

How to Draw a Parrot

12 easy steps for beginners



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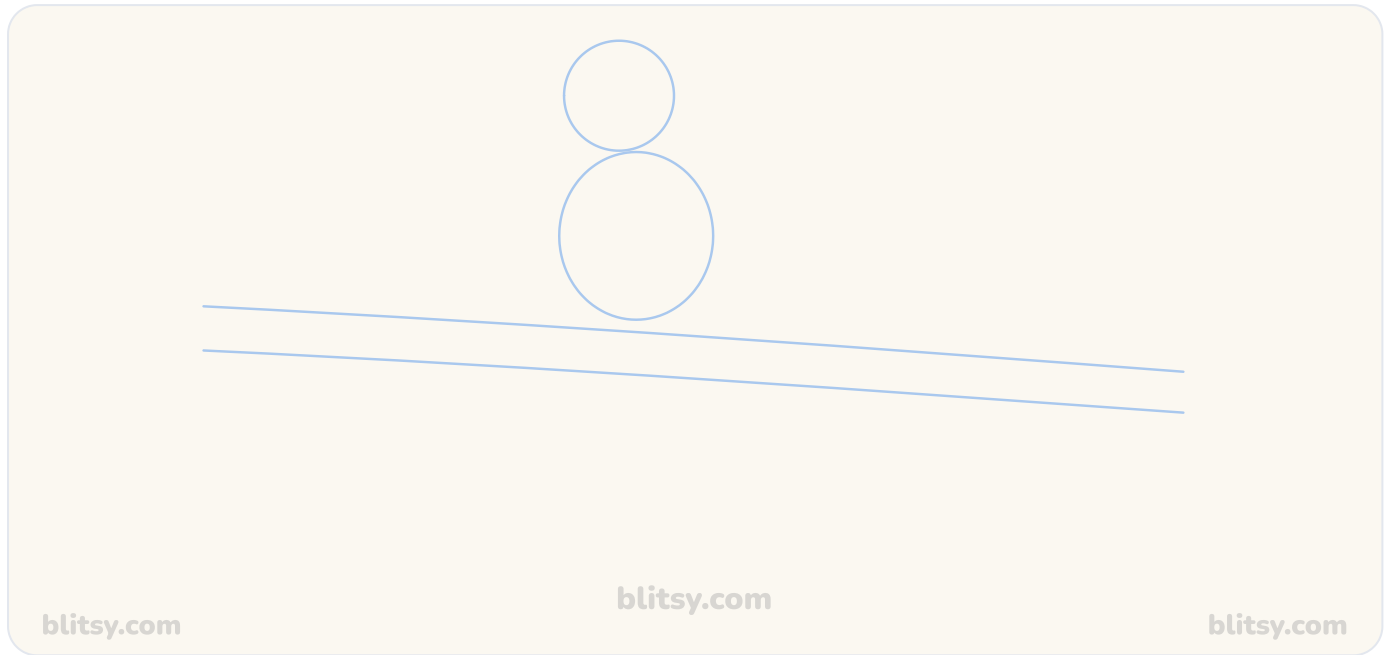
What you'll need

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

How to use this guide

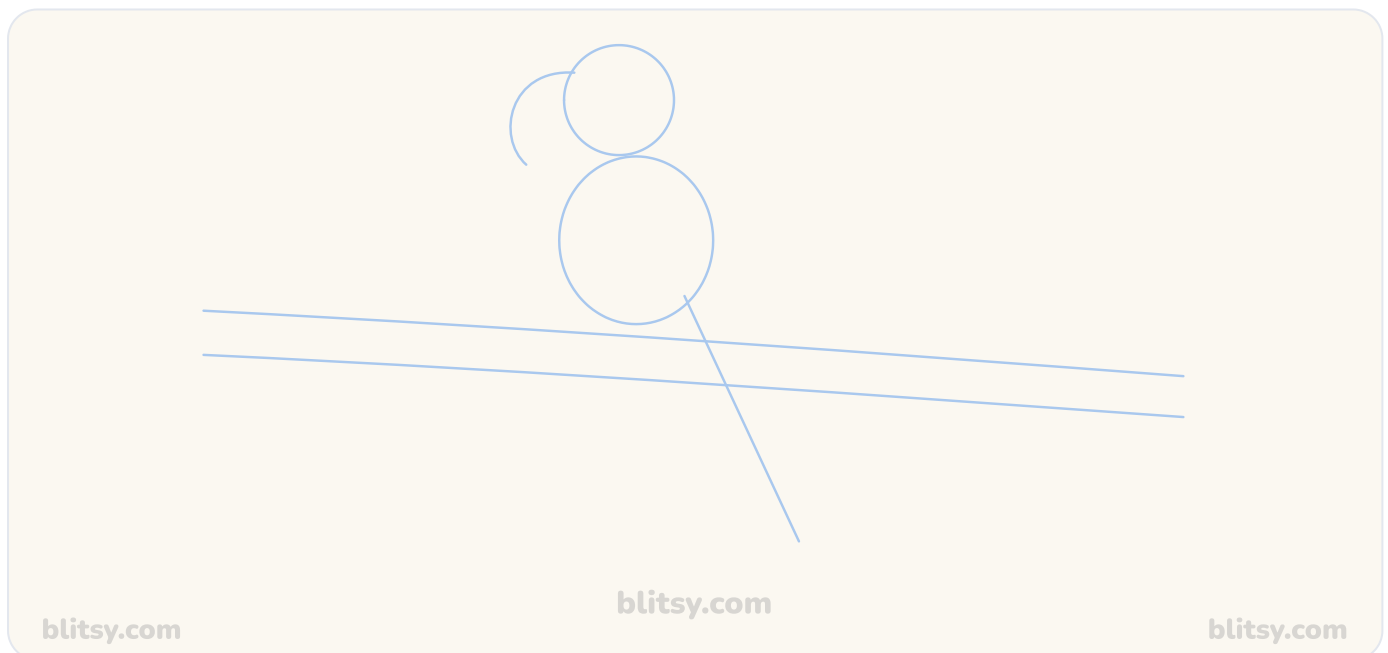
New lines for each step are shown in **blue**; lines you already drew are gray. Draw lightly first, then ink and erase near the end.

[Read the full tutorial online →](#)

STEP 1 Sketch the head, body and branch guides

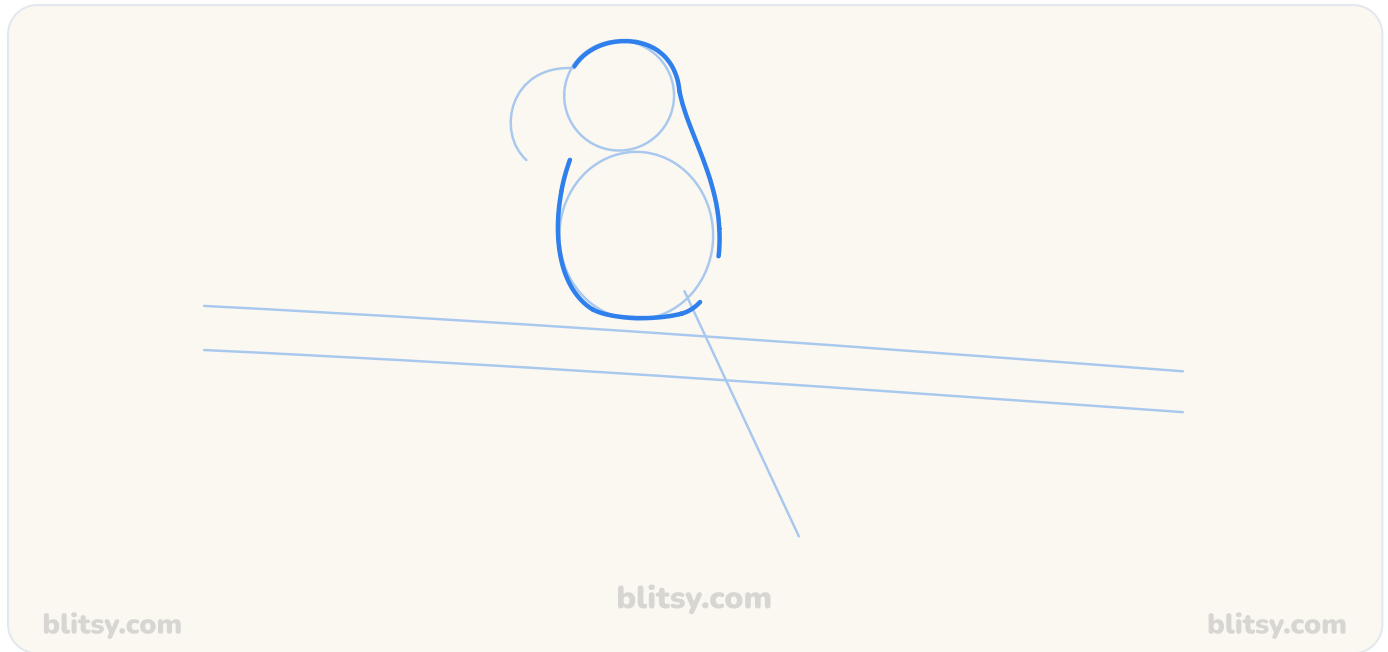
Draw a small circle a little above the middle of the page for the head. Right under it, touching it, draw a taller oval for the body. Then sketch two long lines that slope gently down to the right, a little below the oval. That's your branch.

 **Tip:** Keep the head circle roughly two thirds the width of the body oval, or the bird turns into a chick.

STEP 2 Add the beak and tail guides

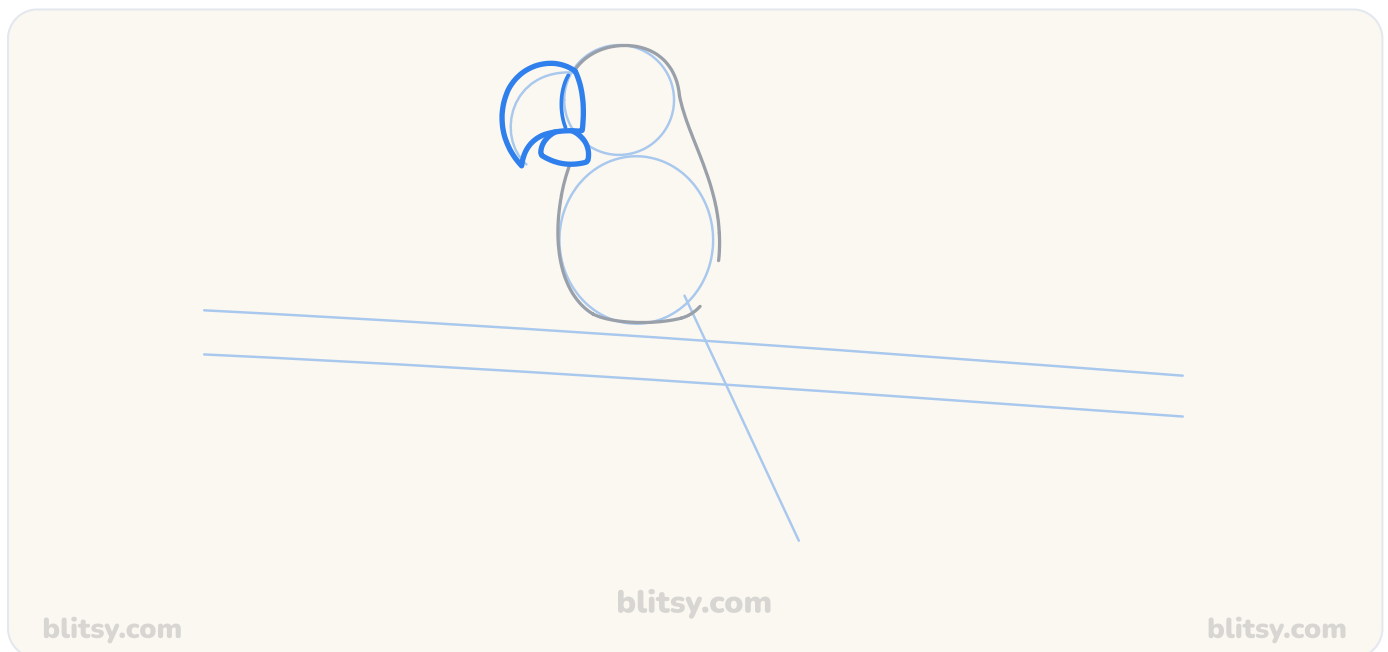
On the left of the head circle, draw one curved line that bulges out and hooks down, like a big comma. Then draw a long straight line from the bottom of the oval down and slightly right, almost to the bottom of the page. Macaw tails really are that long, so don't shorten it.

 **Tip:** Let the tail line lean away from the beak. The opposite slant keeps the bird balanced.

STEP 3 Draw the round head and chest

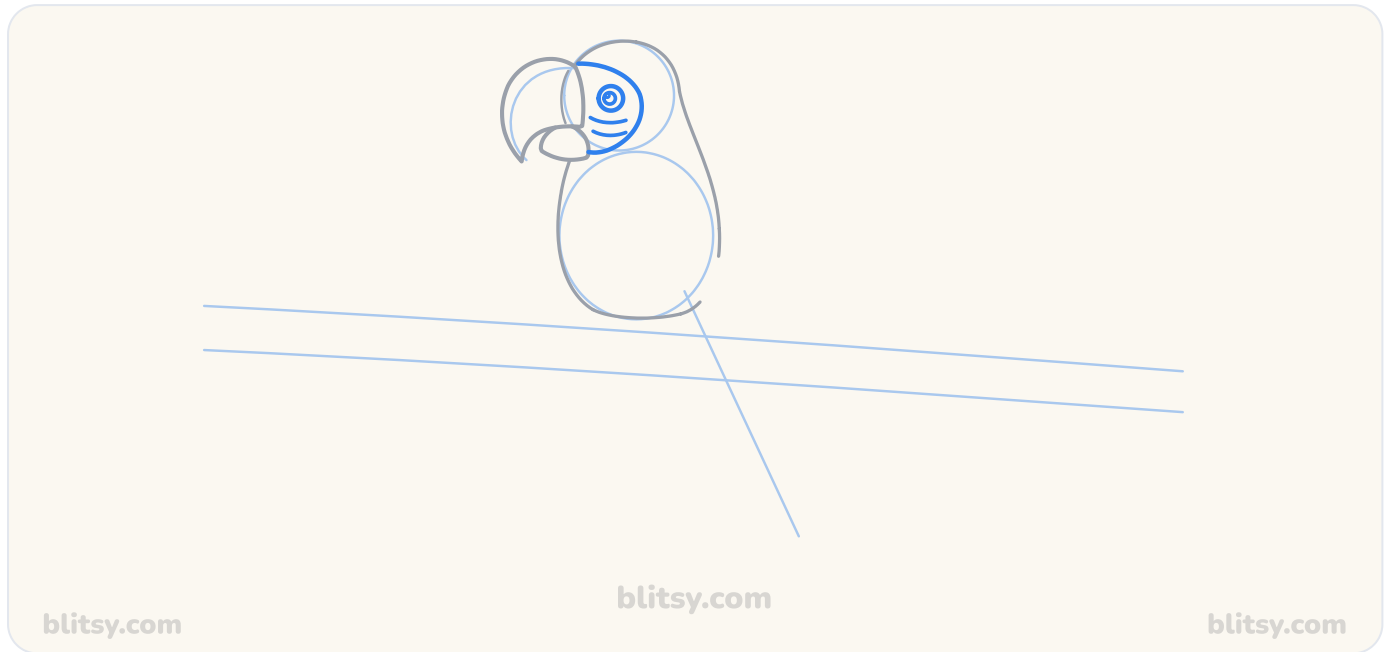
Go over the top of the head circle with a firm line, then let it run down the back in one long, gentle curve. Come back to the chin and draw the chest bulging forward and around to the belly. I let the back line slope outward a little, because a perched parrot sits upright but never stiff.

 **Tip:** Leave the left side of the head open. The beak will cover it in the next step.

STEP 4 Draw the big hooked beak

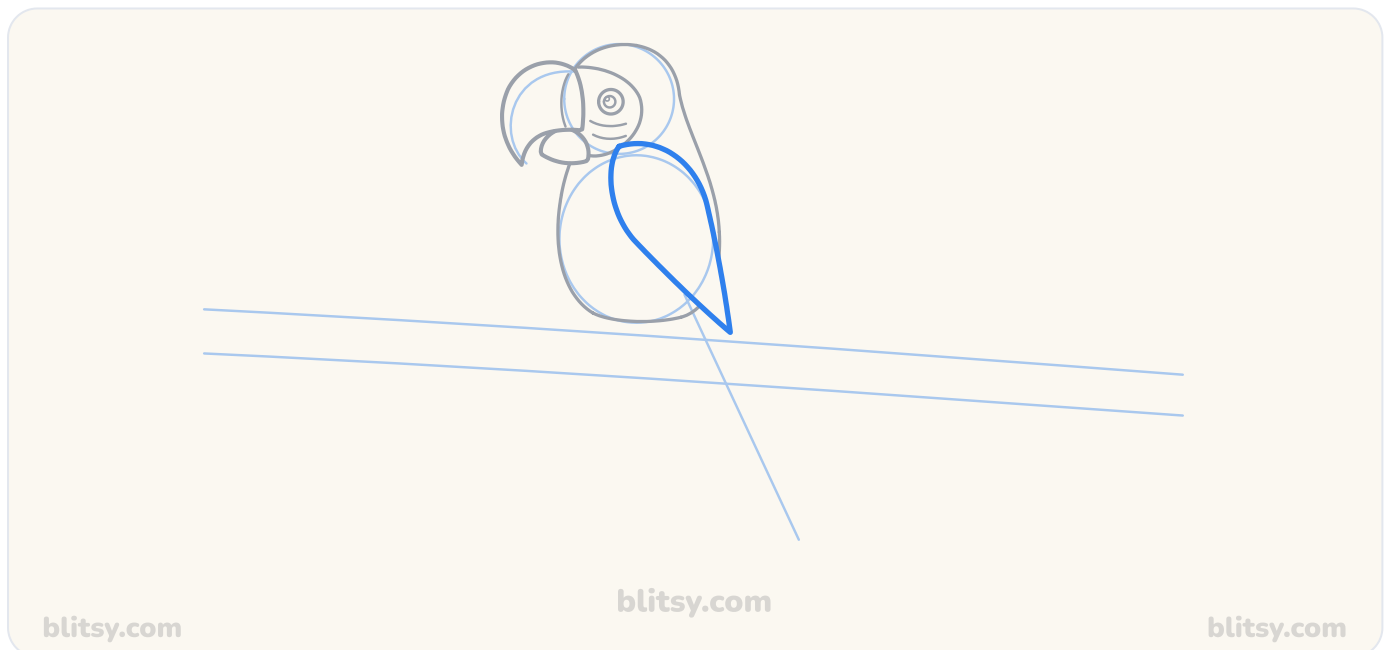
Start where the forehead meets the face and draw a high curve out to the left, then down to a sharp hook pointing toward the chest. From the hook, bring a short line back to the face. Underneath, add the smaller lower beak, tucked behind the hook. Most beginners draw it too small; a macaw's beak is nearly as tall as its head.

 **Tip:** Draw the hook tip last with one short flick so it ends in a real point.

STEP 5 Draw the white face patch and eye

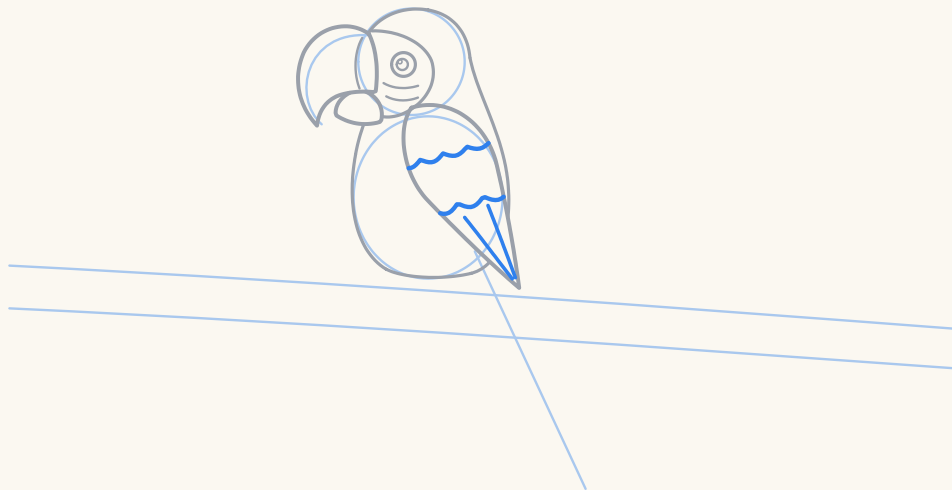
Behind the beak, draw a rounded line from the forehead back and down around the cheek. That bare white patch is a macaw trademark. Put the eye in the upper part of it as a circle with a smaller pupil and a tiny shine. Two short curved lines below the eye hint at the little feather rows on the skin.

 **Tip:** Place the eye closer to the beak than to the back of the head.

STEP 6 Outline the folded wing

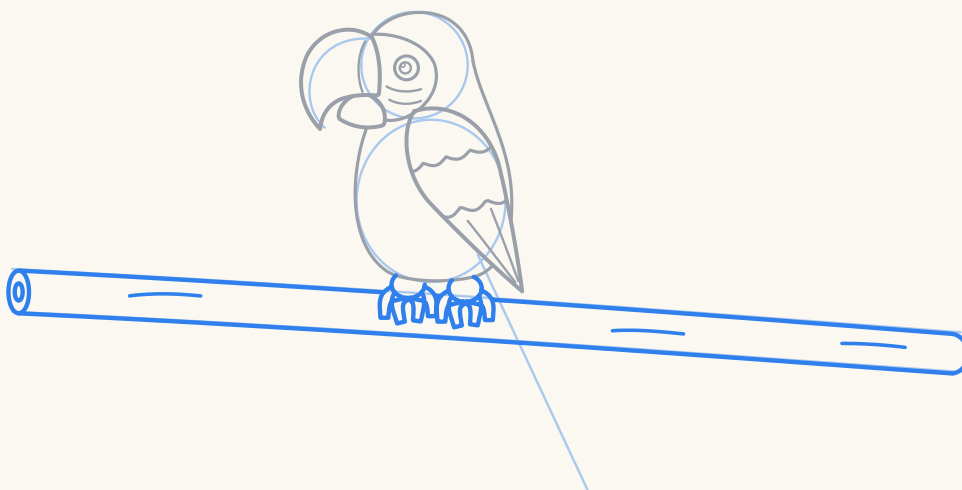
The wing is a long leaf shape lying over the back. Start it just behind the face patch, follow the back line down, and finish in a point that pokes out past the body. Bring the front edge back up in a smooth curve across the chest. Don't worry if it covers half the body; it should.

 **Tip:** Push the wing tip slightly outside the body line so the wing looks layered, not painted on.

STEP 7 Add the yellow and blue bands

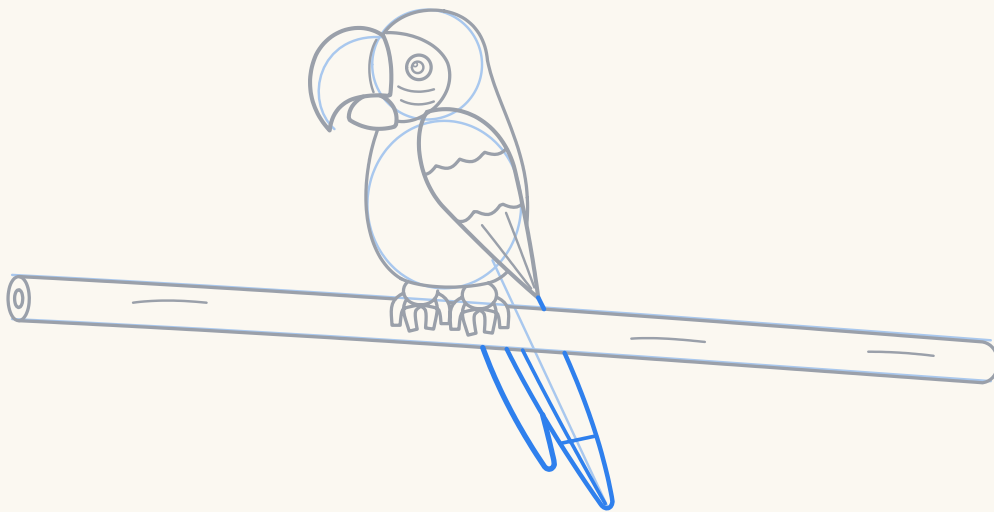
Across the wing, draw two wavy lines, one near the top third and one a bit lower. The bumps are feather tips. The section between them becomes the yellow band, and everything below the second line turns blue. Two long lines toward the tip separate the flight feathers.

Tip: Make the bumps a little bigger on the lower line. The yellow feathers are longer than the red ones above them.

STEP 8 Draw the branch and gripping toes

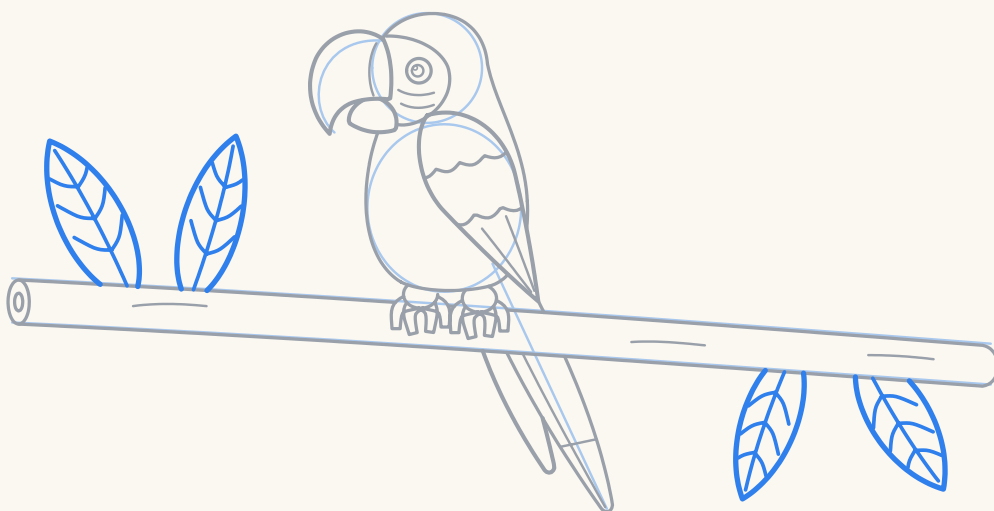
Trace over the branch guides with firm lines, add a small oval with a ring at the left end and a rounded right end. Under the belly, draw two rounded feet. Parrots have two toes pointing forward and two pointing back, so give each foot four thick toes curling over the front of the branch, two leaning left and two right.

Tip: Draw the toes chunky. Thin toes make the feet look like spider legs.

STEP 9 Draw the long pointed tail

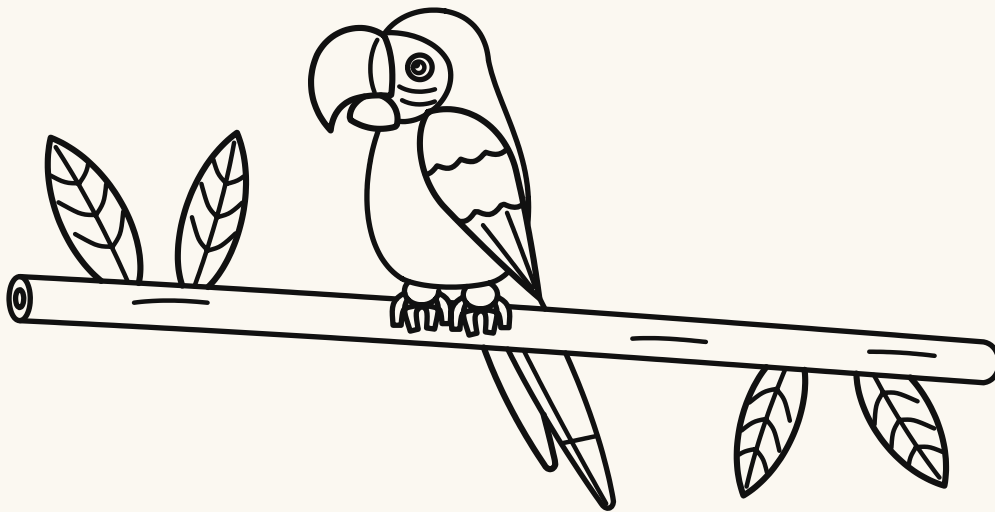
Follow the tail guide with two lines that start behind the body and meet in a sharp point near the bottom. Stop where the branch crosses and continue below it, since the tail hangs behind the wood. On the left, add a shorter outer feather peeking out, then a center line and a line across the lower part for the blue tip.

 **Tip:** Taper the tail slowly. If it narrows too early, it looks like a stick.

STEP 10 Add the tropical leaves

Two broad leaves stand up from the branch on the left, and two hang down on the right. Each one is a wide almond shape with a center vein and a few side veins curving toward the tip. Leaves in opposite corners frame the bird and fill the empty paper.

 **Tip:** Tilt each leaf a different way. Four leaves facing the same direction look like stickers.

STEP 11 Ink the lines and erase the guides

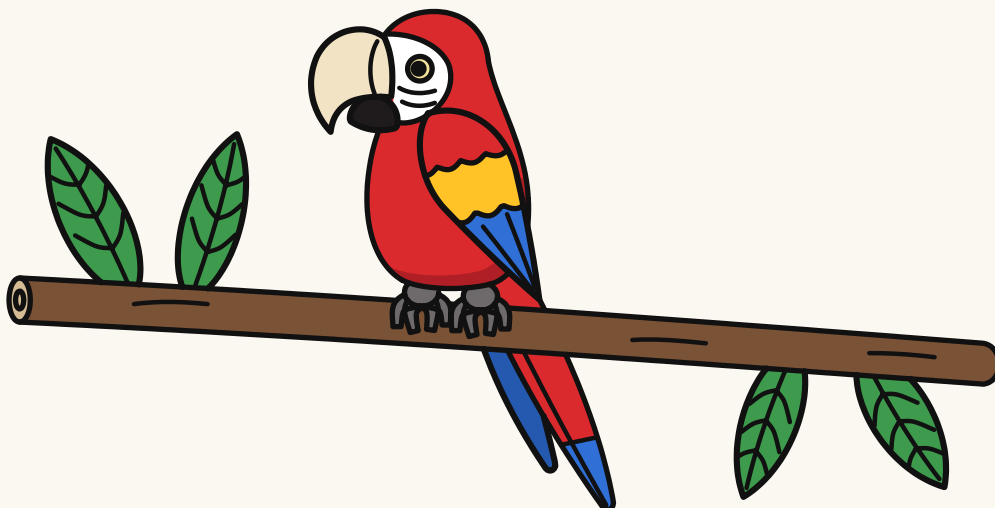
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Go over every line you want to keep with the fineliner. I start with the beak and eye while my hand is fresh, then work outward to the branch and leaves. Skip the circles, the oval and the guide lines. After the ink dries, erase all of them.

 **Tip:** Turn the paper as you ink so you always pull the pen toward you on curves.

STEP 12 Color your macaw

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Fill the head, body, shoulder and tail with red, pressing a little harder along the belly for a shadow. Color the wing band yellow and the feathers below it blue, plus the tail tip and the outer tail feather. The upper beak is cream, the lower beak black, the feet gray. Leave the face patch white, then finish with a brown branch and green leaves.

 **Tip:** Color the yellow before the blue next to it, so no blue smudges into the lighter band.