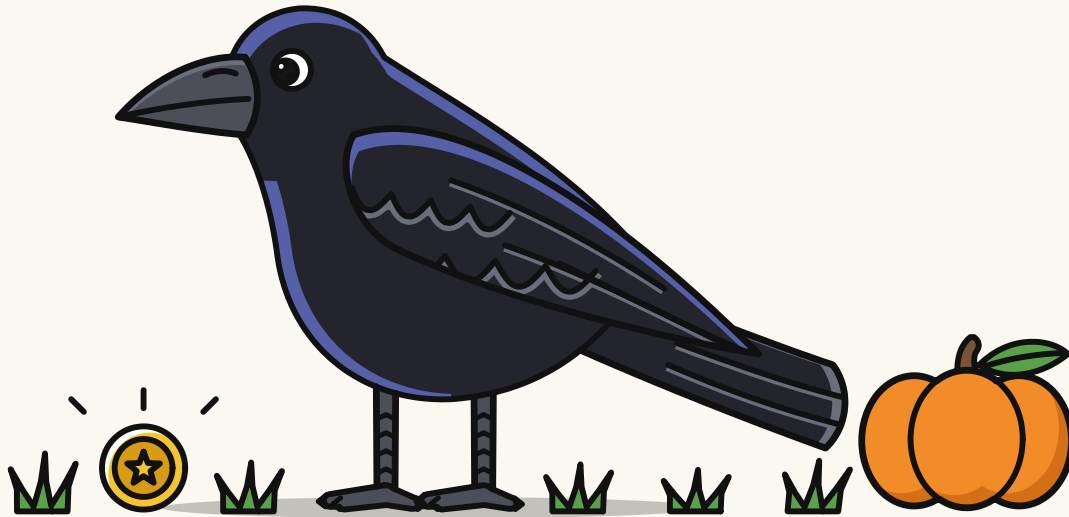


How to Draw a Crow

12 easy steps for beginners



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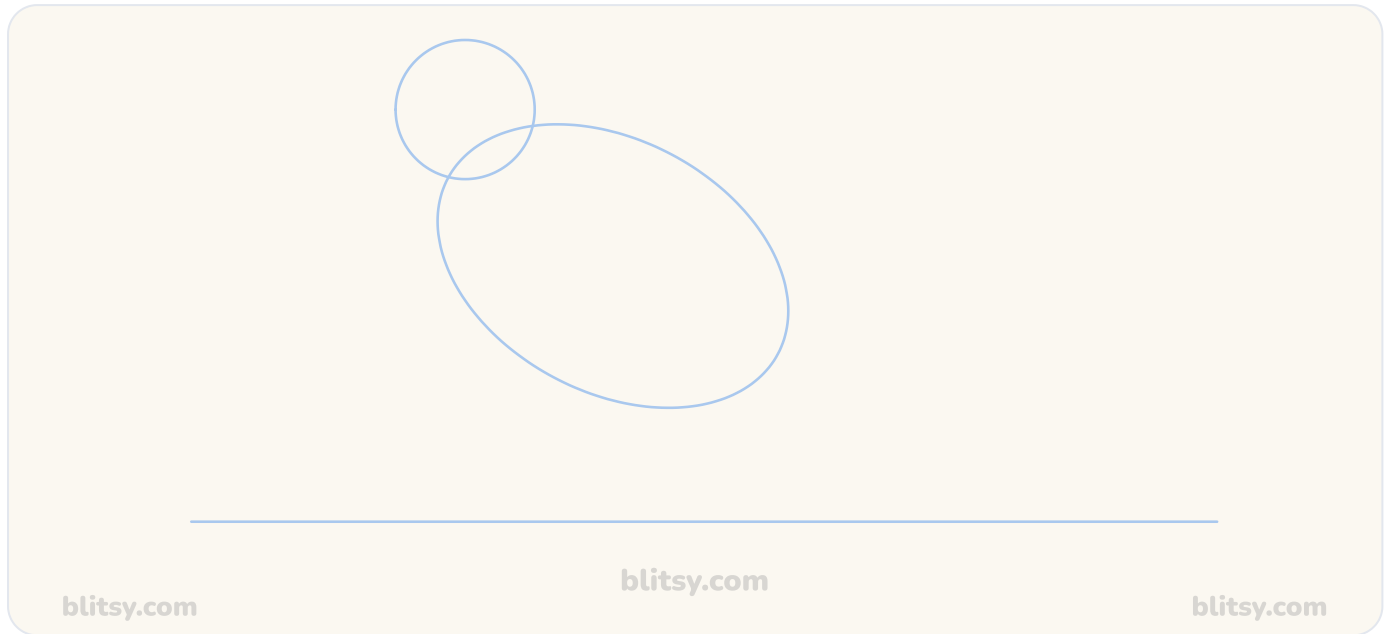
What you'll need

- A pencil
- An eraser
- A black fineliner
- Colored pencils
- Plain paper

How to use this guide

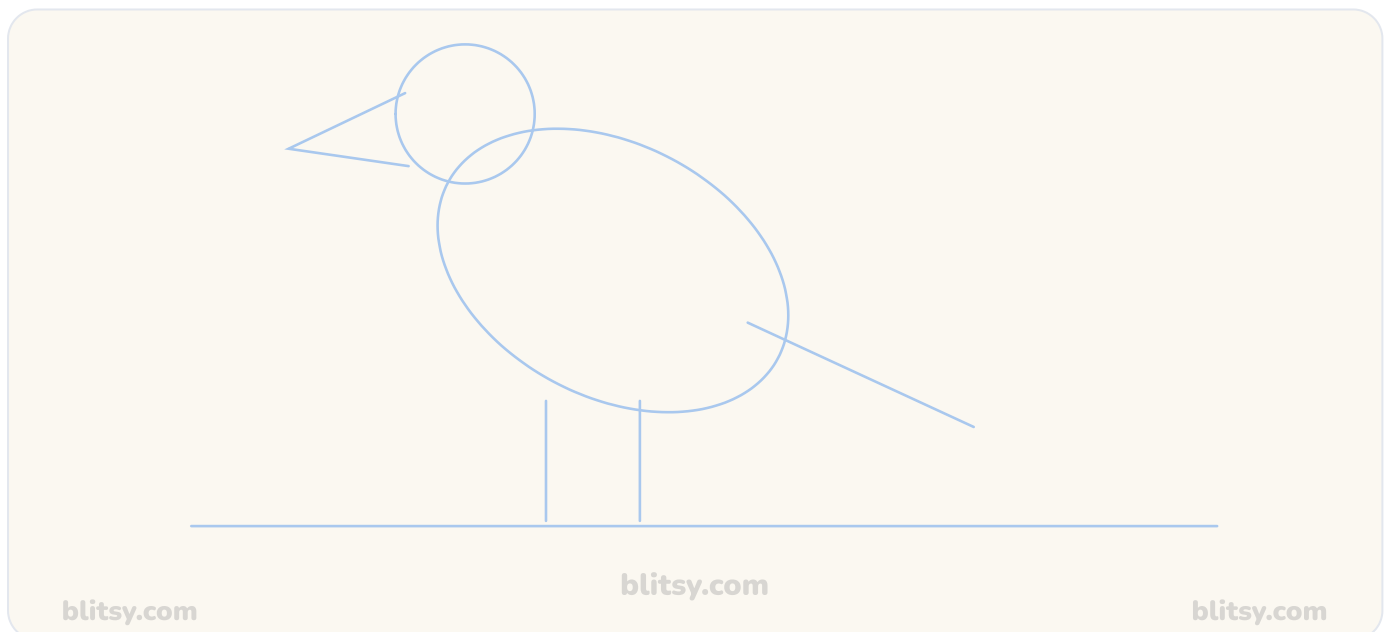
New lines for each step are shown in **blue**; lines you already drew are gray. Draw lightly first, then ink and erase near the end.

[Read the full tutorial online →](#)

STEP 1 Draw the ground line and guide shapes

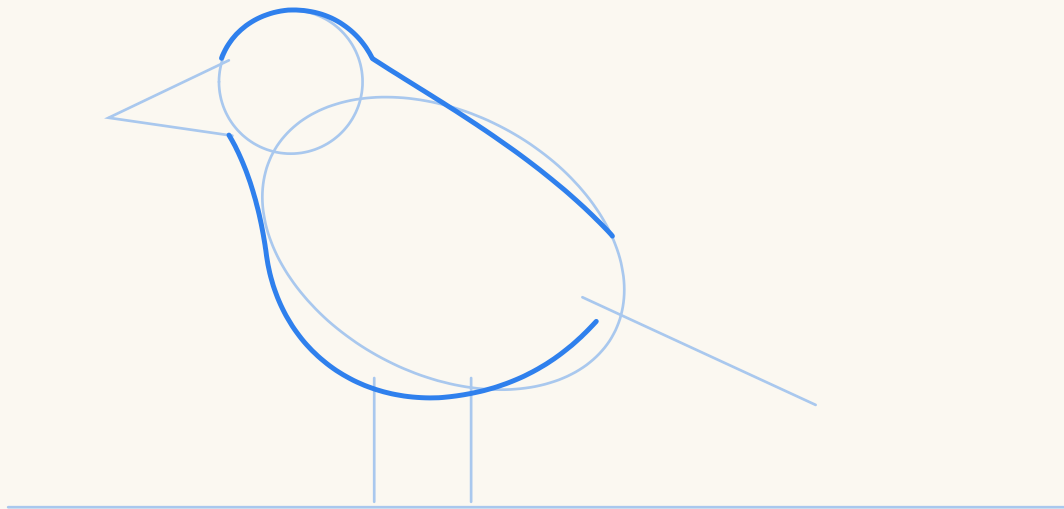
Start with a long flat line near the bottom of the page for the ground. Up on the left, draw a circle for the head. Then add a big oval for the body that overlaps the lower right of the circle and tilts down toward the right, like an egg lying at a slant.

 **Tip:** Leave a gap of about one head height between the oval and the ground line. That space becomes the legs.

STEP 2 Add guides for the beak, the tail and the legs

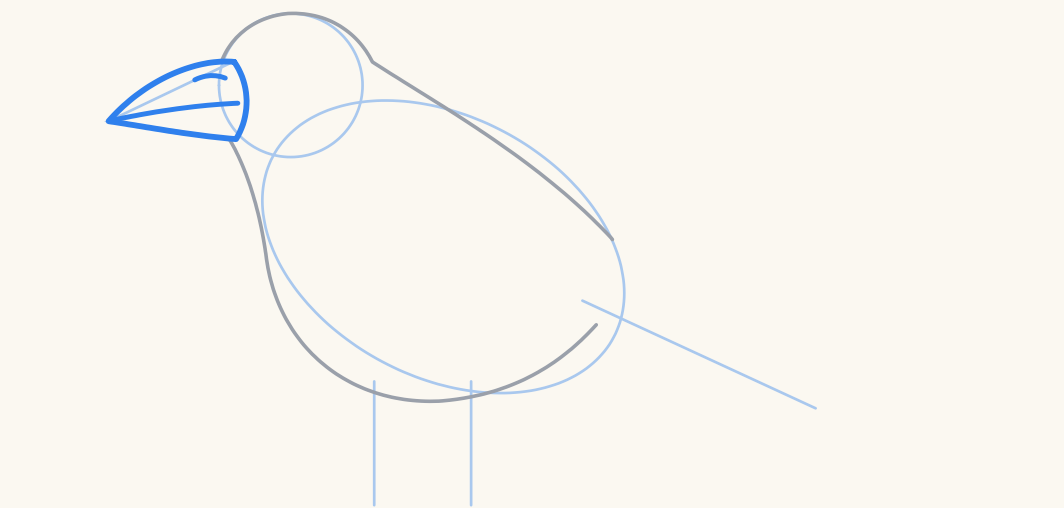
On the left side of the head, sketch a long, pointed triangle for the beak. From the lower back of the oval, draw a straight slanted line for the tail. Finish with two short upright lines from the belly down to the ground.

 **Tip:** Space the two leg lines a little apart. If they touch, the crow looks like it's balancing on one stick.

STEP 3 Outline the crow head and body

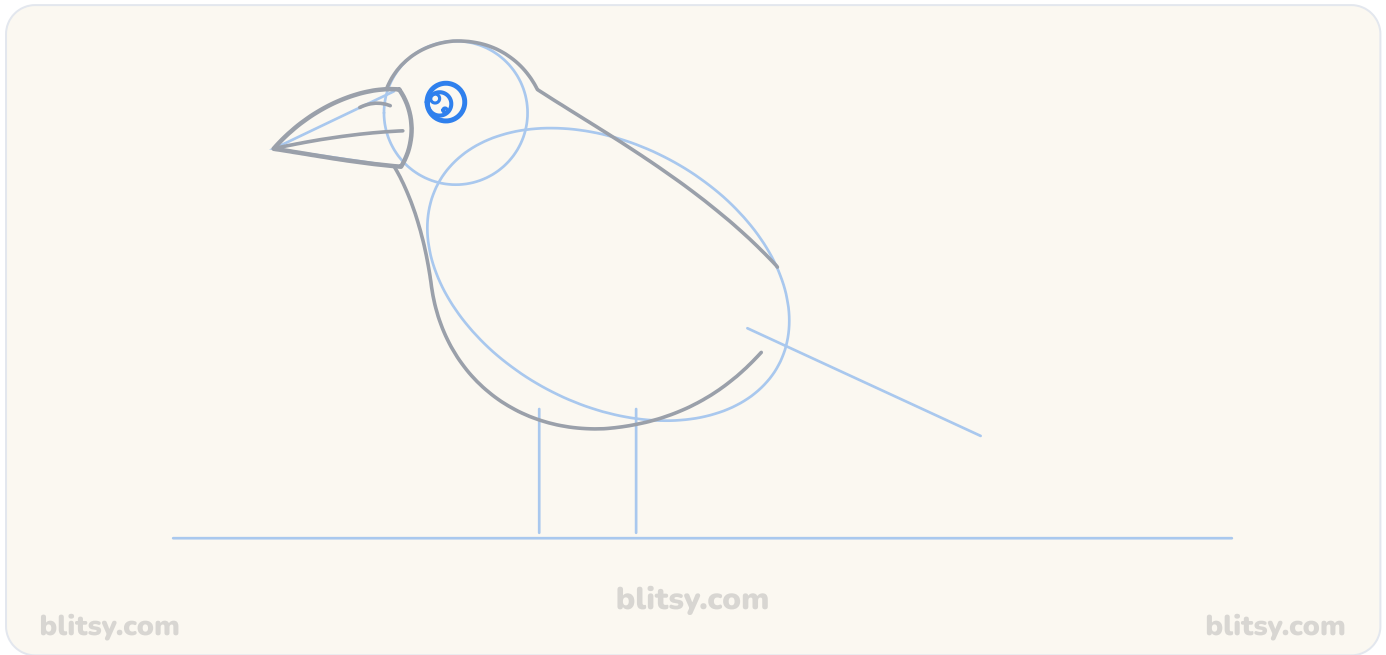
Follow the top of the head circle, then let the line slide down the back in one long curve. Go back to the beak and draw the throat and chest, bulging slightly past the oval, then sweep under the belly. I stop both lines short of the back end on purpose, since the wing will cover that spot in a few steps.

Tip: Make the back almost straight. A crow looks sleek because its back doesn't hump like a songbird's.

STEP 4 Draw the thick curved beak

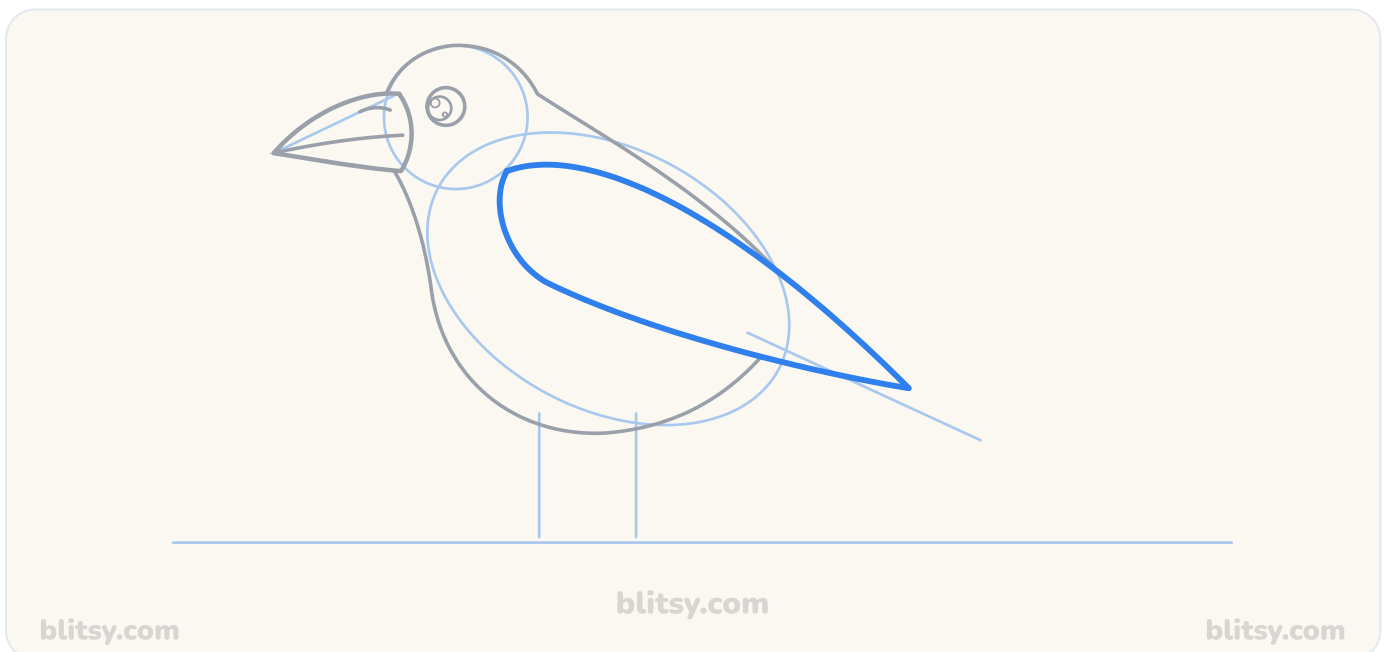
Over the triangle guide, draw a heavy beak with a top edge that curves gently down to the tip. The bottom edge stays nearly straight. Close the back of the beak against the face, then add one line through the middle and a small curve near the top for the nostril.

Tip: Keep the base of the beak tall. A thin beak turns your crow into a blackbird.

STEP 5 Add a bright eye with a shine

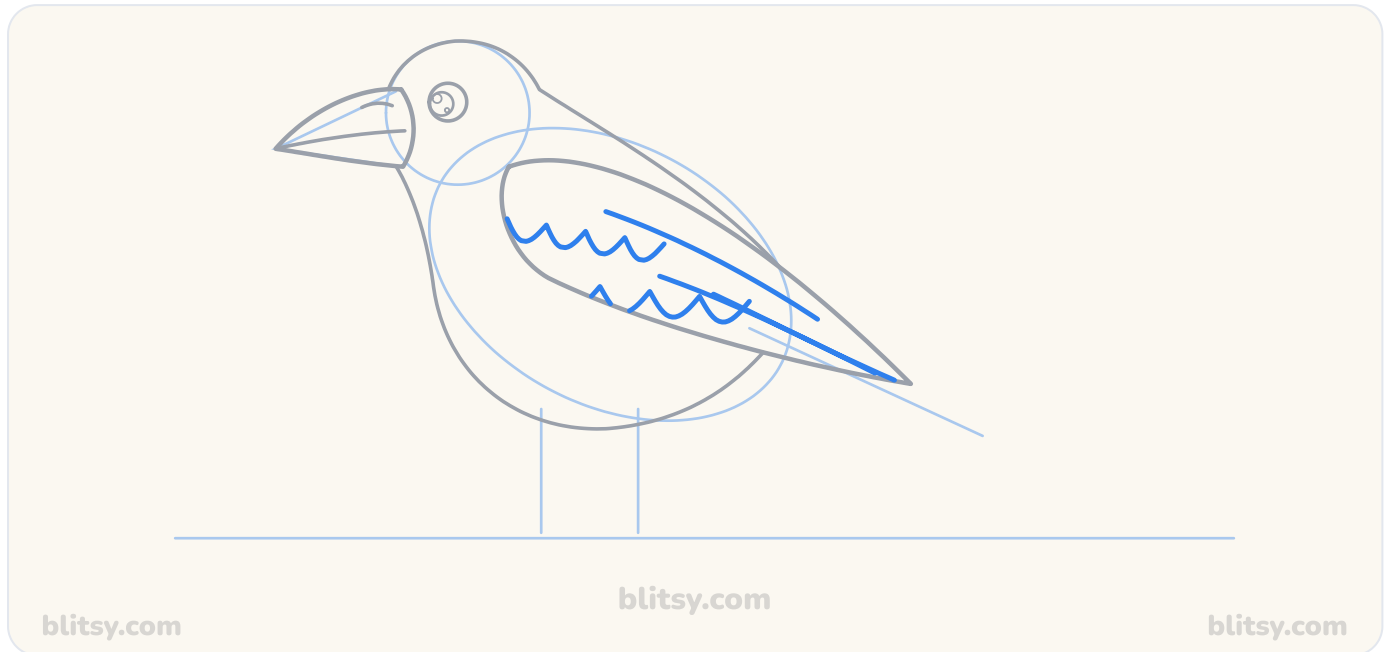
Place the eye just above the line of the beak, a little behind where the beak meets the head. Draw a round eye, then a smaller circle inside for the pupil, shifted toward the beak so the crow looks forward. Add one tiny circle for the shine and a dot below it.

 **Tip:** Make the eye bigger than a real crow's. That's what gives this one its friendly face.

STEP 6 Draw the folded wing

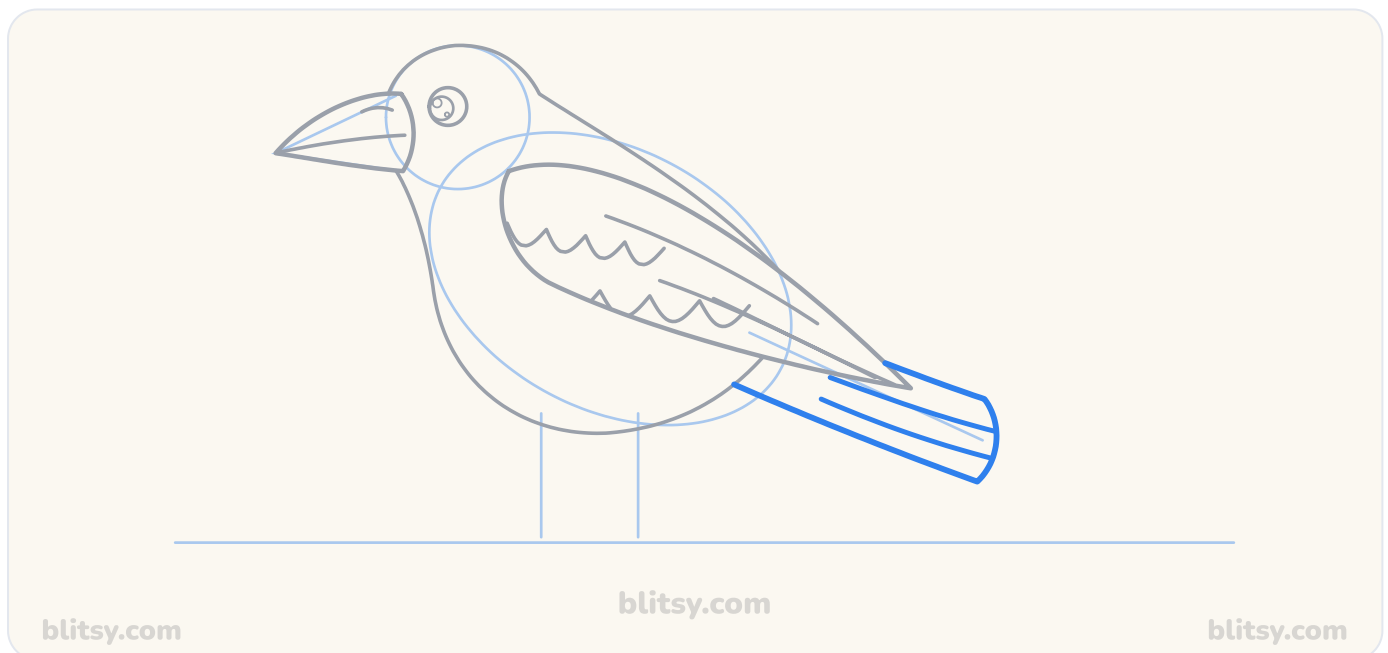
The wing is a long leaf shape lying on the body. Begin just behind the head, follow close to the back line and end in a sharp point that reaches past the oval toward the tail guide. Bring the lower edge back in a soft curve to the front.

 **Tip:** Let the wing tip go past the body. Crows have long wings, and a short one makes the bird look chubby.

STEP 7 Add layered feather rows

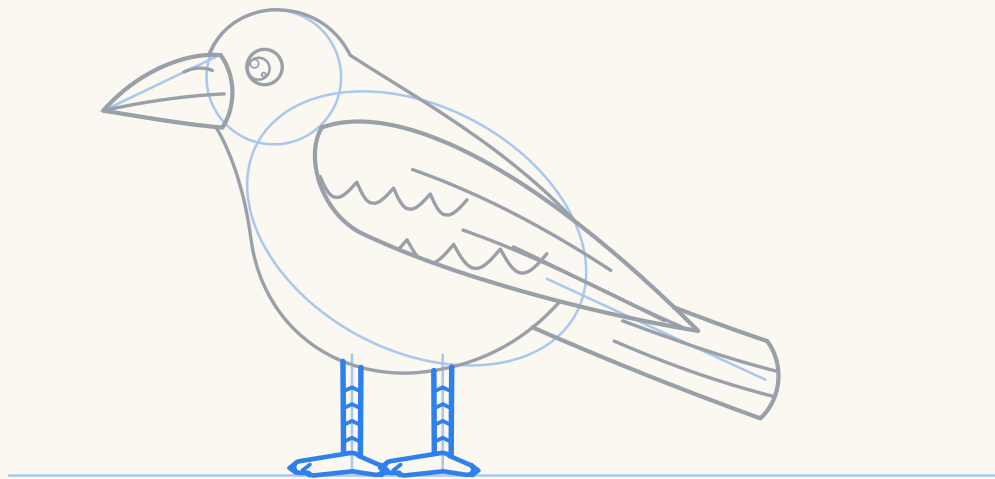
Near the top of the wing, draw a row of small bumps like a scalloped edge. Below it, draw a second row with slightly bigger bumps. These are the smaller wing feathers overlapping like roof tiles. Then pull three long lines toward the wing tip for the flight feathers.

Tip: Draw each bump with the same little wrist motion. Matching bumps look neat even if they aren't perfect.

STEP 8 Draw the fan-shaped tail

Follow the tail guide with two lines that start behind the body and spread slightly apart as they go out. Round off the end with a short curve. Inside, two long lines split the tail into separate feathers. Its upper edge disappears under the wing, so don't draw through it.

Tip: Widen the tail toward its end. If both edges stay parallel, it looks like a stick.

STEP 9 Draw strong legs and scaly toes

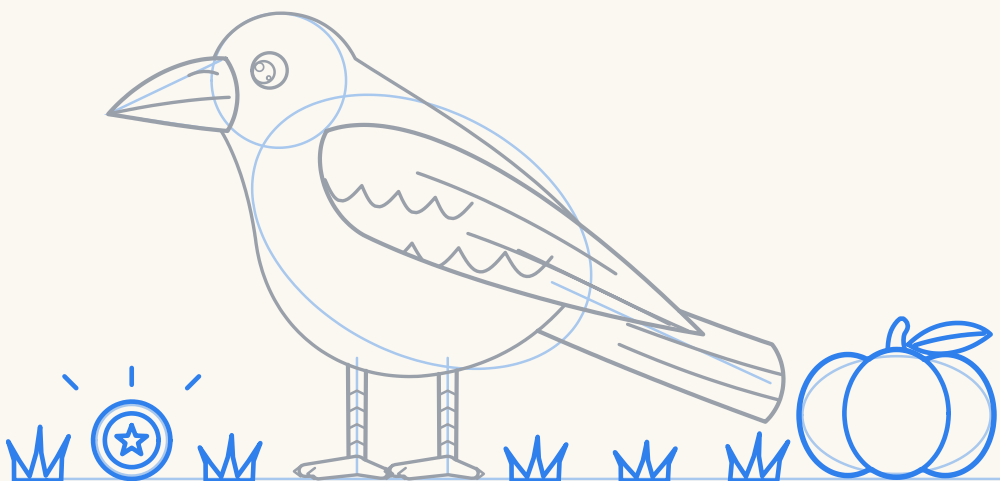
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Go over each leg guide with two close lines. Crow legs are sturdy, so make them thicker than a sparrow's. At the bottom, draw two long toes pointing forward and one short toe pointing back, all flat on the ground, with a small hooked claw at each tip. Little V shapes up the legs show the scales.

Tip: Rest the toes right on the ground line. Toes floating above it make the crow look like it's hovering.

STEP 10 Add the coin, the pumpkin and the grass

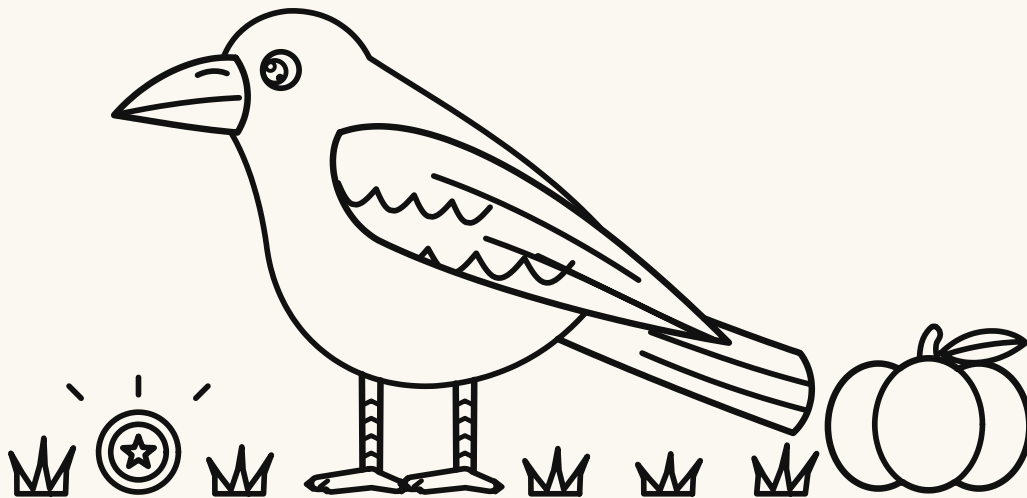
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In front of the crow, draw a circle standing on the ground, a smaller circle inside and a little star in the center. Three short dashes above make it sparkle. On the right, draw a pumpkin from three overlapping round lobes with a curved stem and a leaf. Scatter a few grass tufts along the ground.

Tip: Keep the pumpkin lower than the crow's back. A bigger prop steals attention from the bird.

STEP 11 Ink the lines and erase the guides

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Trace all the keeper lines with your fineliner. I ink the face first while my hand is fresh, then the wing feathers, and leave the grass for last. Skip every pale guide. Let it dry fully before you erase the circle, the oval and the guide lines.

Tip: Turn the paper as you ink the scallops so your hand always pulls the pen toward you.

STEP 12 Color your crow

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Here's my trick for a black bird. Before any black goes down, color a thin blue-purple strip along the top of the head, the back, the chest and the top edge of the wing. Add gray just above each feather row and along the flight feathers. Then fill the rest with black around those strips. Dark gray goes on the beak and legs, gold on the coin, orange on the pumpkin.

Tip: Leave the eye white with its shine. On a black bird, that bright spot is what people notice first.