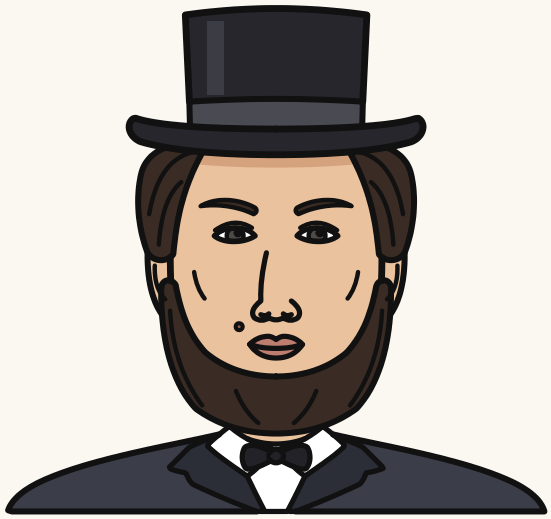
How to Draw Abraham Lincoln

12 easy steps for beginners



What you'll need

- A pencil
- A soft eraser
- A black fineliner
- Peach, brown, black and gray colored pencils
- White 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 →

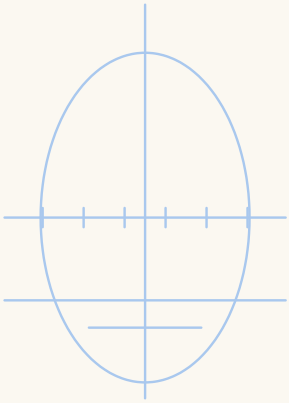
STEP 1 Sketch a long oval and a center line



Lincoln had a long face, so this oval is taller than a usual head: about one and a half times as tall as it is wide. Run a straight line down the middle, from above the oval to a little below it.

💡 **Tip:** Sketch the oval a few times very faintly and keep the best one.

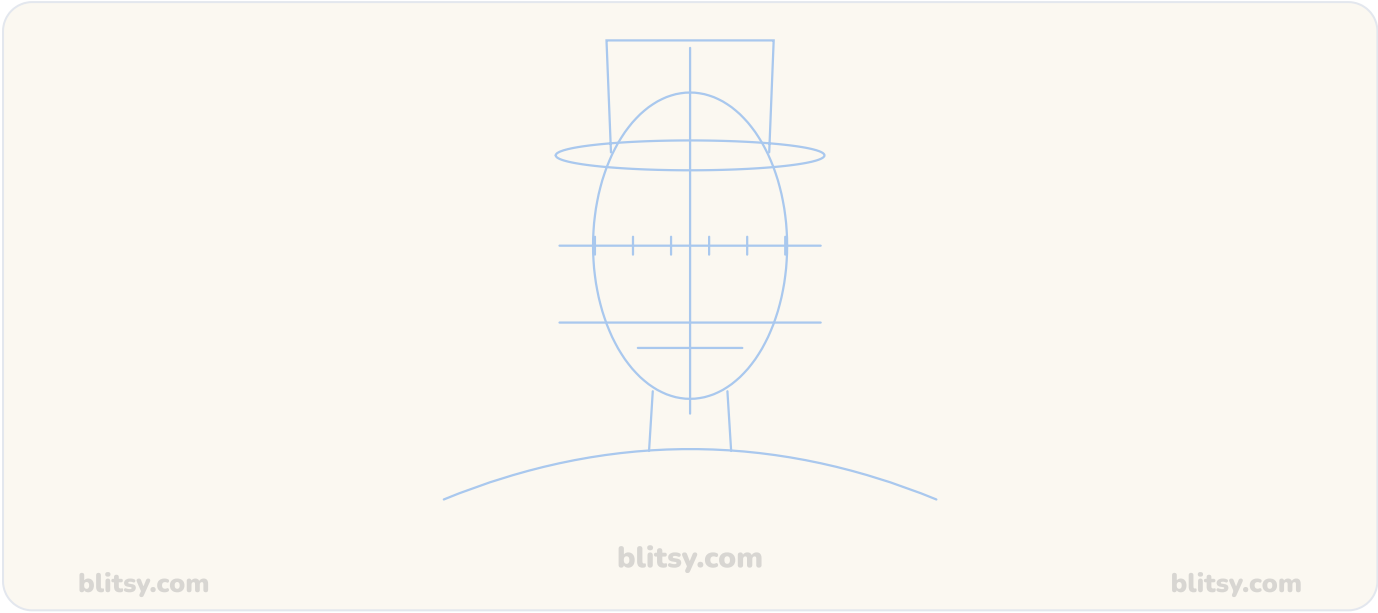
STEP 2 Mark the face guide lines



Halfway down the oval, draw a level line for the eyes. Halfway between that line and the chin goes the nose line. The mouth line is shorter and sits about a third of the way from the nose line to the chin. Mark five even spaces across the eye line.

💡 **Tip:** Turn your paper upside down for a second; uneven spacing jumps out that way.

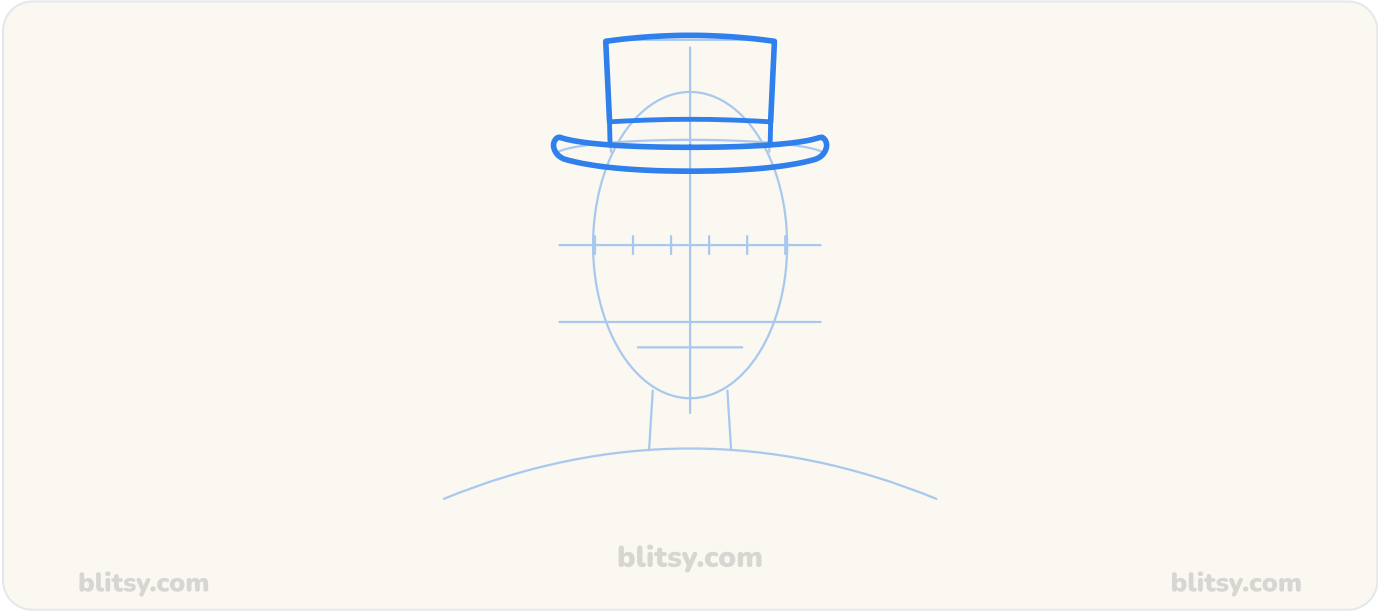
STEP 3 Block in the hat and shoulders



Now place the hat as a simple box. Its bottom edge crosses the oval about a quarter of the way down, and its top reaches well above the head. A flat oval across the bottom of the box shows where the brim goes. Below the chin, add two short neck lines and a wide, shallow arc for the shoulders.

💡 **Tip:** Make the hat box almost as tall as the forehead-to-chin distance. A short hat stops looking like his.

STEP 4 Draw the tall stovepipe hat



Trace the sides of the box for the crown, letting them lean out just a touch toward the top. Draw the brim as a thin band that curls up at both ends and dips slightly in the middle, wider than the head on each side. A second line a little above the brim makes the hat band.

💡 **Tip:** Use a ruler lightly for the crown sides if your hand wobbles; you can soften them when you ink.

STEP 5 Add the side hair and the ears



His dark hair shows below the brim on both sides, so draw a puffy, rounded shape on each side of the head, from the brim down to about the eye line. The inner edge curves in toward the forehead and frames it. Each ear peeks out under the hair, between the eye line and the nose line.

💡 **Tip:** Keep the hair shapes the same height on both sides by checking them against the eye line.

STEP 6 Draw the chin curtain beard



This is the feature that makes the drawing his. Lincoln's beard grew along the jaw and chin with no moustache, so the space above his lip stays bare. Start the outer edge in front of each ear and swing it down around the chin, a little below the oval. The inner edge passes under the mouth line.

💡 **Tip:** Leave a clear gap between the inner beard edge and the mouth line, or the lips will get crowded later.

STEP 7 Shape the coat and lapels



Follow the shoulder arc out from under the beard, sloping gently down and out, and cut the bottom off flat. The two sides of the coat meet low in the middle in a V, with a white shirt showing inside it. Add a folded lapel along each side of the V with a small notch near the top.

💡 **Tip:** The shoulders should spread to roughly two and a half head widths. Narrow shoulders make the hat look top-heavy.

STEP 8 Add the shirt collar and bow tie



Just under the beard, draw two small pointed collar flaps that angle down and outward from the center. In the middle, where they meet, add the bow tie: two rounded triangle wings and a small circle for the knot. I keep the tie fairly small, because a big bow pulls the eye away from his face.

💡 **Tip:** Draw the knot first, then hang one wing on each side of it so they come out even.

STEP 9 Draw calm eyes and full brows



Put an almond shape in the second and fourth spaces on the eye line. Tuck each iris a little under the upper lid; that small overlap gives him a quiet, thoughtful look instead of a wide stare. Add a pupil, a tiny highlight and a soft lid line. His brows are fuller and fairly straight, sitting close above the eyes.

💡 **Tip:** Keep both highlights on the same side of the pupils so the eyes look in one direction.

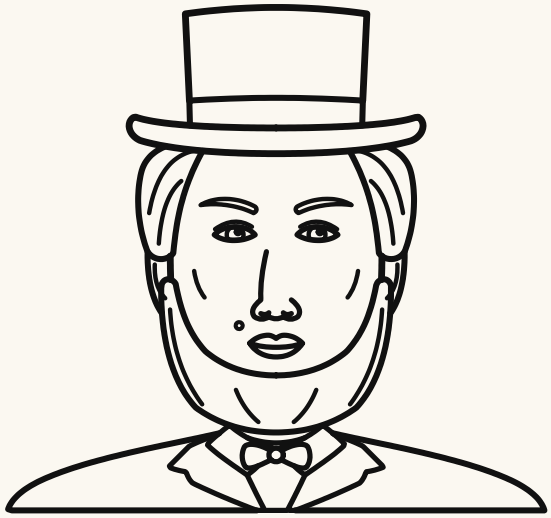
STEP 10 Add the nose, the mouth and the mole



Draw one long, gentle line for the side of the nose, then the base on the nose line with two small nostrils. The mouth is calm and closed: a slightly curved center line, a thin upper lip and a fuller lower lip. Two short curves under the outer eye corners hint at his cheekbones. A tiny circle near the nose, on the left side of your page, is the small mole on his right cheek.

💡 **Tip:** Draw the cheek curves short and light. Long lines there make him look much older than he should.

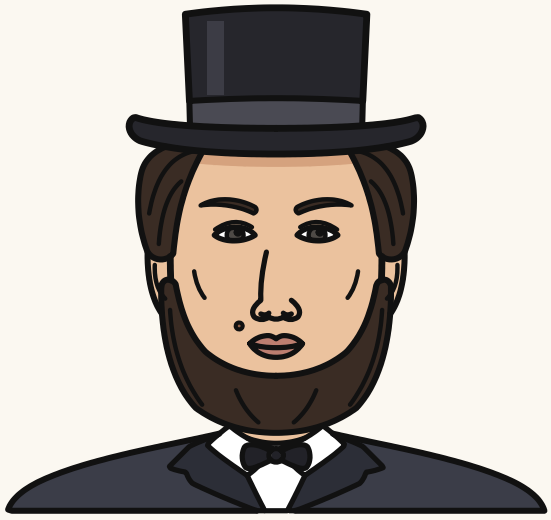
STEP 11 Ink the lines and erase the guides



Trace every keeper line with a black fineliner. Once the ink is dry, erase the oval, the center line, the face lines, the hat box and the shoulder arc.

💡 **Tip:** Ink the hat first and work down the page so your hand rests on clean paper.

STEP 12 Color the portrait



Start with peach on the face and ears, then a tan band right under the brim for its shadow. Use dark brown for the hair and beard, and for the brows. Use black for the hat and bow tie, gray for the band and dark gray for the coat. The collar and shirt stay white, and the lips get a soft rose.

💡 **Tip:** Press softly on the black hat and build it in two passes; one heavy pass turns waxy and shiny.