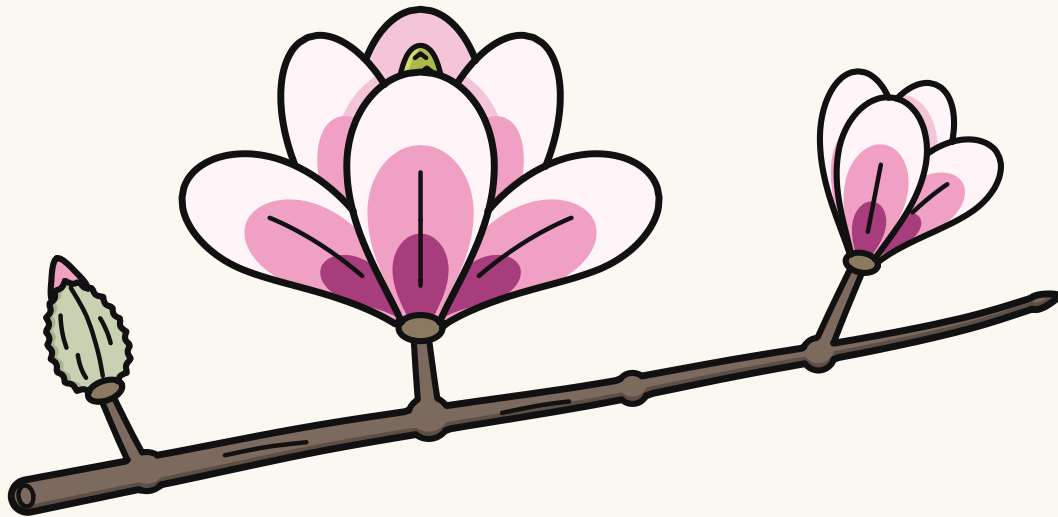


How to Draw a Magnolia Flower

12 easy steps for beginners



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What you'll need

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

How to use this guide

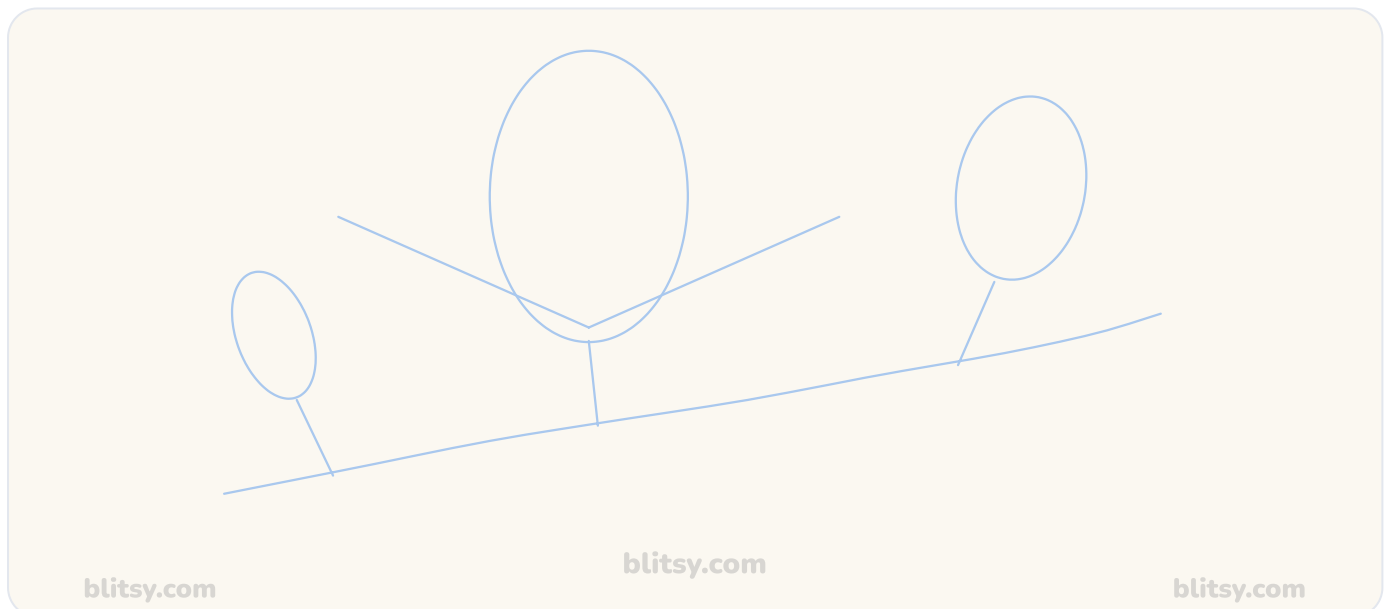
New lines for each step are shown in **blue**; lines you already drew are gray. Draw lightly first, then ink and erase near the end.

[Read the full tutorial online →](#)

STEP 1 Sketch a long curved branch line

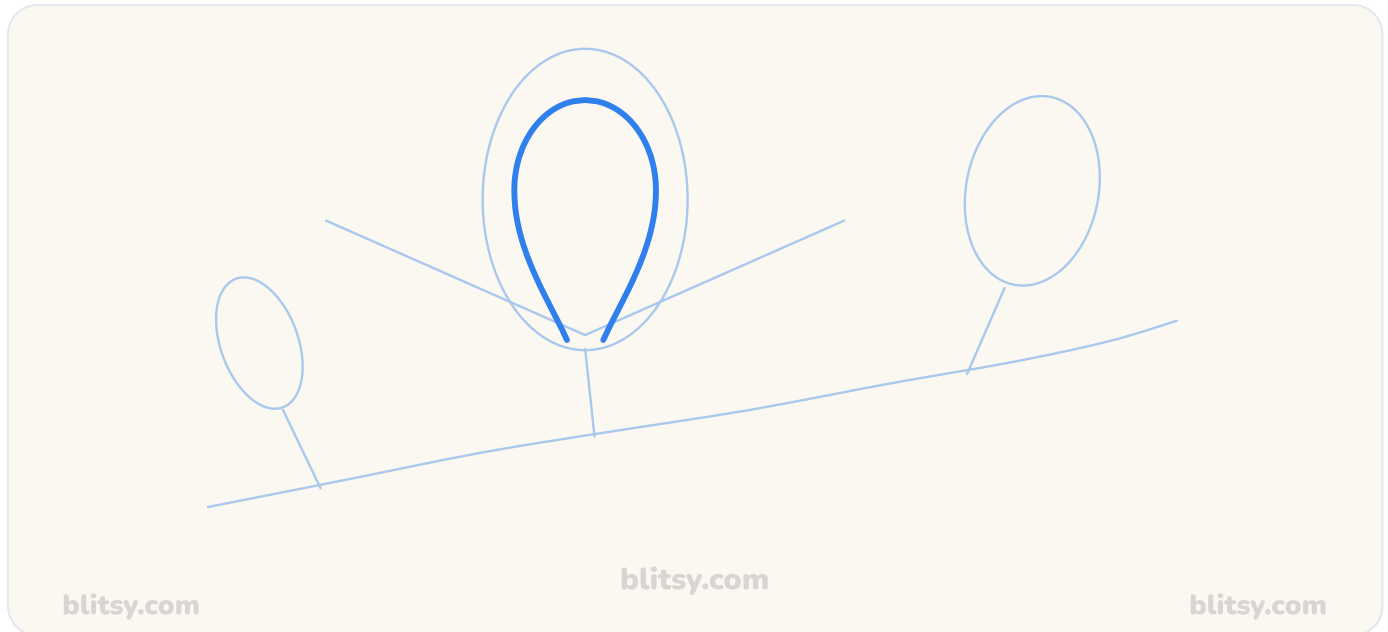
Start low on the left side of the page and draw one gentle line rising toward the upper right. Add three short lines sticking up from it: near the left end, in the middle and toward the right. Those are the twigs for the bud and the two flowers. I always place the branch first, because it decides where everything else sits.

 **Tip:** Keep the branch line slightly curved; a ruler-straight branch looks like a stick from a hardware store.

STEP 2 Add ovals to plan each flower

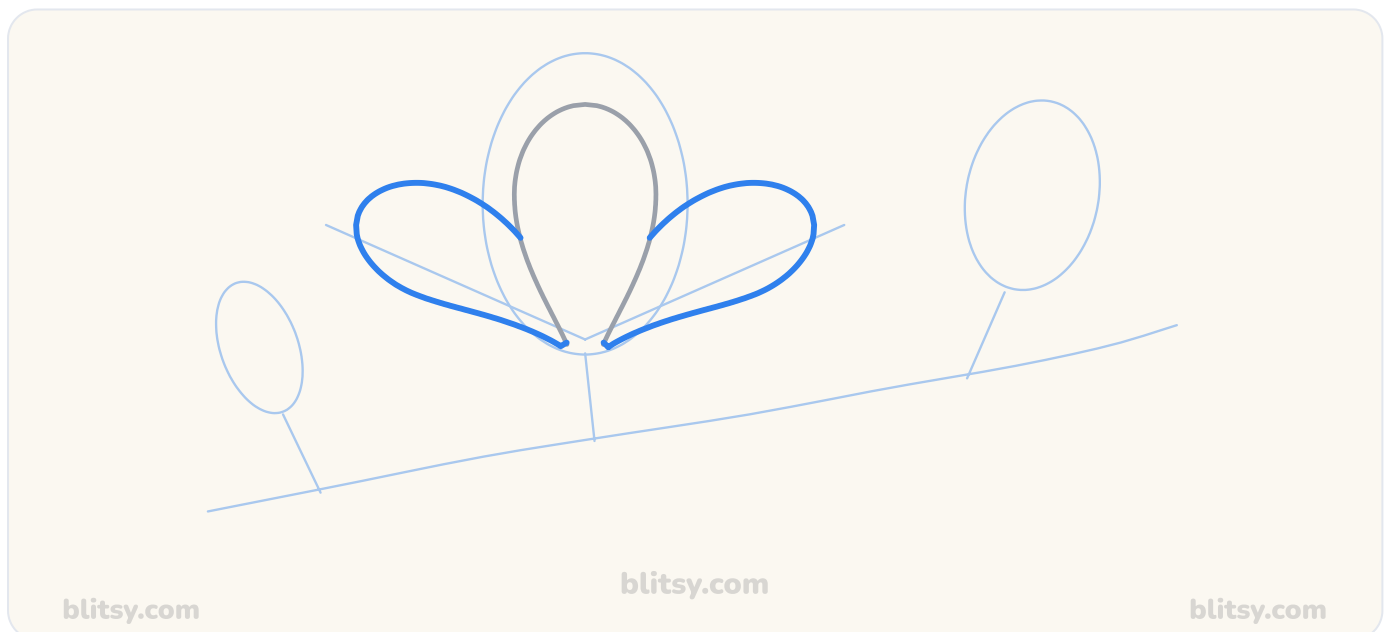
On the middle twig, draw a tall oval for the big bloom. From its bottom, add two slanted lines fanning out left and right; the outer petals will follow them. Then draw a medium oval on the right twig and a small, tilted one on the left. Different sizes show the flowers opening at different times.

 **Tip:** Draw ovals with your whole arm moving, not just your fingers, and they'll come out rounder.

STEP 3 Draw one tall front petal

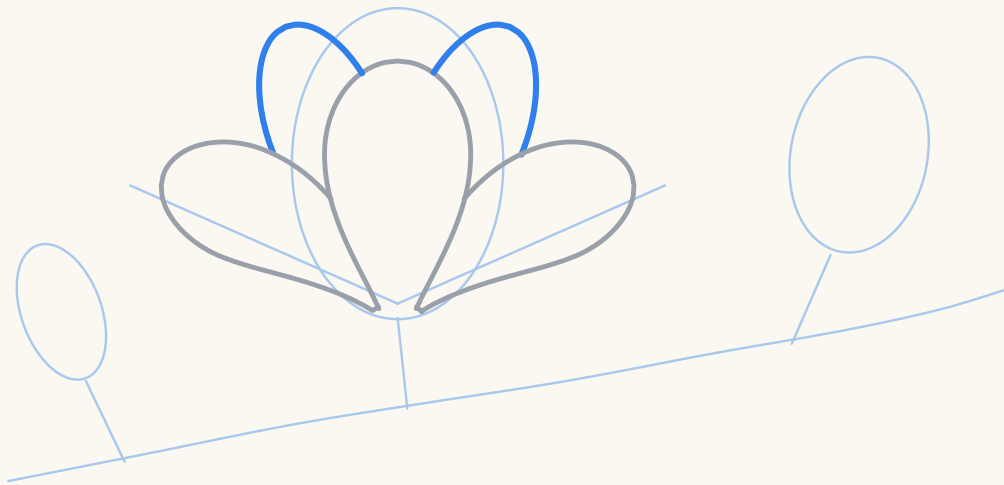
Inside the big oval, draw the petal that faces you. It's narrow at the bottom and swells into a wide, round top, a lot like a spoon standing on its handle. I stop the top a little below the oval's edge, because the petals behind it need to rise above it. Leave the bottom open for now.

Tip: If your spoon looks like a balloon, pinch the bottom narrower; the thin base is what makes it a petal.

STEP 4 Add the outer petals opening outward

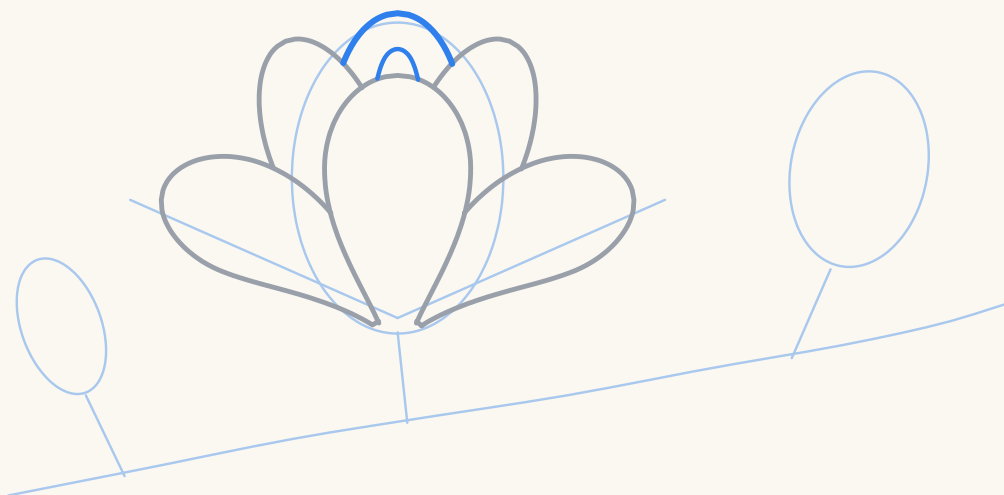
Follow the two fan lines and draw a petal along each one, starting from the base of the front petal. These outer petals have already bent open, so they lie almost sideways. Give them the same spoon shape and tuck each one behind the front petal.

Tip: Let the bottom edge of each outer petal sag slightly; petals that bend down look heavier and more real.

STEP 5 Draw two cupped side petals

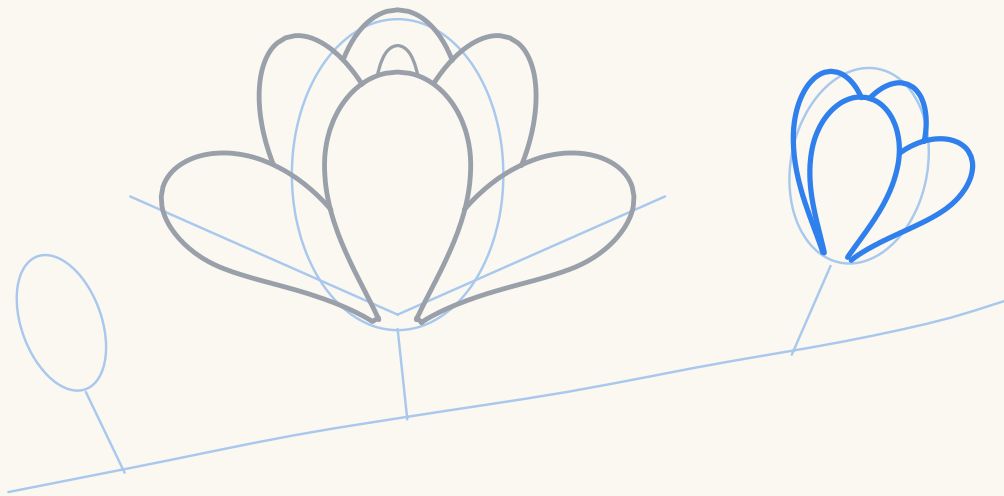
Fill the gap between the front petal and each outer petal with an upright petal leaning a little outward. You'll see only its top, from where it peeks over the outer petal to where it goes behind the front one. Stopping the line at the edge is what makes petals look layered.

Tip: Make the tops of these two petals the highest points of the flower except for the back petal.

STEP 6 Add the back petal and the cone

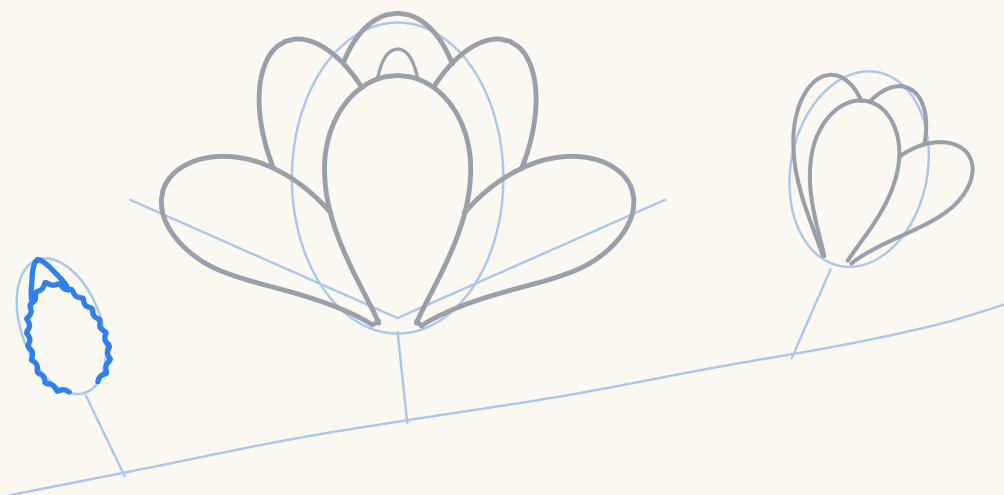
Between the two side petals, draw a rounded arch for the back petal. Just under that arch and above the front petal, draw a tiny pointed dome. That's the cone in the centre of the flower, where the seeds form later. I only show its tip, because a magnolia hides most of its centre inside the cup.

Tip: Keep the cone small; if it's big, the flower starts to look like a lotus.

STEP 7 Draw a smaller half-open flower

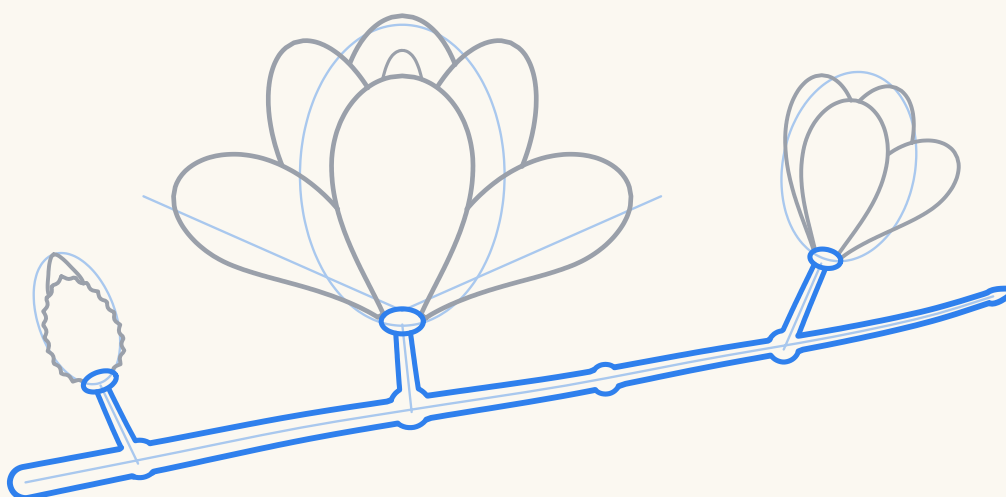
On the right oval, repeat the same idea in a tighter version: a front petal, two upright petals peeking out behind it and one petal on the right just starting to fold open. I tilt this flower a little to the right so it doesn't copy the big one.

Tip: Overlap these petals more than on the big flower; crowded petals read as a flower that hasn't finished opening.

STEP 8 Draw a fuzzy closed bud

In the small left oval, draw a teardrop with the point at the top. Make the edge out of tiny bumps, like small scallops. Real magnolia buds wear a furry wrapper all winter, and the bumpy line shows that softness. At the top, add a small pointed tip of petal poking out.

Tip: Keep the bumps small and even; big bumps turn the bud into a pinecone.

STEP 9 Turn the lines into a knobby branch

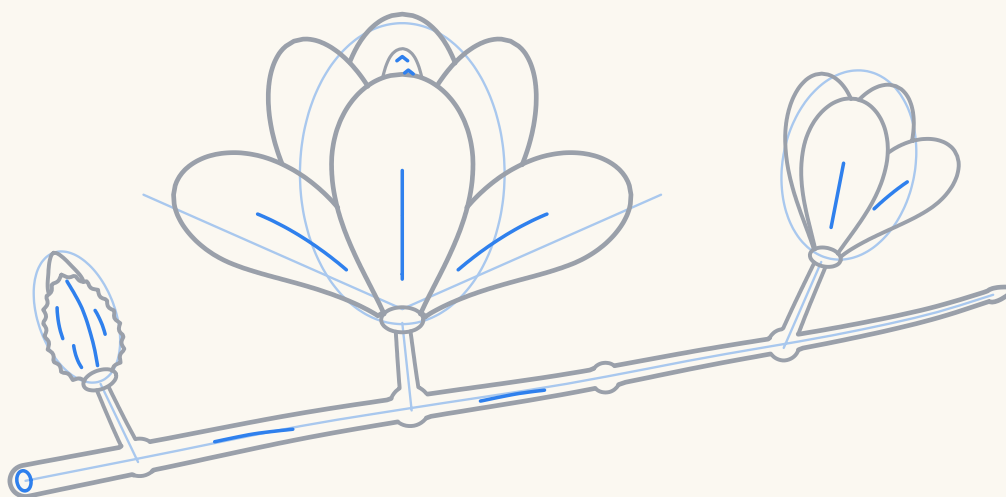
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Draw a small flat oval under each flower and the bud, like a cup they sit in. Then trace both sides of the branch so it's thick on the left and thin at the right end, and do the same for the twigs. Where a twig leaves the branch, let the outline bulge into a round knob. My favourite part is these knuckles, because they make the wood look real.

 **Tip:** Add one extra knob on a bare part of the branch; it looks like a spot where a leaf grew last year.

STEP 10 Add creases, fuzz and bark lines

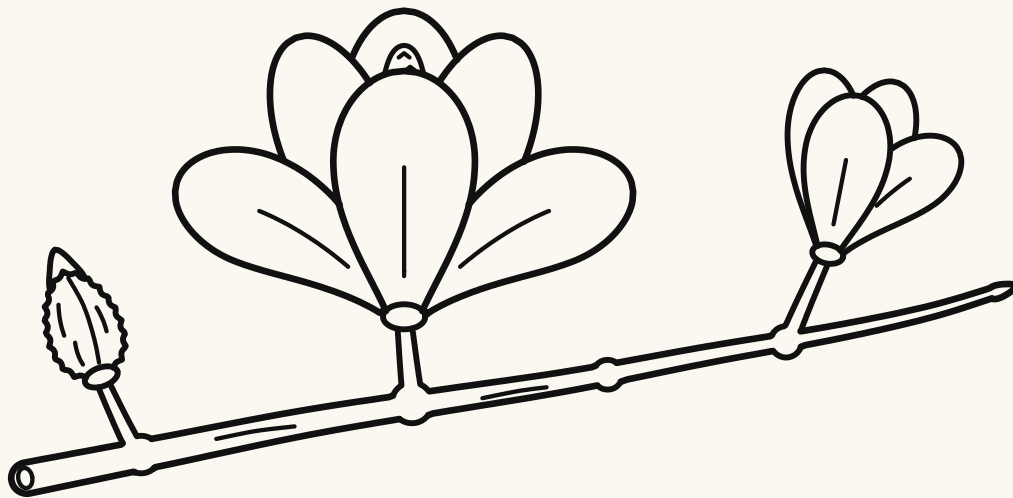
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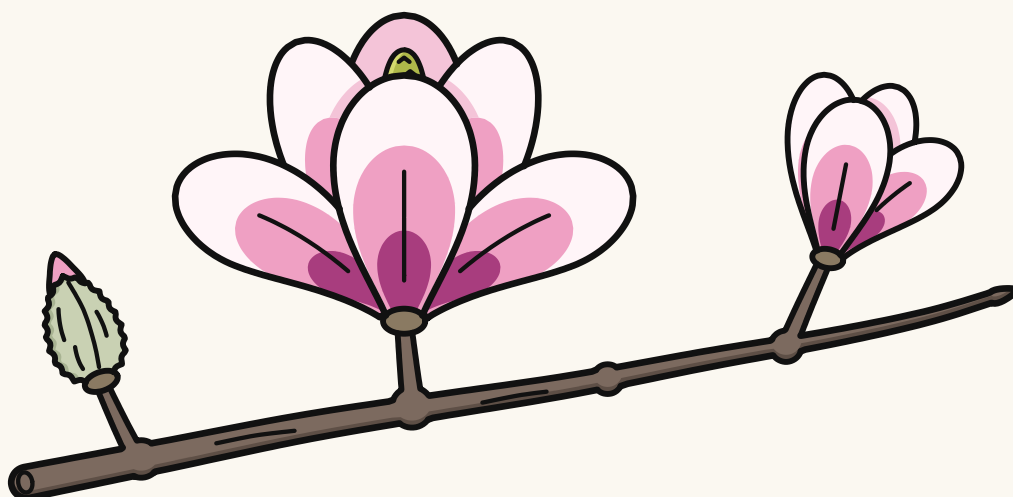
Draw a short line up the middle of the front petal and the outer petals, stopping well before the tip. Put a few tiny curved marks on the cone. Inside the bud, add a seam and some short strokes for fur, then a few thin dashes along the branch for bark.

 **Tip:** Draw the details with a lighter hand than the outlines, so they stay quiet.

STEP 11 Ink your drawing and erase the guides

Trace every keeper line with your black pen, starting with the big flower and working out to the branch. Leave the ovals and fan lines in pencil. Let the ink dry for a minute, then erase. If a petal line ended too early, close it up now.

Tip: Ink the long branch lines in one slow pass rather than many short ones, so they don't look hairy.

STEP 12 Color your magnolia

Leave the petal tops white or give them the lightest touch of pink. Color the lower half of each petal pink and add magenta right at the base. Use light pink inside the cup, yellow green on the cone, gray green on the bud and brown on the branch, with a darker brown along its bottom edge.

Tip: Color the pink from the base upward and lift the pencil as you go, so the pink fades into the white.