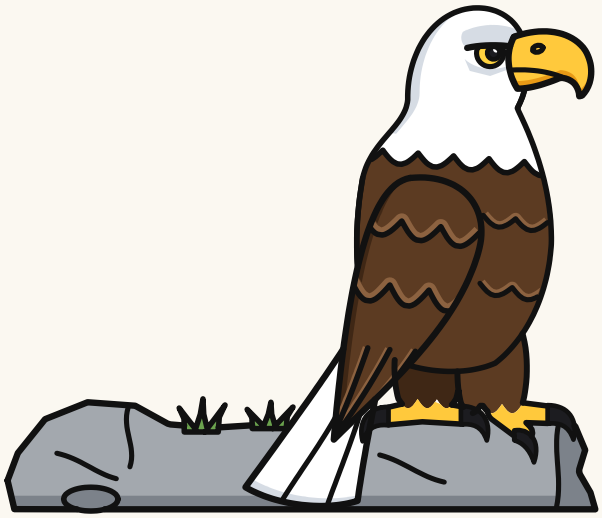
How to Draw an Eagle

12 easy steps for beginners



What you'll need

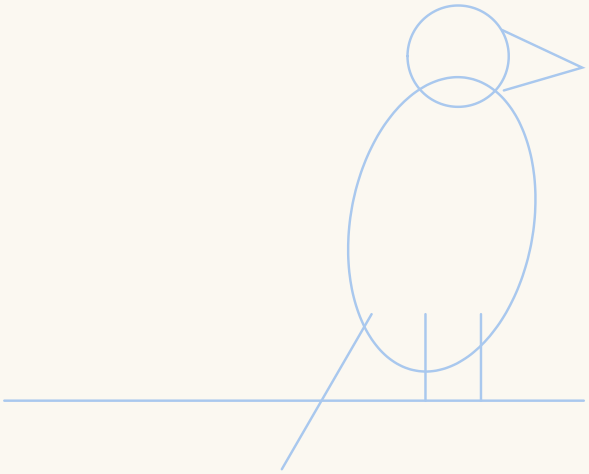
- A pencil
- An eraser
- A black fineliner
- Colored pencils
- Plain paper

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 →

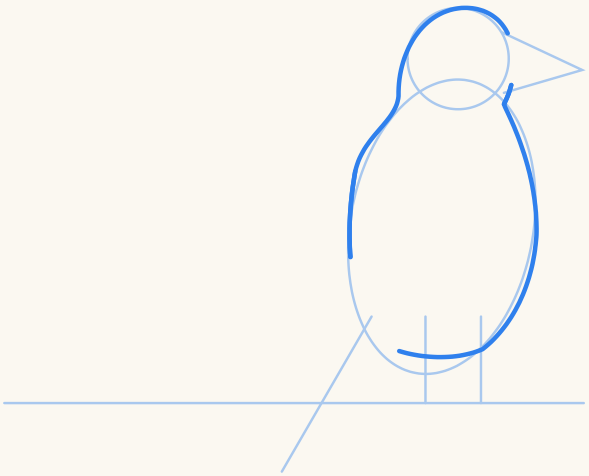
STEP 1 Sketch the guide shapes and the perch line



Draw a long flat line across the lower part of the page for the top of the rock. Above its right half, draw a tall oval leaning a little to the right, then a circle on top that overlaps it. Add a pointed triangle off the circle for the beak, a slanted tail line down to the left and two short leg lines.

💡 **Tip:** Make the oval about three times as tall as the circle. Eagles sit upright, so a round body looks like a pigeon.

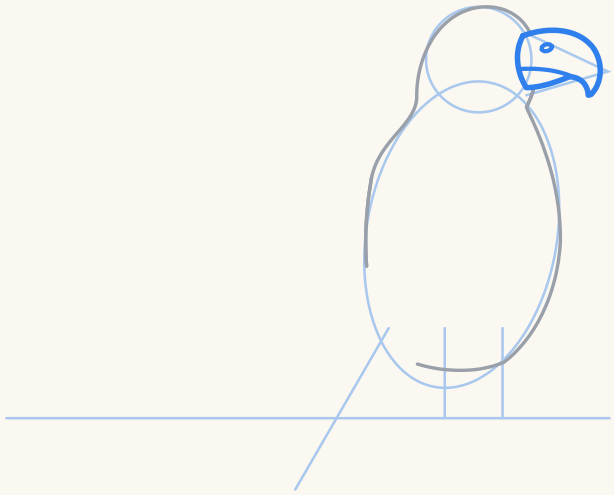
STEP 2 Outline the head and body



Trace around the top of the circle and let the line flow down the back. On the front, start under the beak area, curve out for the chest and sweep under the belly. I leave the lower back open on purpose, because the wing covers it later.

💡 **Tip:** Push the chest slightly past the oval on the right. A full chest is what makes an eagle look proud.

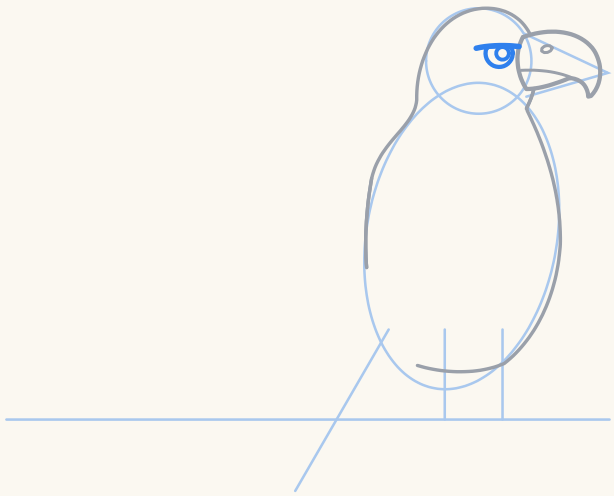
STEP 3 Draw the big hooked beak



Use the triangle as a size guide. The top edge curves forward and then bends down sharply into a hook. Bring the lower edge back under it in a straighter line, then add a mouth line toward the hook and a small oval nostril near the base.

💡 **Tip:** Keep the hook short and sharp. A long, rounded curl turns the eagle into a parrot.

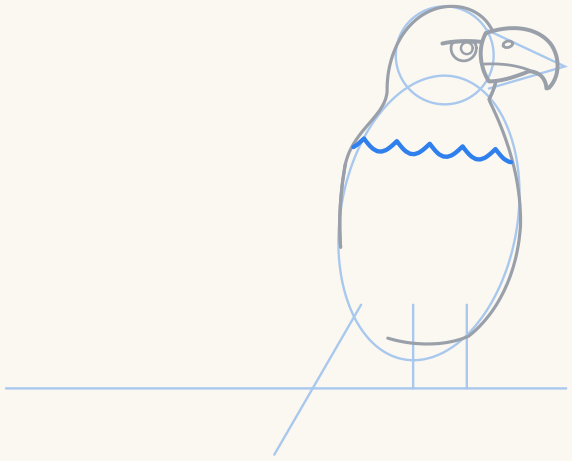
STEP 4 Add the eye under a heavy brow



Place the eye close to the beak, roughly level with its top edge. First draw a short, nearly flat brow line, then a round eye tucked right underneath so the line cuts off its top. Put a pupil inside, a little toward the beak. That flat line is the whole secret of the eagle's stern face.

💡 **Tip:** Slant the brow only slightly. Tip it too steeply and your eagle looks angry instead of alert.

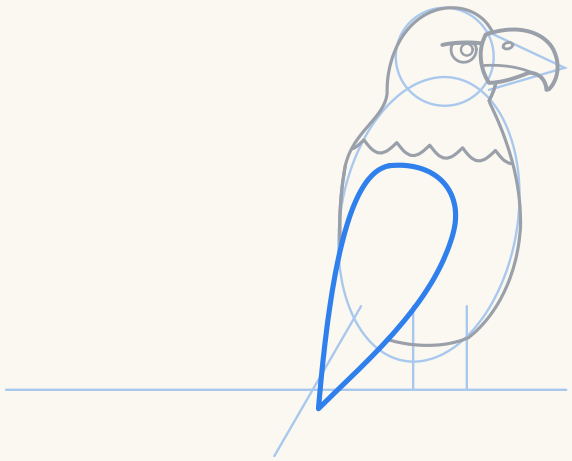
STEP 5 Draw the white head feather line



About halfway between the beak and the middle of the oval, draw a row of small bumps across the body from the back to the chest. Everything above this line will stay white. Most beginners stop the white too high, right at the chin, but on a real bald eagle the white feathers reach down onto the upper chest.

💡 **Tip:** Draw five or six bumps of roughly the same size so the line reads as feathers, not as a scarf.

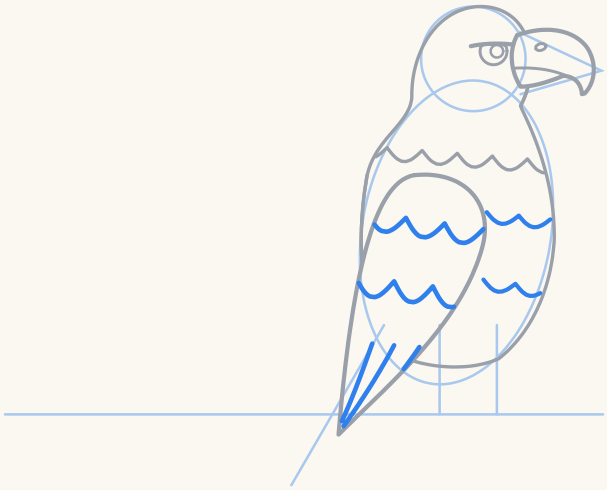
STEP 6 Draw the folded wing



The wing sits on the side of the body like a long teardrop. Begin just under the feather line, follow the back down and finish in a point that reaches past the oval toward the tail guide. Swing the front edge back up across the body to the top.

💡 **Tip:** Let the wing cover more than half of the body. Eagle wings are huge, even when they're folded.

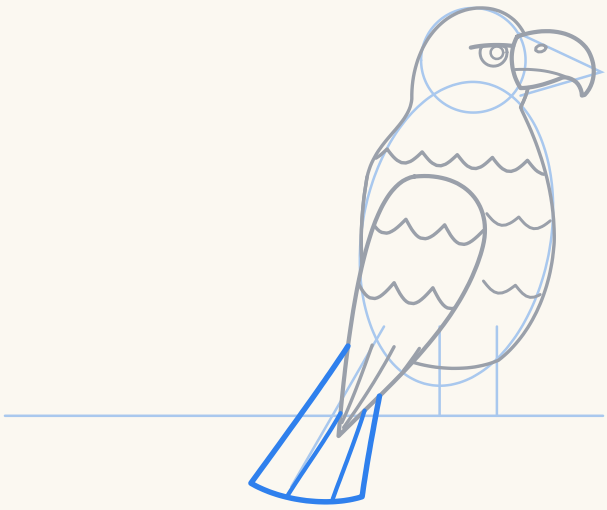
STEP 7 Add the layered wing feathers



Inside the wing, draw two rows of wide bumps, one below the other, like overlapping roof tiles. Then pull three long lines down into the wing tip for the flight feathers. On the chest, add two short rows of smaller bumps so the body has some texture too.

💡 **Tip:** Make the chest bumps smaller than the wing bumps. Different sizes keep the feathers from looking like a pattern.

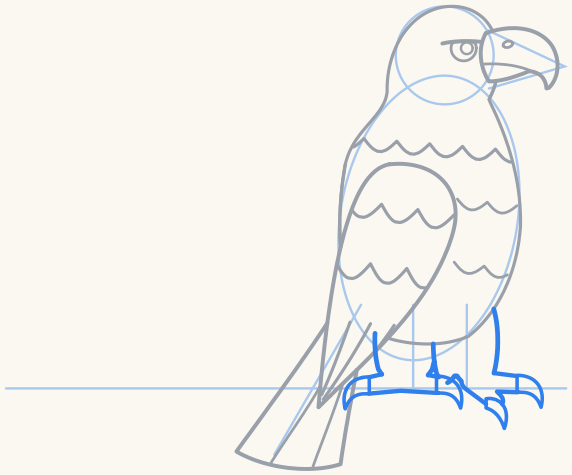
STEP 8 Draw the white tail feathers



Below the wing tip, draw a wedge that widens as it goes down and left, ending in a gently curved edge. Its top is tucked behind the wing and the body, so only draw the parts you can see. Two lines inside split it into feathers.

💡 **Tip:** Widen the tail toward the end. If both sides run parallel, it looks like a white stick.

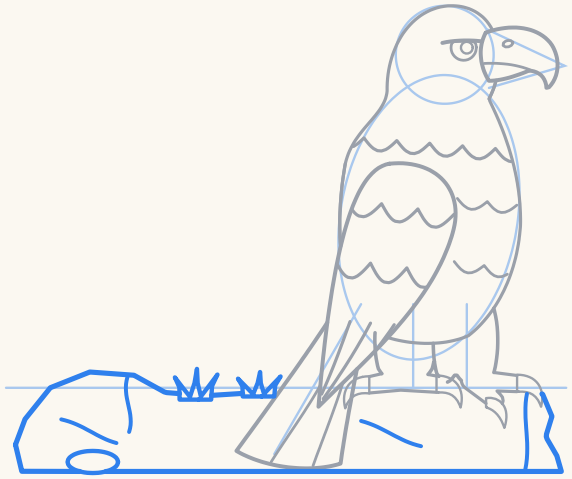
STEP 9 Add the feathered legs and the talons



Eagles have feathers down their legs, almost like baggy trousers. Draw two short rounded shapes under the belly, each with three little feather tips at the bottom. Below them, add short yellow ankles and thick toes that rest on the perch line. Every toe ends in a curved, pointed talon that hooks down.

💡 **Tip:** Curl the talons over the rock instead of drawing them straight. That's what makes the eagle look like it's holding on.

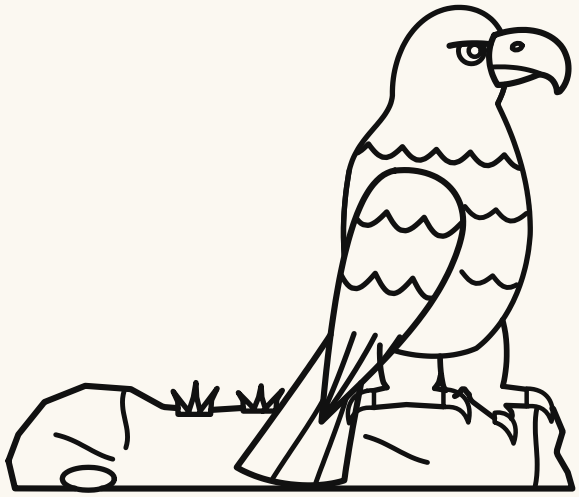
STEP 10 Draw the rocky cliff ledge



Now build the rock around the perch line. Raise a bumpy hump on the left, keep the top flat under the feet and drop a steep, uneven edge on the right so the eagle looks out over a drop. Finish with a few cracks, one pebble and two grass tufts.

💡 **Tip:** Use short straight segments for the rock outline. Smooth curves make stone look like a pillow.

STEP 11 Ink the lines and erase the guides

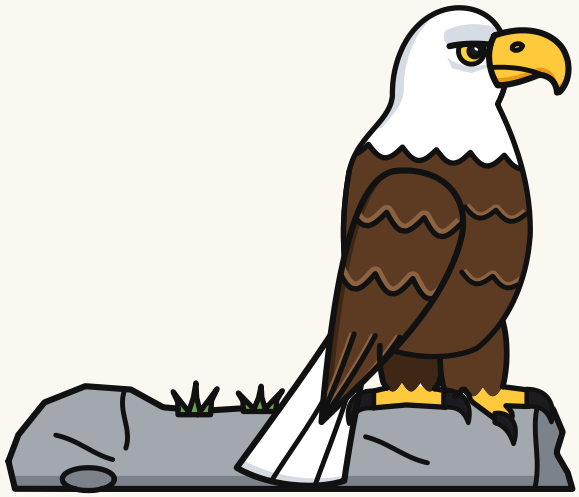


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Go over every line you want to keep with the fineliner. I start with the face, because the brow and the beak need the steadiest hand, and finish with the rock. Wait until the ink is completely dry, then erase the circle, the oval and all the guide lines.

💡 **Tip:** Turn the page as you ink the feather rows, so you always pull the pen toward yourself.

STEP 12 Color the bald eagle



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Leave the head and tail white, with light gray only along the back of the head, under the brow and at the tail's lower edge. Fill the body, wing and legs with dark brown, then add light brown just above each row of feather bumps. Use yellow for the beak, the eye and the feet, and black for the talons and pupil. Gray rock and green grass finish it.

💡 **Tip:** Color the yellow parts last, with a clean pencil tip, so no brown gets dragged into the beak.