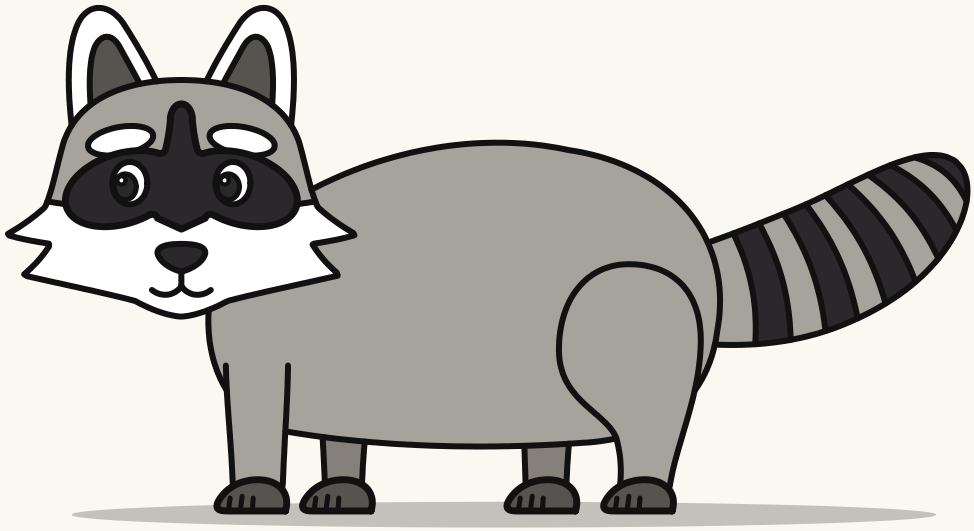
How to Draw a Raccoon

12 easy steps for beginners



What you'll need

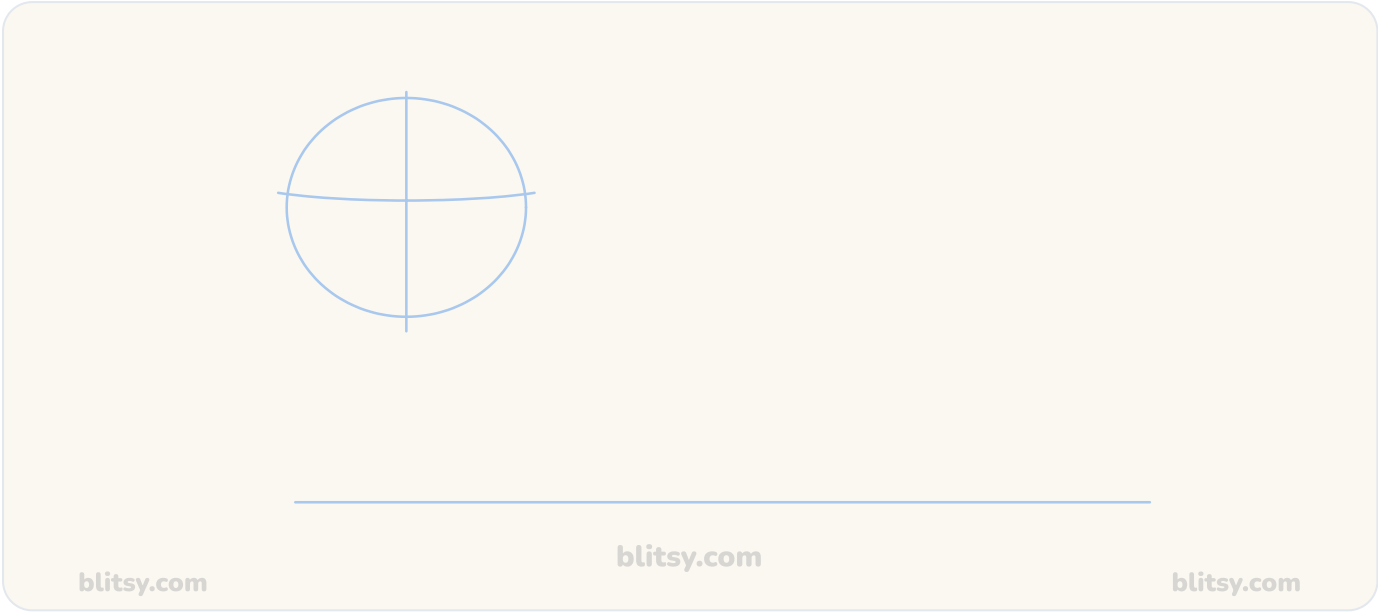
- A pencil
- An eraser
- A black fineliner
- Colored pencils
- Plain paper

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 →

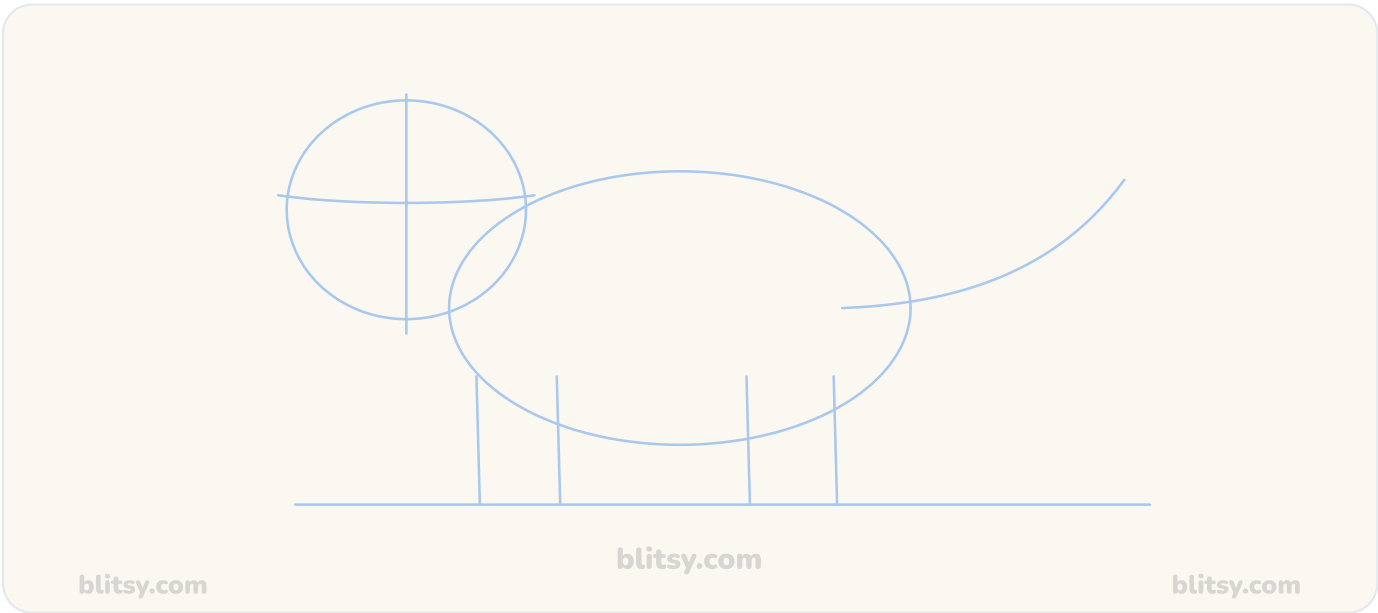
STEP 1 Sketch a head circle and a ground line



Draw a long, flat line across the bottom of your page first. Everything stands on it. Near the left end, well above the line, sketch a circle for the head. Split it with a vertical line down the middle and a gentle curve across, a little below center. The eyes will sit on that curve later.

💡 **Tip:** Keep your pencil light and loose. These shapes are scaffolding, not part of the final raccoon.

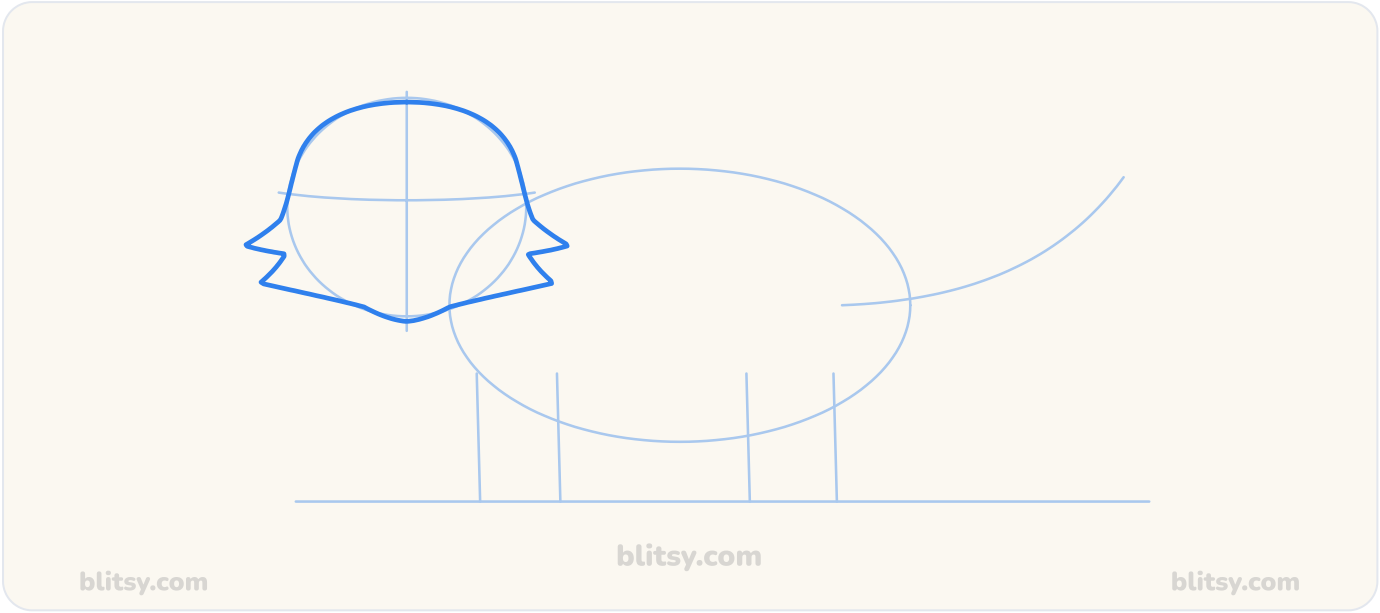
STEP 2 Add a body oval, leg lines and a tail curve



Now draw a wide oval for the body, overlapping the lower right side of the head circle. Make it about twice as wide as the head. Drop four short lines from the oval to the ground, two near the front and two near the back. Then sweep one curve from the back of the oval up to the right for the tail.

💡 **Tip:** Look at the gap between your four leg lines. Two close together at each end reads as a walking animal.

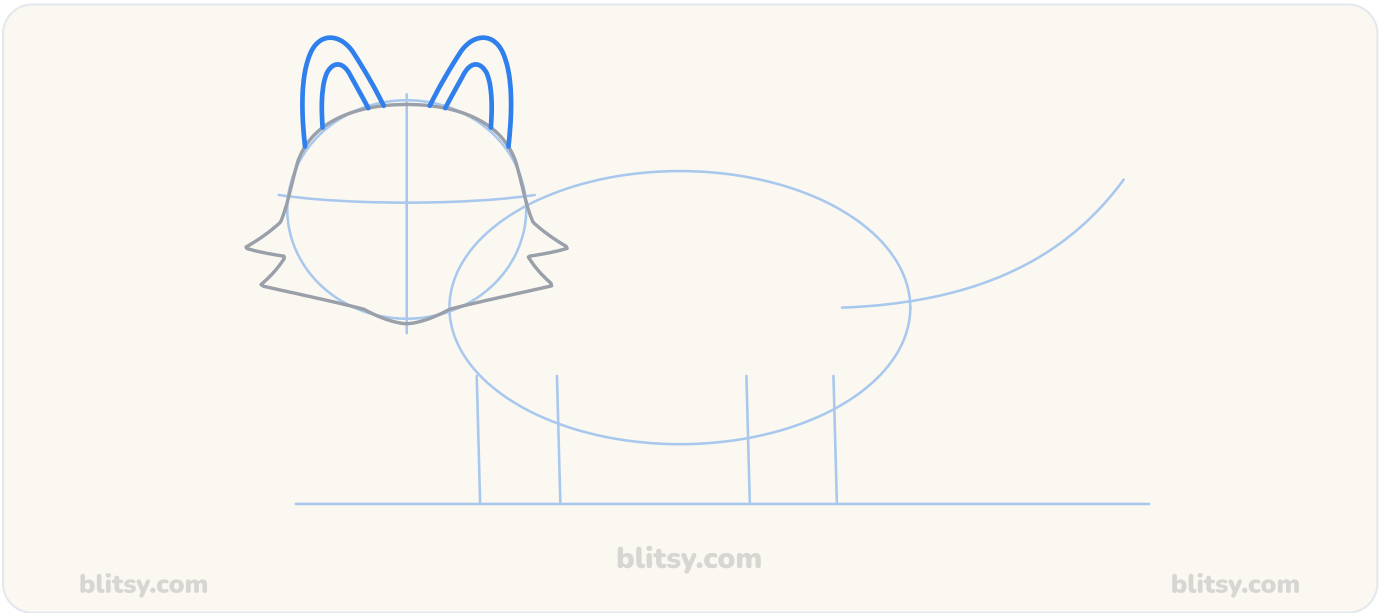
STEP 3 Draw the head with fluffy cheek tufts



Trace the top of the circle for the forehead, then let the sides drop almost straight down. Around the cross line, pull each side out into two pointed tufts of fur. I make the lower tuft a little shorter. Finish with a soft V that ends in a narrow chin just below the circle, since a raccoon's face is pointier than a bear's.

💡 **Tip:** Draw one side, then copy it on the other side while the first is still fresh in your eye.

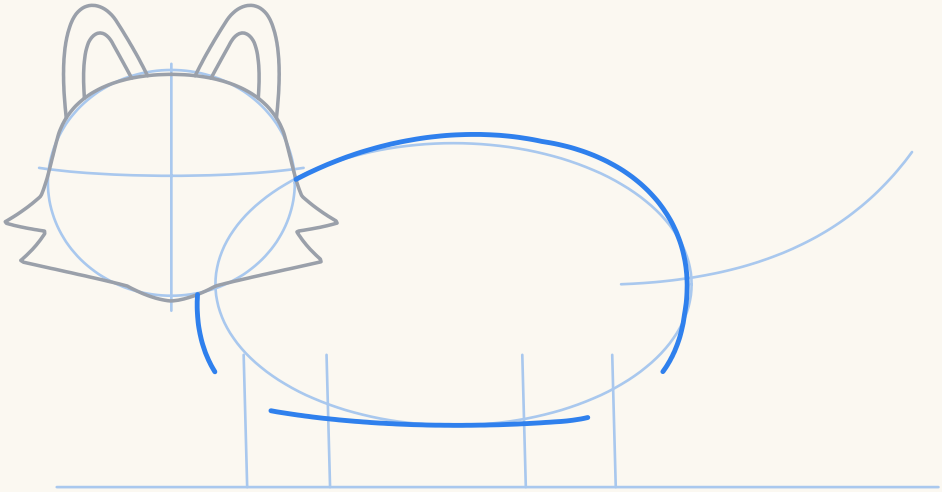
STEP 4 Add two pointed ears



Set the ears wide apart on top of the head, near the outer edges. Each one is a tall triangle with a rounded tip. Stop the outline where it meets the head. Inside, draw a smaller copy of the same shape so there's a band between the two lines. That band becomes the white rim raccoons have around their ears.

💡 **Tip:** Leave a clear gap between the two ear lines. Without it, the white rim disappears when you color.

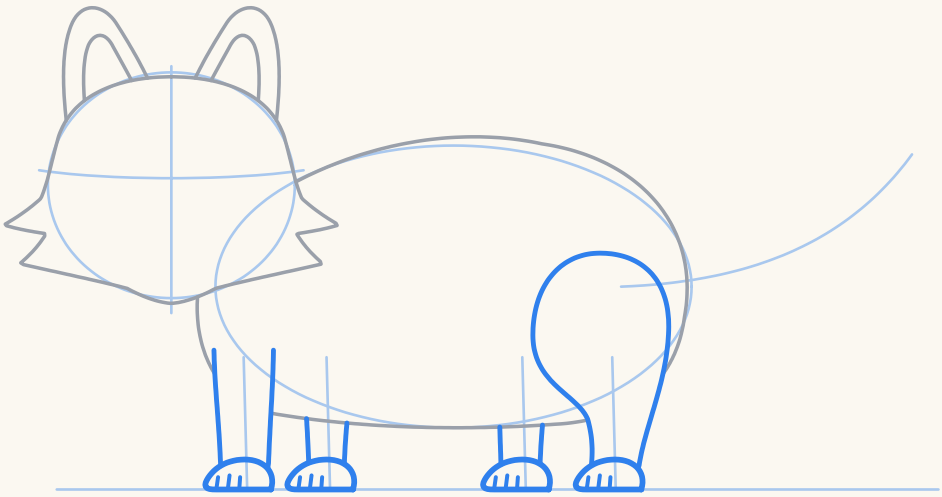
STEP 5 Draw the hunched back and belly



Start just behind the head and run a line up over the back. A raccoon's back is highest over the hips, not the shoulders, so let it climb as it goes right. Round it down over the rump. Then draw the belly as a long, slightly sagging curve along the bottom of the oval. Leave small gaps where the legs will cover the body.

💡 **Tip:** A hump near the back end is what makes this look like a raccoon and not a dog.

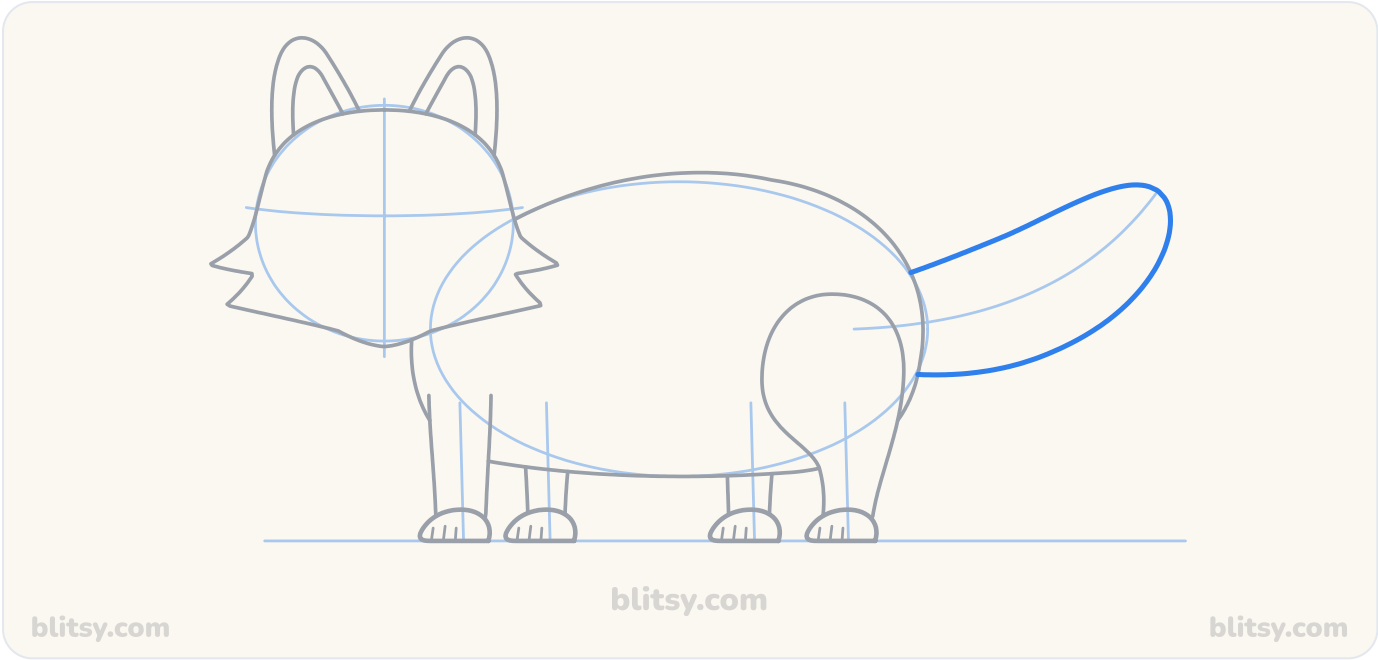
STEP 6 Add four legs and little paws



Build each leg around its guide line. The two near legs sit in front of the body, and the far legs only show below the belly. For the near back leg, I draw a big round thigh that narrows into the lower leg. Add a paw at the bottom of every leg, pointing left, with three short toe lines. Raccoon paws look a lot like small hands.

💡 **Tip:** Keep all four paws resting on the ground line, or your raccoon will seem to float.

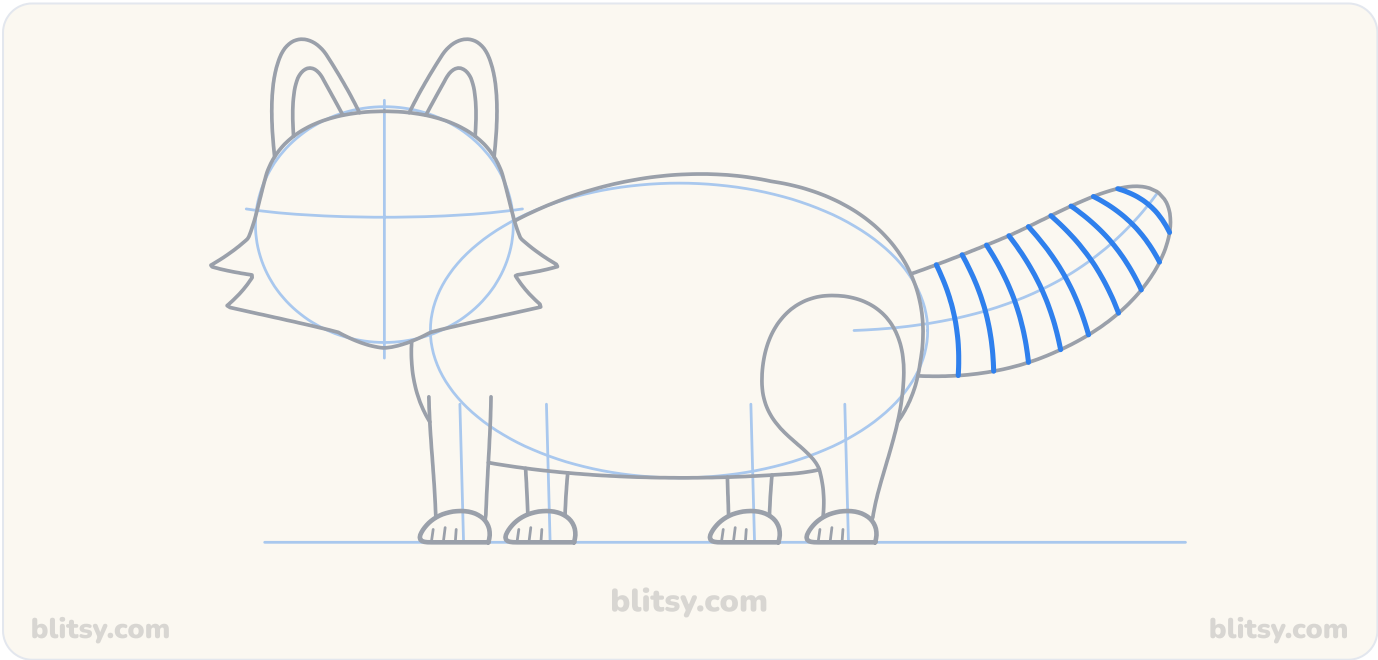
STEP 7 Shape the big bushy tail



Follow the tail curve from behind the rump. Start fairly thick, get a bit fatter in the middle, then round it off at the tip like the end of a sausage. If yours looks thin and pointed, it'll read as a rat tail, so add width before you move on.

💡 **Tip:** Hide the base of the tail behind the body. Only draw the part you can actually see.

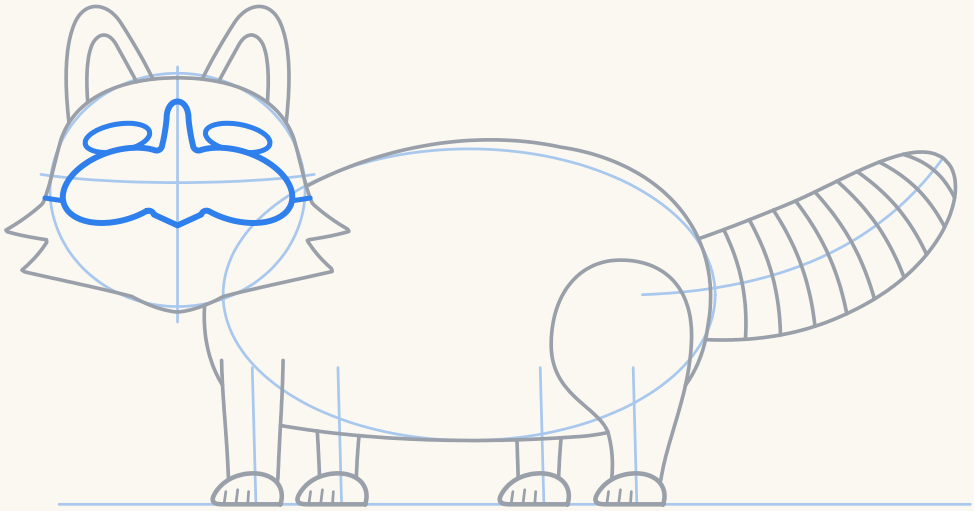
STEP 8 Mark the rings on the tail



Draw curved lines across the tail to mark four black rings and a black tip. Each pair of lines makes one ring. Bend every line slightly toward the tip so the tail looks round, not flat. I keep the gray bands about as wide as the black ones.

💡 **Tip:** Count your bands before you ink. Four rings plus a dark tip looks balanced on this tail.

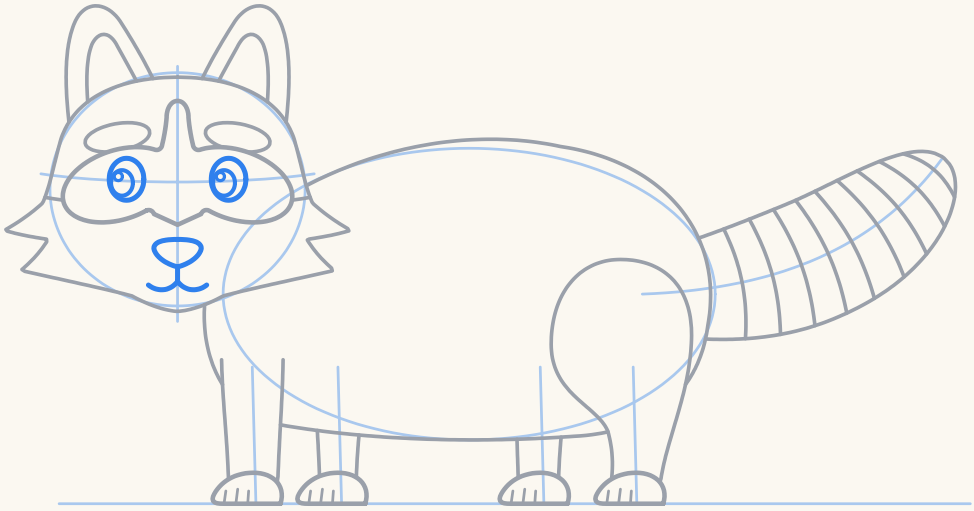
STEP 9 Draw the bandit mask



This is my favorite part. Across the cross line, draw a wide mask with a rounded patch around each eye area, the outer ends sloping down toward the cheeks. Join the patches in the middle and run a narrow stripe up the forehead. Above each patch, draw a flat oval for the white eyebrow. Then add a curve under the mask on each side where the white lower face begins.

💡 **Tip:** Make the mask wider than you think. A small mask looks like sunglasses.

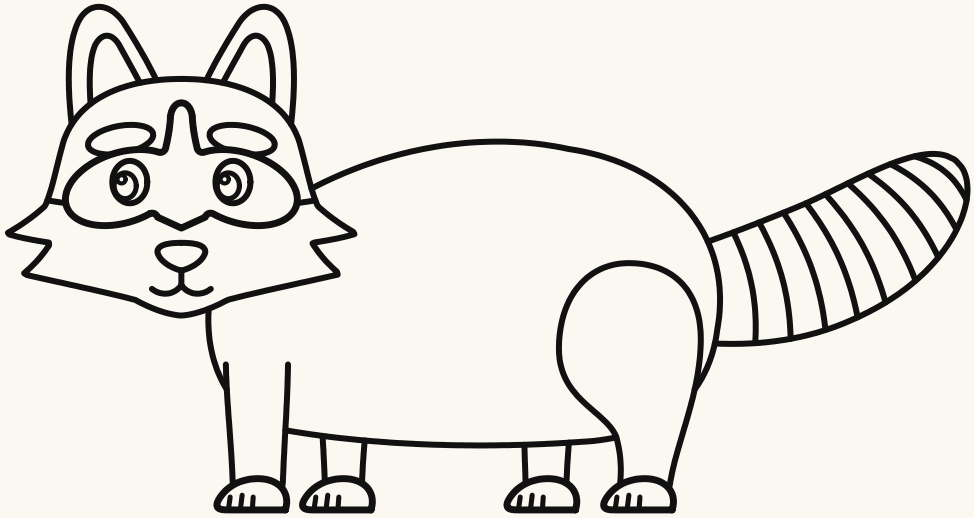
STEP 10 Add the eyes, nose and mouth



Inside each mask patch, draw an upright oval eye. Put a smaller dark oval in each, nudged to the left, plus a tiny circle for the shine. Below the mask, draw a rounded triangle nose with a short line dropping into a soft W for the mouth.

💡 **Tip:** Nudge both pupils the same way. It makes the raccoon look curious instead of cross-eyed.

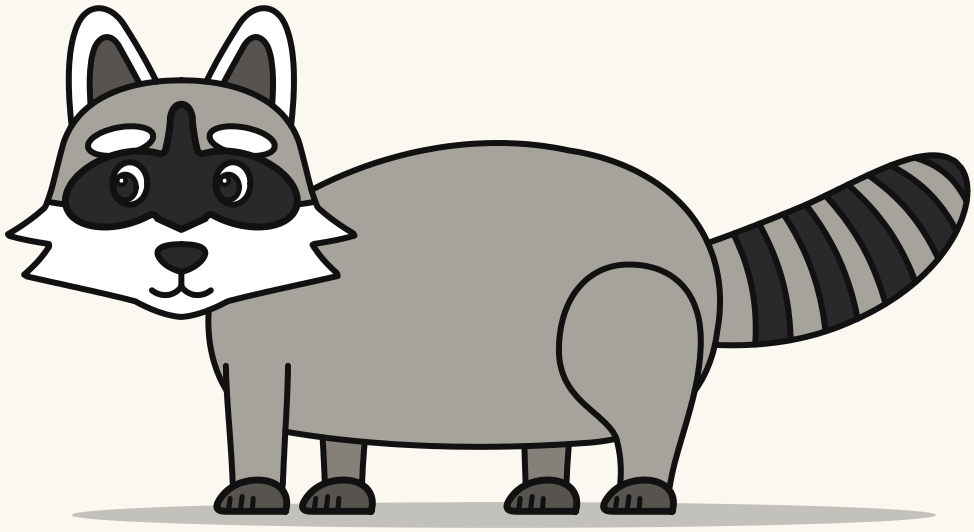
STEP 11 Ink the lines and erase the guides



Go over every line you want to keep with the black pen. Skip the circle, the oval, the leg lines, the tail curve and the ground. Let the ink dry for a minute. Then erase all the guides. Most beginners erase too soon and drag a gray smear across the face.

💡 **Tip:** Use a lighter hand on the toe lines and tail rings than on the outer outline.

STEP 12 Color your raccoon



Shade the head, body, near legs and the gray tail bands in a soft gray. A slightly darker gray on the two far legs pushes them back. Fill the mask, tail rings, nose and pupils with black, and give the paws and inner ears dark gray. I leave the ear rims, eyebrows and lower face as clean white paper.

💡 **Tip:** Color the black parts last so your hand doesn't drag them into the white face.