

Phoebe and Her Unicorn

Dana Simpson's
Cartooning Guide



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Like all creative projects, comics can be made in any number of ways! Here is Dana Simpson's process. After reading how she creates her comics, create your own with the activity at the end!

First, I have to come up with ideas.

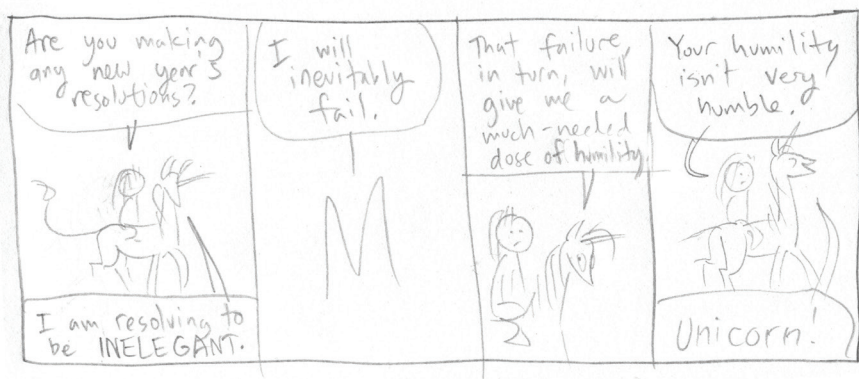
I like to leave my house to do that. My house is full of distractions.

Hm. What kind of New Year's resolution would Marigold make?

...well, what's **HARD** for her?



When I draw them in my notebook, they look like this:



It doesn't have to be much, just enough to show who's talking and what they're doing. (Sometimes, Marigold is just an M, or Phoebe is just a P.)



I take a picture of it on my phone and send it to my editor, so she can tell me what she thinks.

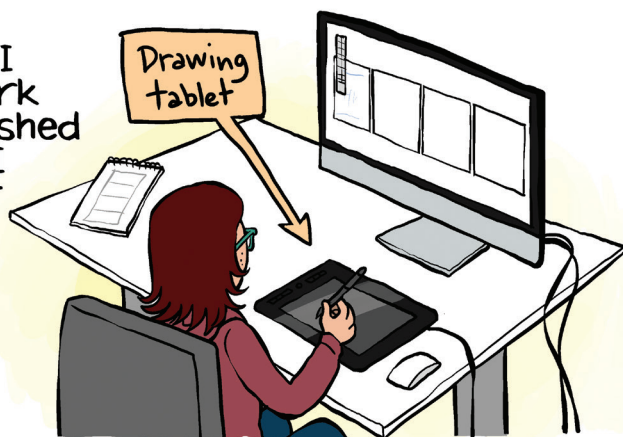
Sometimes she thinks something could be clearer, or funnier.

Other times, she just says:

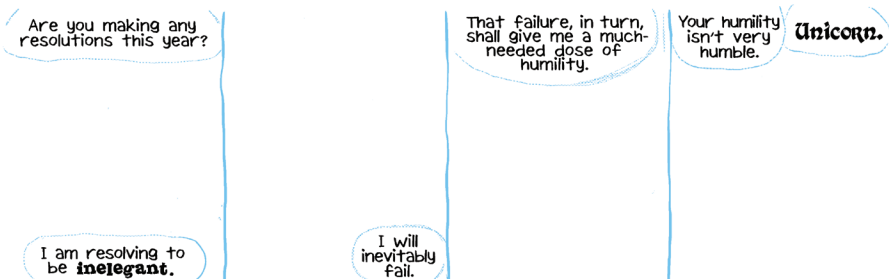
That's good.



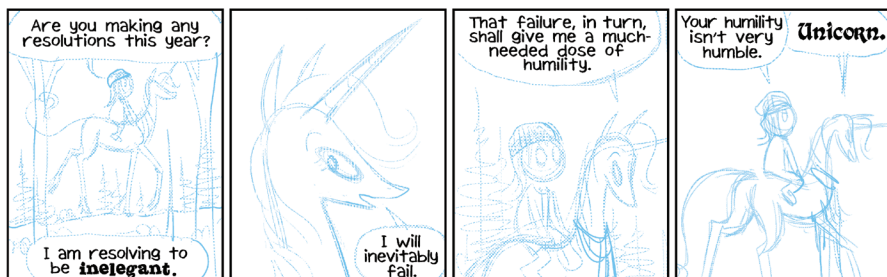
Once she approves, I get to work on the finished artwork. I do all that on my computer.



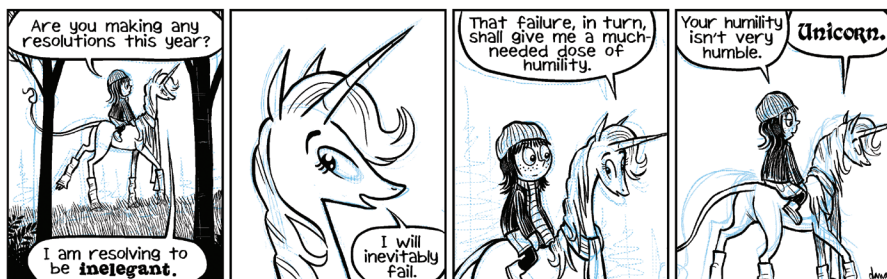
First, I add the lettering, so I know how much space I have for the artwork.



Then, I add the rough "pencil" lines, usually in light blue.



Next, I add the black "ink" lines...



Finally, I add in various shades of gray.



(A colorist who works for my publisher does most of the coloring, and as you can see throughout this book, he does a pretty amazing job!)

Create Your Own Cartoon Strip

Now it's your turn! In the space below, draw a four-panel cartoon strip. It can be about anything you want, but if you need ideas, try telling a story about something fun you've done with a friend!

Remember, this is just one way to make a cartoon! After you're done, try experimenting with different panel sizes, close-ups, and styles of speech bubble!
