

How to Draw a Moon

11 easy steps for beginners



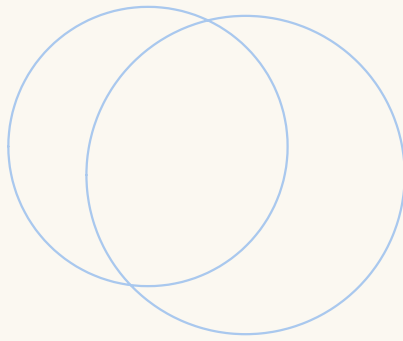
What you'll need

- A pencil
- An eraser
- A black marker
- Coloring 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 two overlapping circles

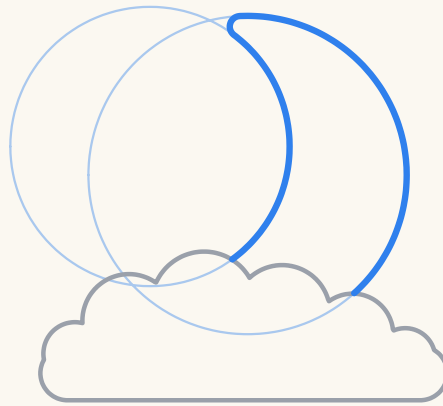
Draw one big circle a little right of the middle of your paper. Then draw a second, slightly smaller circle that overlaps it, shifted up and to the left. The space that belongs only to the big circle is your crescent. The further you shift the second circle, the fatter the moon gets, so I aim for roughly half the big circle's width.

 **Tip:** Leave space below the circles; a cloud and a row of small moons still have to fit.

STEP 2 Sketch a fluffy cloud bed

Under the circles, draw a long cloud with a flat, rounded bottom and five or six bumps on top. Let the middle bumps rise high enough to hide the bottom of the moon. I draw the cloud before the moon on purpose: the cloud sits in front, so later the moon line can simply stop wherever it touches a bump.

 **Tip:** Make the bumps different sizes, biggest in the middle, smaller toward the ends.

STEP 3 Trace the crescent shape

Now go over the outer edge of the big circle, from where the two circles cross at the top, around the right side, down to the cloud. Then trace the inside curve, which is the edge of the smaller circle. Round off the top tip a little instead of leaving a needle point. Kids find rounded tips much easier to ink, and they look friendlier.

 **Tip:** Trace in short strokes along the guide instead of one long sweep; small joins hide well.

STEP 4 Add a sleepy closed eye

Find the thickest part of the crescent, on the right side. About halfway up, draw a small curve shaped like a smile; that's a closed eye. Add three short lashes hanging down from it. Placing the eye in the thick part matters, because a thin horn has no room for a face and the features would crowd the edge.

 **Tip:** Tilt the lashes slightly outward, like a fan, so they don't look like a fence.

STEP 5 Give it a smile and a rosy cheek

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Below and a little left of the eye, near the inside curve, draw a tiny smile. Keep it small, about half the width of the eye. Then add a flat oval cheek to the right of the smile, under the eye. The moon is facing left in profile, which is why the mouth sits close to the inner edge.

 **Tip:** A smaller smile reads as sleepy; a big grin makes the moon look wide awake.

STEP 6 Draw craters and soft shade

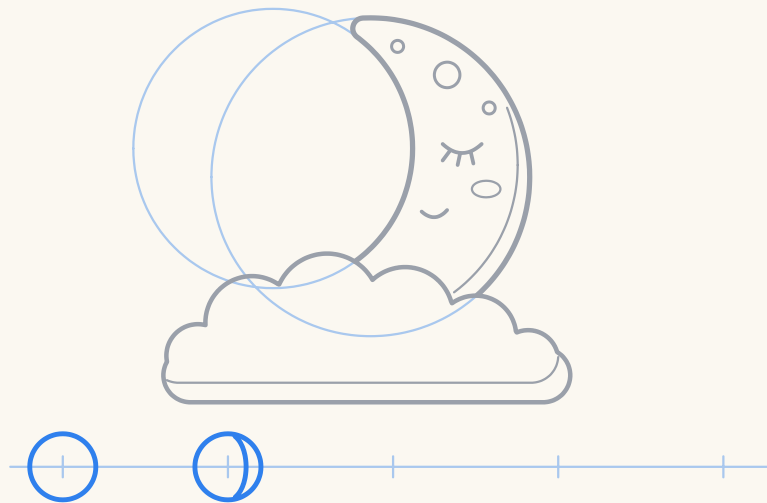
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Put three craters in the empty top part of the moon: one medium circle and two little ones. I keep them away from the face so it stays easy to read. Next, draw a long curve just inside the outer right edge, running down toward the cloud. Last, add a line along the bottom of the cloud for its shadow.

 **Tip:** Odd numbers of craters look more natural than pairs.

STEP 7 Start the phases: new moon and crescent

Lightly rule a long line under the cloud and mark five evenly spaced ticks on it. On the first tick, draw a circle for the new moon, which will be colored dark. On the second tick, draw a circle and add a curve inside it near the right edge. That thin right-hand sliver is the waxing crescent, the same shape as your big moon.

 **Tip:** I use a ruler for the ticks; uneven gaps are the first thing people notice in a row.

STEP 8 Add the quarter, gibbous and full moon

On the third tick, draw a circle split straight down the middle: that's the first quarter, half lit. On the fourth, draw a circle with a curve bulging toward the left side, so most of it will be bright. That's the waxing gibbous. The last circle is the full moon, with two small craters. Notice how the bright part grows from the right each time.

 **Tip:** Keep the lit side on the right for all of them, or the order stops making sense.

STEP 9 Sprinkle stars and a sleepy Zzz

Fill the empty sky with five-pointed stars, a few big and several small, scattered on both sides of the moon. Then write three Z letters in the hollow of the crescent, small near the face and growing larger as they float up and away. Those letters do a lot of work: they tell everyone at once that the moon is asleep.

 **Tip:** Draw each star in one continuous zigzag so the five points come out even.

STEP 10 Ink the drawing and erase the guides

With a black marker, trace every keeper line: the moon, its face, the craters, the cloud, the phases, the stars and the Zzz. Wait a minute for the ink to dry. Then erase both big guide circles and the phase line. The crescent suddenly looks clean, because the circle it was cut from is gone.

 **Tip:** Ink the long moon curves first while your hand is fresh, and the tiny stars last.

STEP 11 Color the night scene

Color the moon pale yellow and the strip along its outer edge a darker yellow. Craters go gray, and the cheek gets a touch of pink. Leave the cloud white with a light blue base. For the phases, fill the dark parts navy and the lit parts pale yellow, then make the stars a brighter yellow than the moon so they twinkle.

 **Tip:** I press lightly for the pale moon; you can always add more yellow, but you can't take it away.