if the character is not romantic but this is not an evil, cunning and vicious character, artists can provide him with enough big eyes but with small pupil points, in addition, if the character suddenly is deprived of a magical way or will or even soul, his eyes lose their luster and become lifeless and all the glare disappears. Children's eyes are usually depicted very large - the old people (with very few exceptions) have small eyes, with small pupils. Points are additional means of expression, as an indispensable attribute of scholars (as opposed to eccentric geniuses) or different shy guys. Sunglasses black, colored or deliberately brilliant, all

shapes and sizes adorn the face, perhaps one-quarter of all known anime characters wear glasses.

Hair in anime is usually composed of strands. Hairstyles of characters may be very different, sometimes of strange shapes and colors. Hair, as well as details of clothing of characters often subjects the wind or inertia, forcing them to move asynchronously with the movements of the character. Hair of various colors was originally a way "to personify" the heroes, making them markedly different. Today, when the characters are worked out down to the smallest details of the person and manners, multicolored hair is not a necessity, rather it is a tradition. In addition, the color of the hair often reflects the nature of the character. For example, red hair is a characteristic indicator of temper (Asuka from the TV series "Evangelion", Lena inverse from the TV series "Slayers"). Blonde hair also indicates the foreign origin of the hero, because most Japanese have black hair. We should also mention the bleached hair, as part of the stereotype of a bully or an eccentric person - has already been mentioned that the vast majority of Japanese have black hair, and lighting is the most effective way for someone to stand out from the crowd in and outside school.

Since the anime serials are usually shown on the television with a frequency of about once a week, for their creation a staff of writers, directors, designers, and dozens of animators was involved. In addition, to fit into the schedule out as far as possible without losing quality, anime artists use the so-called "limited animation techniques". They include repainting some parts of the picture while preserving most of the picture unchanged, static background a simplified form of emotion transfer.

Transmission of emotions in the anime is the point for separate discussion. In addition to the traditional displays of feelings of anime character - changing facial expressions or tone of his voice, a number of other techniques are used. Emotions can be displayed by underlined unrealistic, exaggerated expressions - the characters speak with their eyes closed to convey peremptory tone, or they make a picturesque view of the demonic expression when showing anger. In the comic situations to show the futility feeling, the icons



are used, such as a picture "perspiration" or "swollen vein" arising over the head of the hero, or in a frame above it.

In addition to "serious" classic drawing, there is also a popular style of "Chibi" or the «super-deformed» (SD) style, in which the characters are portrayed in simplified form, with disproportionately large heads and eyes in a half-face. Usually anime artists use the SD style in all sorts of comic situations to show a clear lack of seriousness or parody. Nevertheless, there are serials, all made in such a manner, this style is used to create sympathy for the "small and furry" main characters. For example, in the comedy series «Yamato Nadeshiko Shichi Henge» the main character 90 per cent of screen time is in her Chibi form, behaving as if not quite of this world. Other characters are the same, being more adequate, are depicted, respectively, is quite common.



# Terminology

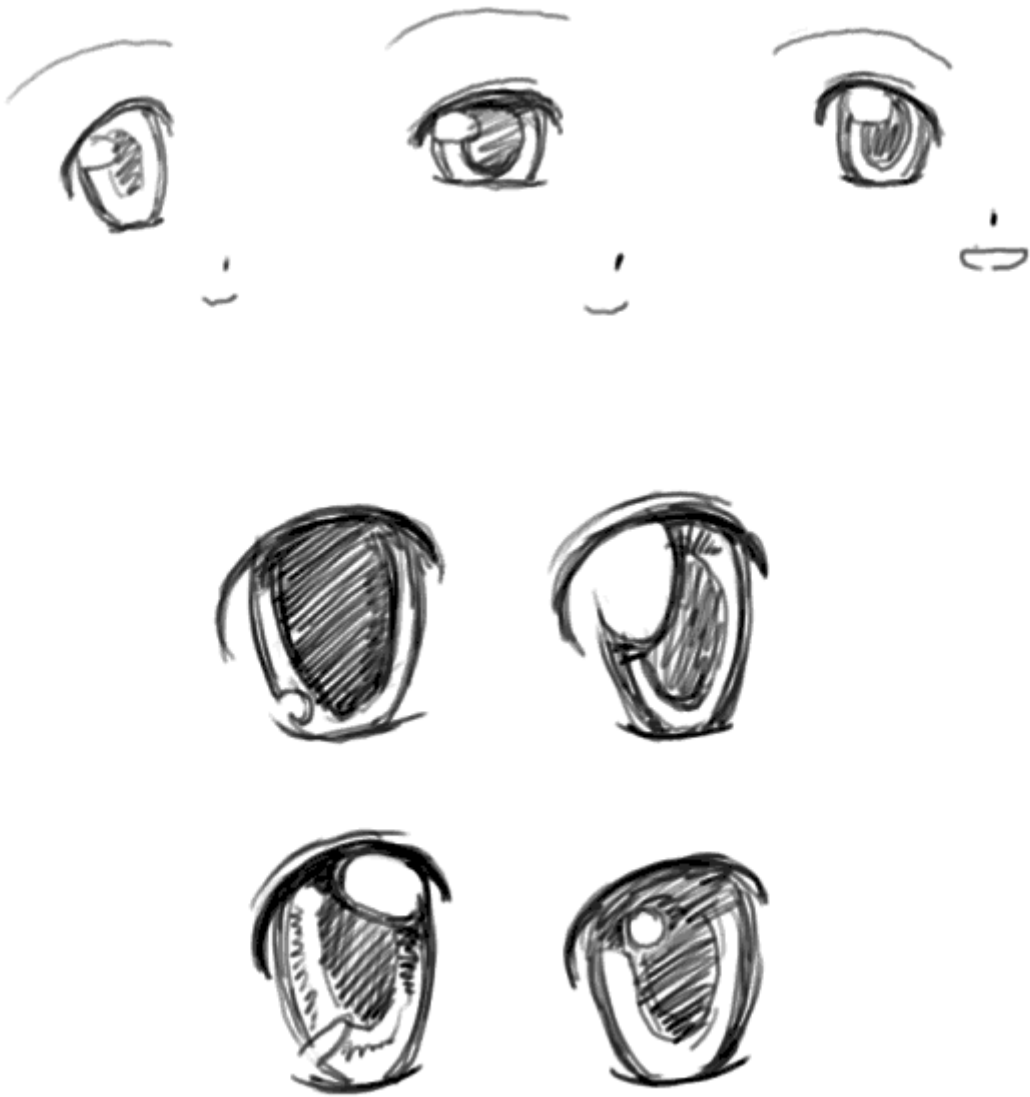
The Japanese word "anime", which means "animation", dates back to the English word «animation» (Jap. アニメーション), borrowed and shortened to three syllables. Despite a somewhat higher prevalence of the truncated form - "anime" - both words have the same meaning in Japanese: they refer to any animation, regardless of its style and country of manufacture. Until mid-1970 instead anime Japanese used the term "manga eyga" ("movie-comics"). As the spread of Japanese animation outside of Japan, the word began to enter into other languages, including Russian, as the designation of animation originating in Japan or having its characteristic stylistic features.

In Japanese, completely missing the force inherent in the Russian accent, so the Japanese word borrowed into the Russian language, usually receives emphasis, depending on the traditions of the pronunciation of words in Russian. The word "anime" in Russian accent has settled, two common variant pronunciations – **a**nime and anime**.** However, if you follow the rules of pronouncing the Russian language, the emphasis is on the last syllable, as in the words of macrame, resume, karate. Such pronunciation as an **a**nime, of course, to the inclusion of the word in the dictionary is not a sign of ignorance, but it is not recommended.

There are two alternative Russian spelling of the word: "anime" - transliteration (Jap. アニメ) according to the rules kiridzi and "anime" - a more common form, corresponding to the tradition of writing has already mastered the Russian language of foreign words containing the sound [e] after a hard consonant (like changing undergone the term "karate"). Both versions are pronounced the same way: [anime].

In Russian the word "anime" is neuter, never declined. The word is sometimes used as the first part of compound words such as "anime director" or "anime serials". In colloquial speech, there are formed from the "anime", the words "animeshnik", "animashki", and so on.

## Plot



As in any other form of cinema, a variety of subjects is limited only by the imagination of anime script writer. Along with anime, telling about the parallel realities and space, there are anime, describing historical events, or even recreate the daily lives of the protagonists in the usual Tokyo. However, different genres impose a variety of prints depicting anime scenes, and

often determine the overall style of building or milestones storyline series.

For example, the product called "shounen-adventure» (shounen-adventure - adventure for the boys) often has a predictable canonical form a large part of the series the main hero gathers a team of supporters and learns new ways of fighting, breaking the small problems that eventually overcome by superior enemy forces. After this episode, either ends or returns to the beginning: this denotes a stronger, more dangerous enemy. One such cycle is sometimes called the arch or the arcade (from the English "arc"). An example of a classic shounen-adventure may be «Rurouni Kenshin» - an epic saga about Himura Kenshin, Samurai since the Meiji Restoration who knows how, but does not wish to kill.

There are anime movies made according to a non-standard cross habitual pattern. For example, a comedy / action movie "Steel anxiety" tells the story of a young, but brave warrior Sagar Sosuke, who was determined to protect the potential victim. The harmonious interweaving of comedy and serious paramilitary plot compensates for shortcomings of the two lines separately.

Despite the abundance of TV series, made according to the canons of the genre it does not decrease the value of the original. An example of the serial with a non-standard subject line can serve the serial «GANTZ» It is an action movie, the main characters are Kaye Kurono and Masaru Kato. They have died under the wheels of the subway train, but were resurrected by a stationary black ball, occupying half of the room in the Tokyo hotel - in order to participate in cruel survival game, where you can get out, only earning 100 points.

Universes in which the action of the serial takes place, can take any shape, from the classic fantasy worlds popularized by the American authors of cyberpunk («Ghost in the Shell», «Serial Experiments Lain») or advanced anime paropunk («Fullmetal Alchemist», «Steamboy»). Stories of fantastic worlds can be quite



different from the traditional to us: in anime «Fullmetal Alchemist» instead of physics developed the art of alchemy. In anime «Trigun» the action takes place in the distant future, on a desolate planet, among the remains of the lost technology. The series "Wolf's rain," they drew post-apocalyptic world in which people once lost themselves, and left huge battlefields, fighting skeletons and mechanisms.

Most of the anime serials have pronounced emotional and ideological connotations. The director creates images suitable for emotional background to convey their thoughts. Popular ideas are: the idea of resistance, the reluctance to give up arbitrarily powerful people or circumstances, the idea of self-determination and choice of life, the moral man. Different ages of the target audience are often influenced by the ideological subtext of the work: shounen-adventures, usually addressed to the young men over the age of twelve, often contain a "simple" emotional range (do not give up, protect your friends, etc.) with a smaller study of details.

## **Criticism**

Criticism of anime underlines parallel growth in popularity outside Japan, and growing number of opponents of this genre of animation. The most serious criticism is excessive, according to many, the amount of violence and eroticism in the anime, misbehavior of people interested in watching and collecting anime - otaku, pouring out at times abnormal in shape (escape from reality, aggressiveness, dependency, close to the drug). In European countries and the U.S. Japanese cartoon products undergo a preliminary assessment, the definition of age audiences, sometimes in order to reduce the minimum age, the publisher of the work cut too explicit or violent images. Many people do not like anime at an emotional level, if the viewer believes that the cartoons created for an audience of children, and he expects a corresponding development of the plot, and any uncomfortable viewing anime is nice youth or adult audiences, or refusing to view, create a negative distance opinion about the

work. As often viewers do not like the graphics solution in the anime - the notorious "big eyes", or voice characters, because of unusual for a European sounding words and express emotions in Japanese. Serious critics also point out that although there are also some outstanding anime works, the bulk of the anime series, 70-80%, is poor in the artistic sense animated film created on the basis of genre templates. Much of the criticism expressed against the anime, it is also true with respect to any branch of the modern media (especially visual) culture.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, I would like to add that I am one of the fans of anime (anime fan). I'm interested in this for a long time practically at the professional level. I go to anime rallies and shows, I go to exhibitions related with Japan. I'm fond of "cosplay". Cosplay is literally translated as "costume play." Cosplay originated in Japan today among fans of anime, manga, j-rock (Japanese rock). Participants of cosplays identify themselves with some anime characters, they wear similar clothing and use similar turns of phrase. Often during the cosplay they play role-playing games.



Pictures below belong to me, the author. Each of them shows different emotions specific for the anime characters. Some



of them have been sketched from the anime some are fan art created by me.

Practically in every picture I tried to answer the question why I actually got down to it.

Well, I actually put the soul into each of them and to their meaning, so that others got the idea what I wanted to say.









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