

How to Draw a Penguin

10 easy steps for beginners



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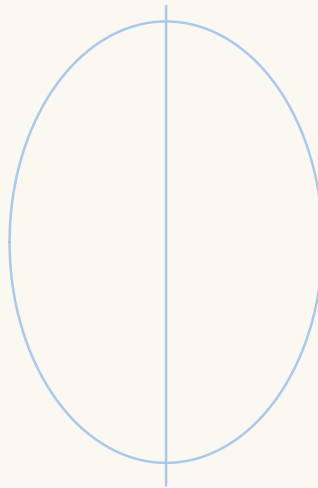
What you'll need

- A pencil
- An eraser
- A black marker
- Crayons or colored pencils
- White 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 center line and an egg

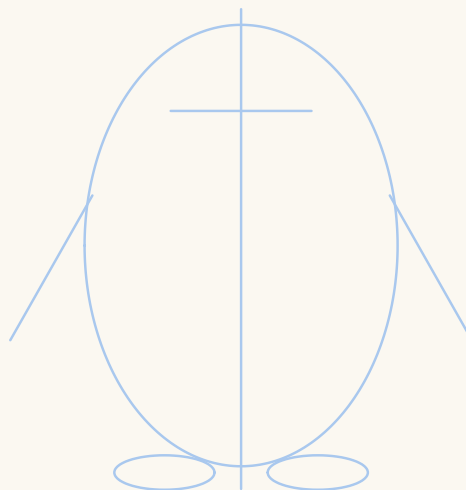
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Draw a straight vertical line down the middle of your page. Then sketch a tall oval around it, a little like an egg standing on its end, filling most of the page from top to bottom. This oval decides how big your whole penguin will be. I tell beginners to make it bigger than feels comfortable, because small drawings are much harder to fit details into.

 **Tip:** Keep your pencil pressure light enough that you could erase the oval with one swipe.

STEP 2 Add guides for the eyes, flippers and feet

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About a quarter of the way down the oval, draw a short line across for the eyes. On each side of the oval, draw a slanted line pointing down and out, starting a little above the middle. These show where the flippers will hang. At the bottom, sketch two flat little ovals, one on each side of the center line, for the feet.

 **Tip:** Check that both slanted lines lean out at the same angle before you go on.

STEP 3 Draw the body outline

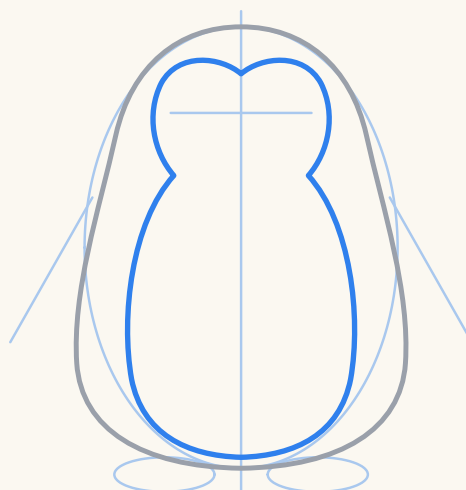
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Now trace a real outline over the egg. Keep the top round and slightly narrow, then let the sides bulge outward as they go down, so the penguin is widest near its lower half. Close it with a wide, soft curve at the bottom. That bottom-heavy shape is what makes a penguin look like a penguin instead of a bowling pin.

 **Tip:** If the sides look straight, push them outward a little just below the middle.

STEP 4 Add the face mask and the belly

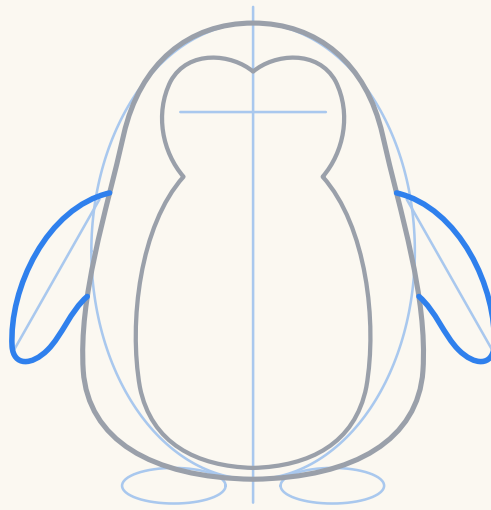
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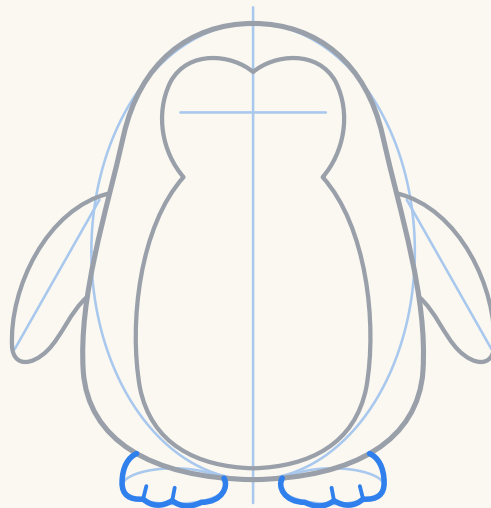
Inside the body, draw the white patch. It starts at the top as a heart shape around the eye line, with a small dip in the center. Under the eyes it pinches in at the neck, then swells into a big rounded belly that almost reaches the bottom. I leave a dark band all around this shape, roughly a finger wide, so the black of the back still shows.

 **Tip:** Draw one half, then copy it on the other side using the center line as your mirror.

STEP 5 Draw two flippers

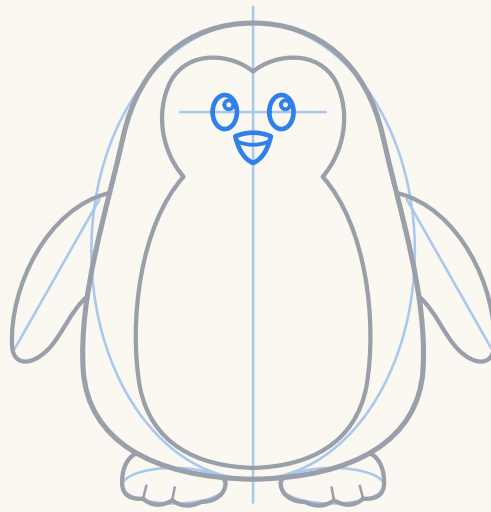
Follow each slanted guide to draw a flipper. Start on the body edge, curve outward and down to a rounded tip, then come back up and rejoin the body a bit lower. The flippers should be about as long as the face mask is tall. Holding them slightly away from the body gives the penguin a happy, balancing pose rather than a stiff one.

 **Tip:** Make the outer edge of each flipper curve more than the inner edge.

STEP 6 Add the orange feet

Use the little foot ovals as your guide. Each foot starts at the bottom of the body, drops down, and ends in three rounded toes along its bottom edge. Add two short lines between the toes so they separate. Most of each foot hides behind the body, so only the front edge needs to show.

 **Tip:** Scallop the toes like the edge of a cloud. Pointy toes look more like a duck.

STEP 7 Draw the eyes and the beak

Sit two upright ovals on the eye line, one on each side of the center, with a small circle inside each for the shine. Just below them, right on the center line, draw a small rounded triangle for the beak, pointing down. A short curved line across the beak shows the mouth. Keep the beak little; a big one quickly turns the face into a toucan.

 **Tip:** Place both eye shines on the same side so the light seems to come from one place.

STEP 8 Add rosy cheeks and a head tuft

Draw a small flat oval under each eye, a little toward the outside. These cheeks are what make the face read as friendly. Finish with three short curved strokes poking up from the top of the head. That tiny tuft isn't on a real adult penguin, but in a cartoon it adds a lot of personality.

 **Tip:** Flick each tuft stroke quickly upward so it tapers at the end.

STEP 9 Ink the lines and erase the guides

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Trace over the outline, the face mask, the flippers, the feet and the face details with your black marker. Leave the center line, the egg, the eye line, the slanted lines and the foot ovals in pencil. When the ink is dry, rub out all the pencil. You should be left with a clean cartoon penguin and no extra lines inside it.

 **Tip:** Turn the paper as you trace the big curves so your hand always pulls toward you.

STEP 10 Color your penguin

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Color the body and both flippers black, or a very dark blue if you want it softer. Leave the face and belly white. Orange goes on the beak and the feet, pink on the cheeks, and the eyes stay black with white shine circles. My trick for the dark parts is to color in small circles instead of back-and-forth lines, which gives an even, smooth finish.

 **Tip:** Color the white belly last with nothing at all. Bare paper is the cleanest white you'll get.