How to Draw a Chibi Character

12 easy steps for beginners



What you'll need

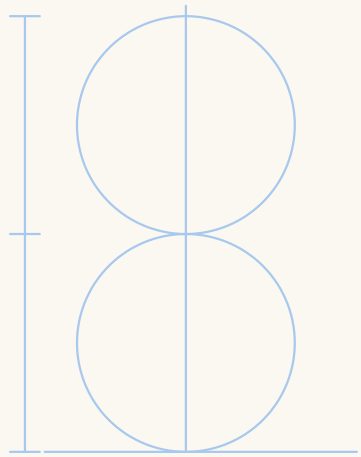
- A pencil
- An eraser
- A black marker
- Colored pencils or markers
- White paper

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 →

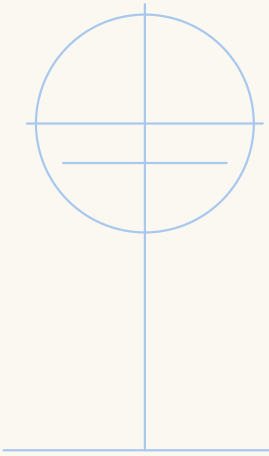
STEP 1 Measure two heads tall



Draw a flat ground line near the bottom of the page and a straight center line rising from it. Right on that center line, stack two equal circles from the ground up, and add a short measuring bar beside them with a tick at the top, the middle and the ground. That stack is the whole chibi rule in one picture: the top circle becomes the head, and the body plus the arms and legs fit in the bottom one.

💡 **Tip:** Make both circles the same size; if the bottom one is bigger, your chibi turns into a toddler instead of a tiny doll.

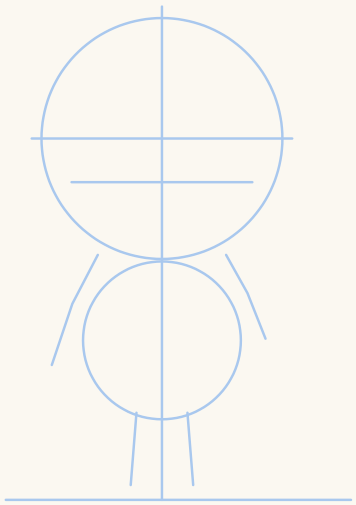
STEP 2 Keep the top circle as the head and add the eye line



Erase the bottom circle and the measuring bar, and keep the top circle: it is already the right size for the head. Cut it in half with a level middle line. Then add a second, shorter line a little below the middle. In chibi faces the eyes sit on or below the halfway mark, and that low placement is what makes the face read as young and round.

💡 **Tip:** If the head looks too big, it's probably right; resist shrinking it.

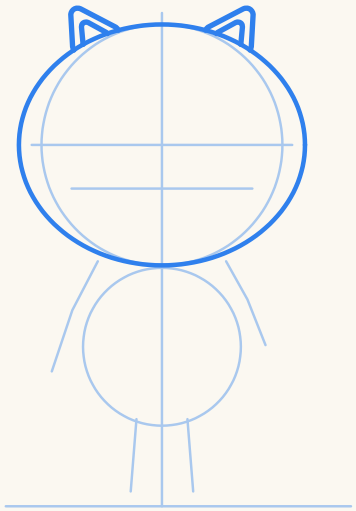
STEP 3 Sketch a small body and limb lines



Under the head, draw a small circle for the body. It should be narrower than the head and touch its bottom edge. Add short slanted lines for the arms from the shoulders, and two short lines for the legs that stop at the ground. Keep every limb short. Long arms or legs are the quickest way to lose the chibi look.

💡 **Tip:** Check the arm lines: the hands should end around the bottom of the body circle, not lower.

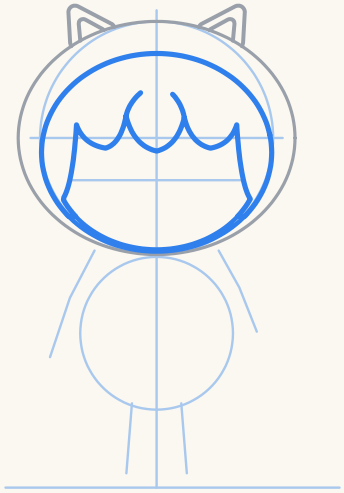
STEP 4 Outline the hood and the cat ears



Draw the hood as a wide oval around the head circle, a bit wider than the circle on each side so it looks puffy. On top, add two rounded triangles for the cat ears, set far apart, with a smaller triangle inside each one. I round the ear tips slightly, because sharp points make the hood look stiff.

💡 **Tip:** Start each ear from the hood line and lean it outward a little.

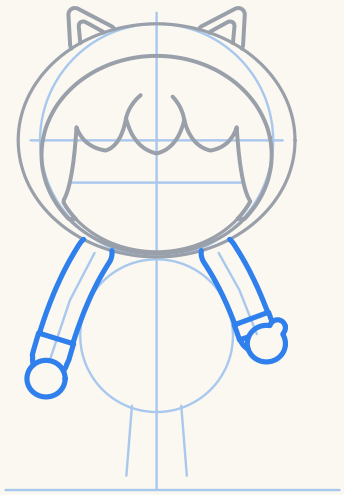
STEP 5 Add the round face and the hair



Inside the hood, draw a second oval for the opening, then a round face that fills most of it and touches the bottom. For the hair, draw three soft clumps of bangs that hang across the forehead, with a longer lock down each cheek. The bangs stop just above the eye line, so leave that space clear.

💡 **Tip:** Make the bang clumps different widths; perfect copies look like a paper crown.

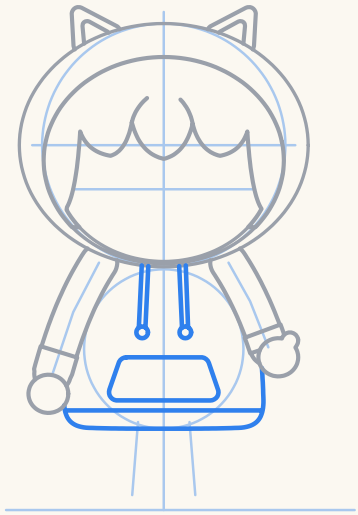
STEP 6 Draw stubby arms and mitten hands



Turn each arm line into a soft, wide sleeve that starts under the hood. Close each sleeve with a short cuff, and finish with a round mitten hand. The right hand gets a small thumb bump on top, since it will hold the drink. Arms this thick feel squishy and toylike, which suits the style much better than thin sticks.

💡 **Tip:** Draw the sleeve as two curves that stay the same distance apart, like a sausage.

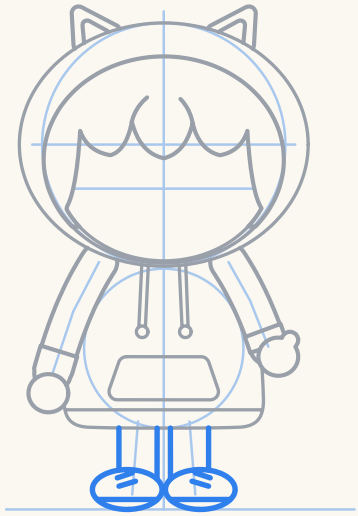
STEP 7 Shape the hoodie with its pocket and strings



Now draw the hoodie body around the arms: a short, rounded shape that flares slightly toward a flat hem. Add a line for the hem band, a wide pocket across the tummy, and two strings hanging from under the chin with little round tips. Notice that the hoodie is barely taller than it is wide.

💡 **Tip:** Keep the bottom corners curved; square corners make the body look like a box.

STEP 8 Draw short legs and sneakers



Below the hem, draw two short legs, each a narrow rounded rectangle. Put a rounded sneaker over the bottom of each one, with its toe pointing slightly outward, and add a sole line and two small lace marks. The shoes should touch the ground line so your chibi stands steadily instead of floating.

💡 **Tip:** Big shoes help balance a big head, so draw them wider than the legs.

STEP 9 Add the boba cup and pearls



Draw a tapered cup beside the right hand, wider at the top, so the mitten overlaps its edge. Add a domed lid, a straw poking out at an angle, a line for the tea level, and five little circles at the bottom for the tapioca pearls. Overlapping the hand in front of the cup is what makes it look held.

💡 **Tip:** Draw the pearls in a small pile, two on top of three, rather than in a straight row.

STEP 10 Draw big low eyes, a tiny nose and a smile



Center each eye on the low eye line. They're tall ovals, almost as tall as the space between the bangs and the cheeks, with a small lash flick at the outer corner. Add a big round shine and a tiny one in each eye. Below them, place a dot for the nose, a small open smile, and blush marks on the cheeks.

💡 **Tip:** Put the big shine on the same side of both eyes, so the light seems to come from one direction.

STEP 11 Ink the outline and erase the guides



Trace every keeper line with a black marker: the hood, ears, face and hair, then the clothes and hands, the shoes and the drink. Wait a minute for the ink to dry, then erase the circles, the center line and the limb lines. Most beginners rush this part and smear the marker, so give it time.

💡 **Tip:** Ink the face last, when your hand has warmed up and your lines are steadiest.

STEP 12 Color your chibi



Color the hoodie and ears mint, with a darker mint on the right side, the pocket and the cuffs for soft shading. Use peach for the face and hands, brown for the hair, dark brown for the eyes and pearls, and tan for the tea. Finish with pink cheeks, blue pants and white sneakers with light purple soles.

💡 **Tip:** Leave the eye shines white paper; coloring around them is easier than adding white later.