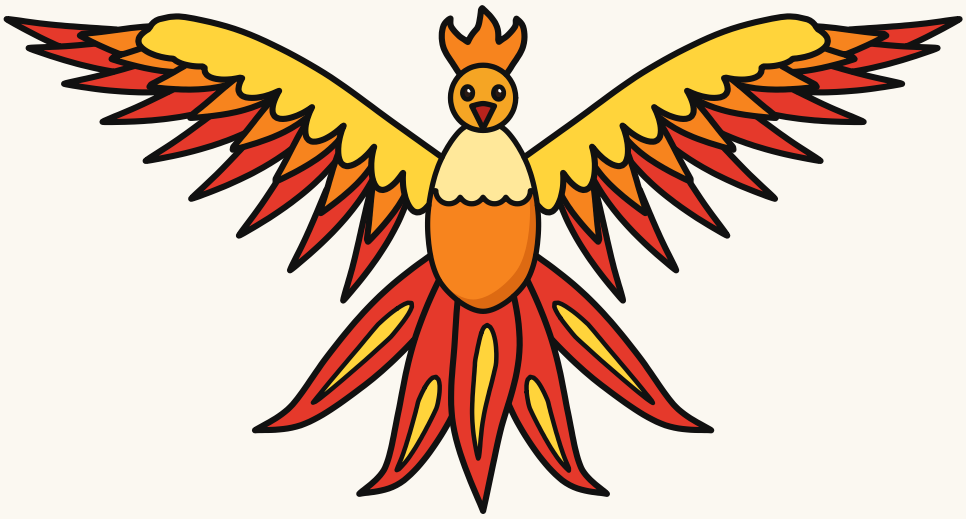
How to Draw a Phoenix

11 easy steps for beginners



What you'll need

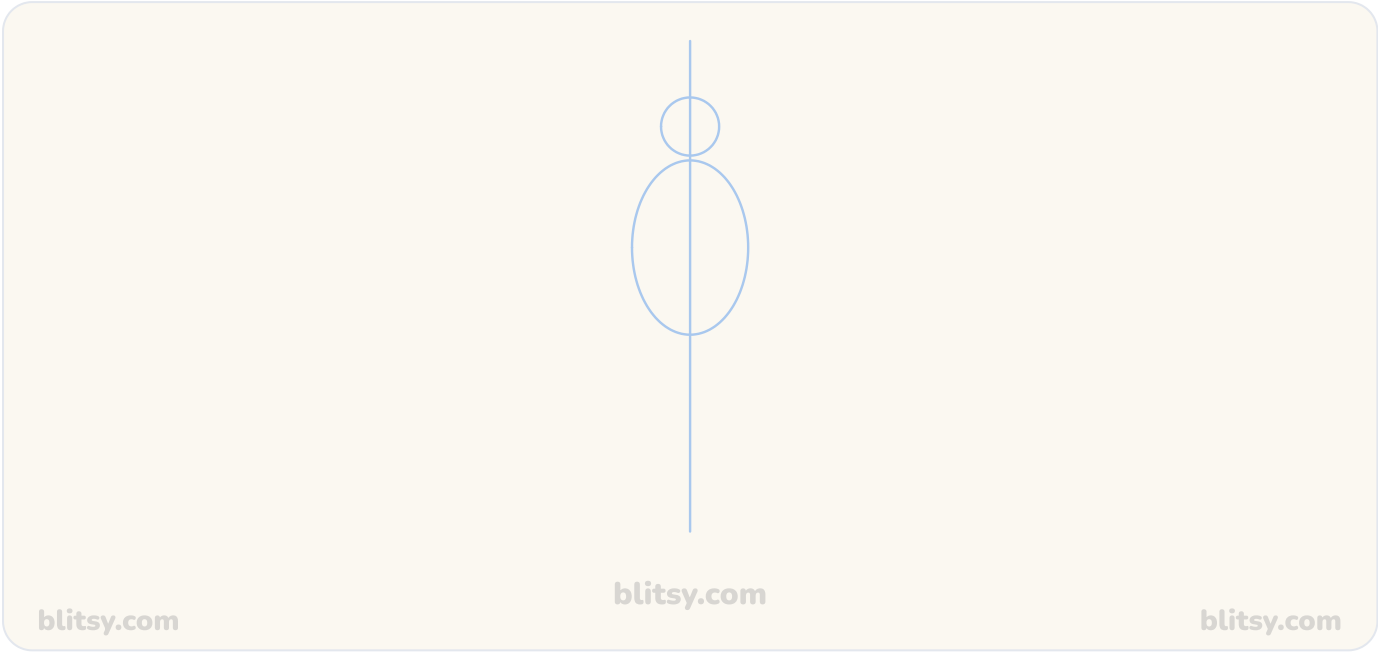
- A pencil
- An eraser
- A black fineliner
- Warm colored pencils or markers
- Plain paper

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 →

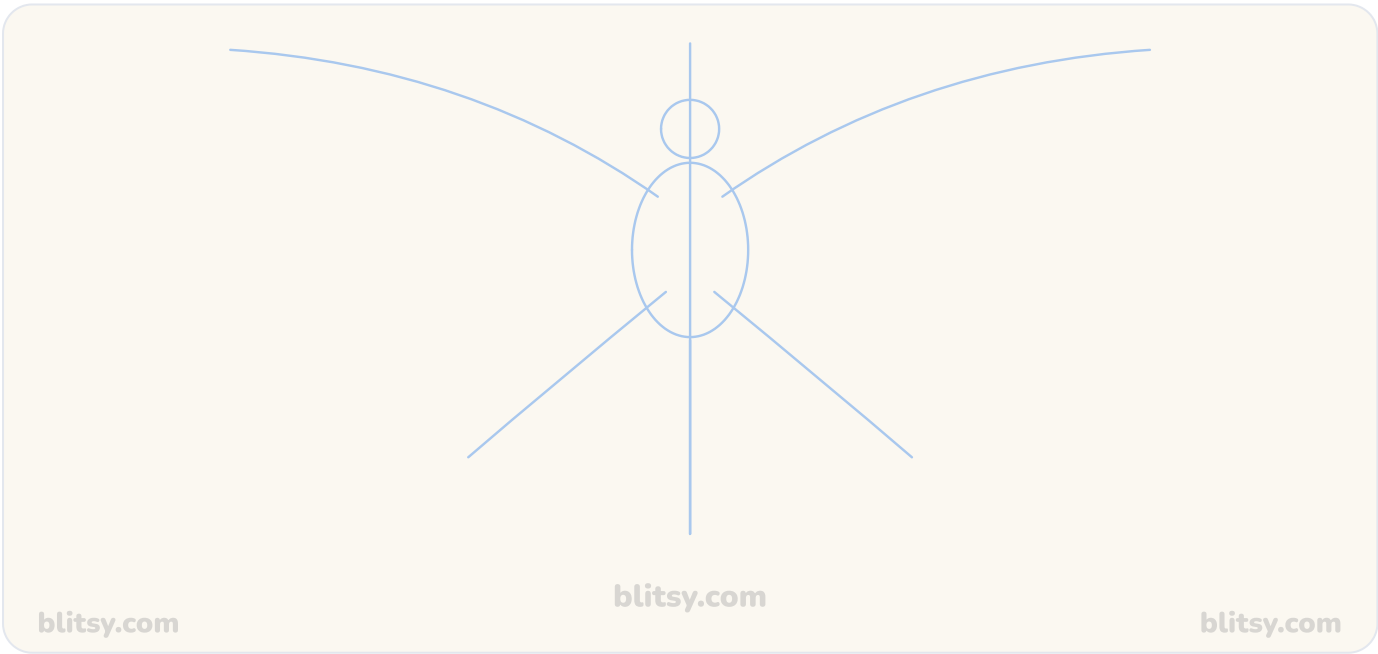
STEP 1 Draw a center line and two circles



Draw a straight line down the middle of the page. Near the top, sketch a small circle for the head, and right under it a tall oval for the body. Keep the head small: on a phoenix the wings and tail do the showing off, so a big head would steal the attention.

💡 **Tip:** Hold the pencil far back from the tip. Your guide lines come out lighter that way.

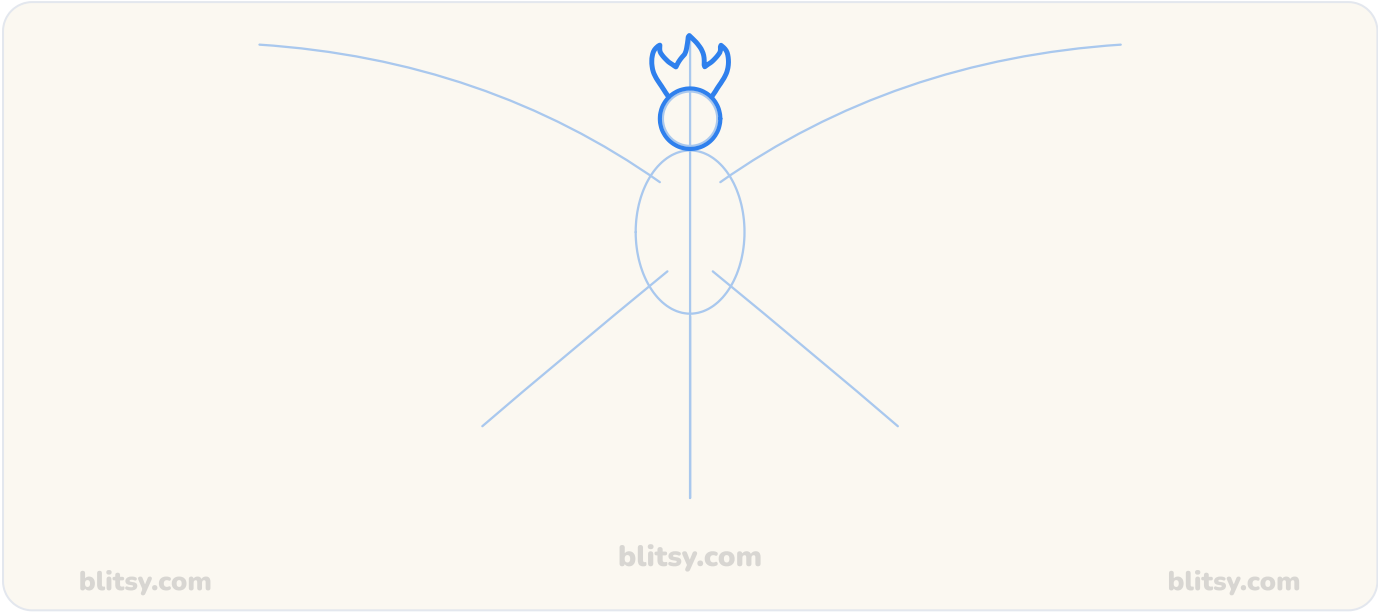
STEP 2 Add wing and tail guide lines



From each shoulder, near the top of the oval, draw a long curve sweeping up and out toward the top corners of the page. Those two curves set how high the wings rise. From the bottom of the body, draw two slanted lines going down and outward, one on each side. Together with the center line, they mark where the tail feathers will flow.

💡 **Tip:** Mark both wing tips with a dot first, at the same height, then connect to them.

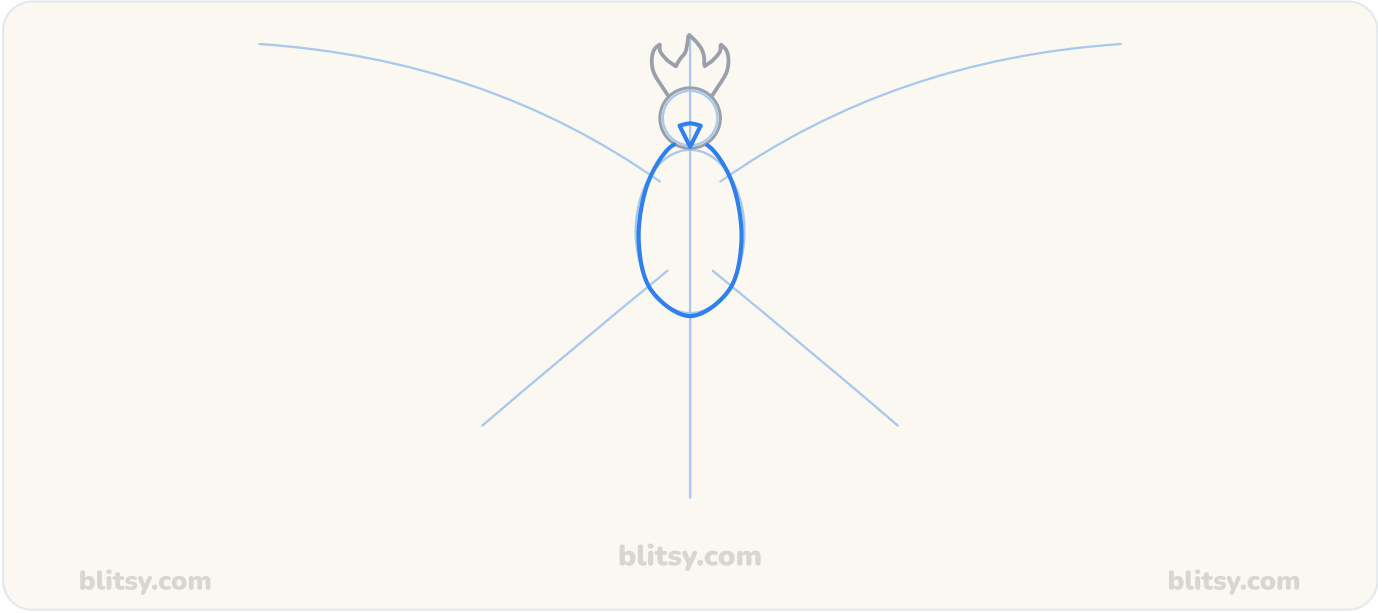
STEP 3 Draw the head and the flame crest



Go over the head circle with a firmer line. On top of it, draw three small flames: a tall one in the middle and a shorter one on each side, with their tips bending outward. Each flame is wide at the bottom and comes to a point, a bit like a candle flame. Let the bottoms tuck behind the head instead of sitting on top of it.

💡 **Tip:** Draw the middle flame first. The two side flames are easier to match when they have a center to lean away from.

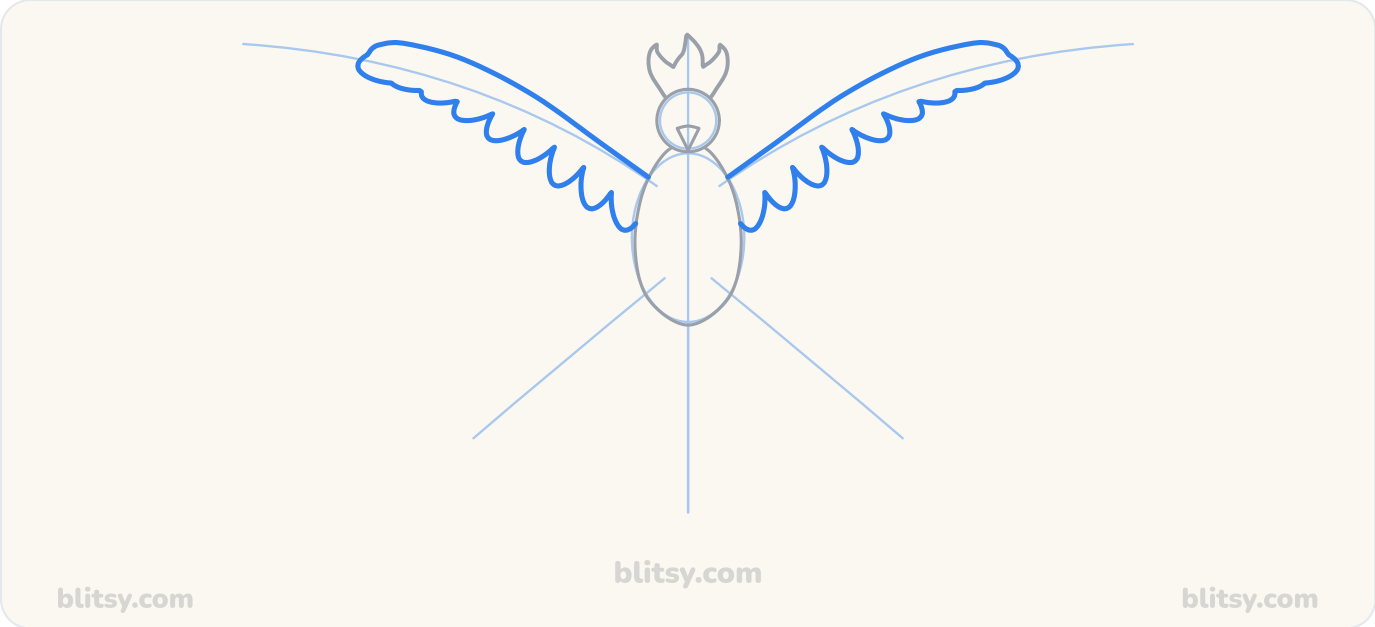
STEP 4 Outline the body and add a small beak



Turn the oval into the body, rounding it a little more at the bottom, like an egg standing on its wide end. The top of the body should disappear behind the head. Then add a short pointed beak at the bottom of the head, pointing straight down. I keep it small so the face still reads as a bird and not a parrot.

💡 **Tip:** If the beak looks too sharp, round its two top corners a little.

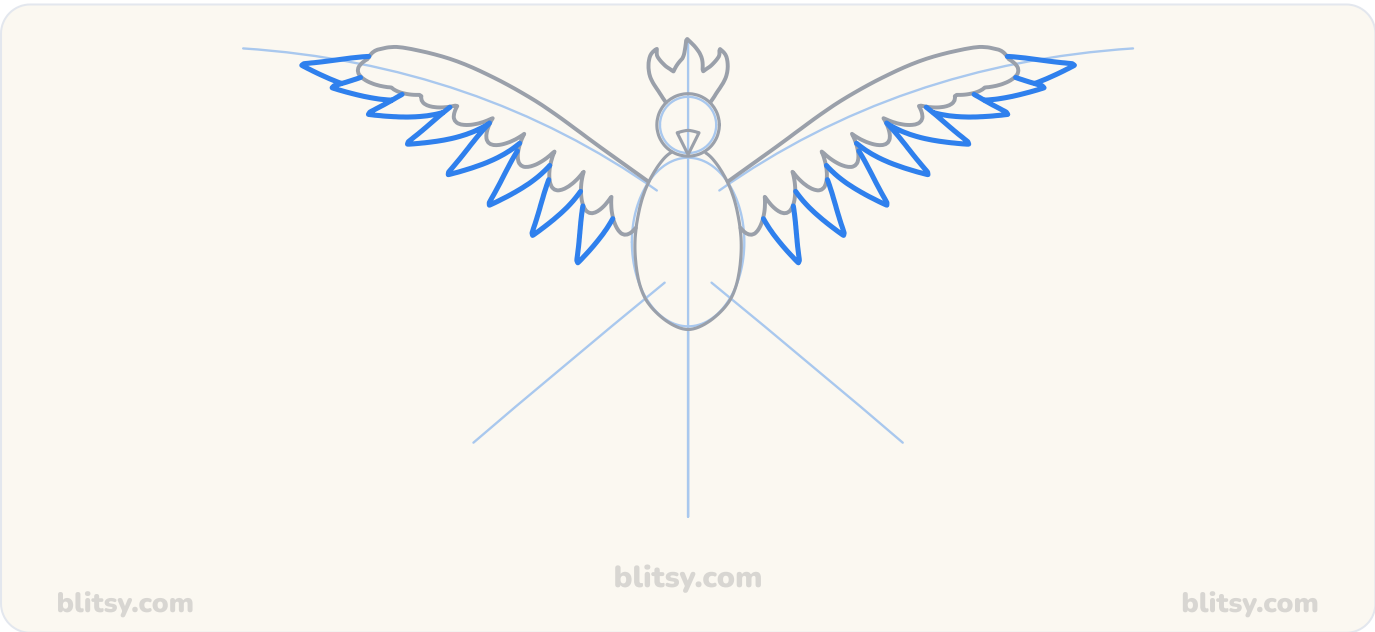
STEP 5 Draw the top row of wing feathers



Start at the shoulder and follow the wing guide up to the tip with one smooth top edge. Under it, draw a row of small rounded bumps, like a scalloped edge, all the way back to the body. Then close the wing shape around the tip. This band is the top of the wing, and every other feather hangs from it.

💡 **Tip:** Make the bumps a little bigger near the body and smaller toward the tip.

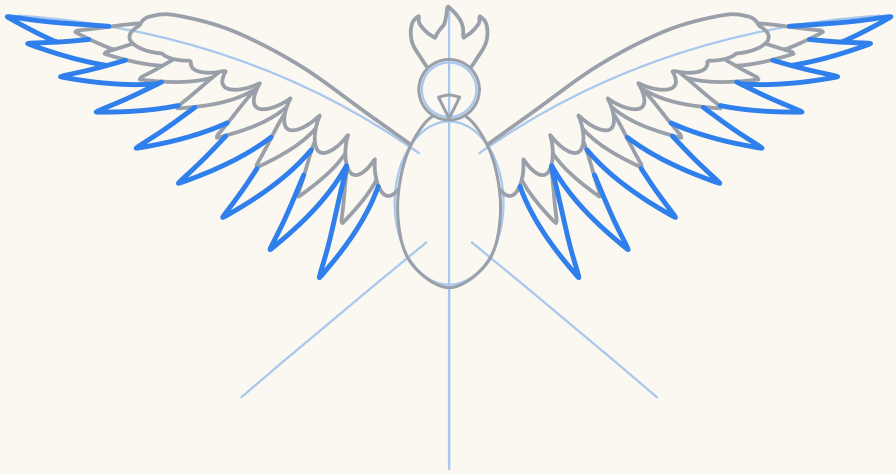
STEP 6 Add the middle row of pointed feathers



Below the scallops, draw a second row: medium feathers with pointed tips. Near the body they point down, and as you move toward the wing tip they slowly turn to point outward. That gentle turn is what makes the wing look like it's opening. Let each feather tuck slightly behind the one beside it.

💡 **Tip:** Count the feathers on the first wing and use the same number on the second.

STEP 7 Draw the long flight feathers



Now add the longest feathers under the middle row. They follow the same turn, pointing down near the body and outward at the tip, but reach much farther. The ones at the wing tip should be the longest of all, stretching past the top row. I find this step goes faster if you draw all the tips first as dots, then join each dot back to the wing.

💡 **Tip:** Curve each long feather slightly instead of drawing it ruler-straight. It looks softer and more alive.

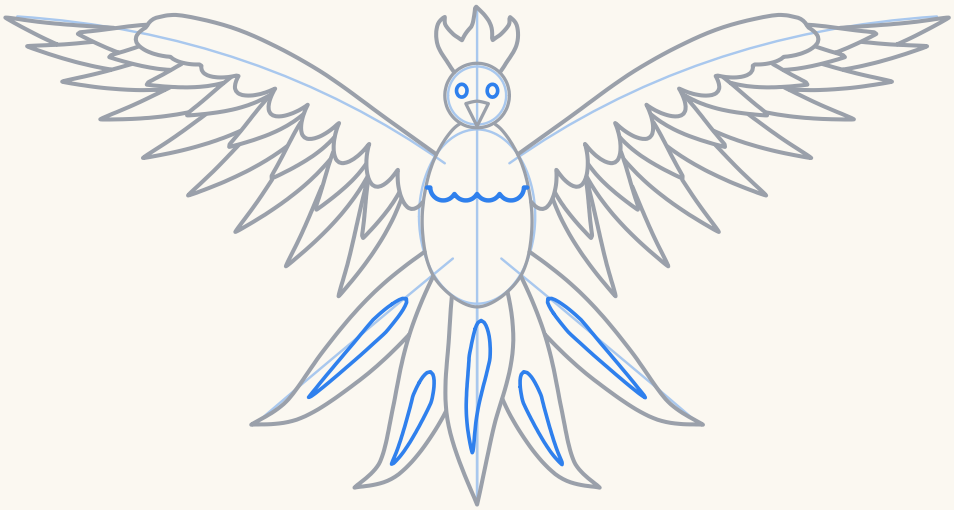
STEP 8 Draw the flowing flame tail



From the bottom of the body, draw five long tail feathers shaped like flames. The middle one drops straight down. The pair beside it bends out a little, and the outer pair follows the slanted guides, with their tips flicking outward at the end. Each feather is widest about a third of the way down, then thins to a point. Let them overlap near the body.

💡 **Tip:** Draw the center feather first, then build the others outward so they overlap neatly.

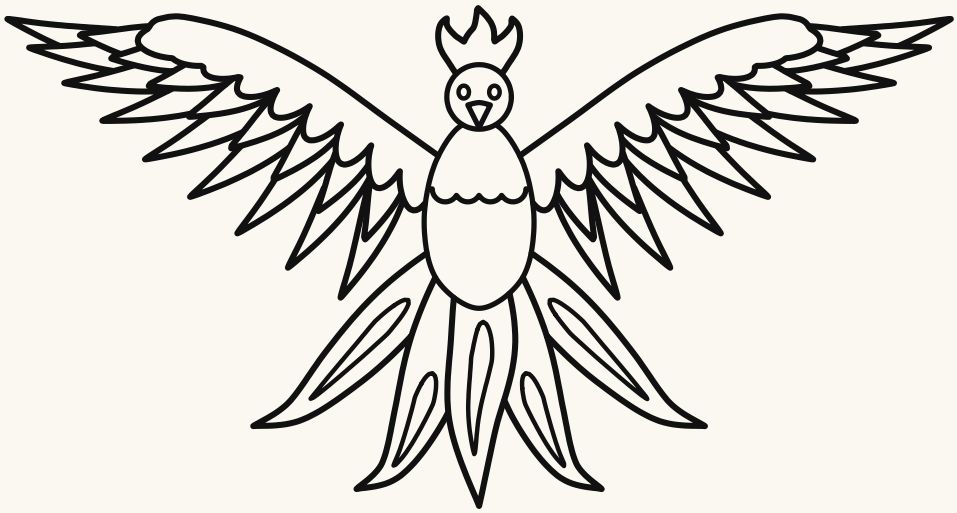
STEP 9 Add the eyes, the chest and the flame centers



Give the head two small oval eyes just above the beak, close to the center line. Across the upper body, draw a wavy line of four little bumps to mark a pale chest bib. Inside each tail feather, draw a narrow teardrop with its round end near the body and its point toward the tip. These inner shapes are what turn plain feathers into flames once you color them.

💡 **Tip:** Keep the eyes close together and fairly low. Wide-set eyes make the bird look surprised.

STEP 10 Ink the drawing and erase the guides



Trace all the lines you want to keep with a black pen. Wings take the longest here because of the many feather tips, so turn the paper to keep your hand comfortable. I skip the center line, the circles and the wing and tail guides. When the ink is completely dry, erase every bit of pencil.

💡 **Tip:** Ink the feather tips with a quick flick. Slow tips tend to end in a blob.

STEP 11 Color your phoenix



blitsy.com
blitsy.com
blitsy.com

Color the top wing row bright yellow, the middle row orange and the long feathers red, so each wing glows from gold to fire. Make the body and crest orange, the head gold and the chest bib pale yellow. Fill the tail feathers with red and their teardrop centers with yellow. My last touch is a darker orange along the lower right edge of the body, which gives it a rounded look.

💡 **Tip:** Color the yellows first and the reds last, so the darker color never smears into the light one.