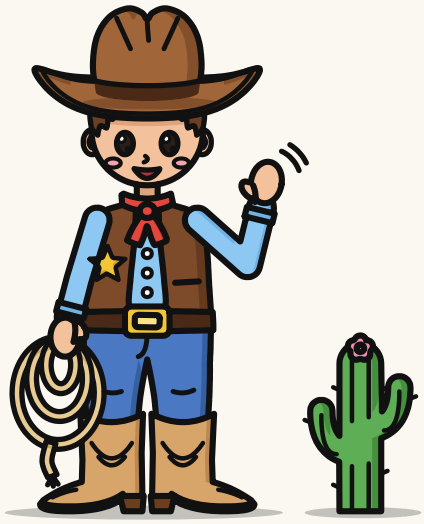
How to Draw a Cowboy

12 easy steps for beginners



What you'll need

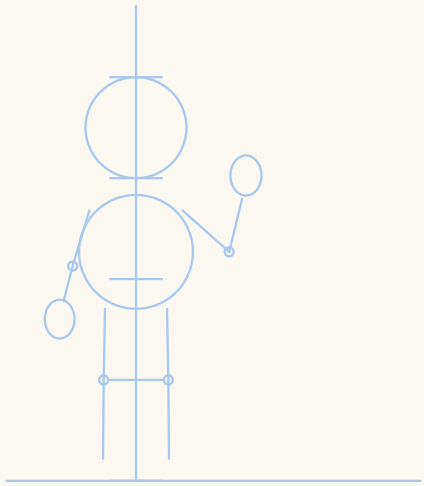
- A pencil
- An eraser
- A black marker
- Colored pencils
- Paper

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 →

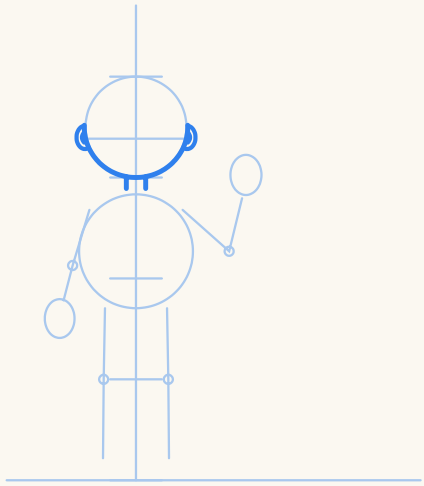
STEP 1 Draw head marks and a stick body



Start with a line down the middle of the page and a ground line at the bottom. Draw a head circle near the top, then make short marks below it, each one head apart, until you reach the ground. Add an oval for the chest, a stick arm hanging down, another bent up for the wave, and two straight legs with small knee circles.

💡 **Tip:** Leave a good gap above the head circle, since the hat will stand up quite a bit higher than the head.

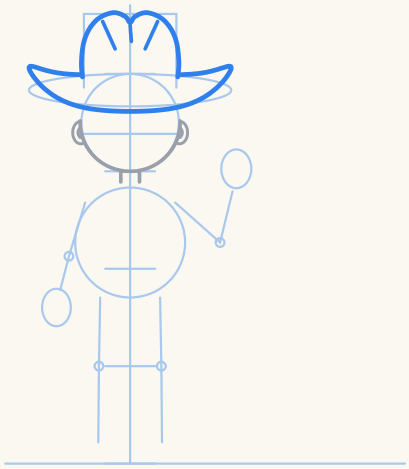
STEP 2 Shape the face, the ears and the neck



Draw a soft line across the middle of the head for the eyes. Trace the lower half of the head circle firmly for the chin; the hat will cover the top. Add a C-shaped ear on each side at eye level and two short neck lines.

💡 **Tip:** Keep the neck short and about as wide as the gap between the eyes, so the head doesn't look like it's floating.

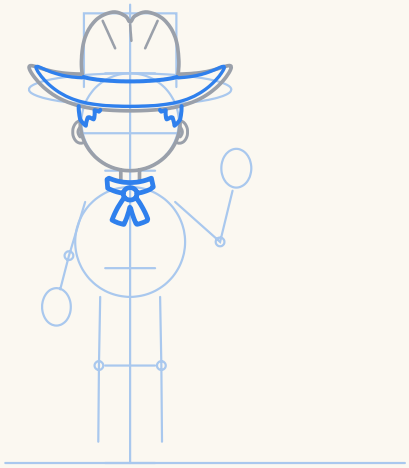
STEP 3 Draw the curled brim and the tall crown



This is where I slow down. Sketch a flat oval across the forehead, roughly twice as wide as the head, and a light box on top for the crown. Now draw the real brim over that oval, but lift both ends upward into curls and let the front edge dip a little toward the eyes. The crown rises from the middle with two bumps on top and two short dent lines.

💡 **Tip:** Curl both brim ends to the same height; one tip higher than the other makes the hat look tipped over by accident.

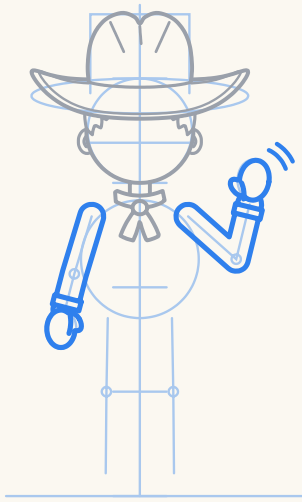
STEP 4 Add the hatband, the hair and the bandana



Run a curved line around the base of the crown to make a band, and add a thin second line just inside the brim edge. A couple of short, spiky hair tufts peek out under the brim beside each ear. For the bandana, draw a band hugging the neck, a small round knot at the front and two tails hanging down.

💡 **Tip:** Curve the bandana band downward in the middle like a smile; a straight band looks like a stiff collar.

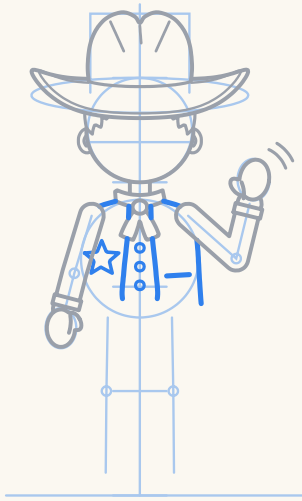
STEP 5 Draw the sleeves, the cuffs and the hands



Follow each stick arm with two lines for a long sleeve, and add a slightly wider cuff at the wrist. Hands are mittens with a thumb bump: the lower one rests at hip level for the rope, the raised one opens toward his hat. Two short curved lines beside it show the wave.

💡 **Tip:** Give the arms real width, about a third of the head, so they look soft and cartoony instead of like sticks.

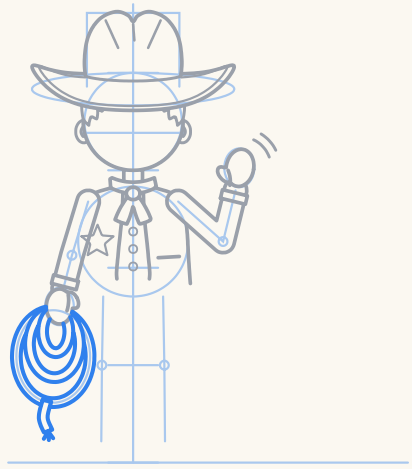
STEP 6 Add the open vest and the star badge



The vest is two panels with a strip of shirt showing between them. Draw each inner edge from the bandana down to the waist, curving out slightly at the bottom. Put three small round buttons on the shirt strip, a pocket line on one panel and a five-point star on the other.

💡 **Tip:** Place the star high on the chest, level with the elbows, where a real badge would be pinned.

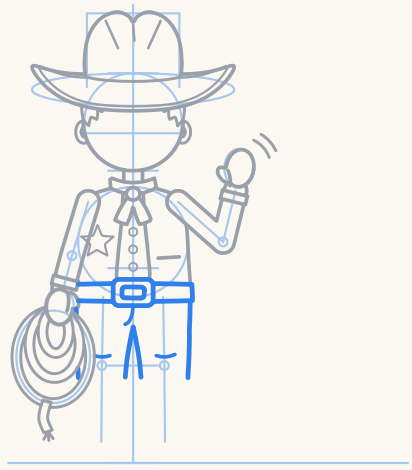
STEP 7 Draw a coiled rope lasso



Lightly sketch a tall oval hanging from the lower hand as a size guide. Inside it, draw three rope loops that all start at the hand and drop to different depths, smallest in front. Rope has thickness, so each loop gets two close lines. Finish with a short tail hanging from the bottom and a few frayed strands at its end.

💡 **Tip:** Draw the smallest loop first and the bigger ones around it; that way you never have to erase a line that should be hidden.

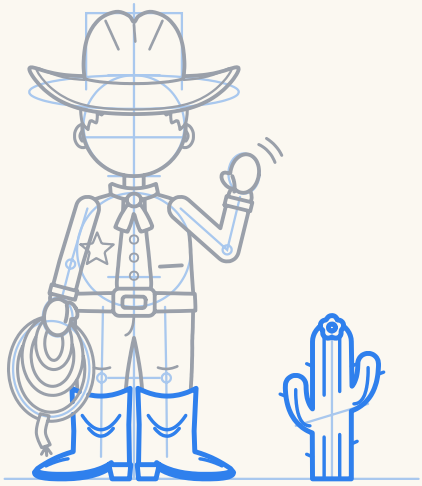
STEP 8 Add the belt, the buckle and the jeans



The belt runs across the waist below the vest. Cowboy buckles are big, so make yours a rounded rectangle wider than the belt is tall, with a smaller rectangle inside. Under the belt, draw each jean leg down to around the third head mark, with a narrow gap between them. Leave the bottoms open for the boots. Add a short fly line and two knee creases.

💡 **Tip:** Let the inner leg lines meet a little under the buckle, not right at the belt, so his legs don't look too short.

STEP 9 Draw the boots, the heels and a cactus



Each boot starts as a tall shaft with a V-shaped dip at the top. At the bottom, the foot turns outward into a long pointed toe, and a small block heel sits under the back. Add a sole line and a few curved stitch lines. Beside him, add a cactus: a rounded trunk with an arm on each side and a flower on top.

💡 **Tip:** Point the toes away from each other; boots pointing straight at you are tricky and look stubby.

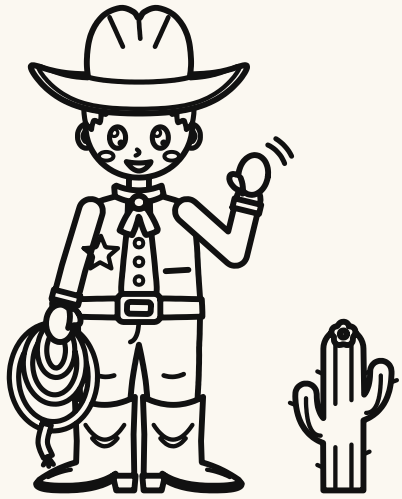
STEP 10 Give him eyes, a nose and a smile



Two tall ovals go on the eye line, spaced about one eye apart. Draw a big shine circle near the top of each and a tiny one below it. A small hook is enough for the nose. For the mouth, I like a small open smile with a flat top and a round bottom and a little tongue inside. Flat cheek ovals finish the face.

💡 **Tip:** Keep the eyes just under the brim shadow but not touching it; that little gap lets the face breathe.

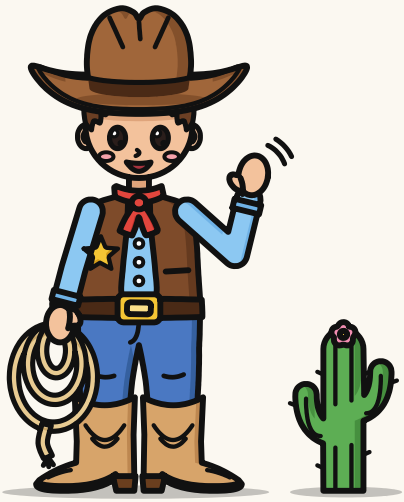
STEP 11 Ink the lines and erase the guides



Go over every keeper line with your marker. Leave the head circle, the stick limbs, the marks and the guide ovals alone. I ink from the top down so my hand never smears fresh ink. Let it dry, then erase the pencil.

💡 **Tip:** Ink the rope loops slowly in one pass each; stopping halfway leaves a bump that shows.

STEP 12 Color your cowboy



Use brown for the hat, the vest and the belt, with a darker hatband. Color the bandana red, the shirt light blue and the jeans a deeper blue. The star and buckle are yellow, the boots and rope tan, and the cactus green with a pink flower. A darker strip down the right side of the crown and jeans adds shape.

💡 **Tip:** Use a darker skin shade just under the brim; it tells the eye the hat is really shading his face.