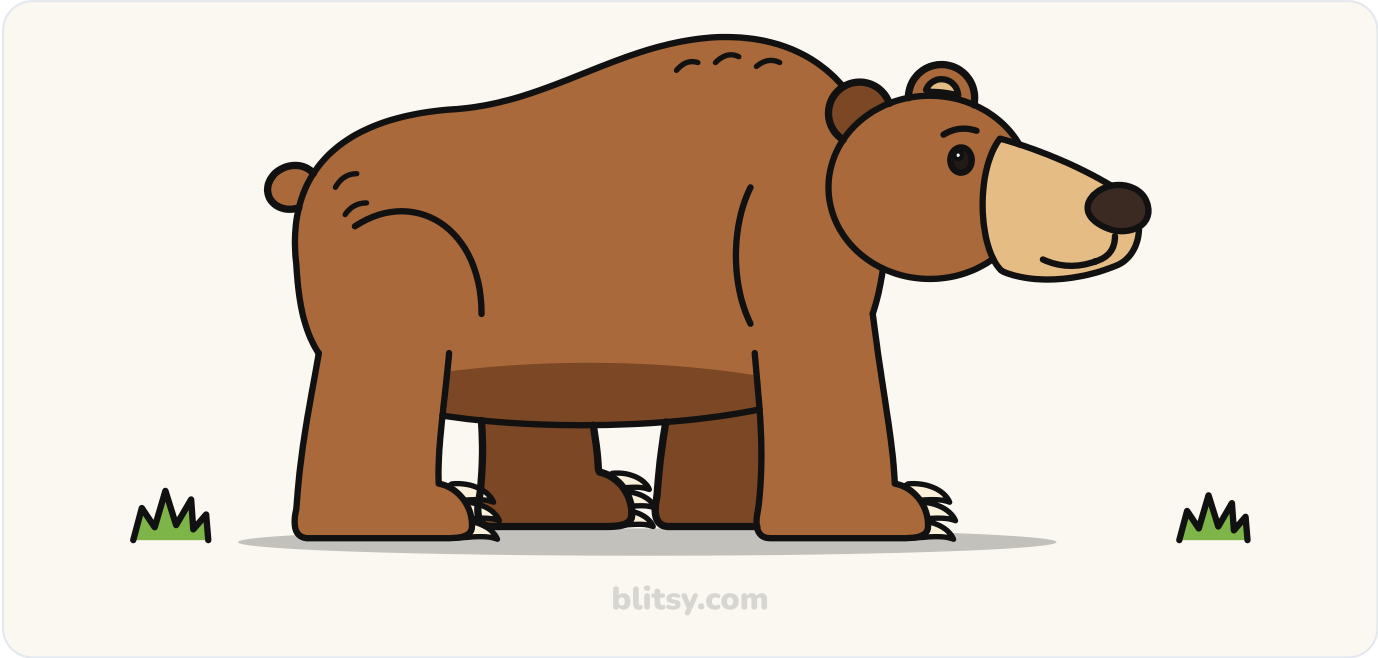
How to Draw a Bear

12 easy steps for beginners



What you'll need

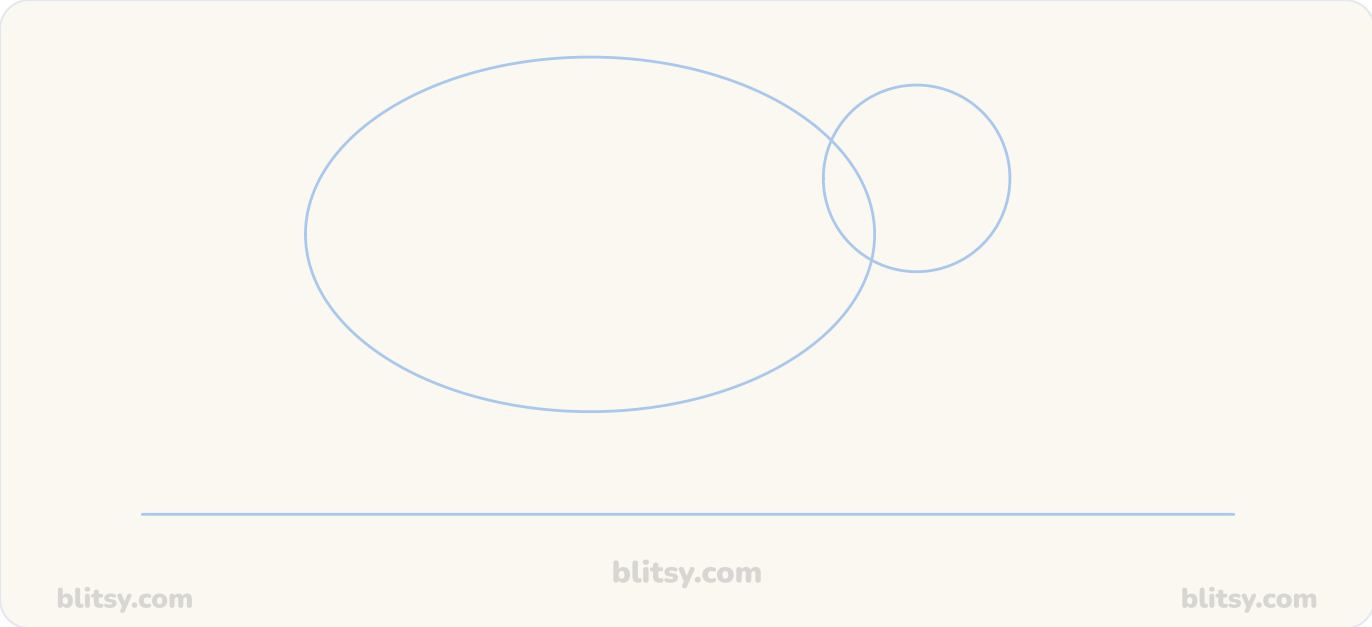
- A pencil
- An eraser
- A black fineliner or marker
- Colored pencils or crayons
- Plain paper, landscape

How to use this guide

New lines for each step are shown in **blue**; lines you already drew are gray. Draw lightly first, then ink and erase near the end.

Read the full tutorial online →

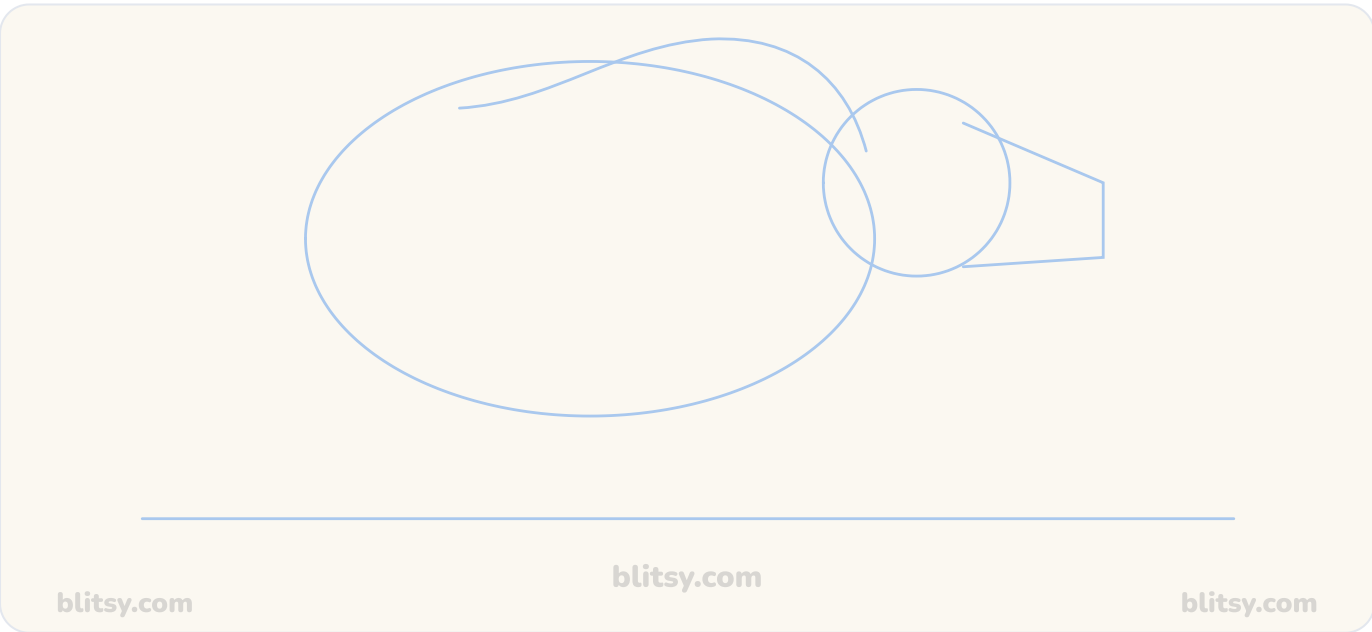
STEP 1 Draw a ground line, a body oval and a head circle



Begin with a long, flat ground line close to the bottom of the page. Above it, sketch a wide oval for the body and leave room underneath for the legs. Then place a circle at the right end of the oval, overlapping it a little and sitting lower than its top, because a bear carries its head below its shoulders.

💡 **Tip:** Press so lightly that you can barely see the lines. They're only scaffolding.

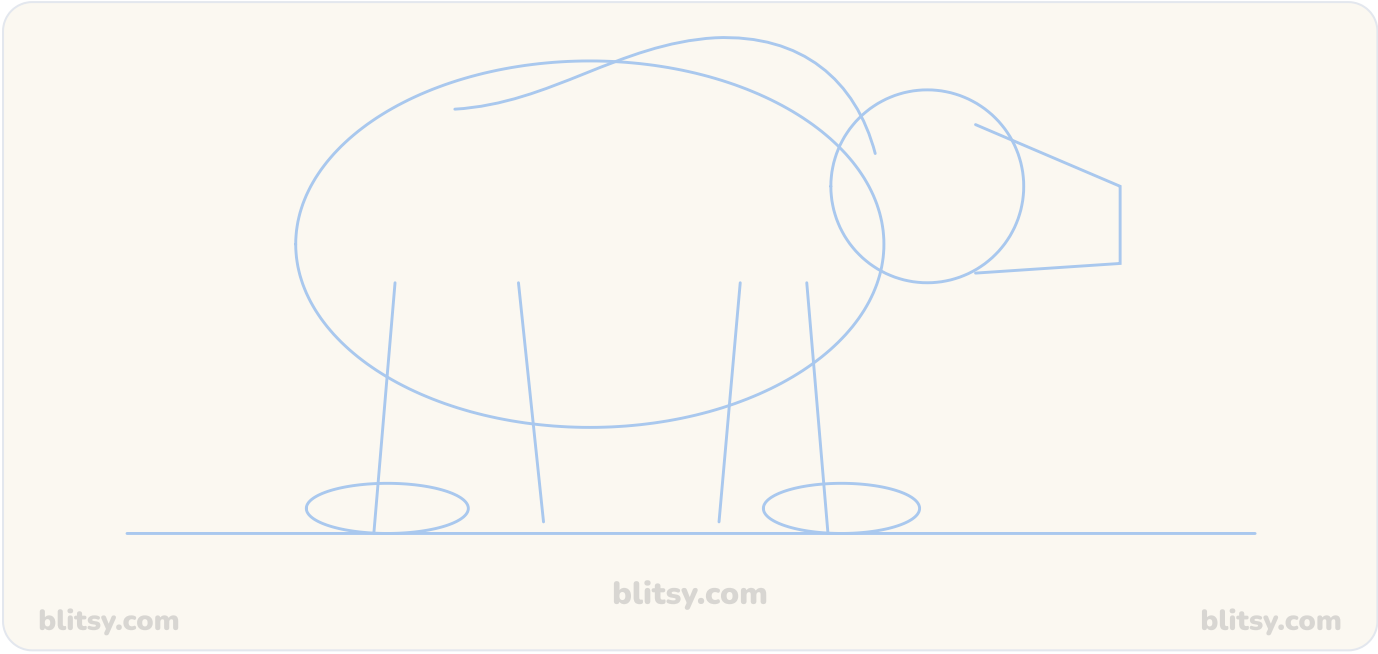
STEP 2 Add a snout box and a hump curve



From the front of the head circle, draw a long box that narrows toward the end, like a wedge pointing right. That's the snout, and on a brown bear it's longer than most people expect. Next, run a curve along the top of the oval that rises into a bump above the front legs. That shoulder hump says brown bear right away.

💡 **Tip:** Put the highest point of the hump above the front legs, not in the middle of the back.

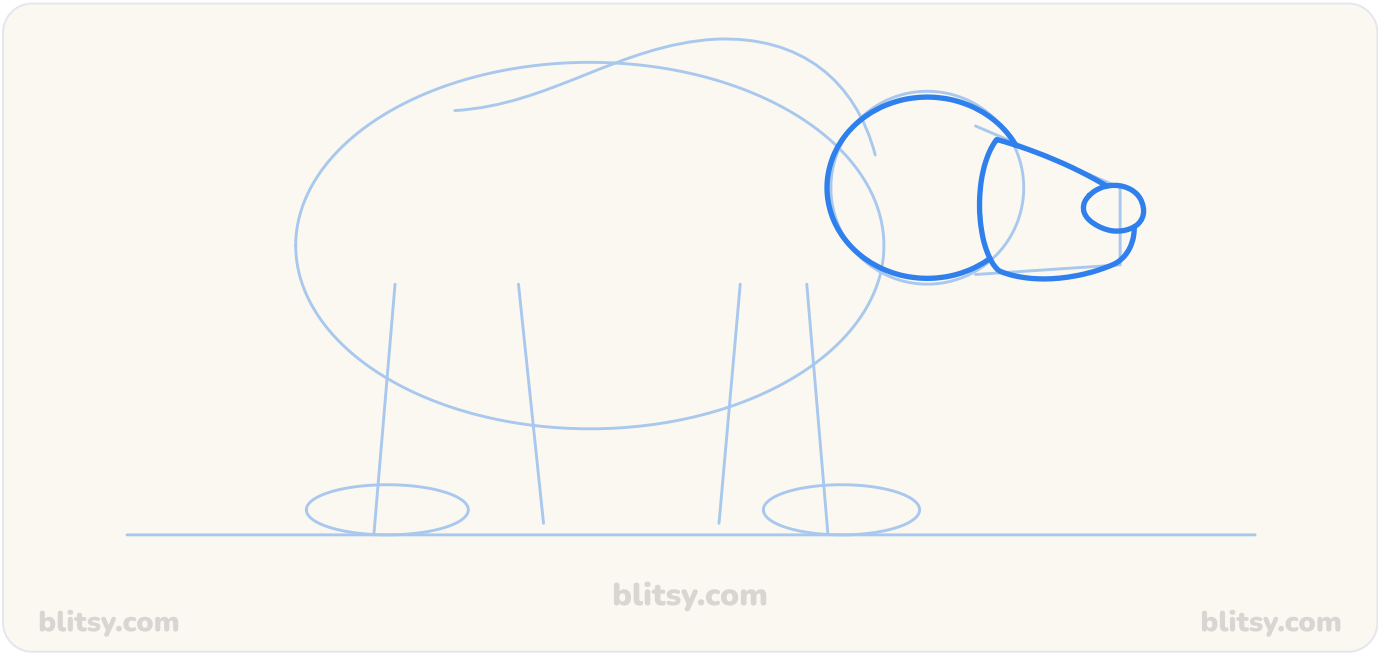
STEP 3 Sketch four leg lines and two paw ovals



Bears walk with their legs wide apart, so draw two lines near the back of the oval and two under the front. I slant them a little in opposite directions, which makes the bear look like it's walking rather than standing still. At the bottom of the two outside lines, add flat ovals on the ground for the near paws.

💡 **Tip:** Leave some space between each pair of lines, or the far legs will have no room later.

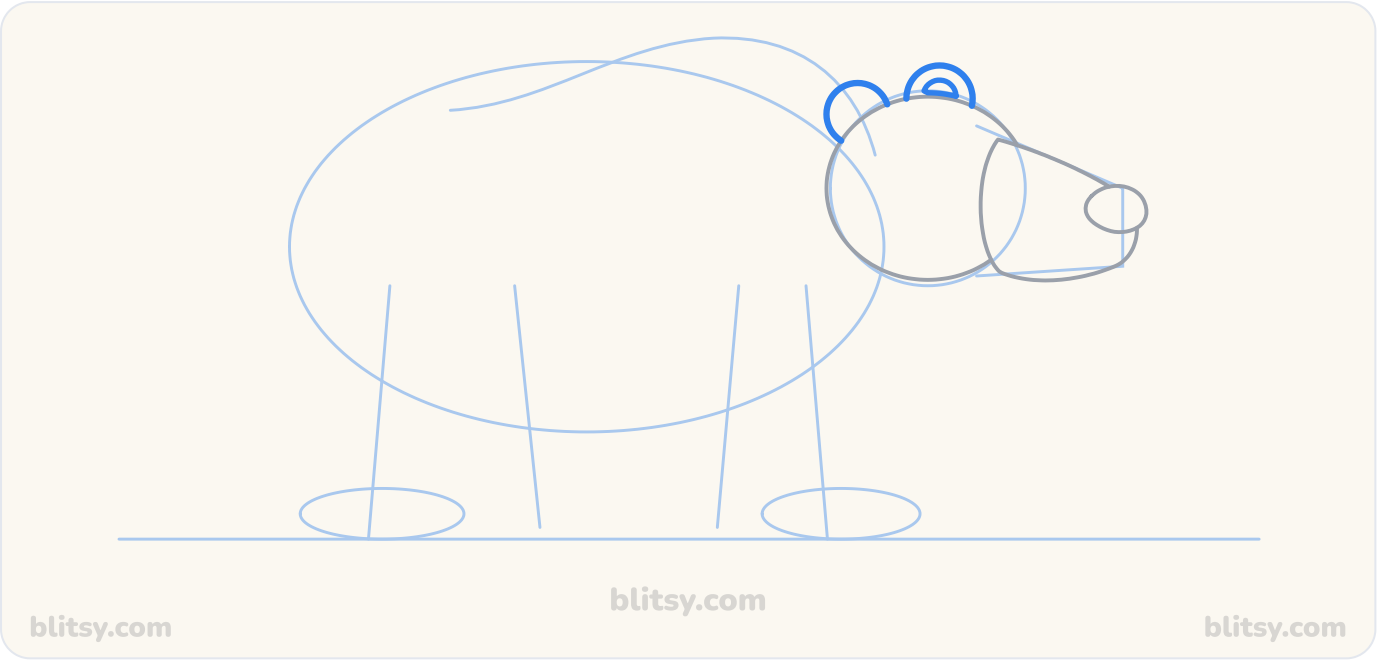
STEP 4 Outline the round head, the long snout and the nose



Trace the head circle with a firm line. Now follow the snout box: a gentle slope down from the forehead, a rounded tip, then a chin curving back under the face. Draw the back edge of the snout as a soft curve on the cheek, and finish with an oval nose right on the tip.

💡 **Tip:** Round every corner of the snout box. Sharp corners turn the bear into a dog.

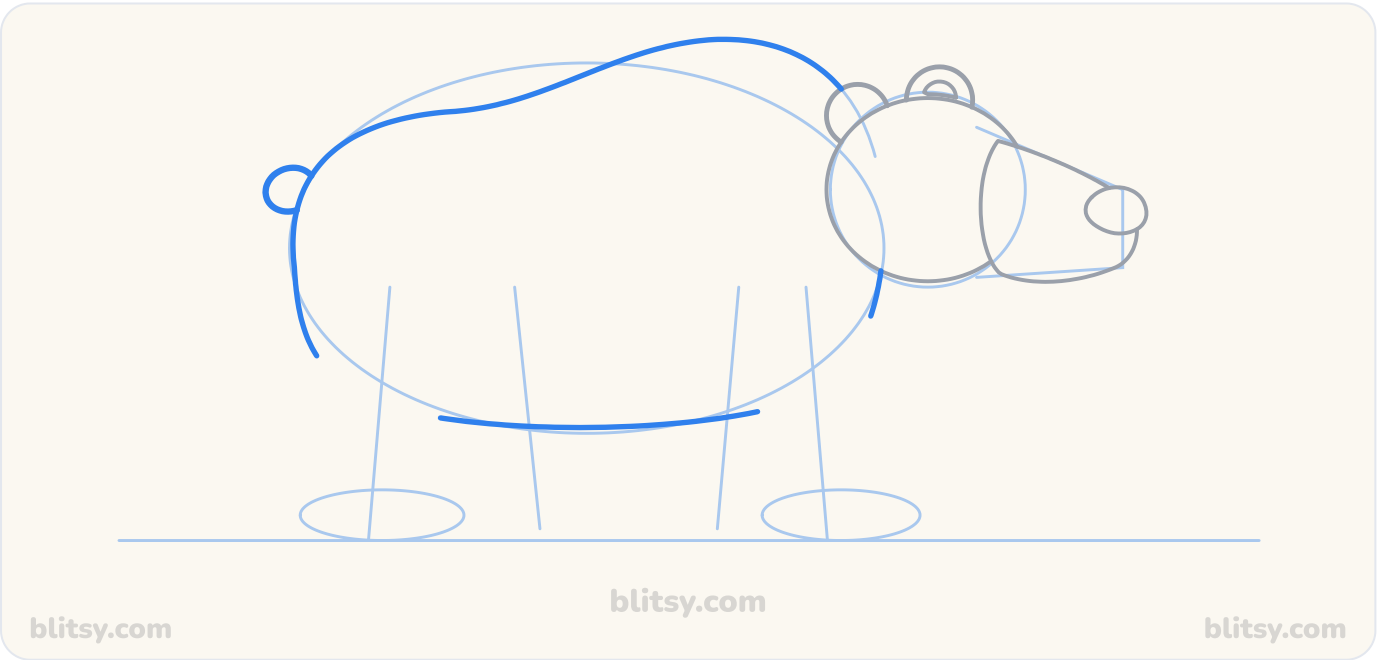
STEP 5 Put two small round ears on top



Bear ears are small and round, like half circles poking out of the fur. Add one toward the back of the head and one nearer the front, both sitting on top of the circle. Inside the front ear, draw a smaller curve for the inner ear. Small ears make the head look big and strong.

💡 **Tip:** Keep each ear about a third as wide as the head circle, no bigger.

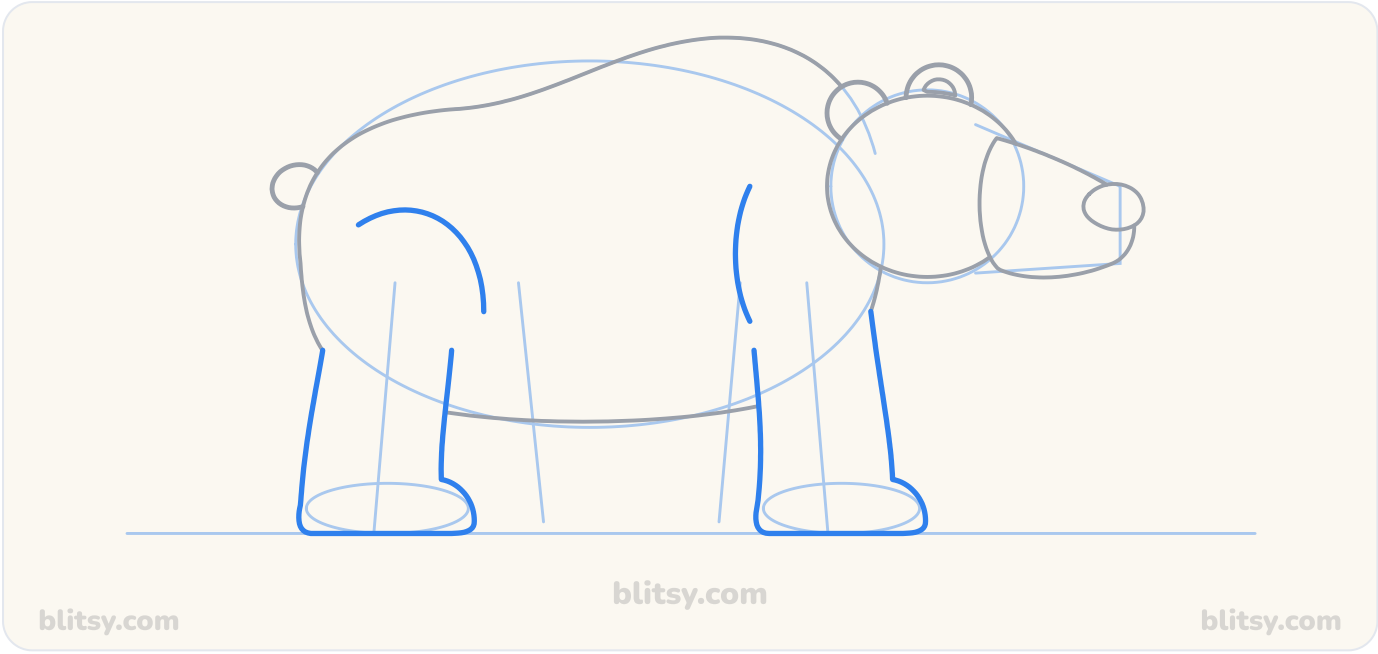
STEP 6 Draw the back with its shoulder hump



Go over your hump curve with a firm line, from the rump up over the shoulders and down behind the head. Round off the rump and add a short belly line between the legs, skipping the parts where the legs will go. Last, add a tiny round tail on the rump. It really is that small on a bear.

💡 **Tip:** Draw the long back line in two or three strokes, lifting your pencil between them.

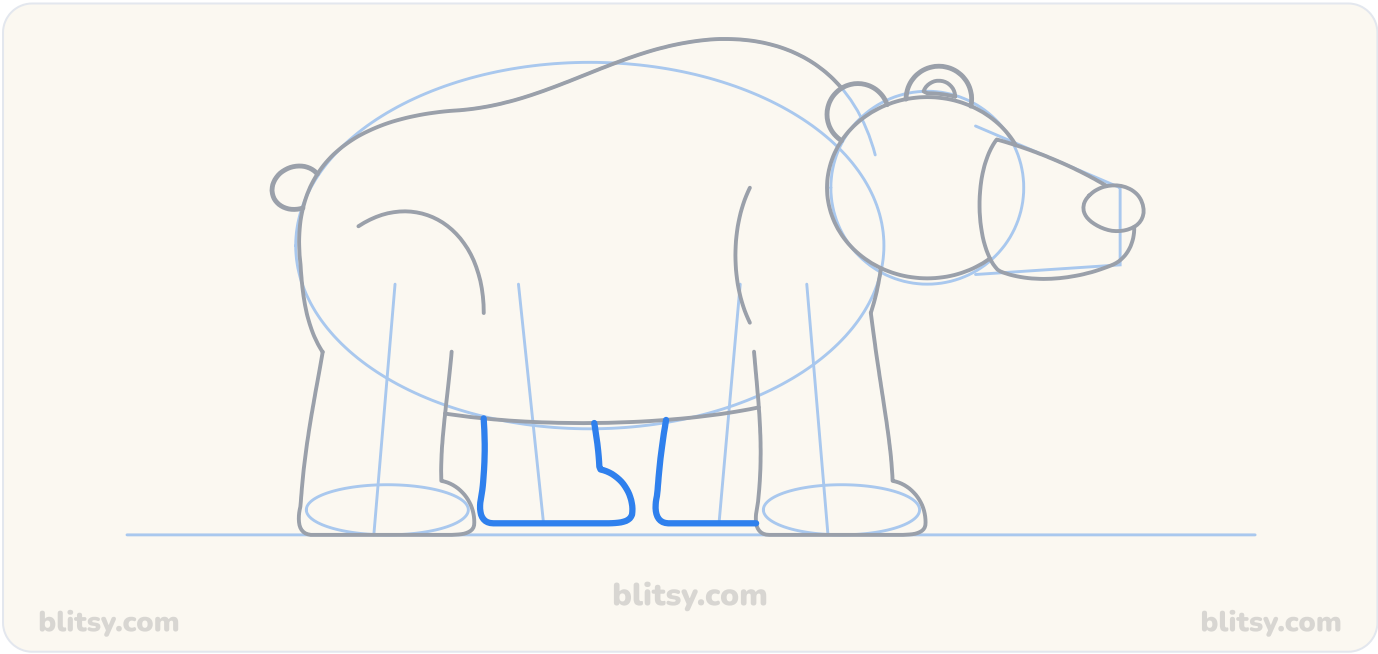
STEP 7 Build the two thick near legs and paws



Use the outside leg lines to draw two thick legs, each almost as wide as the gap between them. Let the paws stretch forward with rounded toes and a little heel at the back, sitting flat on the ground. Then add a curved line on the rump for the big back thigh and a shorter one on the chest for the shoulder.

💡 **Tip:** Make the legs wider than feels natural. Thin legs are the fastest way to lose the bear.

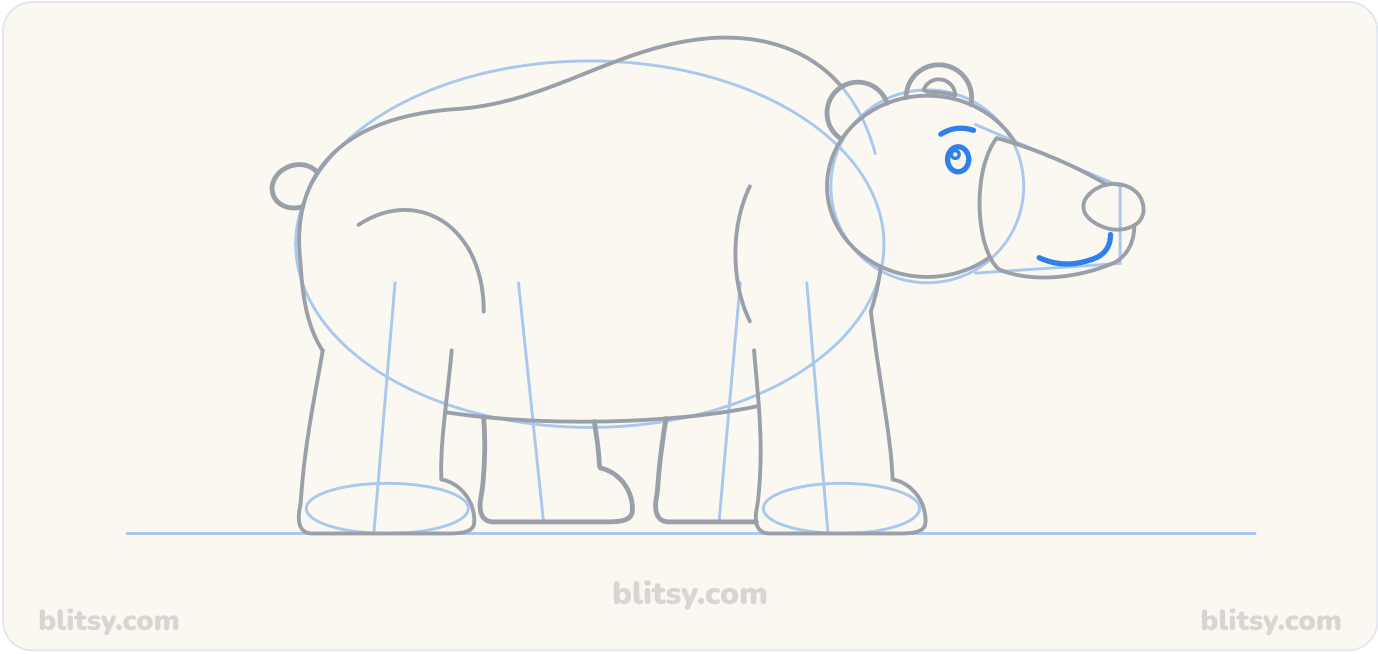
STEP 8 Add the two far legs



The far legs peek out between the near ones, under the belly. Draw only the lower part you can see, starting at the belly line and ending in a paw just above the ground line. I keep them slightly shorter than the near legs. That small difference is what puts them behind the body.

💡 **Tip:** Stop the far leg lines where they meet the near legs instead of drawing through.

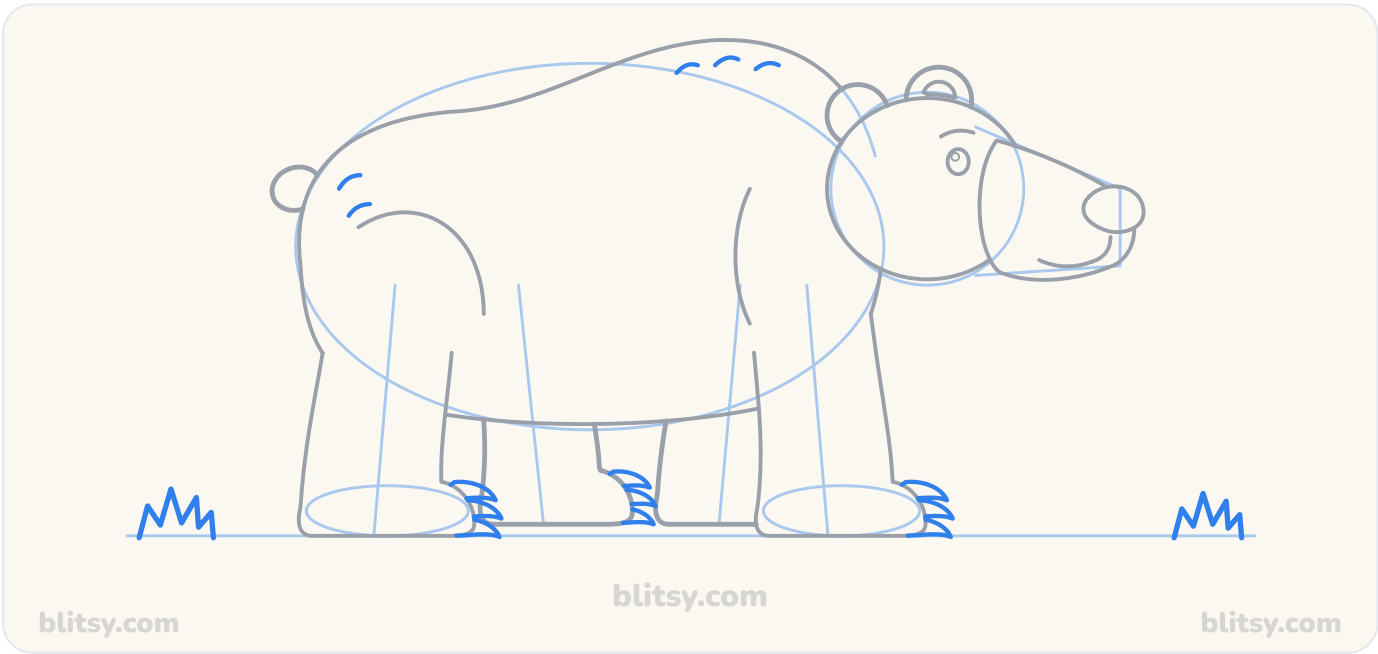
STEP 9 Give your bear a small eye and a smile



Place a small oval eye on the head circle, just behind where the snout starts. Leave a white dot inside for a shine and draw a short brow above it. Then add a smile under the nose that runs back along the snout. A tiny eye keeps the face gentle.

💡 **Tip:** Tilt the brow up a touch at the back end for a calm, happy look.

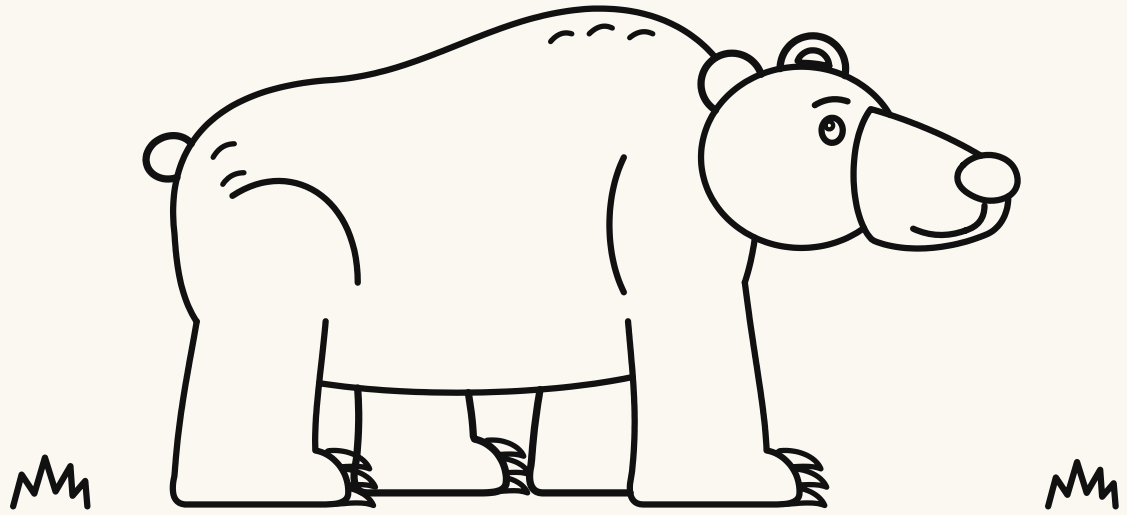
STEP 10 Draw claws, fur marks and some grass



On the front of each paw, draw three short hooked claws stacked on top of each other. Brown bears have long claws, but short ones read better at this size. Add a few little curved fur marks on the hump and the rump. Finish with two spiky grass tufts on the ground line, one on each side of the bear.

💡 **Tip:** Three fur marks per spot is plenty. More starts to look like scratches.

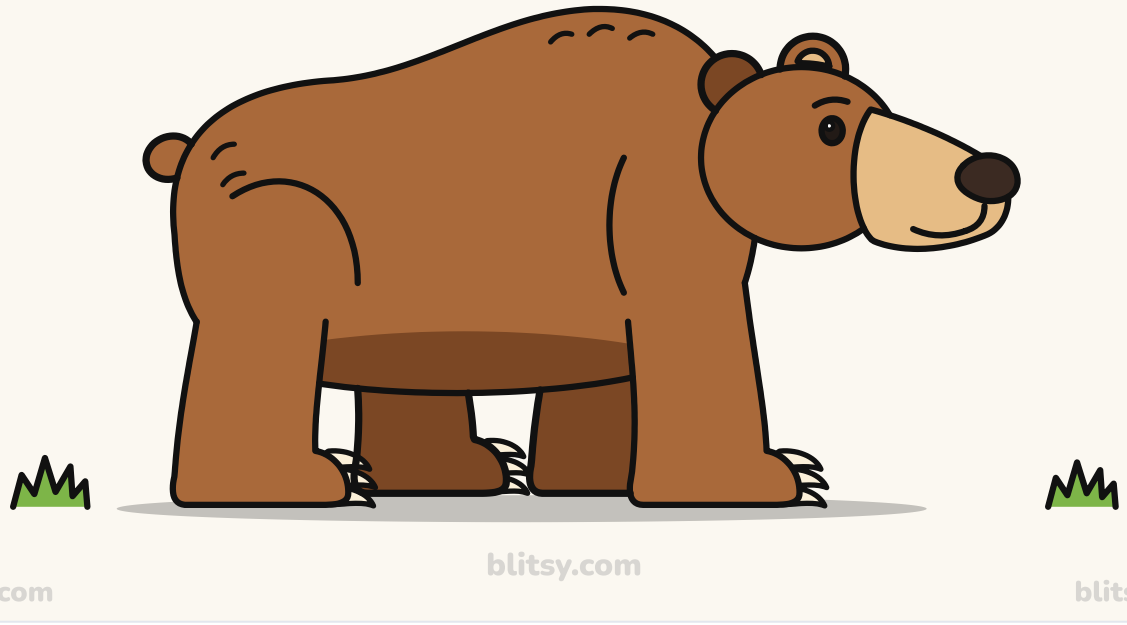
STEP 11 Ink the outline and erase the guides



Trace every line you want to keep with a black fineliner. I go head first, then the body and legs, then the claws and grass, moving away from my hand so I don't smudge wet ink. Skip the oval, the circle, the snout box and the leg lines. Wait a minute for the ink to dry, then erase all the pencil guides.

💡 **Tip:** Ink the hump in one smooth stroke if you can. It's the line people notice first.

STEP 12 Color your bear



Fill the head, body, near legs and front ear with a warm brown. A darker brown goes on the far legs, the back ear and a band along the belly, which pushes those parts back and gives the body weight. The snout and inner ear get tan, the nose and eye black, and the claws cream. Green on the grass finishes it.

💡 **Tip:** Color the big brown body in short strokes that follow the direction of the fur.