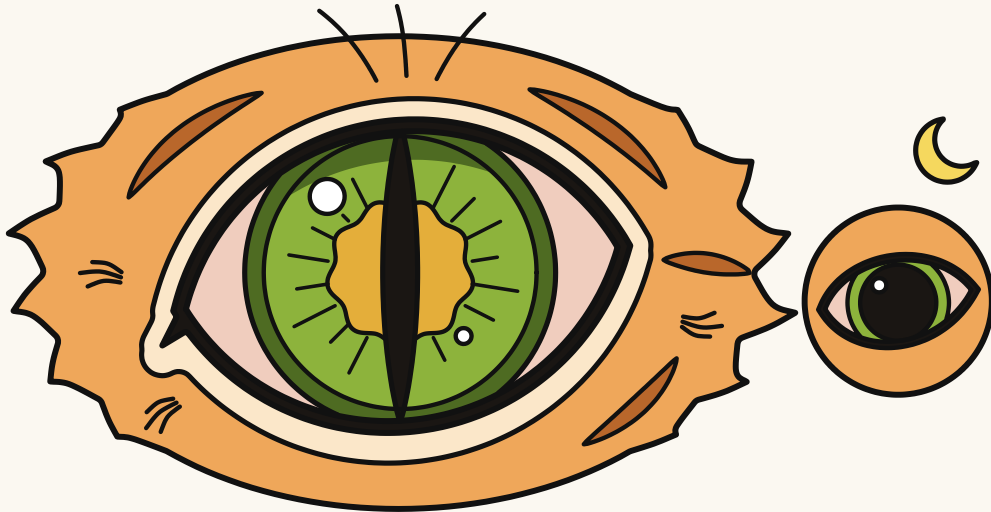


How to Draw a Cat Eye

12 easy steps for beginners



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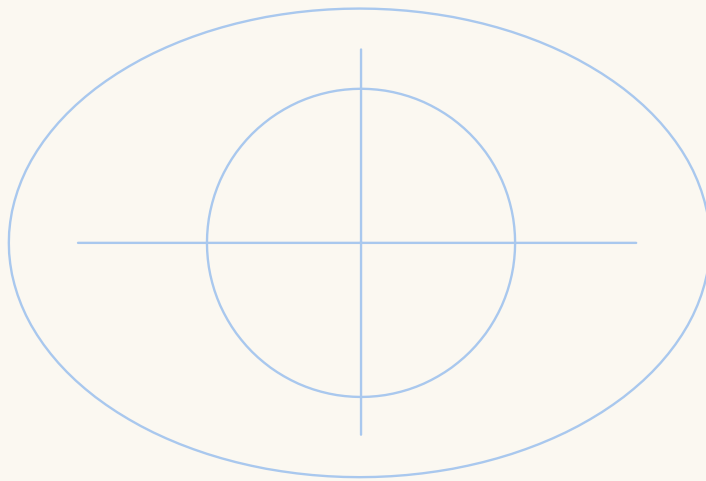
What you'll need

- A pencil
- An eraser
- A coin or cup to trace
- A black fineliner
- Colored pencils or markers

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 Sketch the guide circle and oval

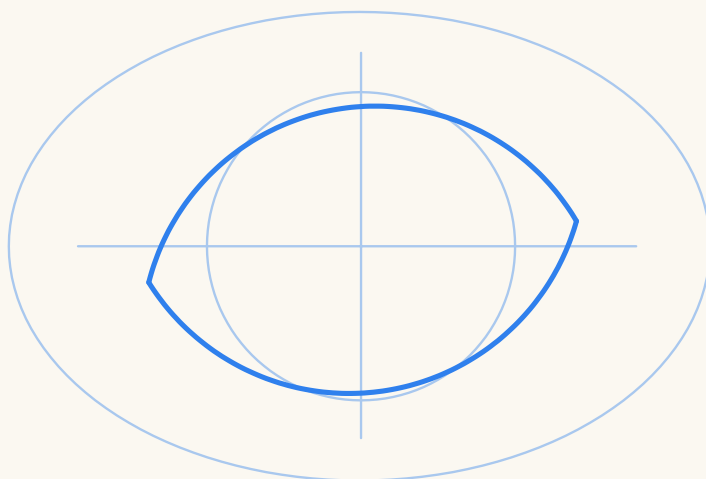
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Turn the page sideways and draw a wide oval that fills most of it. In its middle, draw a circle about half as tall as the oval, with a level line and an upright line crossing at its middle. The circle is the iris. The oval marks where the fur ends.

 **Tip:** Keep the oval off the right edge of the page, because the small night eye goes there later.

STEP 2 Draw the almond eye shape

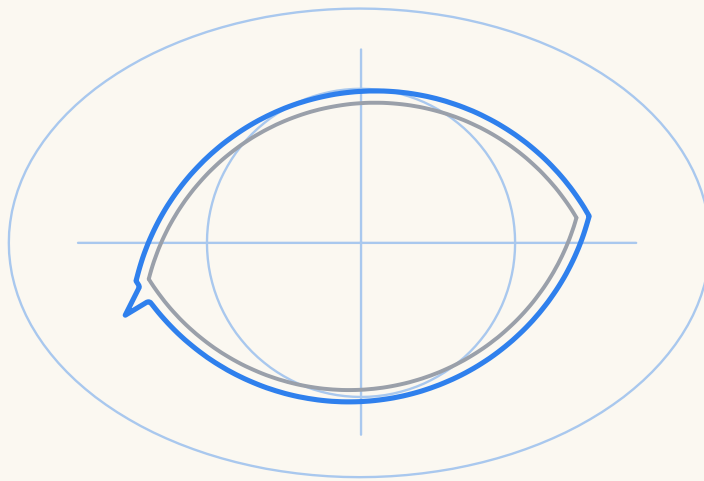
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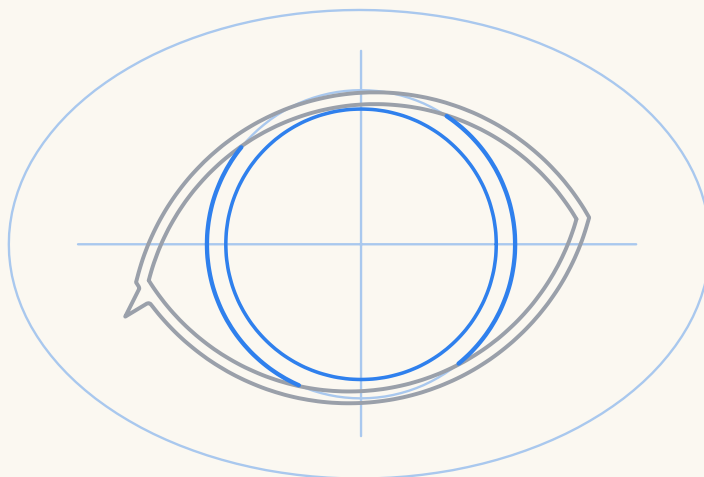
Wrap the eye around the circle. The top lid is one curve sitting just inside the top of the circle, and the bottom lid sits just inside its bottom. Let both curves run past the circle and meet in a point on each side. I set the left corner a bit lower than the right, which tilts the eye upward.

 **Tip:** If the lids leave a gap above or below the circle, the eye will look shocked. Let them clip the circle a tiny bit.

STEP 3 Add the dark rim and the corner notch

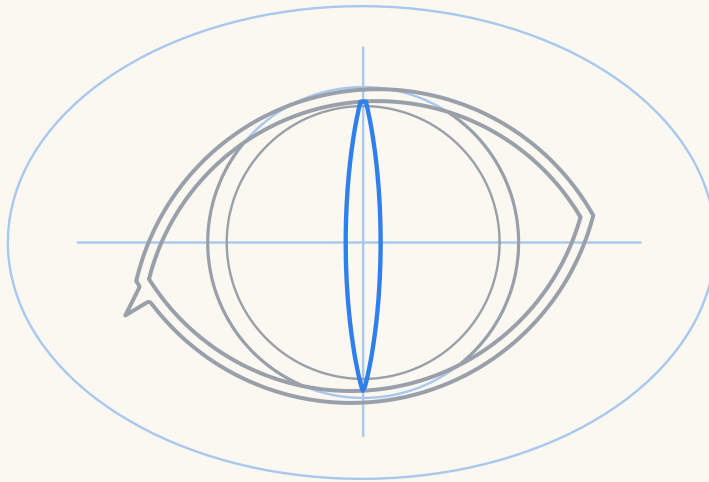
Cats have a dark rim around the eye, like built-in eyeliner. Draw a second line a little outside the almond, all the way round, coming to a point at the outer corner. At the inner corner, nearest the nose, pull the rim down into a small pointed hook. That notch says cat instead of person.

Tip: Keep the gap between the two lines even. A rim that swells and shrinks looks smudged once it's black.

STEP 4 Outline the iris and its outer ring

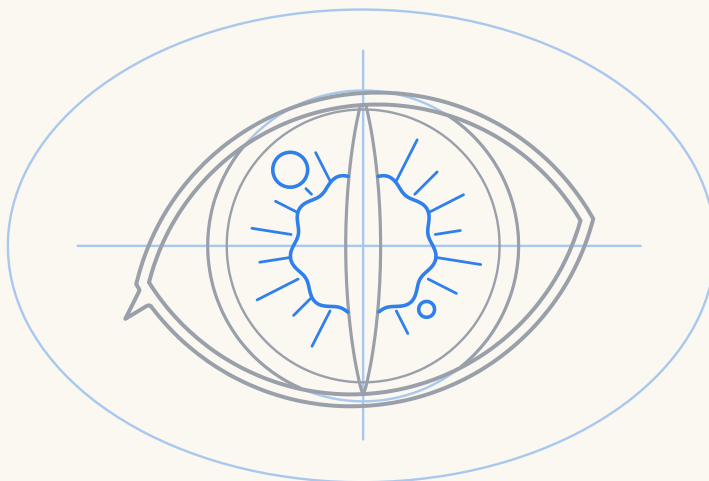
Trace over your guide circle, but only the part that shows between the lids. Then draw a slightly smaller circle inside it, about a finger width in, for the dark edge of the iris. On a real cat the iris fills nearly the whole eye, so only small corners stay empty.

Tip: Trace the outer circle with a coin, then do the inner one by hand.

STEP 5 Draw the tall slit pupil

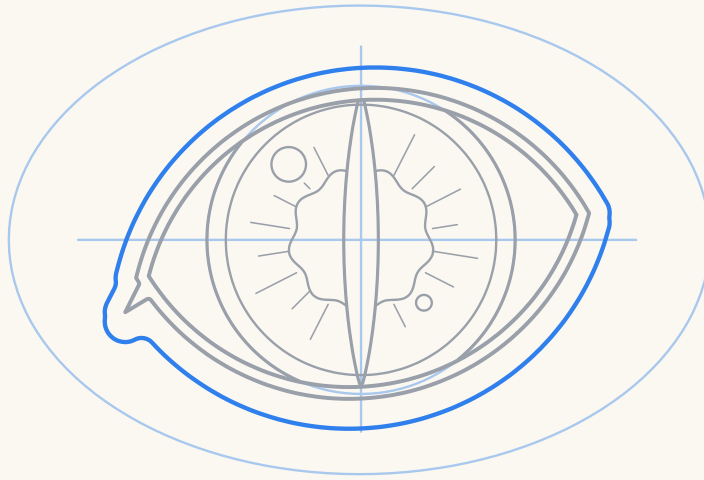
Here's the part everyone waits for. From the top of the iris to the bottom, along the upright guide, draw a long, thin shape like a stretched leaf: pointed at both ends and widest in the middle. In bright light a cat's pupil really does squeeze down to a slit like this.

 **Tip:** I draw one side in a single stroke, then the other. Stopping halfway leaves a bump.

STEP 6 Add the iris lines and two shines

Around the pupil, draw a wavy ring about halfway out to the iris edge. Many green-eyed cats have a gold zone in the middle like this. From that ring, add short rays pointing outward, some long, some short. Finish with two circles for reflections, a bigger one upper left and a tiny one lower right.

 **Tip:** Leave a small space around each shine circle so no iris lines run through it.

STEP 7 Draw the pale ring of fur

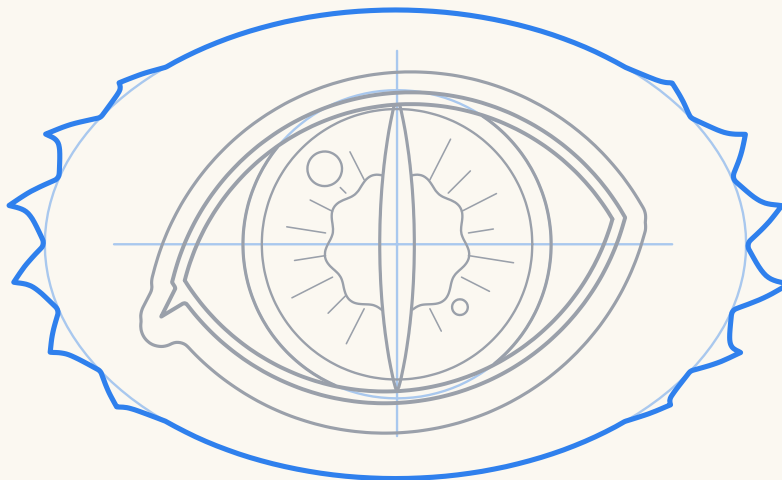
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Most cats have lighter fur hugging the eye. Draw a smooth line about a fingertip outside the dark rim, a bit wider below the eye than above. I like this ring a lot: it separates the eye from the fur and makes the colors pop.

Tip: Draw this ring with your hand resting on the paper below the eye; the curve comes out steadier.

STEP 8 Shape the tufted fur edge

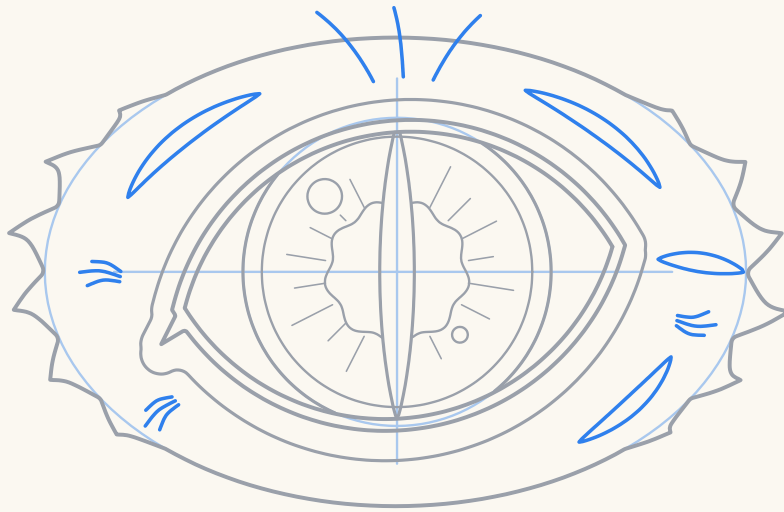
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Follow the big guide oval to mark where this patch of face ends. Keep the top and bottom smooth. On the left and right sides, break the line into a few pointed tufts that sweep outward, like cheek fluff. Those tufts tell the eye it's looking at fur and not at a sticker.

Tip: I vary the tufts slightly in size, since identical points look like a saw blade.

STEP 9 Add stripes, fur strokes and brow whiskers

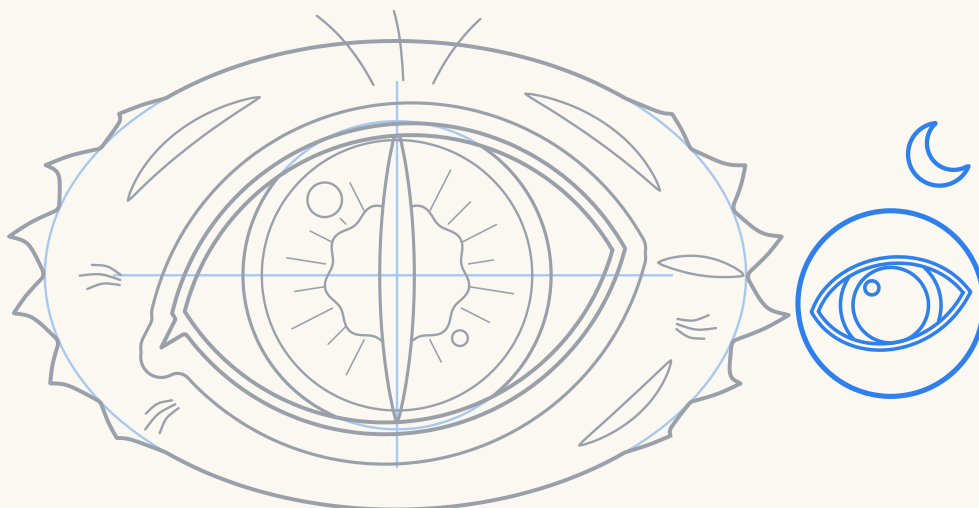
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Tabby markings follow the shape of the eye, so draw two curved stripes above it and one below on the right, pointed at both ends. Add a short stripe behind the outer corner. Then put three small fanned fur strokes on the cheeks and three long brow whiskers rising past the edge of the fur.

Tip: Group the fur strokes in threes and leave space between groups. Scattered single hairs read as scratches.

STEP 10 Draw the round pupil for the dark

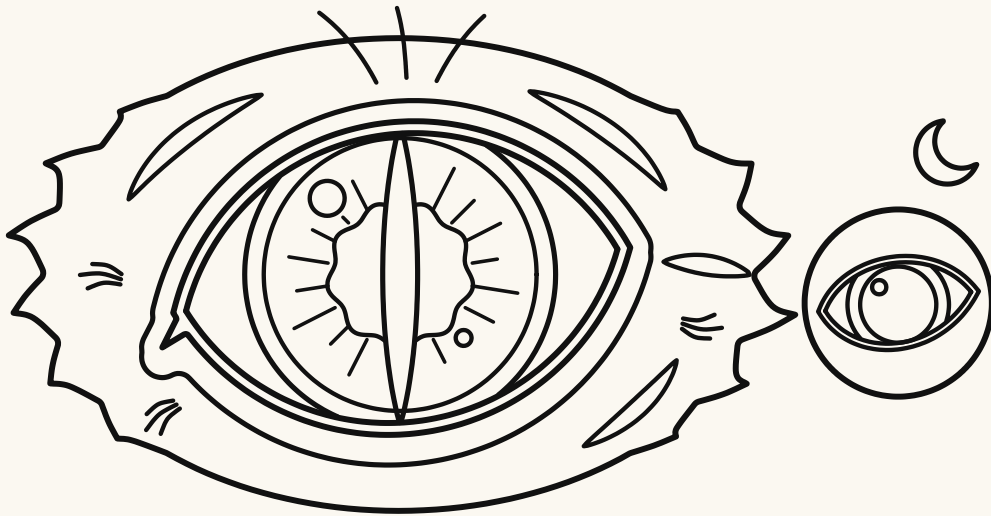
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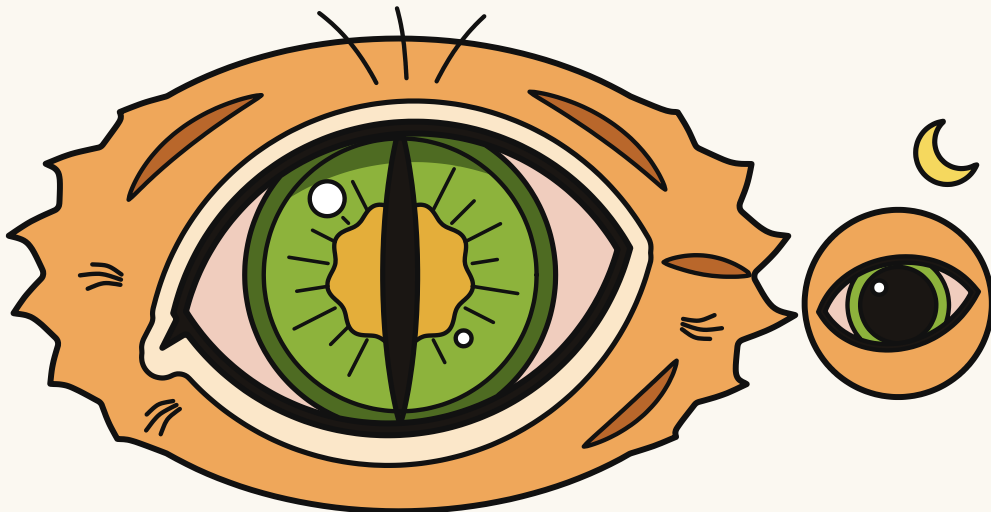
To the right, draw a circle about a quarter the width of the fur patch. Inside, draw a small almond eye with a dark rim and an iris, like before. This time the pupil is a big round circle that leaves only a thin ring of iris. Add a tiny shine, and a crescent moon above, to show it's night.

Tip: Make the round pupil cover most of the iris; a small dot looks human.

STEP 11 Ink the keeper lines and erase guides

With the black pen, go over the lines you want to keep. I start with the pupil and the shines, since those need the calmest hand, and finish with the long fur edge. Skip the cross, the iris guide and the big oval. Give the ink a minute, then erase every pencil mark.

 **Tip:** Spin the paper as you go, so you're always pulling the pen toward you around the curves.

STEP 12 Color the cat eye

Fill the fur with orange and the stripes with brown, and keep the ring around the eye cream. The rim and both pupils are solid black. Color the iris green with a dark green outer band and a gold middle, then add dark green under the upper lid for its shadow. The corners get soft pink.

 **Tip:** My rule: leave both shines as bare white paper. Erasing color never looks as clean.