How to Draw a Pumpkin

12 easy steps for beginners



What you'll need

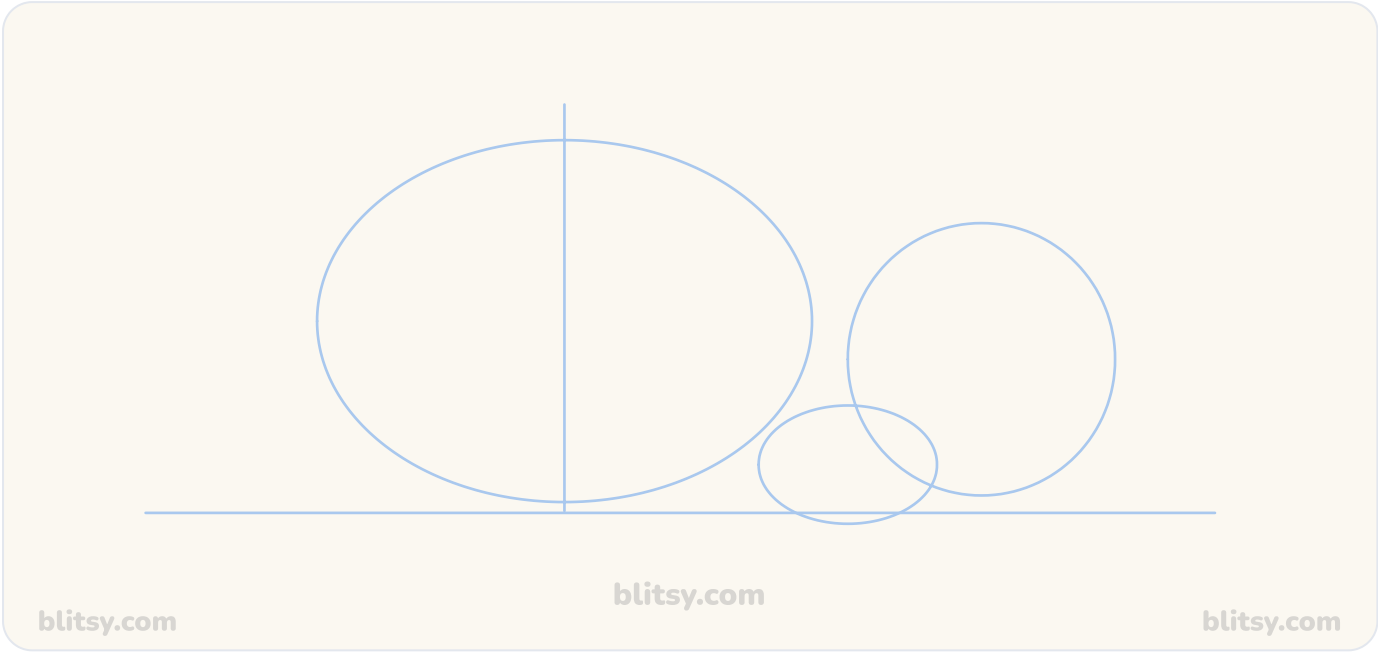
- A pencil
- An eraser
- A black marker
- Colored pencils
- Paper

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 →

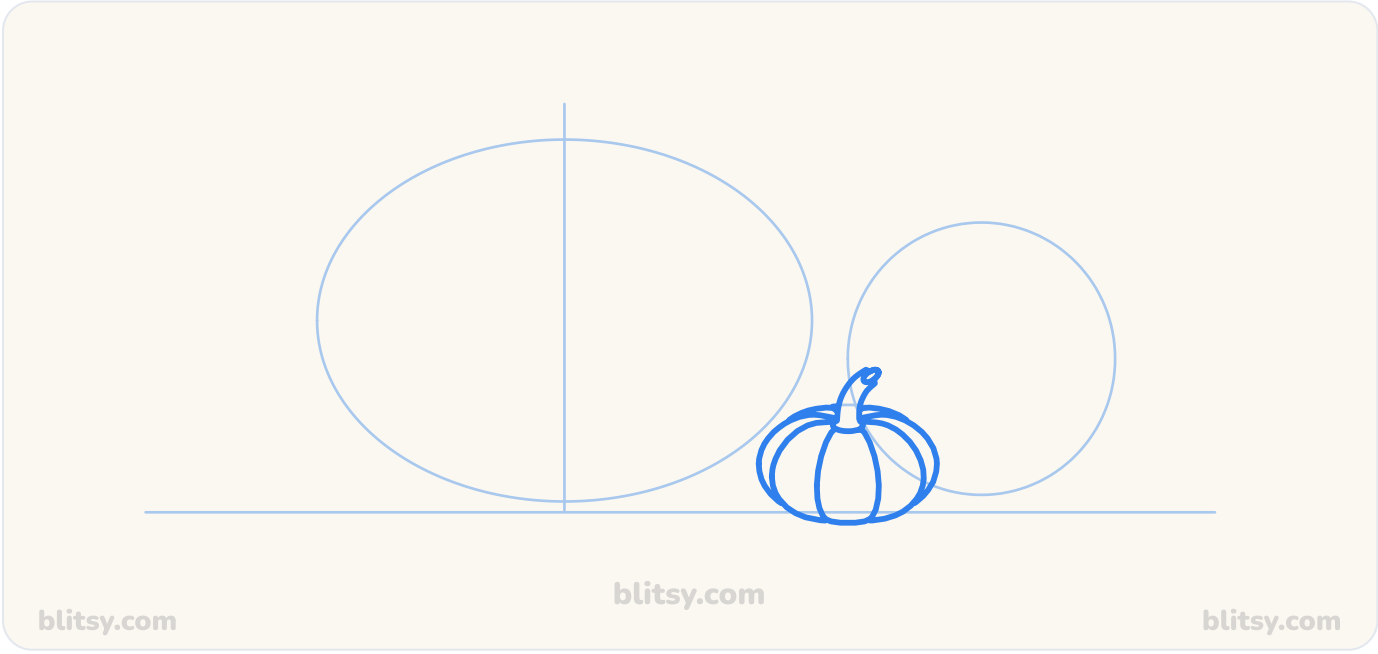
STEP 1 Sketch light ovals and a ground line



Draw a long, flat line near the bottom of the page for the ground. Above it, sketch a wide oval on the left with a light line down its middle. To the right, add a tall circle that sits a bit higher, then a small oval in front of both, touching the ground. These shapes set each pumpkin's size before you commit.

💡 **Tip:** Keep the guide ovals faint enough that you could barely photocopy them.

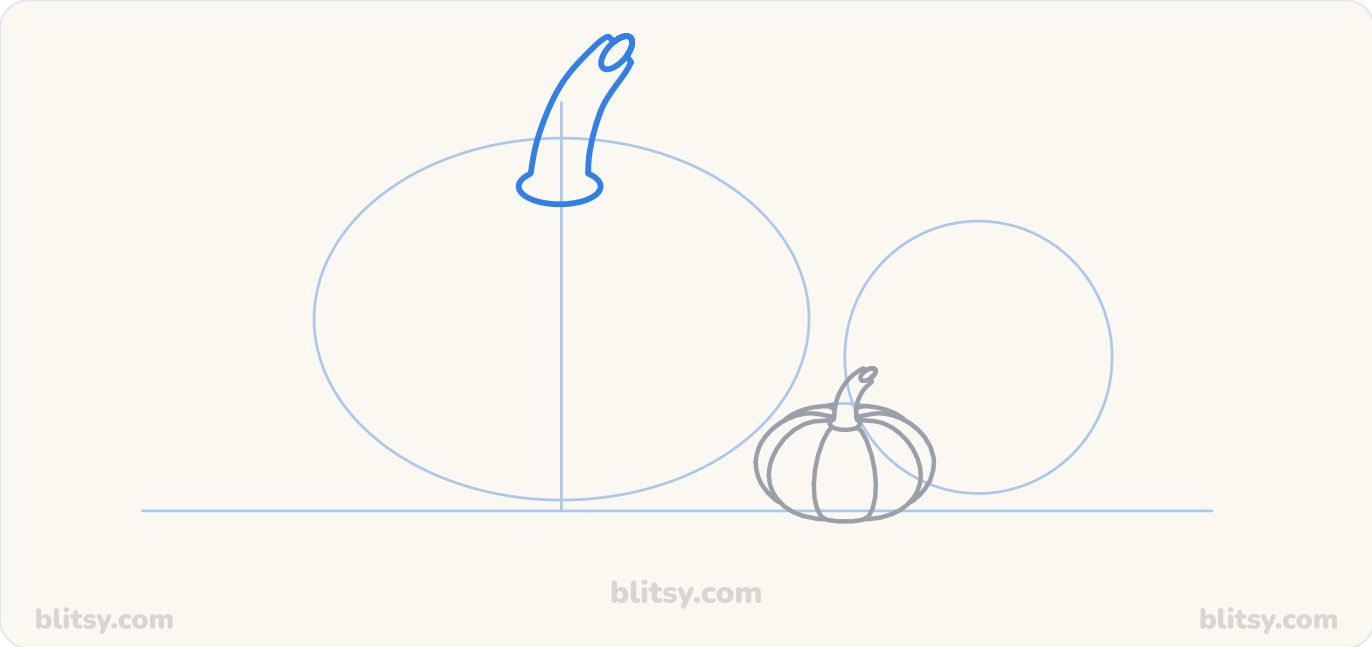
STEP 2 Draw the tiny pumpkin up front



Start with the pumpkin closest to you. Inside the small oval, draw a narrow front slice, two rounder slices hugging it, then a thin sliver on each edge. Add a short stem. I draw the nearest object first in any still life, because everything behind it simply stops at its edge and you never erase overlaps.

💡 **Tip:** Squash this pumpkin a bit. Small ones are usually flatter than big ones.

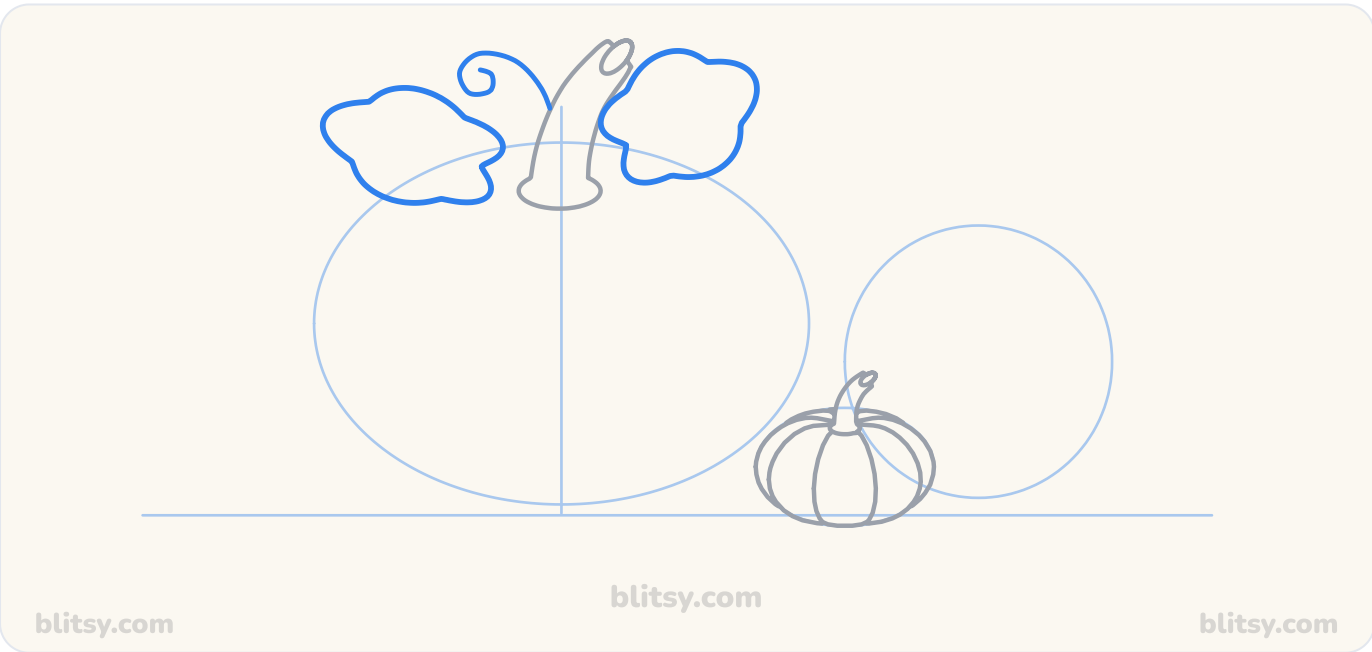
STEP 3 Add a thick curved stem



On the center line, near the top of the big oval, draw a flat oval for the stem base. From it, pull up a thick stem that bends right as it rises, and cap it with a small slanted oval where it was cut. Make it chunky; a thin stem makes a big pumpkin look like a toy.

💡 **Tip:** Draw both sides of the stem in one smooth pass each, not in short scratchy strokes.

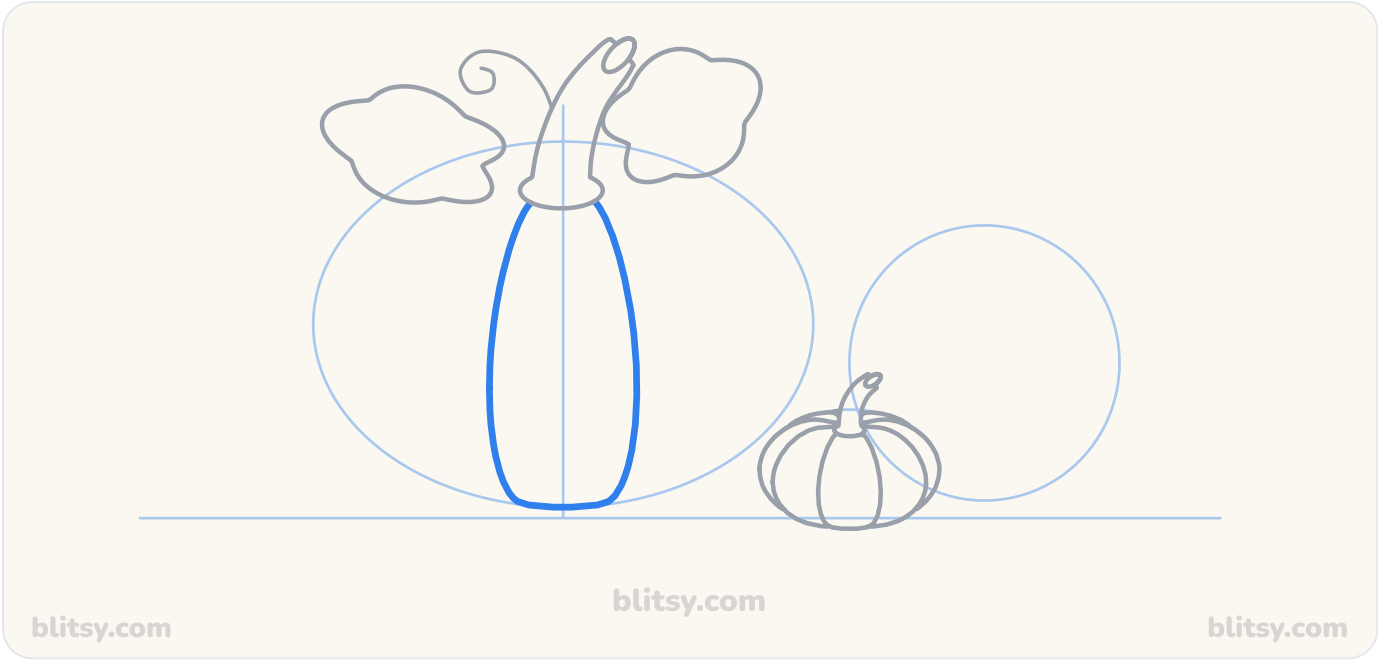
STEP 4 Draw two leaves and a curly tendril



Pumpkin leaves are broad, with soft wavy bumps instead of points. Lay one on the left shoulder so it covers part of the top, and let the other rise behind the stem on the right. Between the left leaf and the stem, draw a thin vine that twists into a spiral. These come before the body because they sit in front of it.

💡 **Tip:** Bumpy edges look more natural when the bumps are slightly different sizes.

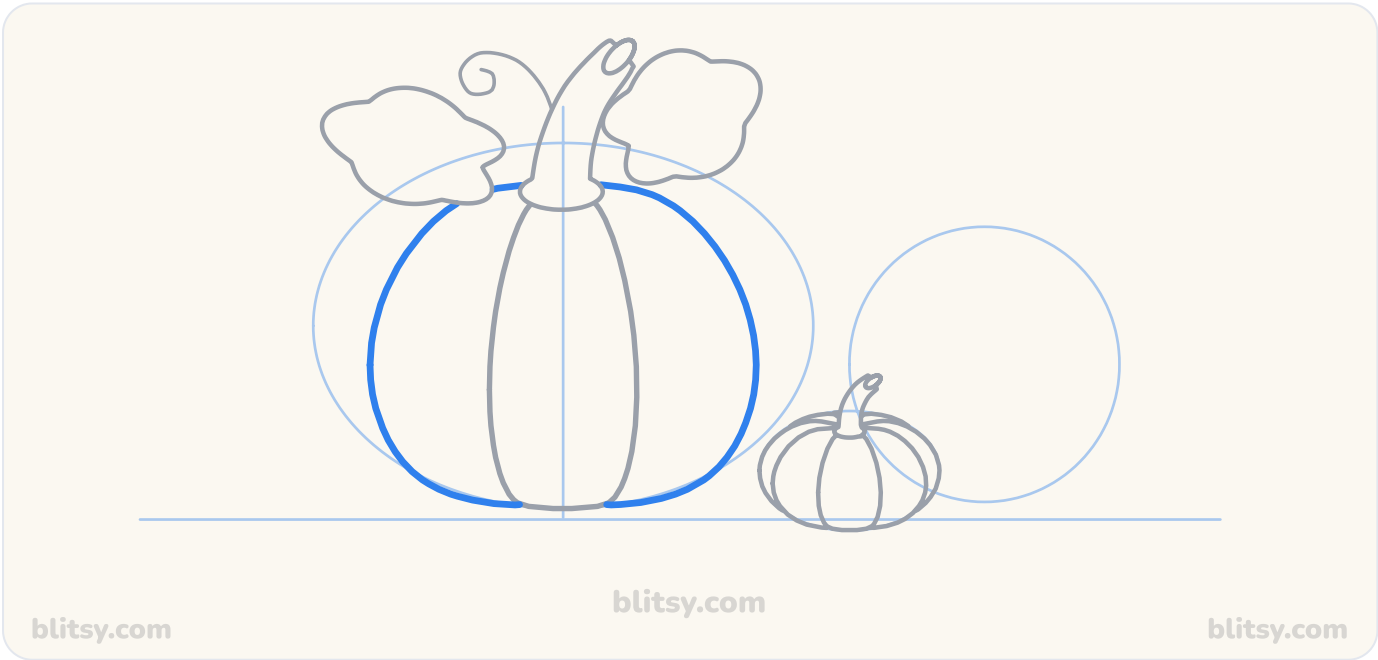
STEP 5 Draw the front slice under the stem



Here's the heart of the lesson. Start right under the stem base and draw a long, narrow slice that swells a little in the middle and rounds off just above the ground. Think of an orange segment standing on its end. It faces you straight on, so it's the narrowest slice of all.

💡 **Tip:** Use the center line to keep the slice even on both sides.

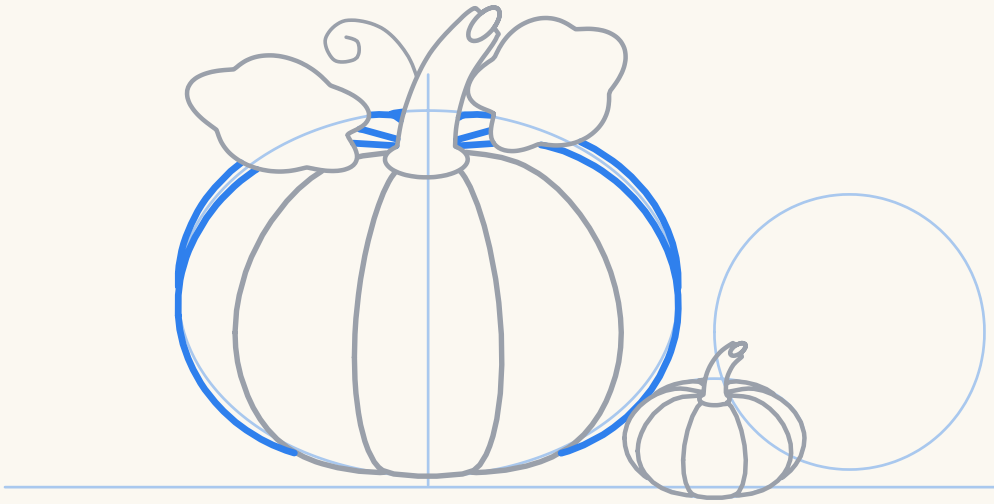
STEP 6 Add a slice on each side



Starting at the stem again, curve a line out to the left, swing it wide and bring it back to the bottom of the front slice. Repeat on the right. These slices are wider because they bend away from you. When I demonstrate this, I stop each line where it meets the leaf, since the leaf lies on top.

💡 **Tip:** Every rib line should begin under the stem. That's what makes the pumpkin look round.

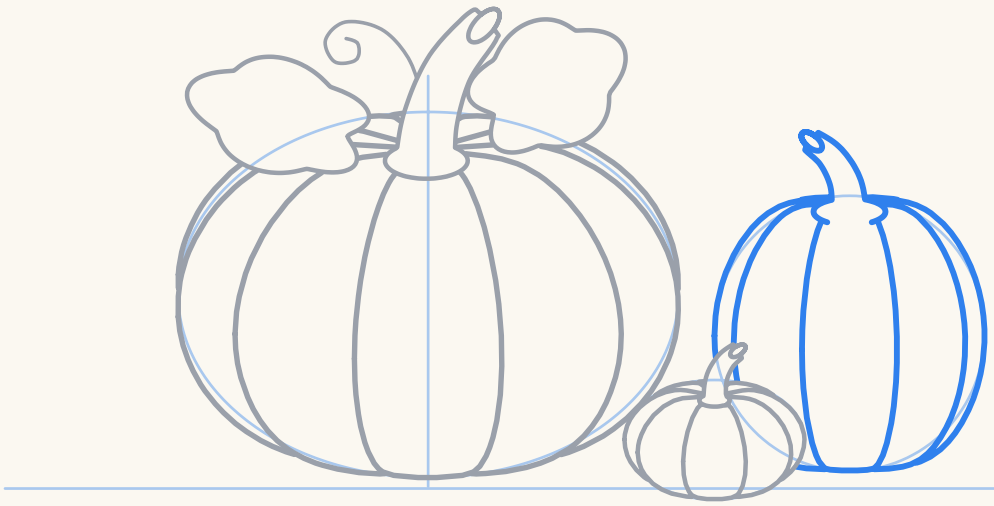
STEP 7 Round it off with the outer slices



Along the far left and right edges, draw one more curve just outside each side slice. Keep them thin, because they're turning around the back. Near the top, add a couple of short lines peeking out beside the stem; those are ribs on the far side.

💡 **Tip:** Follow the guide oval for the outer edge, then let the line wobble slightly at each rib.

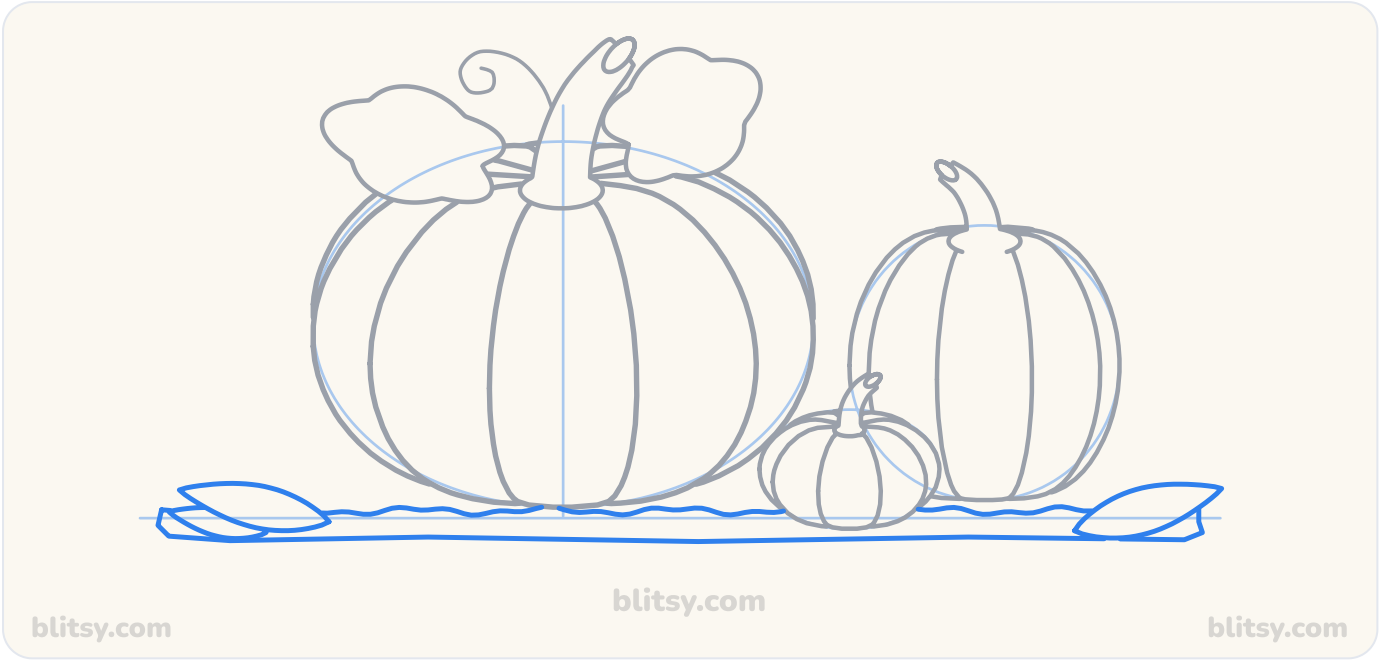
STEP 8 Draw the tall pumpkin behind



Inside the right circle, repeat the slice method: a narrow front slice, wider sides and thin outer ones, stretched upward since this pumpkin is tall. Its left side disappears behind the other two, which tells the eye it's further back. Top it with a slim stem leaning left.

💡 **Tip:** A stem leaning the other way keeps the two pumpkins from looking like copies.

STEP 9 Add the hay and fallen leaves



Draw a loose, wavy strip along the ground line for hay, stopping at the pumpkins' edges. On the left, draw two long fallen leaves, one overlapping the other, and add a single leaf on the right. Keep them flatter than the leaves on the pumpkin, since they're lying down.

💡 **Tip:** Lying leaves look flat when you draw them wider than they are tall.

STEP 10 Add veins, stem lines and straw



Draw a few curved veins in each big leaf, all starting near the stem, and one straight vein down every fallen leaf. Add two grooves along the big stem, then short straw strokes poking up from the hay. My rule is that small details go last, so they don't get erased by accident.

💡 **Tip:** Make detail lines thinner than outlines, or the drawing gets busy fast.

STEP 11 Ink the lines and erase the guides



Go over every line you want to keep with the black marker, working top to bottom so your hand stays out of wet ink. Let it dry, then erase the ovals, the center line and the ground line. If a slice line ran under a leaf while sketching, erase that bit too.

💡 **Tip:** Press a little harder on the outer edges of each pumpkin for a bolder outline.

STEP 12 Color the pumpkins



Color the big and tall pumpkins orange, then add dark orange along the right edge of every slice; that stripe makes the ribs pop. Leave a pale streak on the upper left for shine. Color the tiny pumpkin cream, the stems brown and the leaves green, then finish with golden hay, one red leaf and two yellow ones.

💡 **Tip:** Shade every slice on the same side, so the light seems to come from one place.