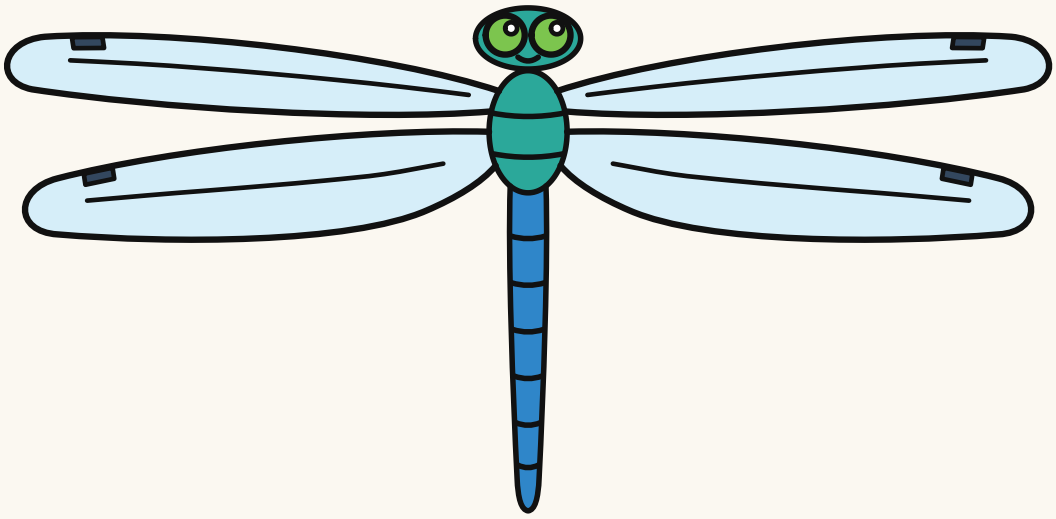
How to Draw a Dragonfly

10 easy steps for beginners



What you'll need

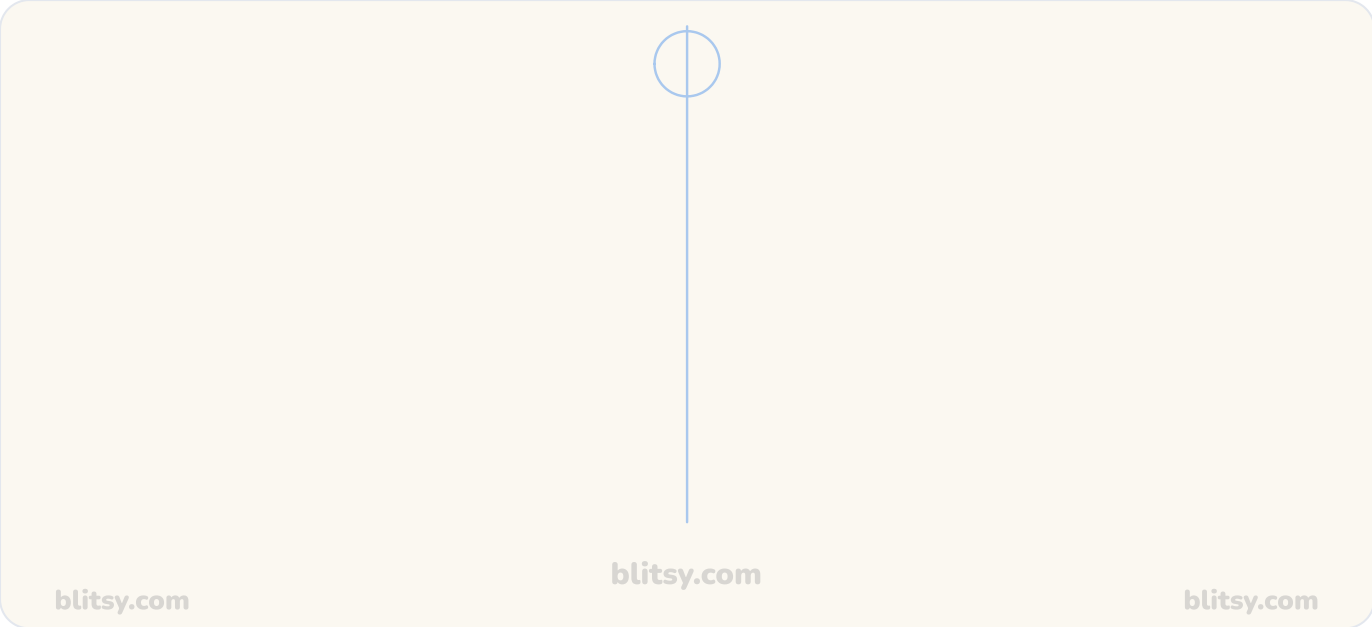
- A pencil
- An eraser
- A black fineliner
- Colored pencils or markers
- Plain paper

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 →

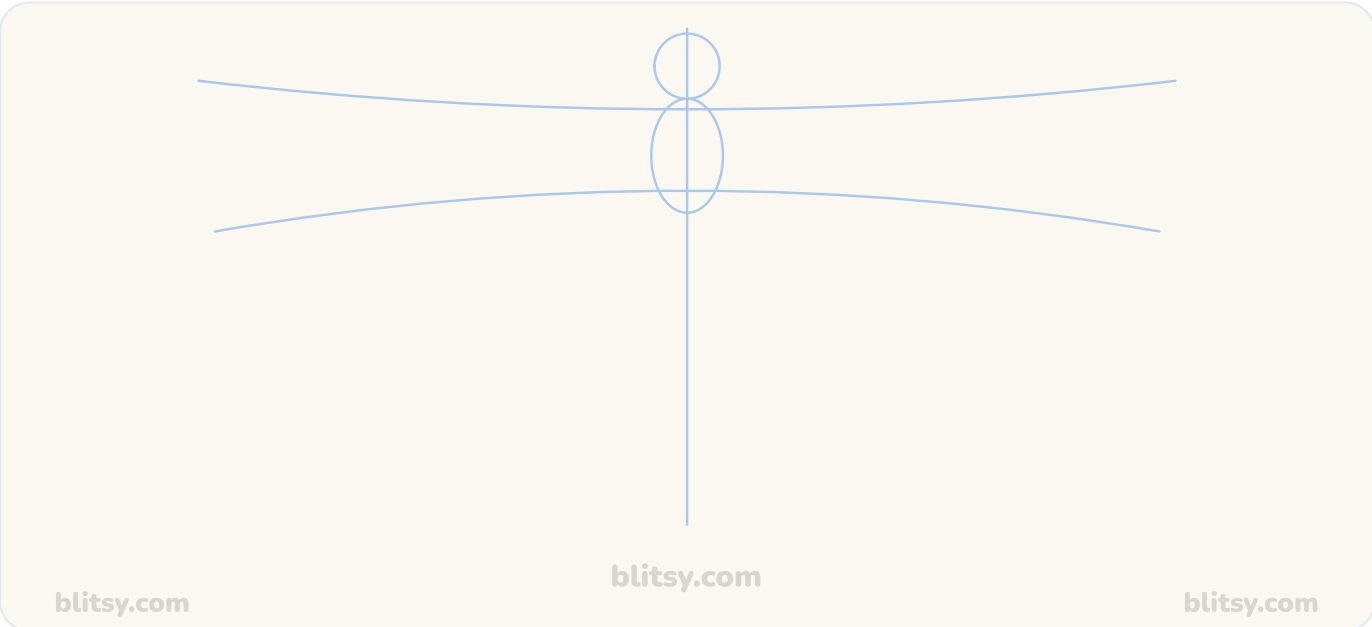
STEP 1 Draw a guide line and a head circle



Start with one straight vertical line down the middle of your paper, from near the top to near the bottom. Everything else is built around it. At the very top of the line, sketch a small circle for the head. I keep this circle small on purpose: a dragonfly's head is only a little wider than its body.

💡 **Tip:** Use a ruler for the center line if your hand wobbles. Nobody will see it after step 9.

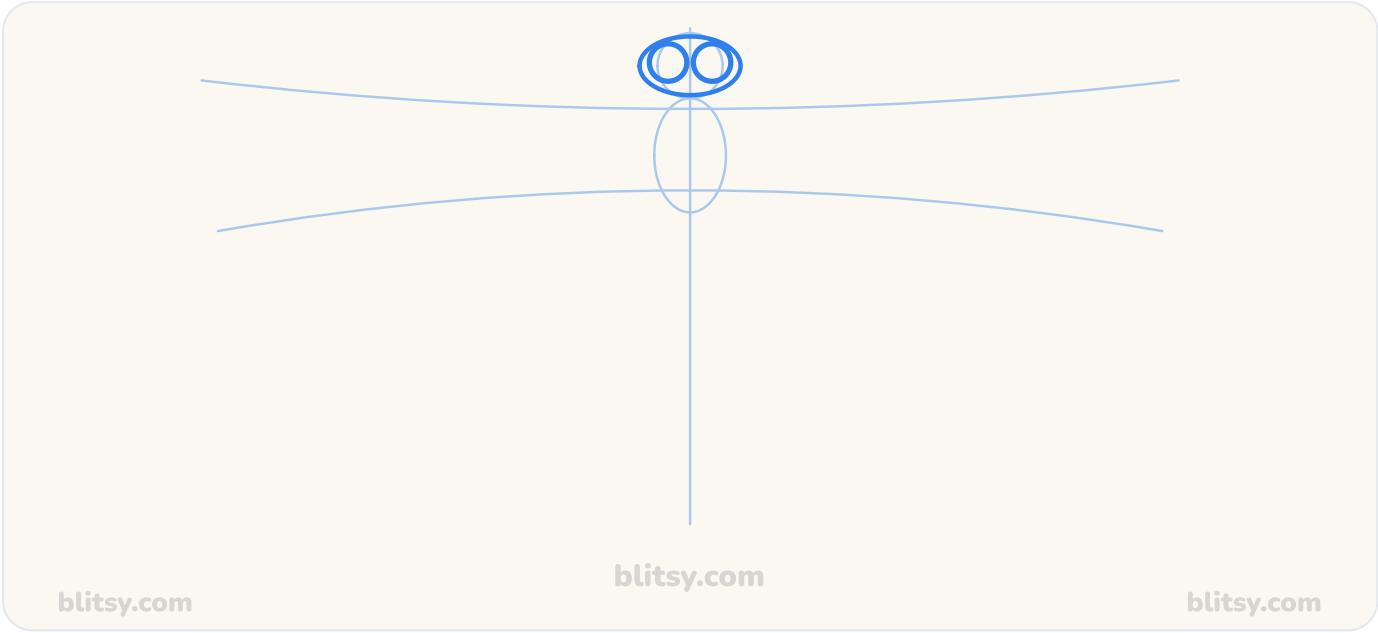
STEP 2 Add the body oval and two wing lines



Right under the head, draw a tall oval centered on the line. This chunky part is the thorax, where all four wings attach. Next, draw two long curved lines across the paper. The upper one crosses the top of the oval and bends gently down in the middle. The lower one crosses near the bottom of the oval and arches the other way.

💡 **Tip:** Stretch the wing lines almost to the paper's edges. Short guides lead to short, stubby wings.

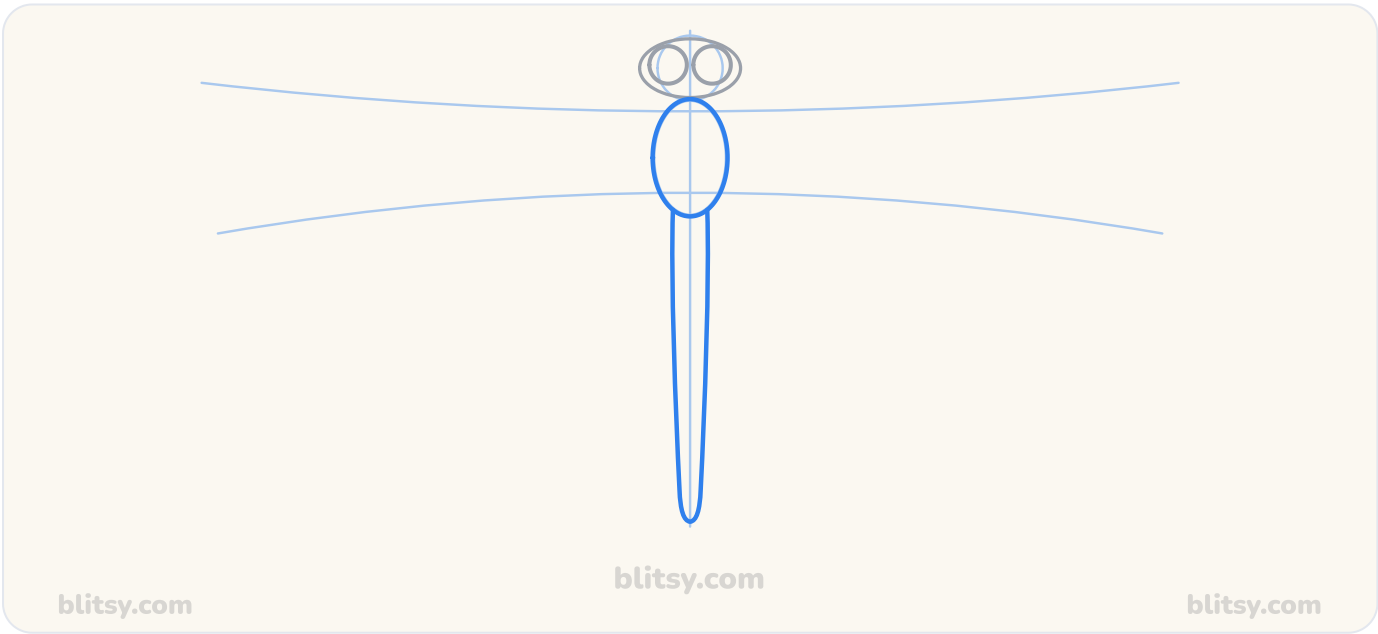
STEP 3 Draw the head and big eyes



Turn the head circle into a wider oval, a bit like a flattened egg lying on its side. Inside it, draw two large round eyes side by side so they nearly fill the head. Real dragonflies have enormous eyes that wrap around their face, so it's fine if yours almost touch the edges.

💡 **Tip:** Draw the left eye, then the right one at the same height. Matching heights keeps the face friendly.

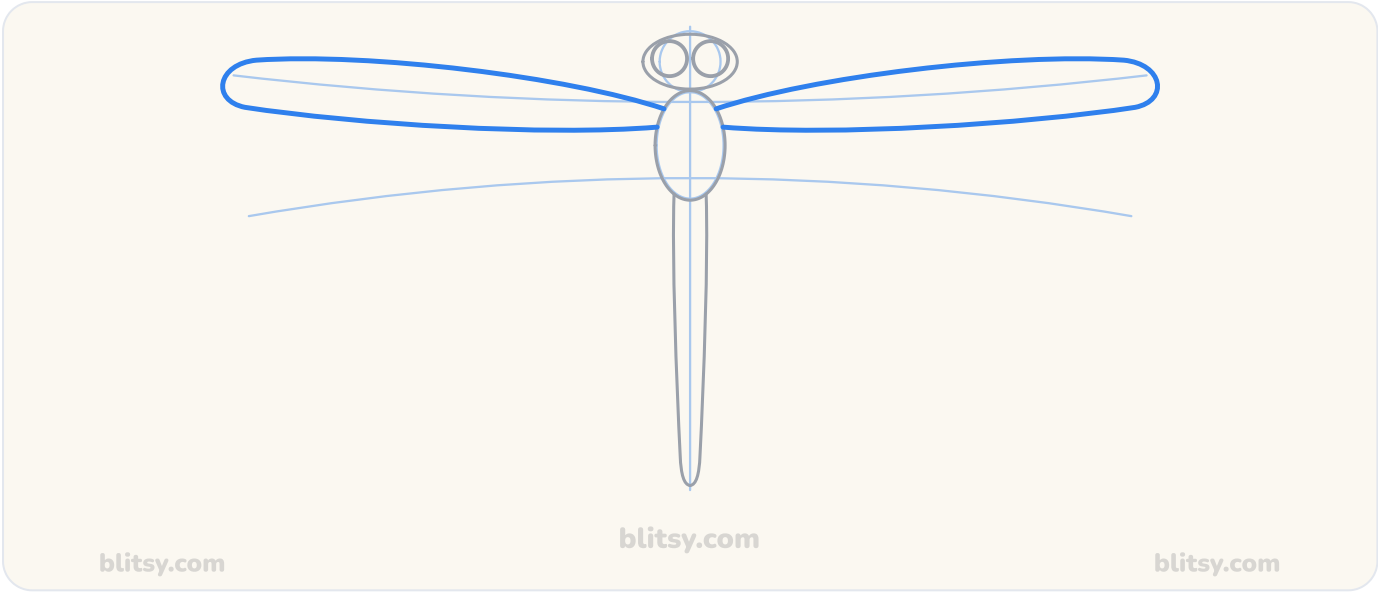
STEP 4 Outline the body and the long tail



Go over the oval guide with a confident line to make the thorax. From its bottom, draw the tail as two long lines running down beside the center line, close together. Let them come a little closer as they go down, and join them with a small rounded tip at the bottom. The tail should be roughly as long as one wing.

💡 **Tip:** Draw each long tail line in one smooth pull of your arm, not in short scratchy bits.

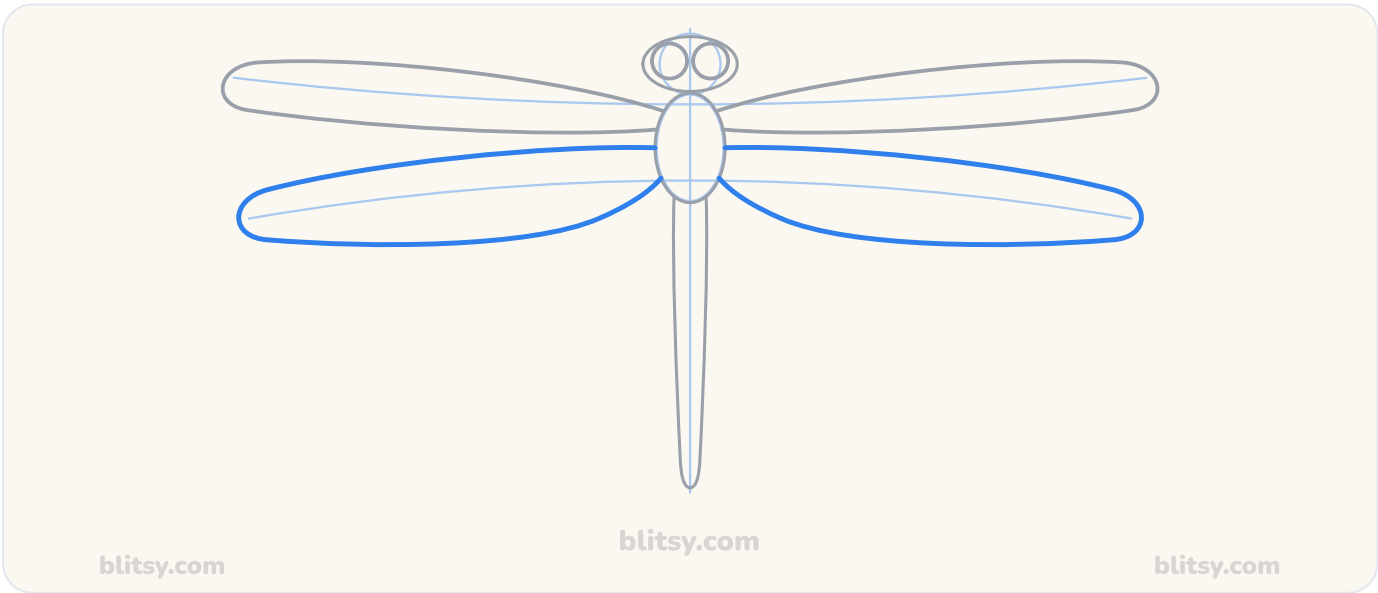
STEP 5 Draw the two front wings



Each front wing starts at the top half of the body and follows the upper wing line outward. Make the wing long and slim, with a rounded tip at the end, and bring the bottom edge back to the body. Then draw the matching wing on the other side. I check the two tips against each other before moving on, because uneven wings are the first thing people notice.

💡 **Tip:** Turn your paper upside down for a second. Any wing that's longer or fatter jumps right out.

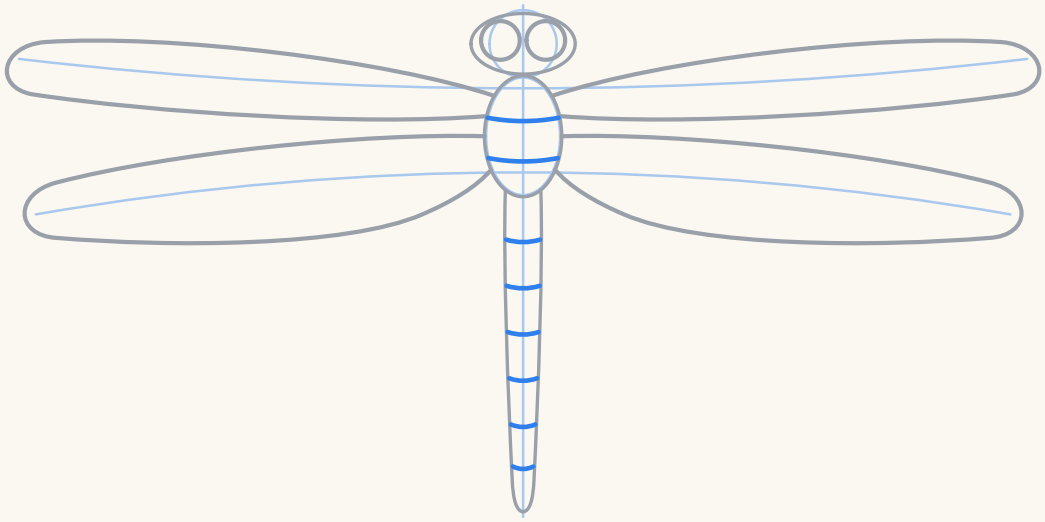
STEP 6 Draw the two back wings



The back wings attach just below the front ones, along the lower guide line. Make them a little shorter but wider near the body, so their bottom edge swoops in a soft curve back to the thorax. I always leave a small gap between each front and back wing. That gap is what makes four separate wings instead of one big blob.

💡 **Tip:** If the back wings touch the front ones, nudge their top edge down rather than redrawing everything.

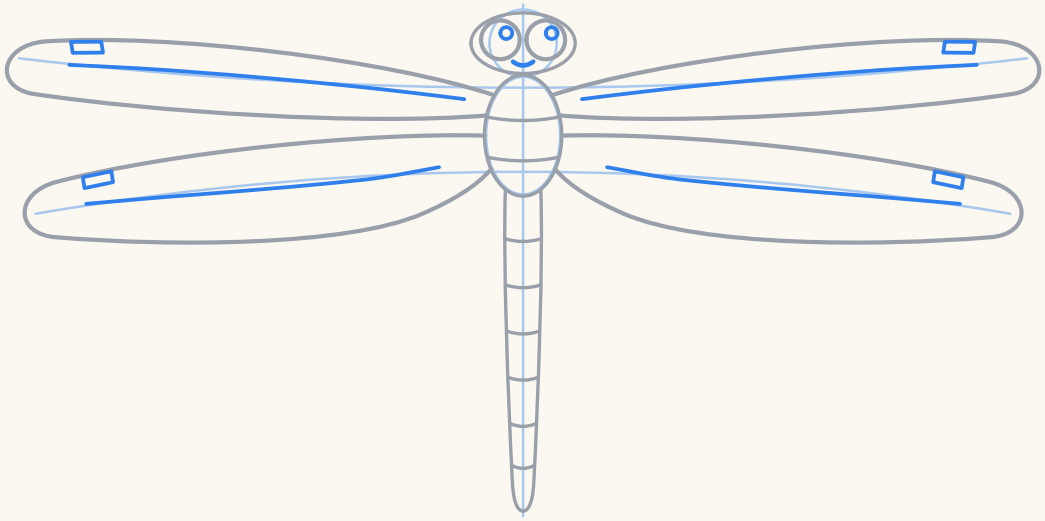
STEP 7 Add rings to the tail and body



Now draw short curved lines across the tail, spaced evenly from the body to the tip. These show the segments a dragonfly's tail is made of. Six or seven rings look right at this size. Add two more curved stripes across the thorax so it matches the tail.

💡 **Tip:** Curve every ring slightly downward. Flat rings make the tail look like a ladder.

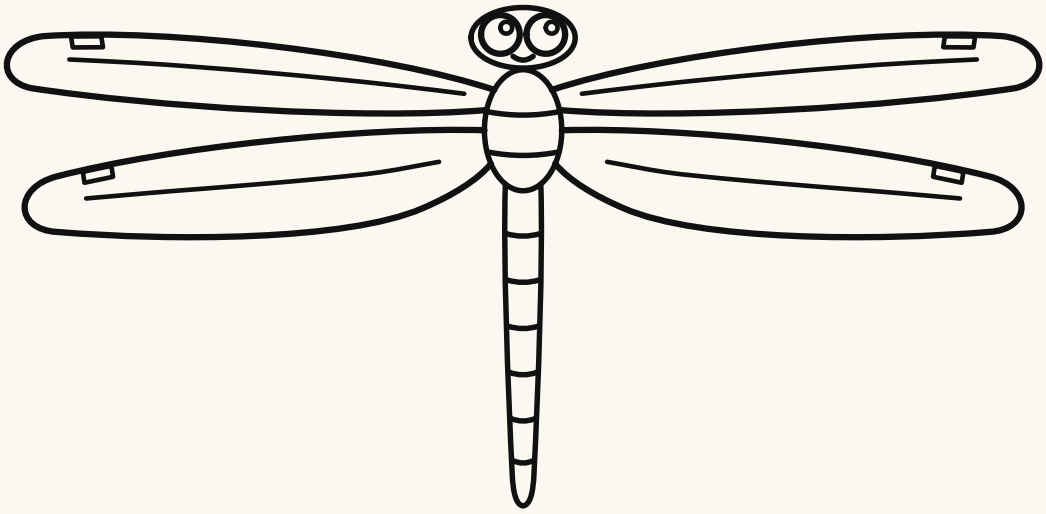
STEP 8 Add wing veins, spots and a face



Inside each wing, draw one long thin vein running from the body toward the tip. Near the tip, along the top edge, add a tiny four-sided spot. Real dragonflies have that dark mark on every wing, and it makes yours look right even in a simple drawing. Finish the face with a small shine circle in each eye and a little smiling mouth under them.

💡 **Tip:** Put the eye shine on the same side in both eyes, as if light comes from one direction.

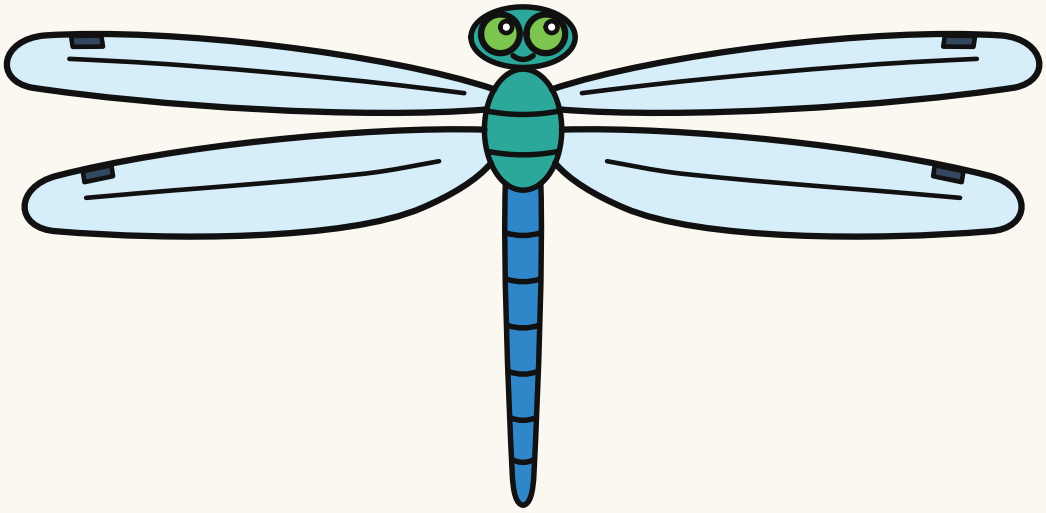
STEP 9 Ink the lines and erase the guides



Trace every line you want to keep with a black pen. Go a little slower on the wing tips, where the curve turns tightly. I skip the center line, the head circle, the body oval and the two wing guides. Once the ink is dry, erase all the pencil, and your dragonfly suddenly looks clean and finished.

💡 **Tip:** Wait a full minute before erasing. Fineliner ink smears more easily than you'd expect.

STEP 10 Color your dragonfly



Give the wings a very pale blue, almost white, so they look see-through. Color the four wing spots dark blue. Use teal for the head and body, and a brighter blue for the tail. Make the eyes green and leave the little shine circles white. My favorite part is the tail, where a slightly darker blue near each ring adds depth without any extra lines.

💡 **Tip:** Press very lightly on the wings. Heavy color makes them look solid instead of glassy.