How to Draw a Sunflower

12 easy steps for beginners



What you'll need

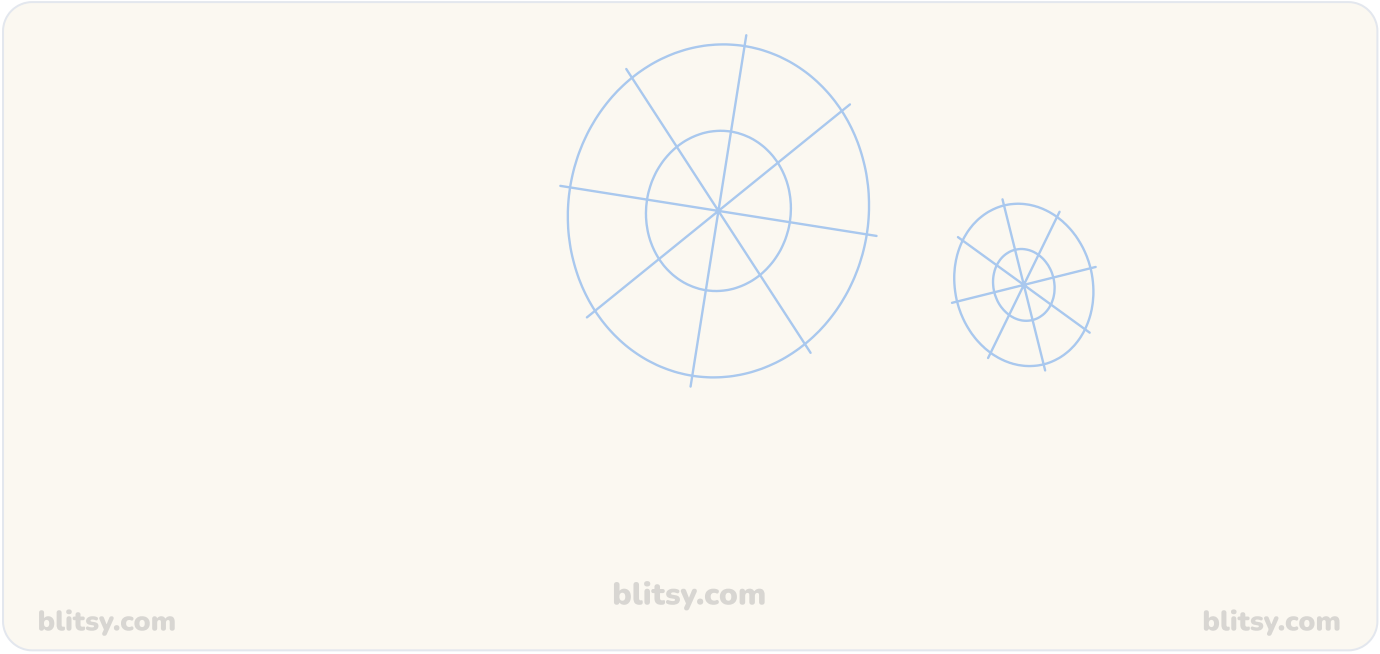
- A pencil
- An eraser
- A black fineliner
- Colored pencils
- Paper

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 →

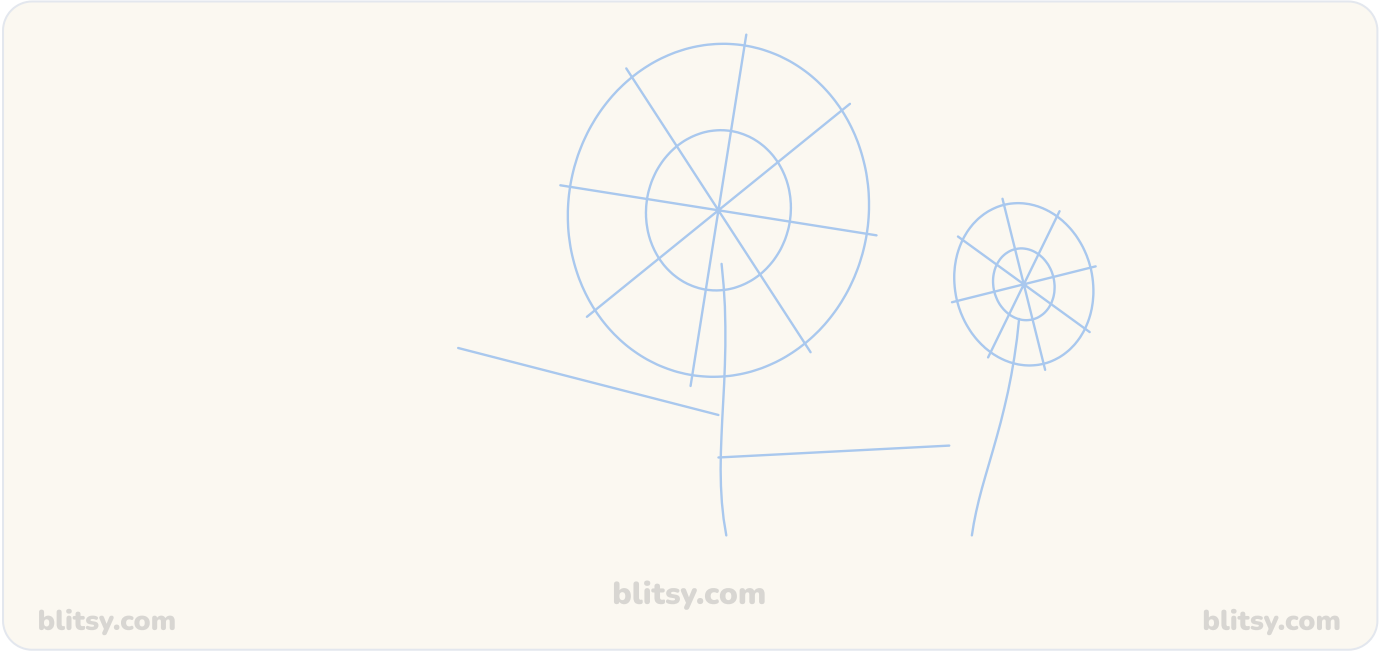
STEP 1 Draw two circles and cross lines



Sketch a large circle a little left of centre and a smaller one lower on the right. Inside each, add a second circle about half as wide for the seed centre. Then draw four lines through the big flower, like cutting a pie into eight slices. I squash both circles slightly into ovals so the flowers look turned a touch to the side, which feels more natural than a flat face.

💡 **Tip:** Hold the pencil far back from the tip; your guides will come out lighter on their own.

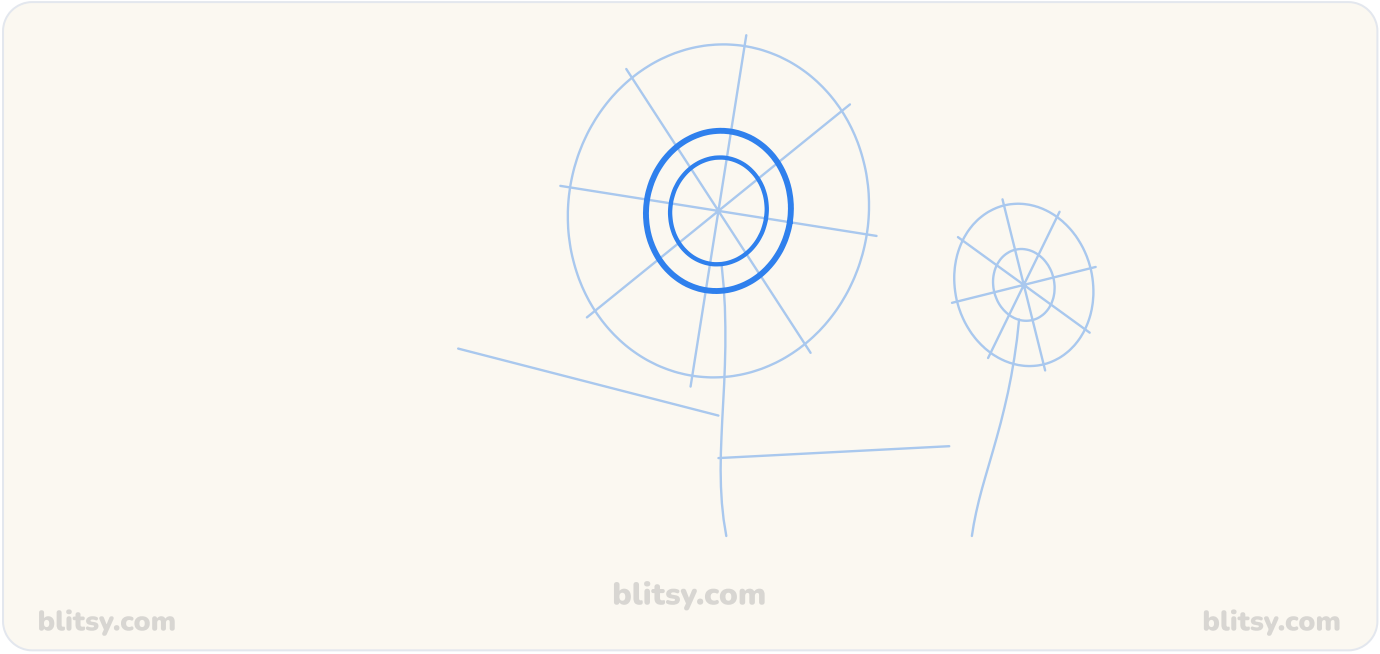
STEP 2 Add the stem and leaf guide lines



From the bottom of the big circle, run a long, slightly wavy line down the page. Do the same for the small flower. Now mark two leaf directions from the main stem: one up and to the left, one lower down pointing right. Leaves at different heights keep the plant from looking like a stiff letter T.

💡 **Tip:** Leave a finger's width between the right leaf line and the small flower's stem.

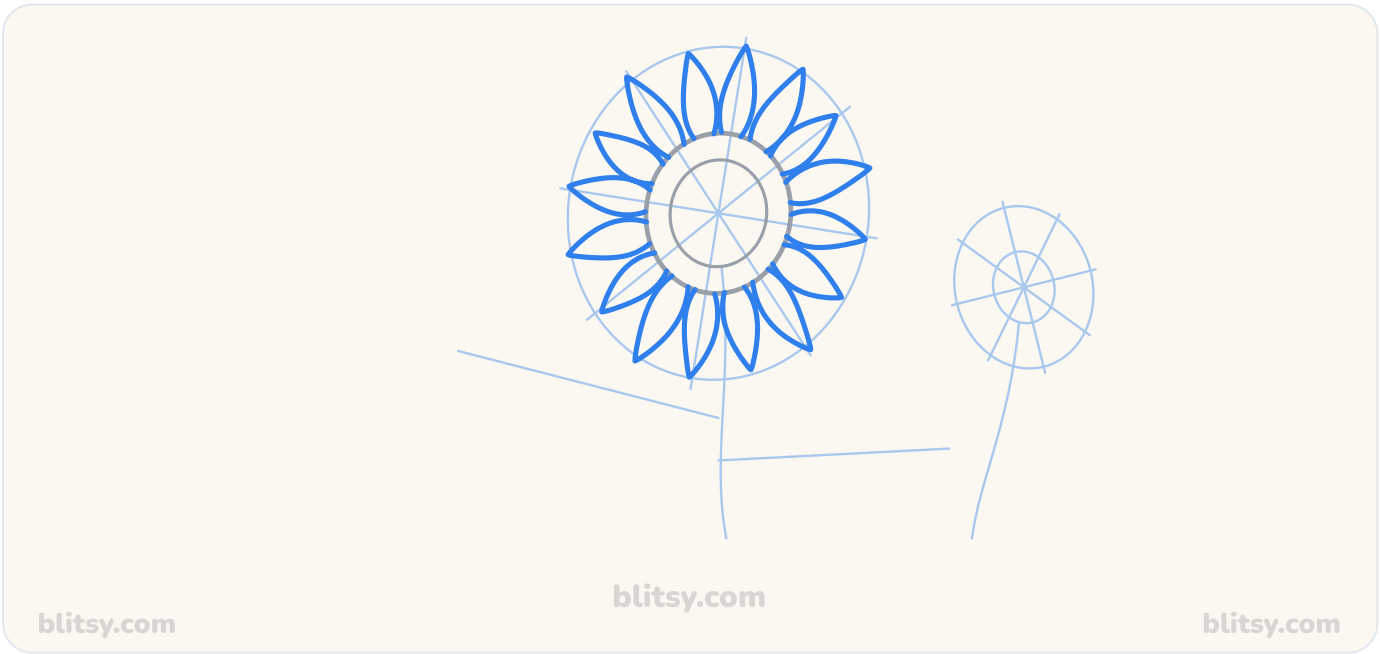
STEP 3 Draw the big round seed centre



Go over the inner oval of the big flower with a firm line. Then draw one more ring inside it, a little smaller, to make a thick border around the middle. That border becomes the darker outer ring of seeds. A small wobble is fine; real sunflower centres are rarely perfect circles.

💡 **Tip:** Draw circles in two halves, top then bottom, instead of one nervous loop.

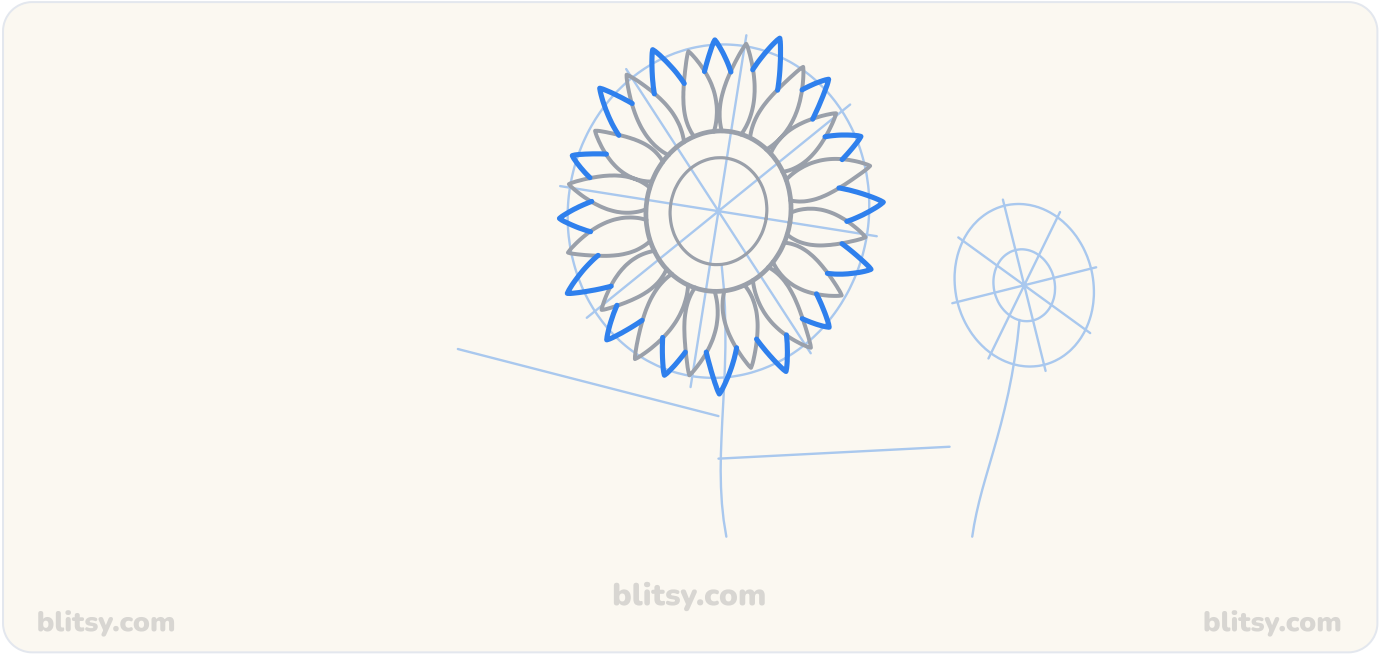
STEP 4 Add the front ring of pointed petals



Around the seed centre, draw sixteen long petals that end in sharp points at the outer guide. Put one petal on each cross line and one halfway between, and you'll land on sixteen without counting. Each petal is narrow at the base, widest a third of the way out, then tapers to a point. Leave small gaps between them for the back petals.

💡 **Tip:** Draw every petal from the centre outward so the points all flick the same way.

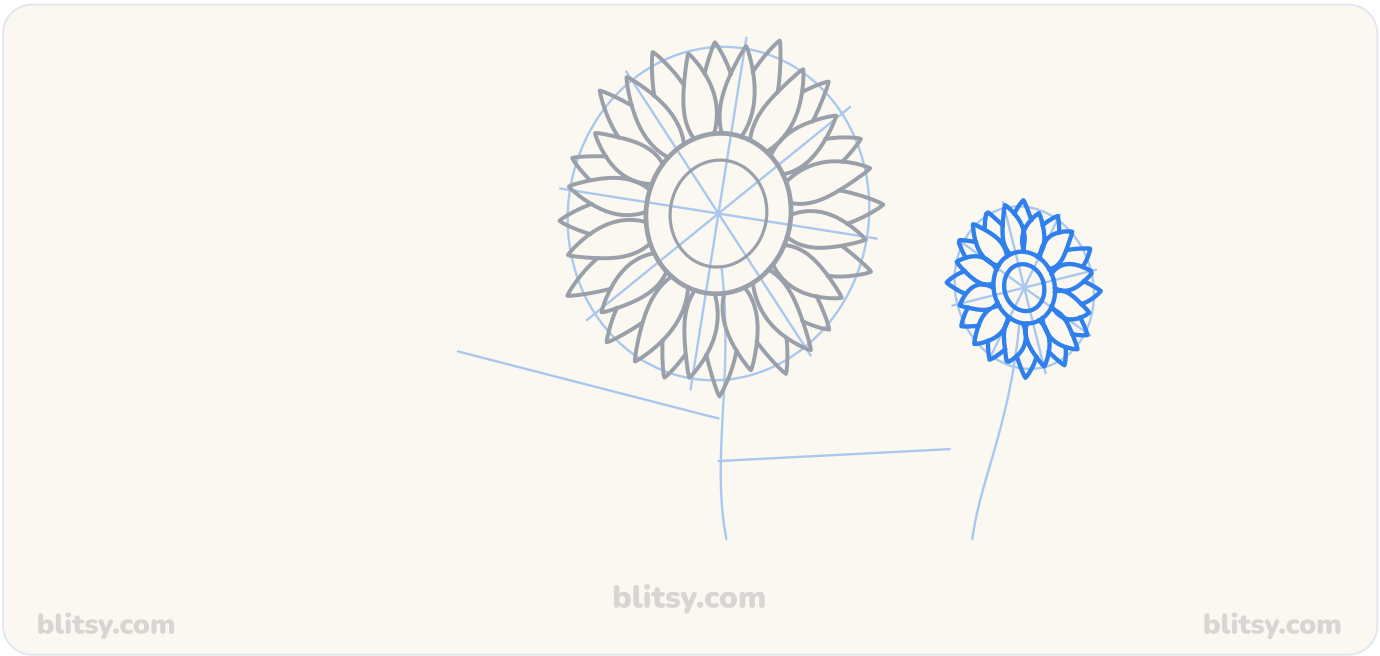
STEP 5 Fit the back petals into the gaps



Now draw a second ring of petals behind the first. Each one peeks out of a gap, so you only draw its tip and sides until they disappear behind the front petals. Make these a little longer. This step turns a flat daisy into a full sunflower, and it's the one most people skip.

💡 **Tip:** Stop each back petal line the moment it touches a front petal; never draw over it.

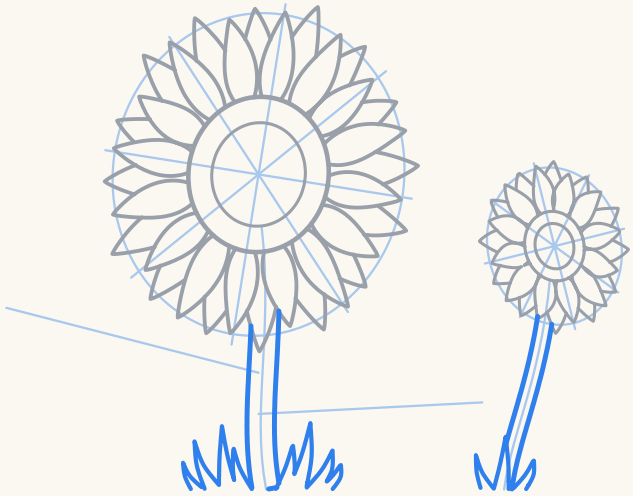
STEP 6 Draw the smaller sunflower



Repeat the same recipe on the small circle: a seed centre with an inner ring, twelve front petals, then back petals peeking between them. Fewer petals means chunkier shapes, which suits a smaller flower. I tilt this one the opposite way, so the two blooms seem to turn toward each other.

💡 **Tip:** Draw the big flower's petals over the small one wherever they touch, so the big bloom sits in front.

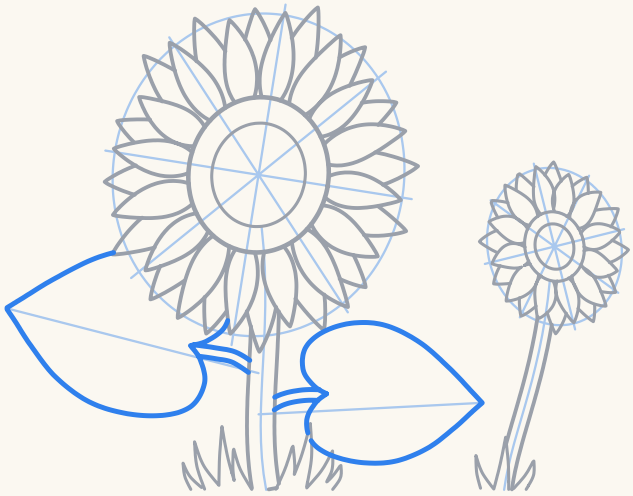
STEP 7 Thicken the stems and add grass



Trace both sides of each stem guide to turn it into a tube. A sunflower stem holds up a heavy head, so make the main one sturdy, about a third as wide as the seed centre. The small stem can be thinner. At the bottom, add a few pointed grass blades around each stem to hide where they end.

💡 **Tip:** Grass blades look best when a few lean left, a few lean right and none are the same height.

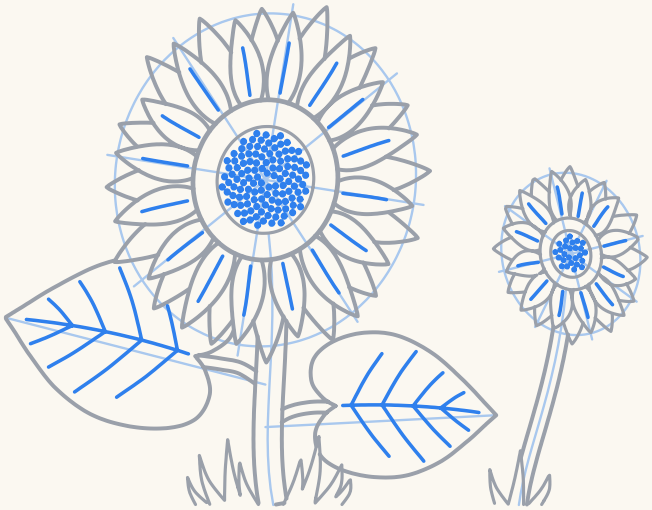
STEP 8 Draw two big heart-shaped leaves



Sunflower leaves are broad hearts with a pointed tip. Start each one with a short stalk coming out of the main stem. At its end, draw two rounded lobes, then sweep both edges out wide and back in to a point along the leaf guide. Let the left leaf tuck behind the petals and the right one droop a little, the way heavy leaves do.

💡 **Tip:** Make the widest part of each leaf sit closer to the stalk than to the tip.

STEP 9 Add seeds, petal creases and leaf veins



Fill the middle of each seed centre with small dots, working outward from the very middle in a loose swirl. Real sunflower seeds grow in curving spiral rows, so even a rough swirl reads as a seed head. Then draw a short line down each front petal, and give each leaf a central vein with four angled side veins on each side.

💡 **Tip:** Keep the dots small and evenly spaced; big blobs turn the centre into a black hole.

STEP 10 Draw a busy little bee



In the empty left corner, draw a small oval body with two stripes and a pointy stinger. Add a round head facing the flowers, a dot eye, a tiny smile and two curly antennae, then two teardrop wings on top. A dashed, looping flight path finishes it. Little kids can leave the bee out.

💡 **Tip:** Point the bee's head toward the big flower so it looks like it's on its way somewhere.

STEP 11 Ink the lines and erase the guides



Trace every keeper line with your black pen: seed centres first, then petals, stems, leaves and the bee. Skip the guide circles, cross lines and stem guides. Once the ink has dried, erase all the pencil underneath. With so many petals, this is where the drawing snaps into focus.

💡 **Tip:** Rest your hand on a scrap of paper while inking so you don't smear the wet lines.

STEP 12 Color your sunflowers



Color the front petals bright yellow and the back petals orange, which pushes the back ring behind and adds depth. Add golden yellow near the centre on each front petal. The outer seed ring is dark brown, the middle lighter brown. Stems, leaves and grass are green, with dark green on the lower half of each leaf. The bee gets golden yellow, black stripes and pale wings.

💡 **Tip:** Color the yellow first and the brown last, so dark pencil never drags into the petals.