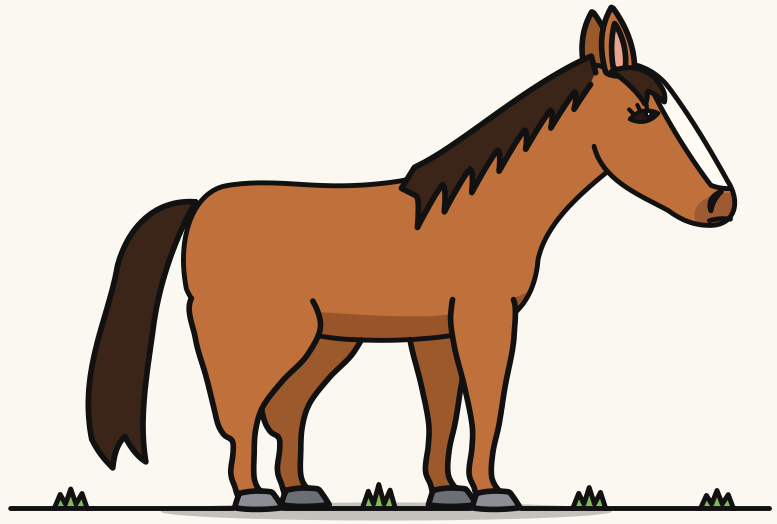
How to Draw a Horse

11 easy steps for beginners



What you'll need

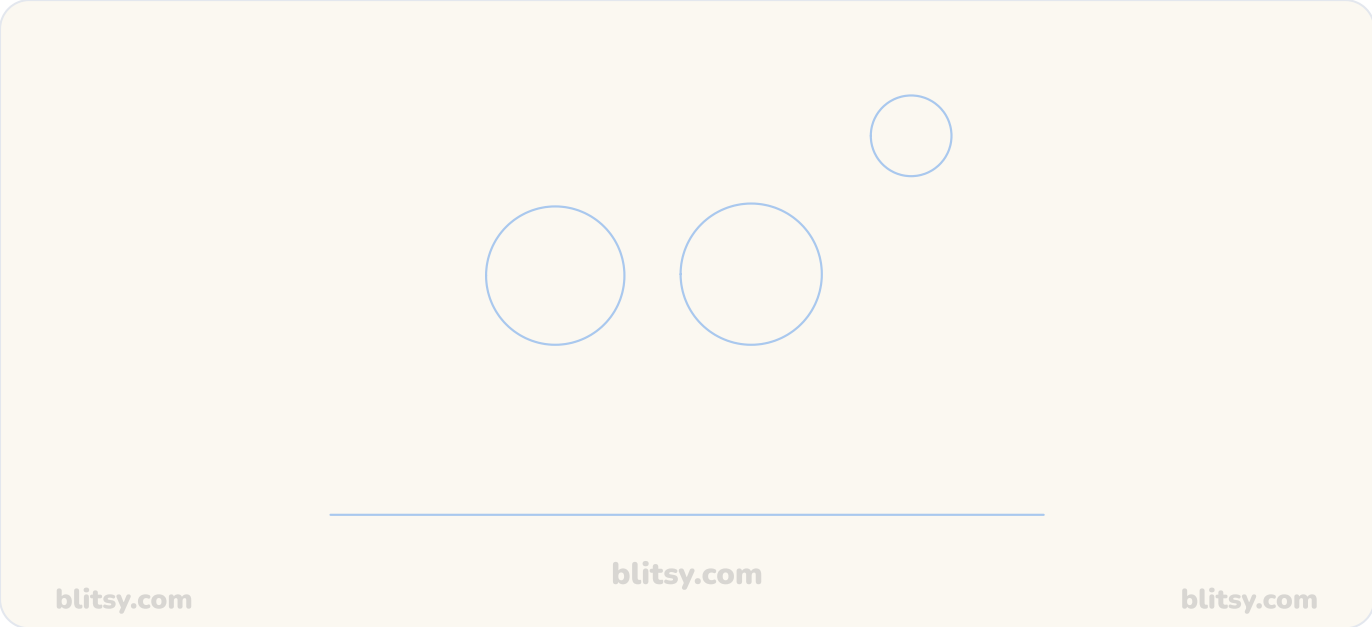
- A pencil
- An eraser
- A black fineliner or marker
- Colored pencils or crayons
- Plain paper, landscape

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 →

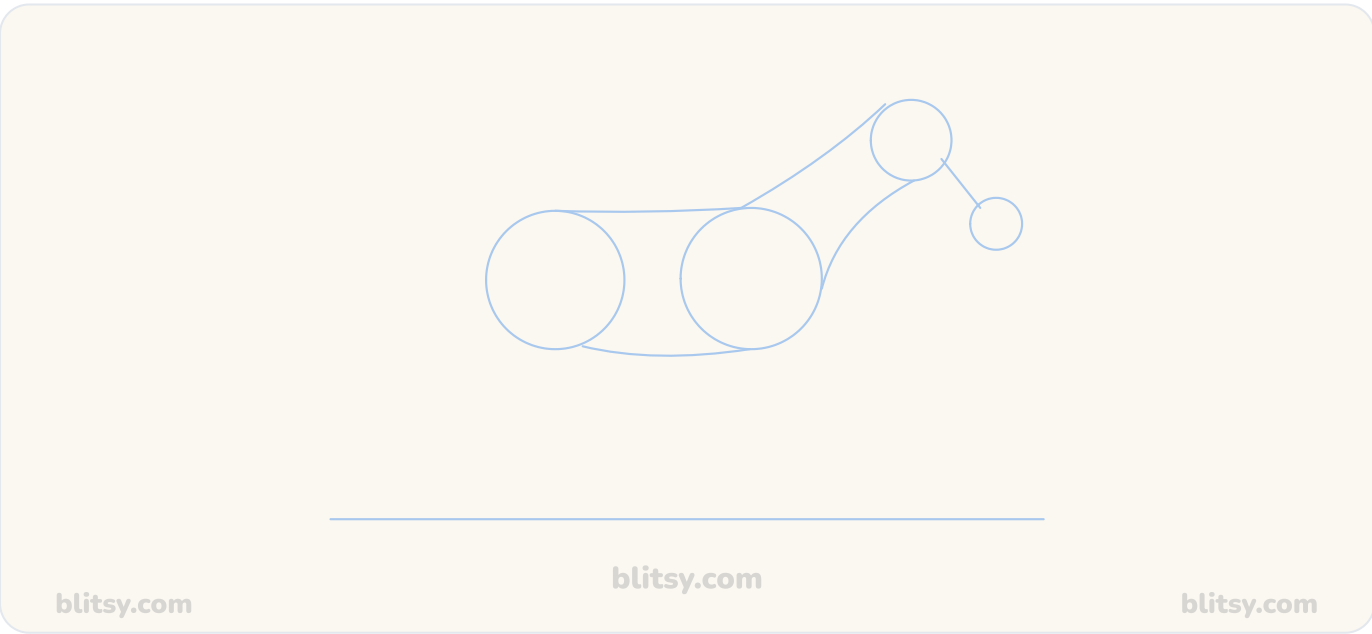
STEP 1 Draw a ground line and three circles



Start with a long ground line near the bottom of the page. Above it, draw two circles of about the same size side by side: the hips on the left and the chest on the right, with only a small gap between them. Then place a much smaller circle high up and to the right for the head. I keep the body circles close because a horse is roughly as tall at the shoulder as it is long.

💡 **Tip:** Press so lightly that the circles almost disappear. You'll be erasing them later.

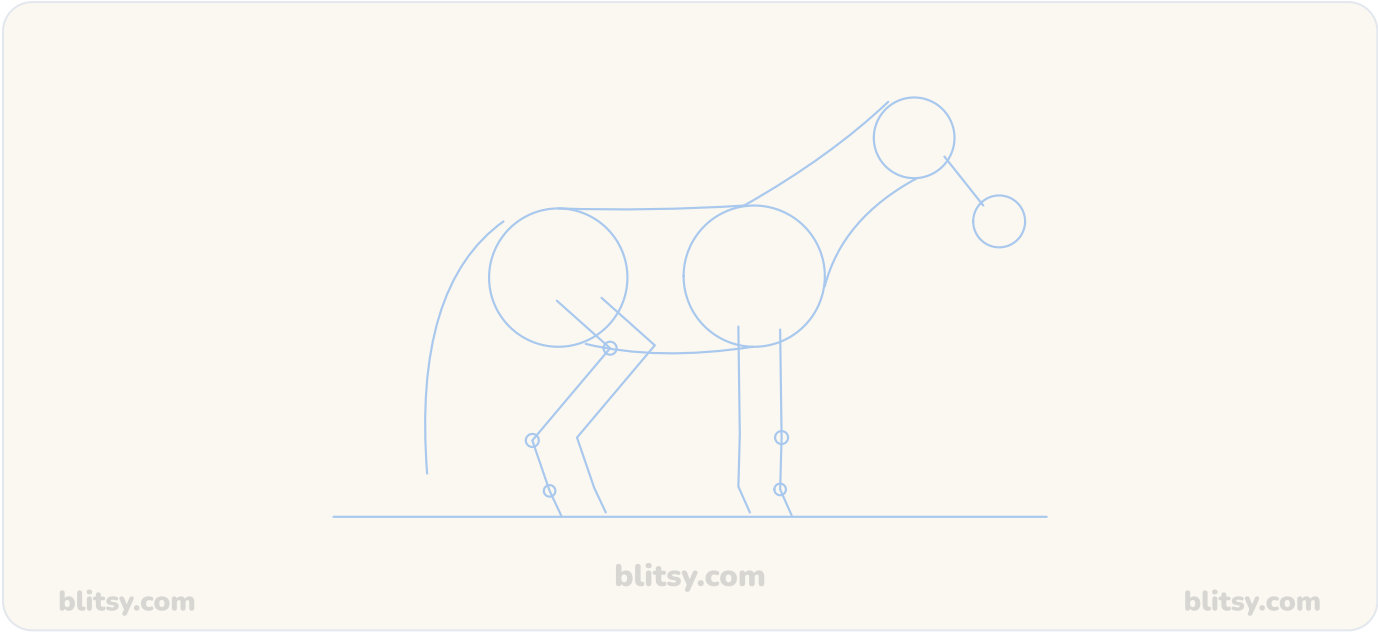
STEP 2 Connect the back, the neck and the muzzle



Link the tops of the body circles with a gently dipping back line and the bottoms with a belly line. Two curved lines from the chest circle up to the head circle make the neck, which should be long and thick. Add a small muzzle circle down and to the right of the head and join the two with a short line. That slanted line sets the angle of the face.

💡 **Tip:** Let the top neck line curve upward like a rainbow. A straight neck looks stiff.

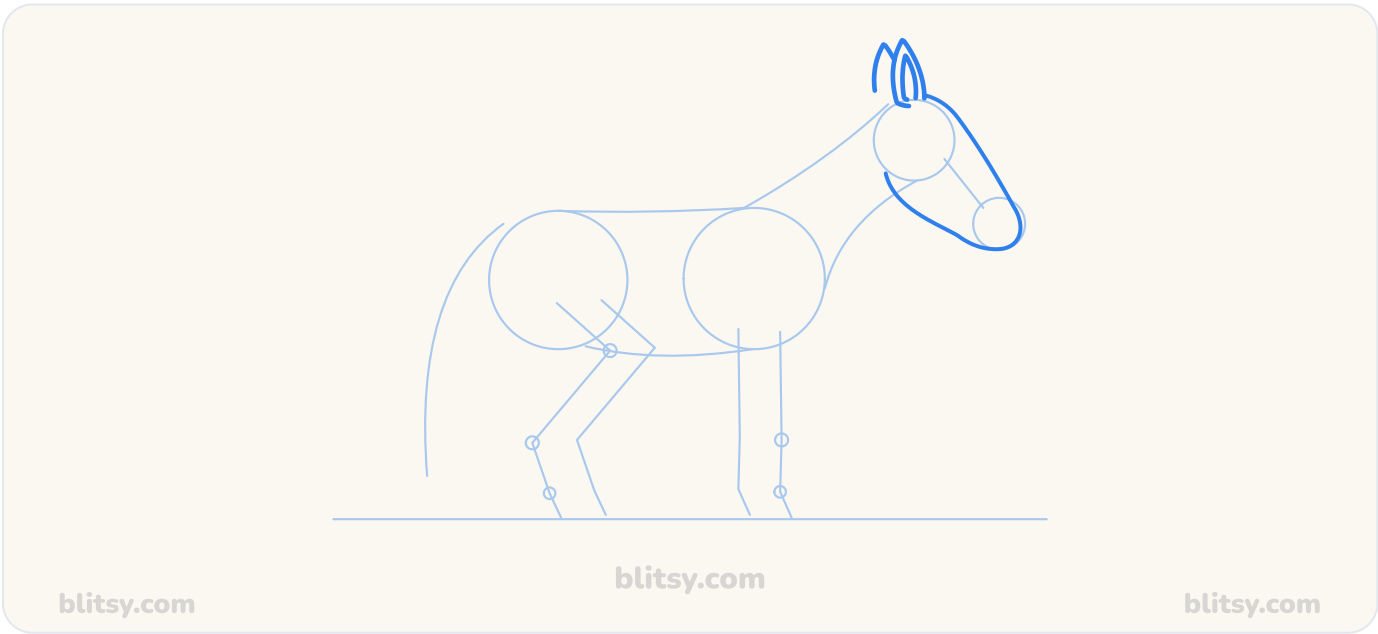
STEP 3 Add stick legs with joint dots



This is the step I spend the most time on when I teach horses. The front legs drop almost straight down from the chest, with a dot for the knee about halfway and another just above the hoof for the fetlock. The hind legs go forward to the stifle, slant back to the hock, which sits a little higher than the front knee, then drop to the ground. Add a long curve behind the hips for the tail.

💡 **Tip:** The front knee bends forward and the hock points back. Check both before moving on.

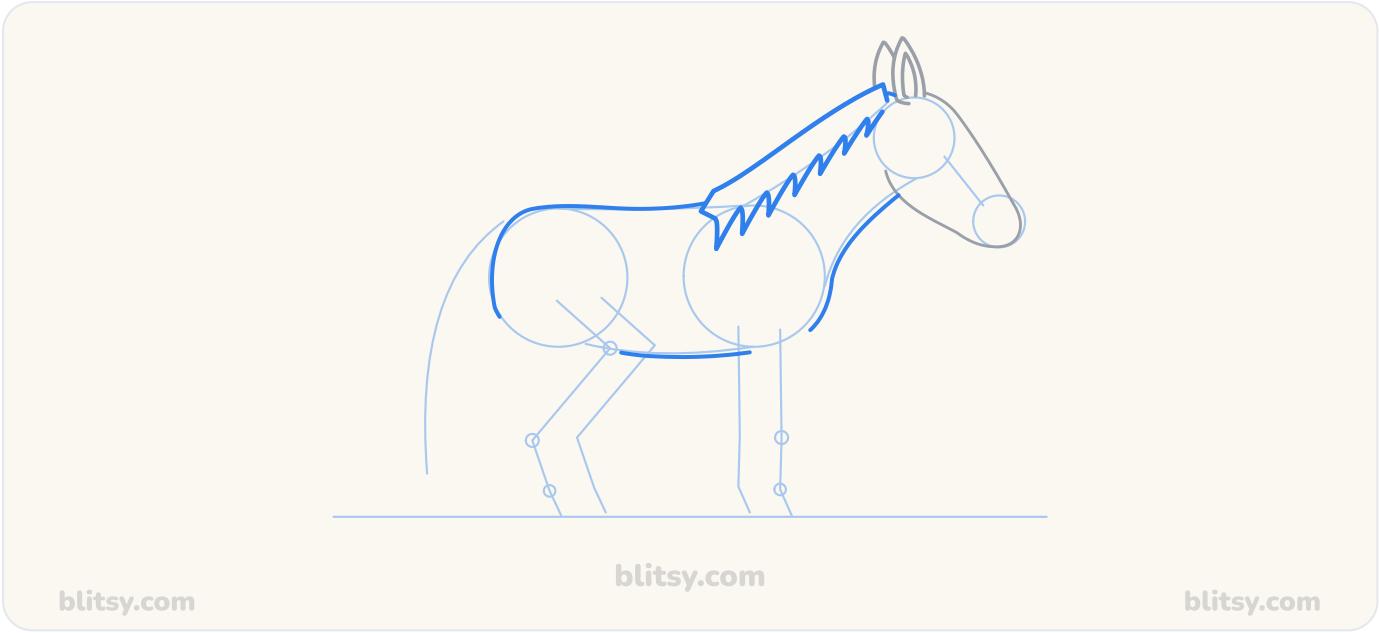
STEP 4 Shape the long head and two ears



Wrap one line around the head circle and the muzzle circle. The front of the face slopes down in a long, fairly straight line, while the bottom curves around a big round cheek. On top, draw two pointed ears standing up, one peeking out behind the other. I keep the ears fairly small, since oversized ears turn a horse into a donkey.

💡 **Tip:** Make the head about as long as the neck. Short heads look like a pony toy.

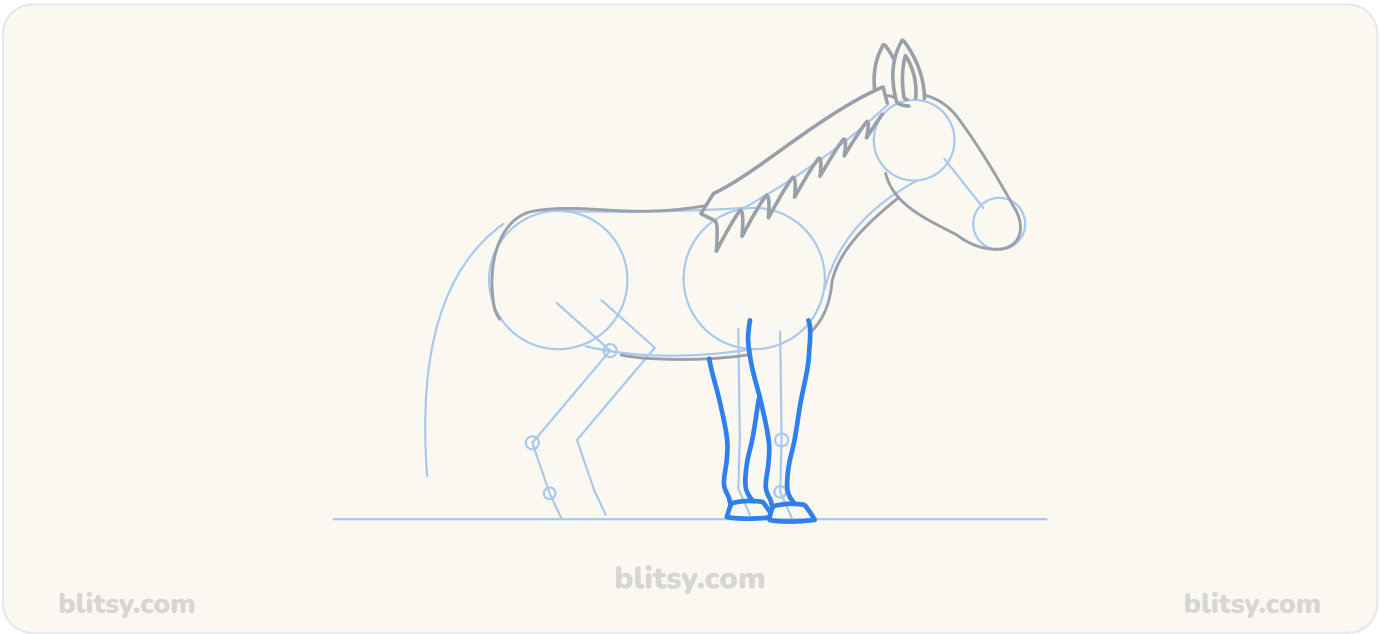
STEP 5 Outline the body, neck and mane



Trace around the hip circle for the rump, along the back and up the front of the chest. Run the throat line from under the cheek down to the chest. Instead of a plain top line on the neck, I draw the mane right away: a strip sitting just above the crest, with pointed locks hanging down onto the neck. Leave short gaps at the bottom where the legs will join.

💡 **Tip:** Make the locks different lengths. Hair that's perfectly even looks like a comb.

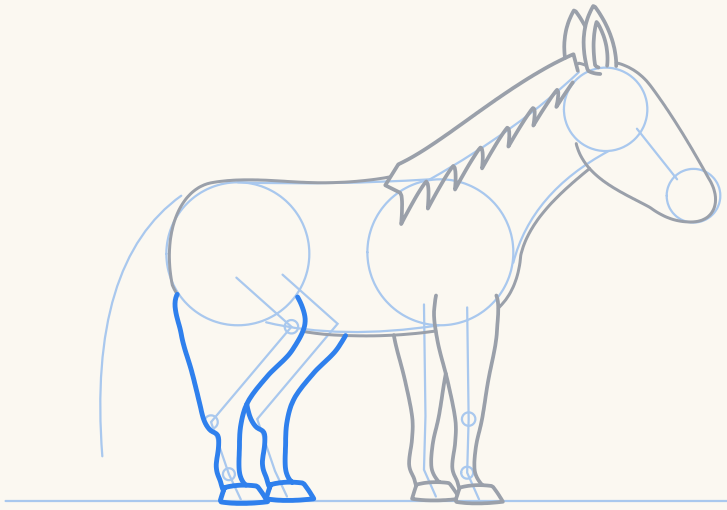
STEP 6 Draw the front legs and hooves



Build the near front leg around its stick. It starts wide at the elbow, narrows toward the knee, stays slim and straight down the cannon, then bulges slightly at the fetlock. A short pastern slants forward into a hoof shaped like a small trapezoid. The far front leg sits a little behind it, so you only draw the edges that show.

💡 **Tip:** Keep the lower leg thin. Horse legs are much slimmer than beginners expect.

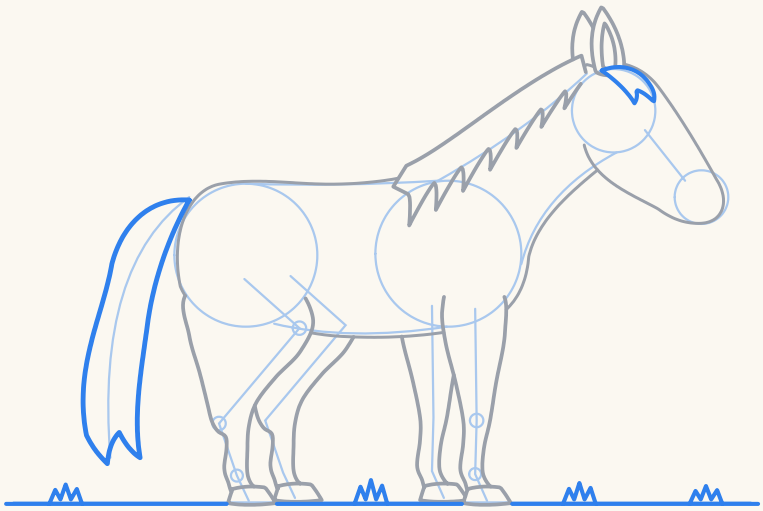
STEP 7 Add the hind legs with pointed hocks



Most horse drawings go wrong right here, so slow down. Draw a big rounded thigh from the hip, then let the front edge slant backward from the stifle toward the hock. The back edge forms the hock as a clear point sticking out behind the leg. Below it, the cannon drops straight down to the fetlock and hoof. The far hind leg sits slightly ahead and is partly hidden.

💡 **Tip:** If the hind leg looks like a dog's, lower the hock and lengthen the cannon below it.

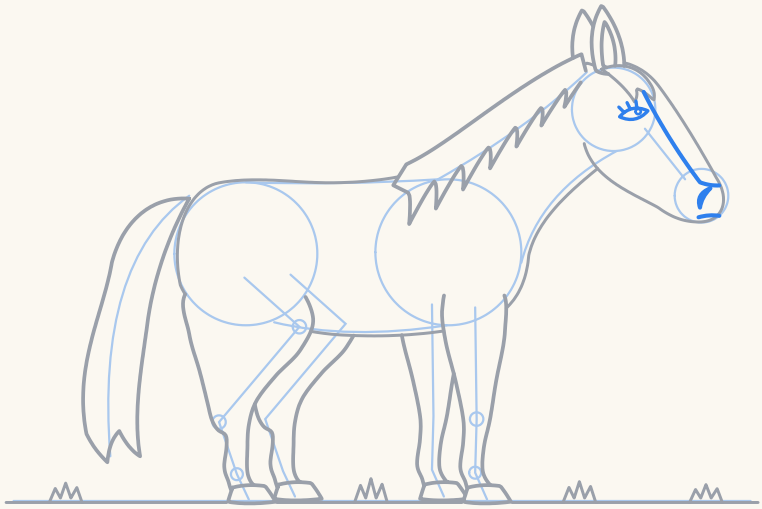
STEP 8 Draw the tail, forelock and grass



Follow the tail guide with a long flowing shape that starts narrow at the top of the rump and widens as it falls, ending in two pointed tips. Between the ears, add a small forelock falling forward onto the forehead. Then turn the ground line into grass with a few little tufts between the hooves.

💡 **Tip:** Draw the tail in one sweeping motion from your elbow, not your wrist.

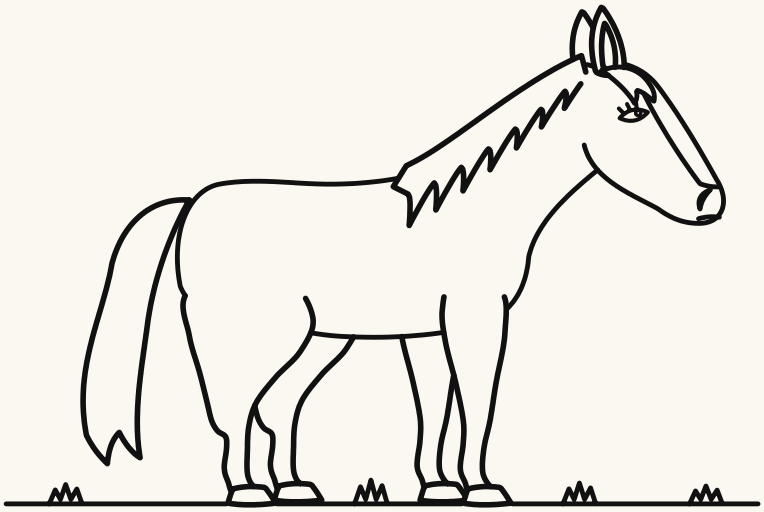
STEP 9 Give it a kind eye, a nostril and a blaze



Place an almond-shaped eye just below the forelock, closer to the back of the head than the nose, and add a few short lashes and a shine dot. A small crescent near the end of the muzzle makes the nostril, with a short mouth line below. Then mark the blaze, a white stripe running down the front of the face to the nose.

💡 **Tip:** Leave a tiny white dot in the eye. It makes the horse look gentle and alive.

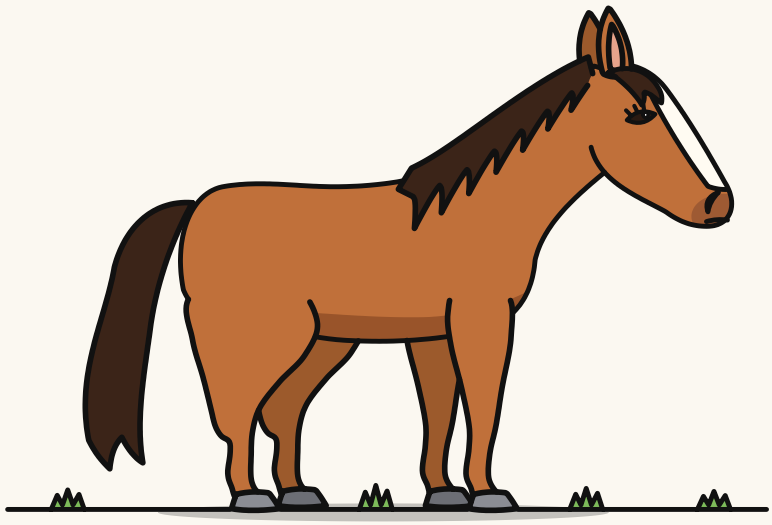
STEP 10 Ink the lines and erase the guides



Go over every keeper line with your black pen, starting at the head and working toward the tail. Leave out the circles, the sticks and the joint dots. I wait a full minute for the ink to dry before erasing, because a smear across the horse's side is hard to hide.

💡 **Tip:** Turn the paper as you ink the legs, so you're always pulling the pen toward you.

STEP 11 Color your horse



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Fill the head, the body and the near legs with a warm orange brown. Go over the belly and the area under the jaw with a darker brown for shadow, and use that darker shade on the two far legs too, which pushes them back. The mane and tail get a very dark brown or black, and so does the forelock. Keep the blaze white, make the hooves gray and add pink inside the ear.

💡 **Tip:** Color the dark mane last, after the brown, so it doesn't smudge into the coat.