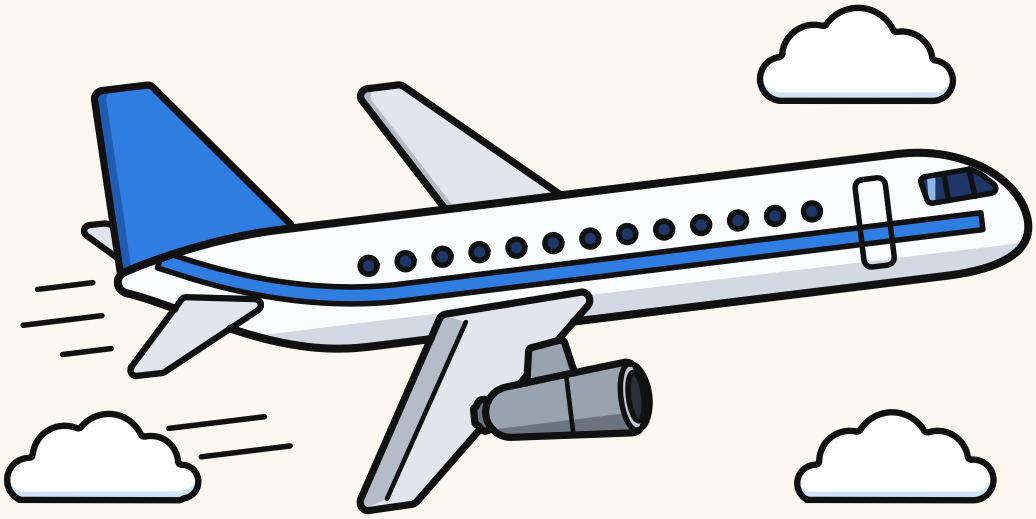
How to Draw an Airplane

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 tilted line and a long capsule



When I teach this plane, I start with the paper sideways and one straight line that climbs gently from lower left to upper right. Around it, draw a long capsule: two parallel lines with a round cap at each end. Make it roughly seven times longer than it is tall. That slight upward tilt is what makes the plane look like it's taking off rather than parked.

💡 **Tip:** Keep the tilt small; a steep line makes the jet look like it's falling.

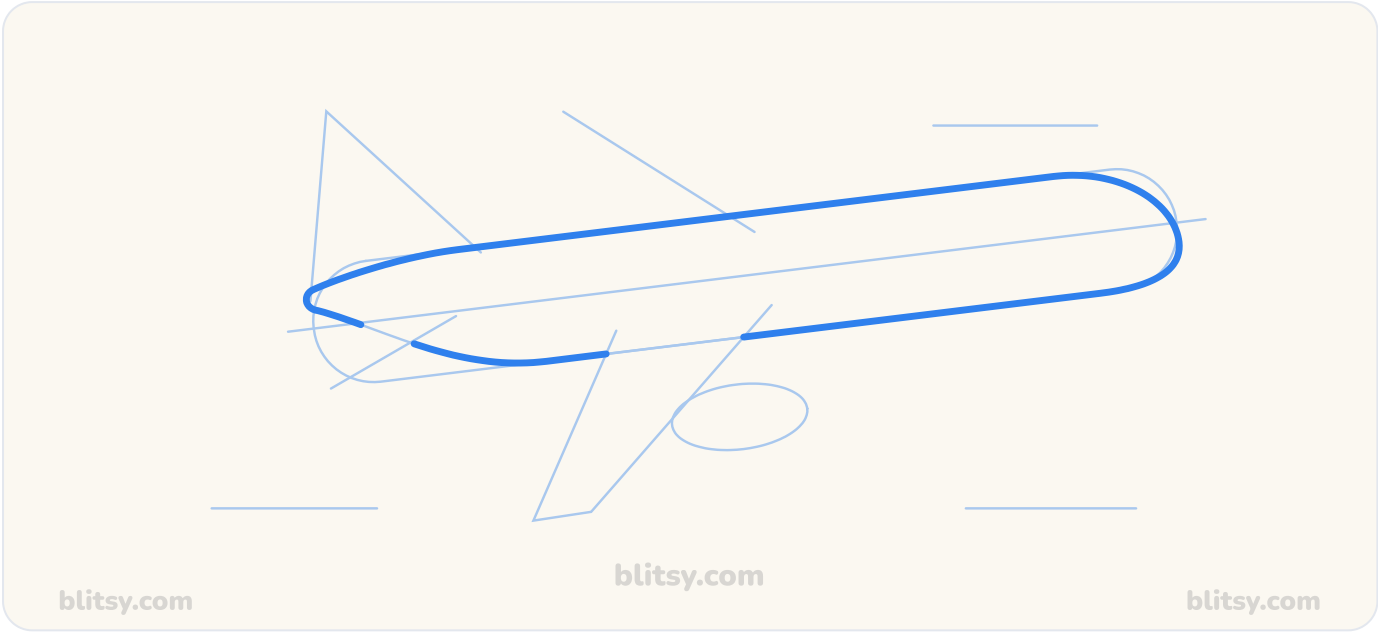
STEP 2 Add guides for the wings, tail and engine



Below the middle of the capsule, draw a slanted four-sided shape that leans back toward the tail. This is the near wing, and a parallelogram is all it really is. Above the body, a single slanted line marks the far wing. At the back, sketch a tall triangle for the tail fin and a short line for the little tail wing. Add a flat oval under the wing for the engine and three short lines where clouds will sit.

💡 **Tip:** Both wings should lean back at the same angle, like arrows pointing at the tail.

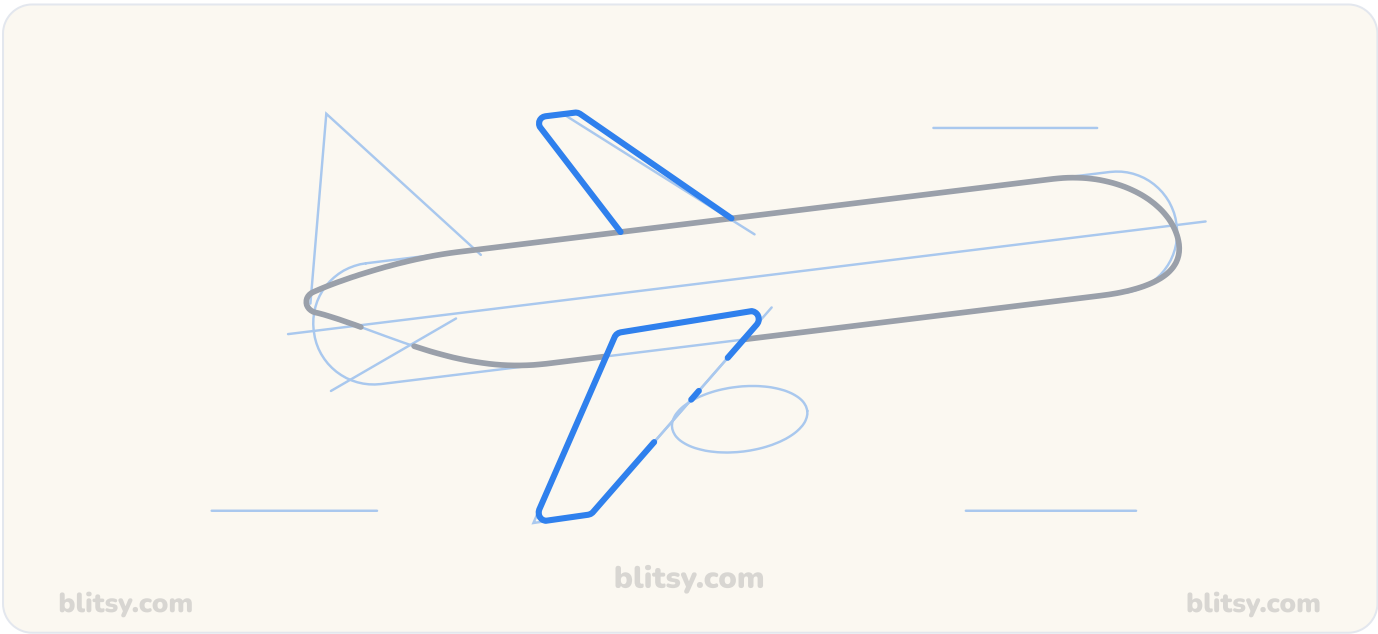
STEP 3 Draw the fuselage outline



Now the real body. Follow the top of the capsule in one long, nearly straight line. At the front, round the nose like the end of a thumb. Underneath, run the belly straight until about a quarter from the back, then sweep it up toward a small, blunt tail tip. That upward curve under the tail is what makes it look like a jet instead of a sausage.

💡 **Tip:** Draw long lines in two or three strokes rather than one shaky pull.

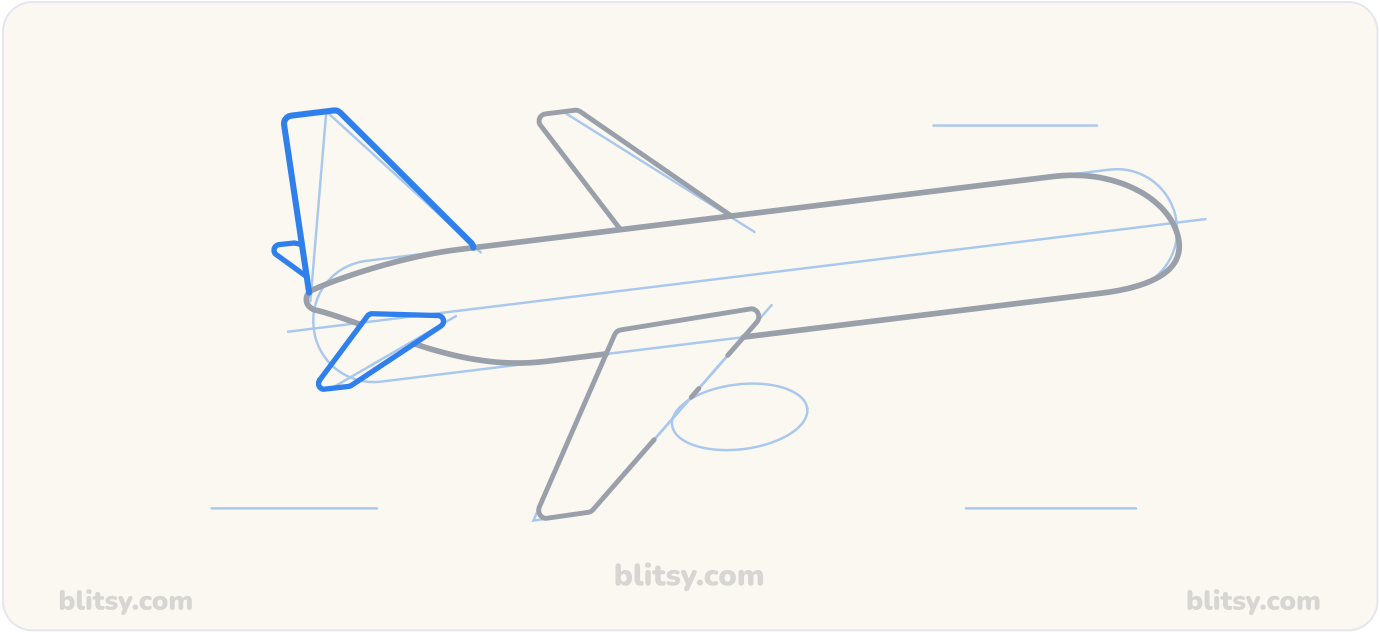
STEP 4 Shape the swept-back wings



Trace the parallelogram guide for the near wing, rounding its far corners slightly. It's big because it points toward you, so let its tip reach well below the body. Most beginners make this wing too short. Erase the body line inside it. For the far wing, draw a much shorter, narrower shape poking out above the body, ending where it meets the top line.

💡 **Tip:** Make the far wing smaller; that size difference creates depth.

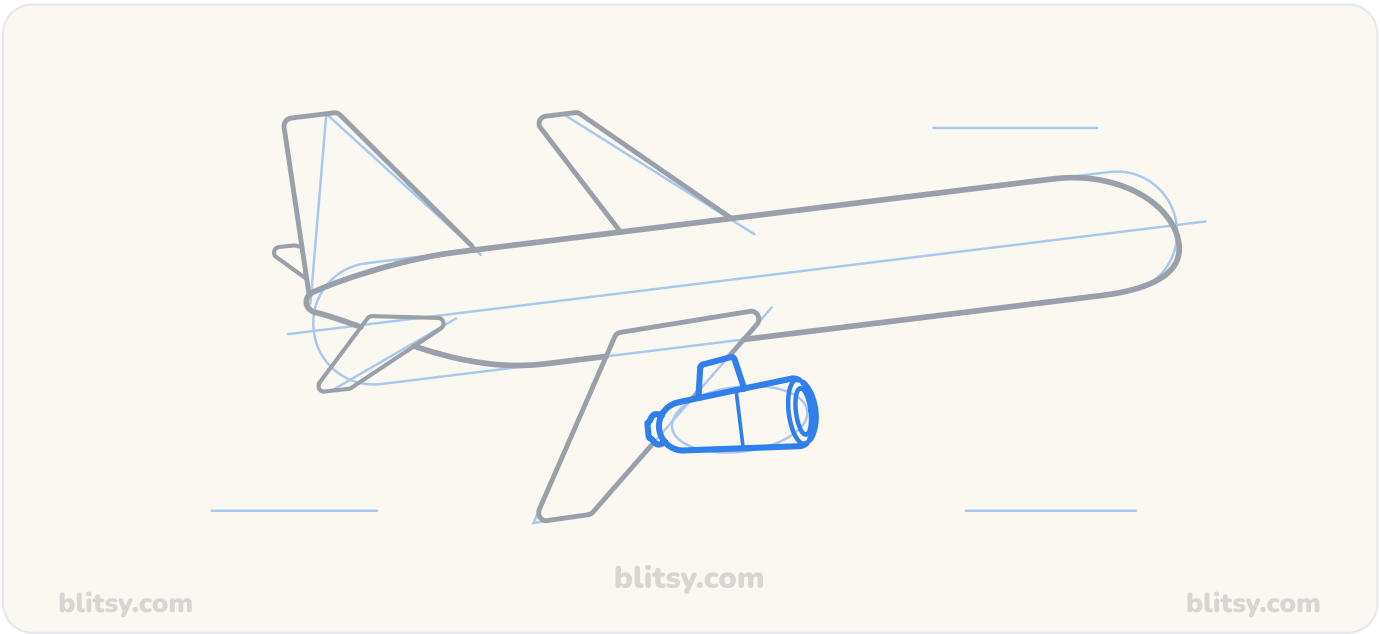
STEP 5 Build the tail fin and stabilizers



Use the triangle guide to draw the tail fin: a slanted front edge, a short flat top and a back edge that drops almost straight down to the tail tip. Then add the small horizontal wing near the tail, pointing down and back like a mini copy of the main wing. A tiny sliver of the far one can peek out behind the fin.

💡 **Tip:** Keep the stabilizers about a third the size of the main wing.

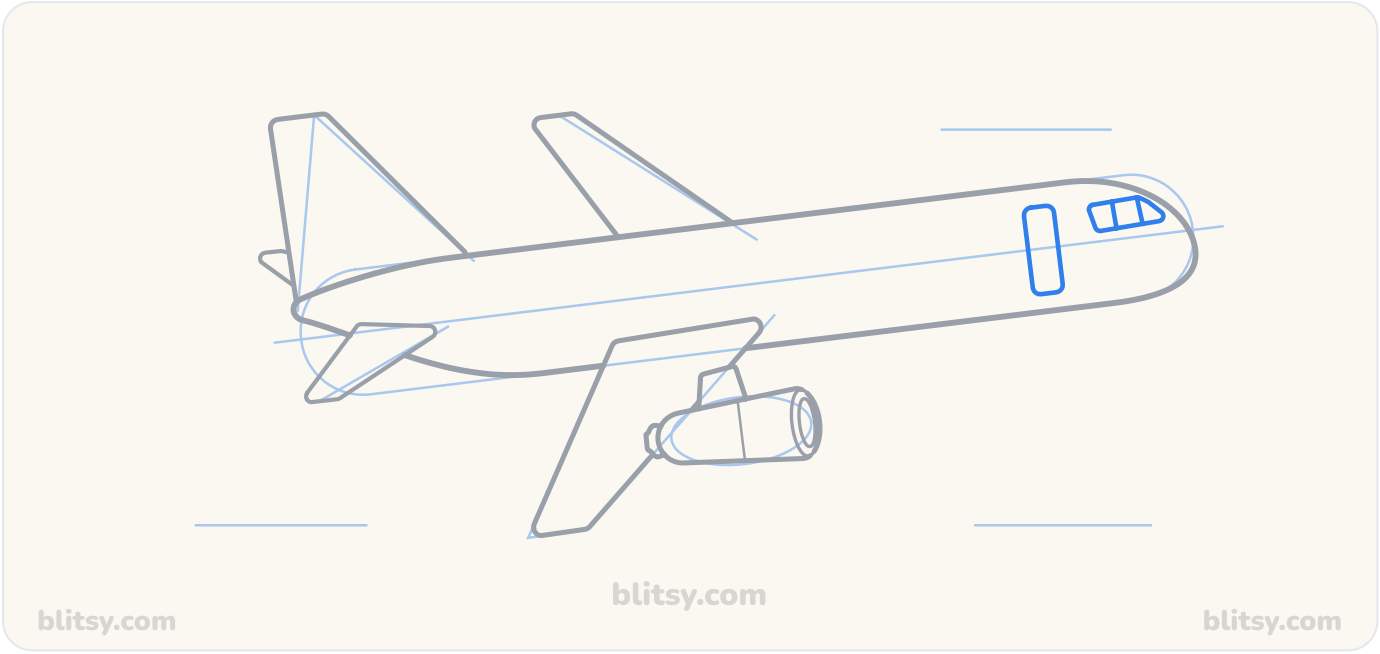
STEP 6 Hang the engine under the wing



Turn the oval guide into a short, fat cylinder that hangs below the wing and sticks out ahead of its front edge. Give the front a round lip with a smaller oval inside for the intake, and add a little cone at the back for the exhaust. A short block on top, called the pylon, holds it to the wing; erase the wing edge behind the engine.

💡 **Tip:** The intake ovals are narrow because you see them from the side.

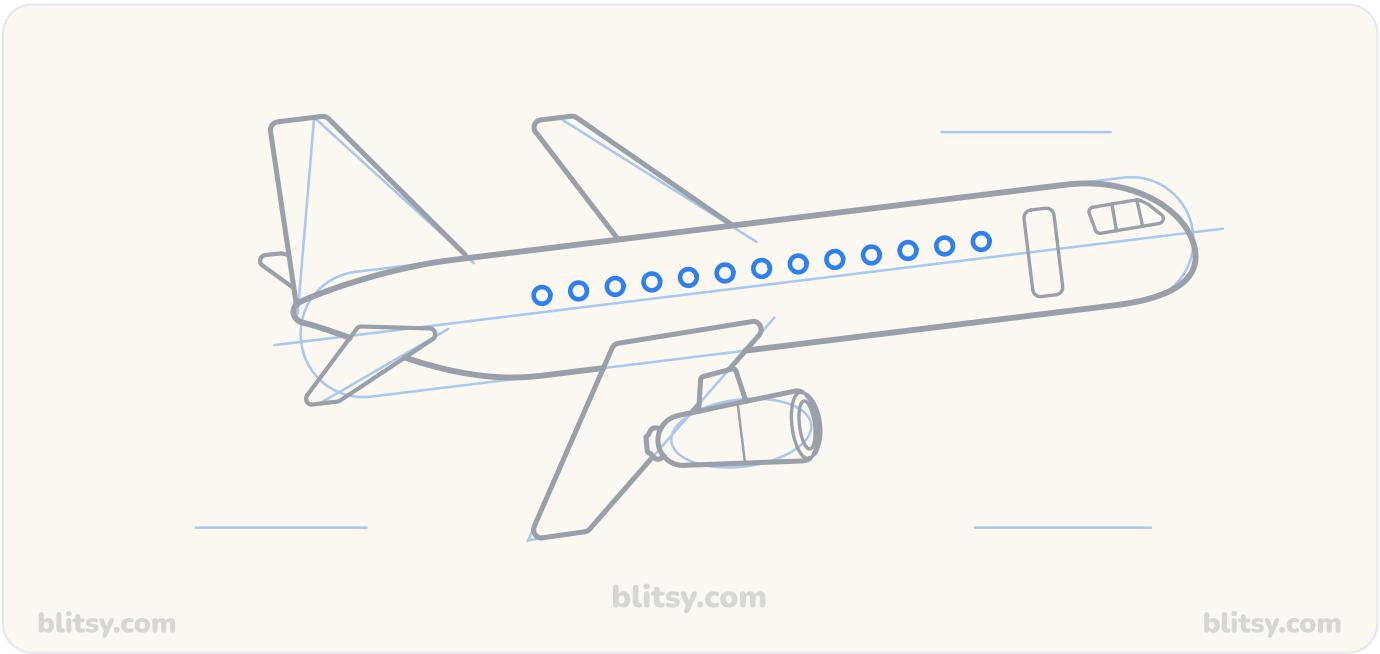
STEP 7 Add the cockpit window and the door



Near the top of the nose, draw a short window strip that slants down at the front, then split it into three panes with two small lines. Behind it, a tall rounded rectangle makes the front door. I place the door about one door width behind the cockpit, which keeps the nose from looking crowded.

💡 **Tip:** Tilt the door slightly so it lines up with the climbing body.

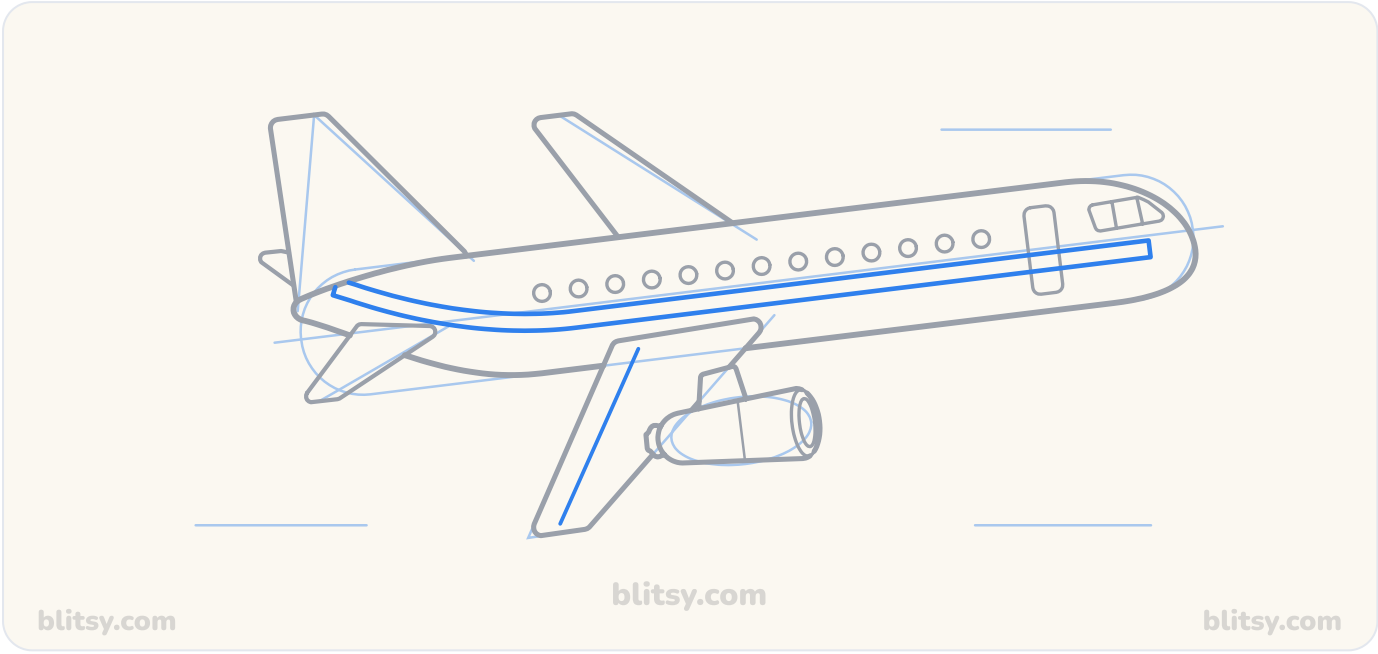
STEP 8 Draw a row of round windows



Along the upper half of the body, draw small circles in a straight row from behind the door toward the tail. Space them evenly, roughly three window widths apart. Follow your tilted center line so the row climbs with the plane. I never fuss over perfect circles here; once they're colored, small size differences vanish.

💡 **Tip:** Mark the first and last window, then fill in the middle.

STEP 9 Add the body stripe and a wing flap



Under the windows, draw two close parallel lines from just behind the nose all the way back. Near the tail, curve them upward so the stripe sweeps into the fin. On the near wing, add one line parallel to its back edge for the flap. Real flaps slide out to help the wing make extra lift at low speed.

💡 **Tip:** Draw the top stripe line first, then copy its curve just below.

STEP 10 Draw clouds and speed lines



Sit three bumpy clouds on their flat guide lines: one high on the right and two low. Each one is a row of half circles, biggest in the middle. Then draw a few short dashes trailing behind the tail and the wing tip. Put them behind the plane only, never in front, or it will look like the jet is flying backward.

💡 **Tip:** Leave gaps between the speed lines; three or four strokes are plenty.

STEP 11 Ink the plane and erase the guides



Go over every line you want to keep with the black pen: body, wings, tail, engine, windows, stripe, flap, clouds and speed lines. Then, once the ink is dry, erase the capsule, the center line, the wing and tail guides, the engine oval and the cloud lines.

💡 **Tip:** Ink the windows last so your hand doesn't smudge the long lines.

STEP 12 Color the airplane



Leave the body white and shade the belly with light gray, which makes the tube look round. Color the stripe and tail fin blue, adding a darker blue edge on the fin. Fill the windows and cockpit with dark blue. The wings and stabilizers get light gray with a darker strip along the back edge, and the engine is gray with a nearly black intake. I leave the clouds white with a light blue line underneath.

💡 **Tip:** Color the dark windows first, before your hand rests on the body.