How to Draw a Puppy

11 easy steps for beginners



What you'll need

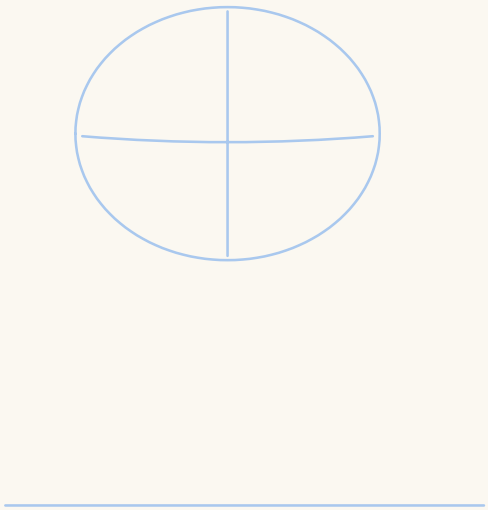
- A pencil
- An eraser
- A black marker or fineliner
- Colored pencils or crayons
- Plain paper

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 →

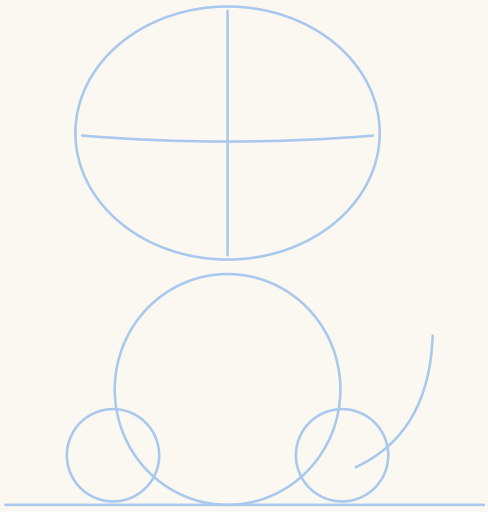
STEP 1 Draw a head oval with cross lines



Put a light ground line near the bottom of your page first, so the puppy has something to sit on. Up high, draw a wide oval for the head. Split it with a straight line down the middle, then a soft curve across, just under halfway. The eyes sit on that curve, and the nose lands on the middle line.

💡 **Tip:** Barely touch the paper. These lines are scaffolding and they all disappear later.

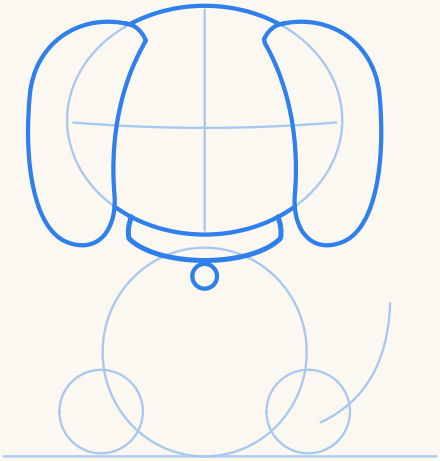
STEP 2 Add the body guide and hip circles



Below the head, draw a round body guide that sits right on the ground line and almost touches the chin. At the bottom of it, add two small circles, one on each side, for the hips of the back legs. One curved stroke rising on the right marks the tail. I keep the body a bit narrower than the head on purpose, since a big head is what makes a dog look young.

💡 **Tip:** Check the gap between head and body. If you could fit a finger in it, nudge the body up.

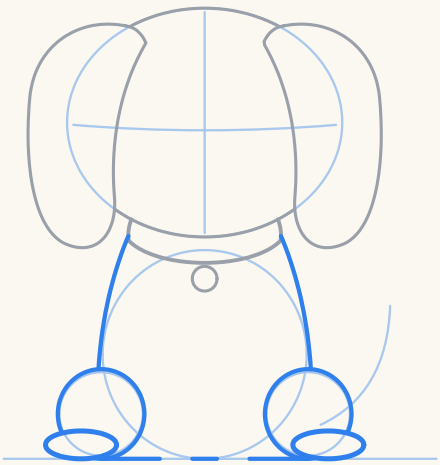
STEP 3 Outline the head, floppy ears and collar



Trace the top and lower part of the head oval firmly. Now the fun part: each ear starts at the top of the head, swings out over the side of the face and hangs down past the chin, ending in a round bottom. The inner edge of each ear runs down the cheek, so the ears cover the sides of the head. Under the chin, draw a curved band for the collar and a small circle hanging from its middle for the tag.

💡 **Tip:** Make the ears longer than feels right. Short ears turn a puppy into a bear cub very quickly.

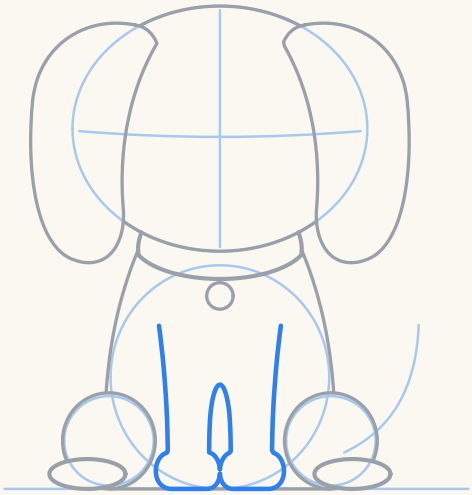
STEP 4 Draw the sitting body and back hips



From both ends of the collar, let a line slope out and down to the ground, bulging slightly as it goes. That's the body. Over the two hip circles, draw rounder, firmer circles, then a flat oval at the front of each one for the back foot. The body lines stop where they meet the hips, because the hips sit in front.

💡 **Tip:** Lay the back feet flat along the ground line. Tilted feet make the puppy look like it's sliding.

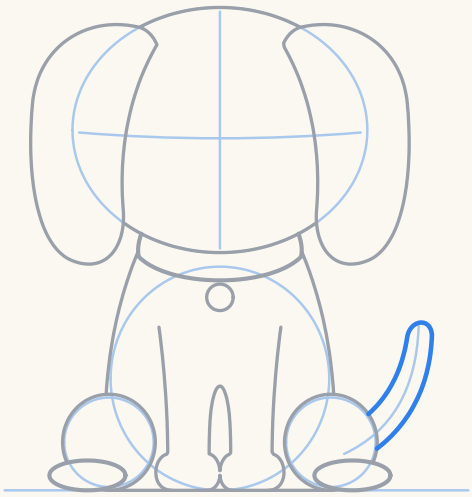
STEP 5 Add the front legs and paws



Front legs are two long, slightly tapered columns running down the chest. Start each outer line a little below the tag and bring it straight to the ground. Between the legs, draw a narrow arch so they separate near the bottom. Round each leg out into a chunky paw at the ground line. Most beginners make these legs too thin, so give them some width.

💡 **Tip:** Leave the tops of the legs open. They melt into the chest, and a closed top would look like a box.

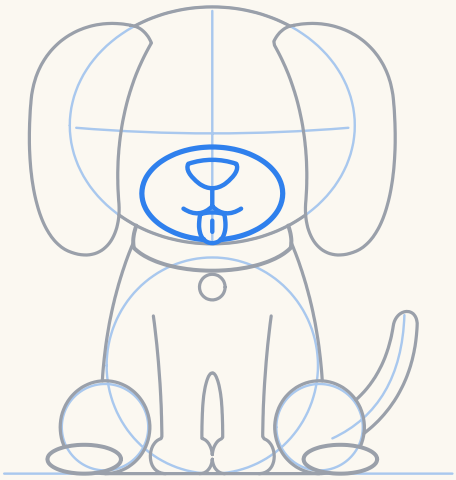
STEP 6 Draw a wagging tail



Follow your tail guide from behind the right hip and curve two lines upward together, slightly apart at the base and closer at the end. Close the tip with a small round cap. Don't draw the part of the tail that would be hidden by the hip.

💡 **Tip:** Draw the outside curve of the tail first, then let the inner one follow it.

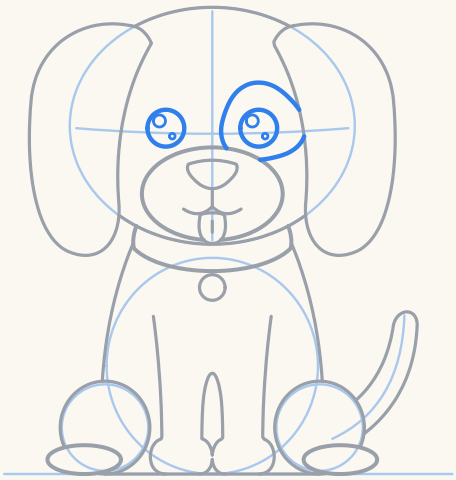
STEP 7 Add the muzzle, nose and tongue



The muzzle is a wide oval sitting low on the face, centered on the middle line and reaching almost to the chin. Near its top, draw a rounded triangle for the nose, point facing down. Drop a short line from the nose and add two gentle curves for the mouth, like a stretched letter W. Below the middle, a little U shape with a line down the center becomes the tongue.

💡 **Tip:** A big nose reads as cute. If yours looks like a button, make it wider.

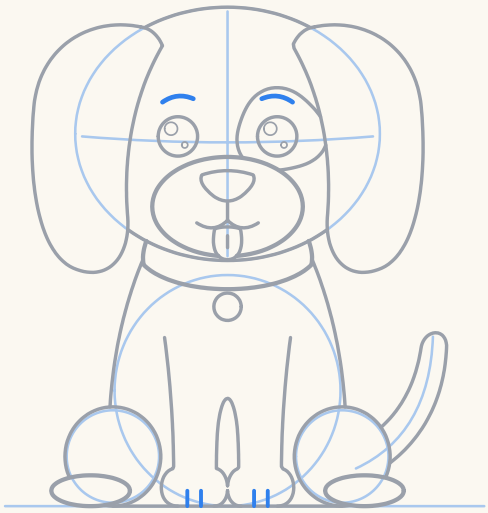
STEP 8 Draw the eyes and an eye patch



Set two round eyes on the curved cross line, one on each side of the center and well apart, about two eye widths between them. Inside each, add a large shine circle at the top left and a tiny one lower down. Then wrap a wobbly patch shape around the eye on the right. I like a patch that's a little lumpy, because perfect circles look painted on.

💡 **Tip:** Put the shine dots in the same corner of both eyes, so the light seems to come from one place.

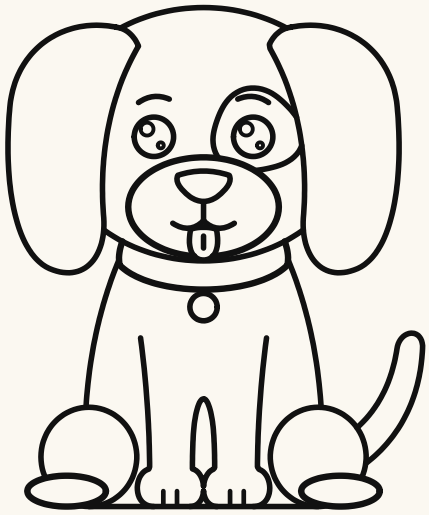
STEP 9 Add eyebrows and toe lines



Two short curved strokes above the eyes act as eyebrows, and they change the mood more than you'd think. Lift them for a curious pup or tilt them down in the middle for a sad one. On each front paw, draw two short lines up from the ground to split the toes.

💡 **Tip:** Keep the eyebrows short. Long ones start to look grumpy.

STEP 10 Ink the drawing and erase the guides



Trace over every final line with your black marker. I usually ink the face first, while I'm still careful, and do the big outline after. Skip all the guide circles and the cross lines. Wait until the ink is properly dry, then erase the pencil underneath so only the clean outline is left.

💡 **Tip:** Rest the side of your hand on a scrap of paper so you don't smudge the ink as you work down.

STEP 11 Color your puppy



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Light brown covers all the fur, from the head down to the tail. The ears and the eye patch are a darker brown. Color the muzzle cream, the tongue pink and the collar blue with a yellow tag. Fill the eyes and nose black but leave the shine dots white. A gray shadow under the puppy keeps it from floating.

💡 **Tip:** Color the dark brown parts last, so the darker pencil doesn't drag into the lighter fur.