How to Draw an Owl

12 easy steps for beginners



What you'll need

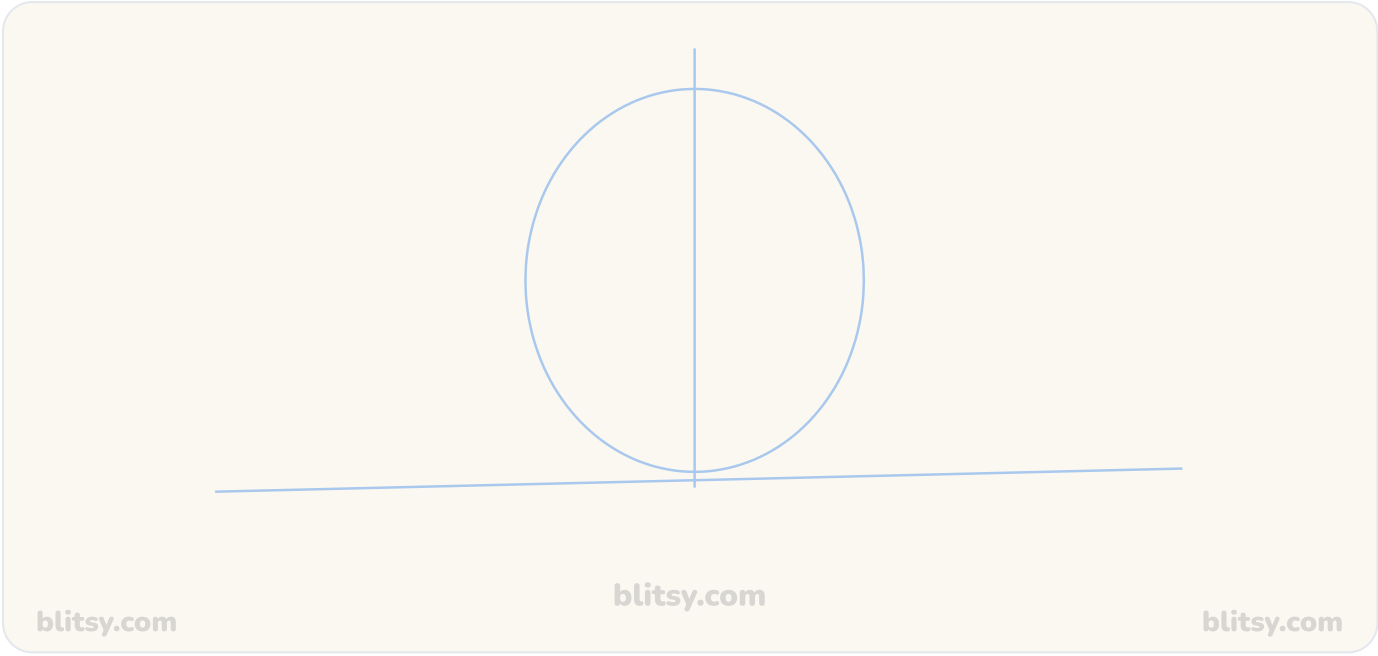
- A pencil
- An eraser
- A black fineliner
- Colored pencils
- Plain paper

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 →

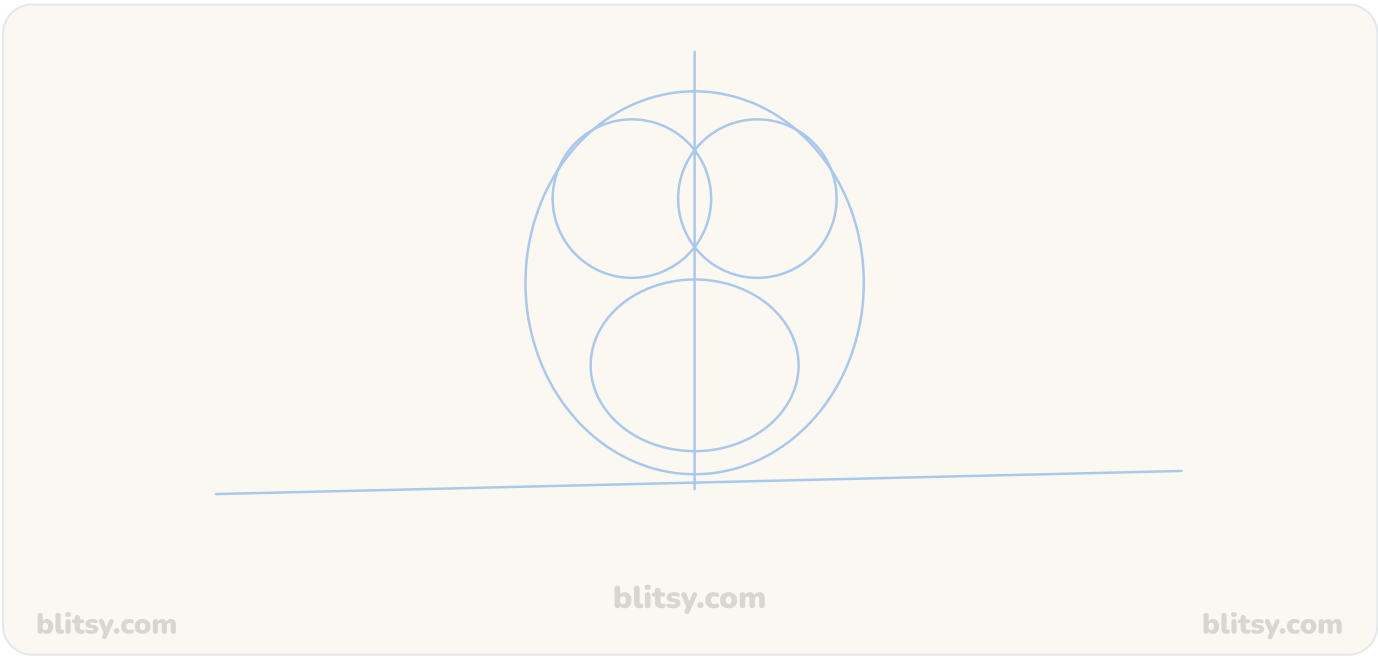
STEP 1 Sketch an egg shape and a center line



In the middle of the page, draw a tall egg shape with the wider end at the bottom. Run a straight line down through its middle, top to bottom. Then add a long, almost flat line under the egg for the branch. An owl seen from the front matches on both sides, and this line keeps you honest.

💡 **Tip:** Press so lightly that you can barely see the lines. They're only there to help you.

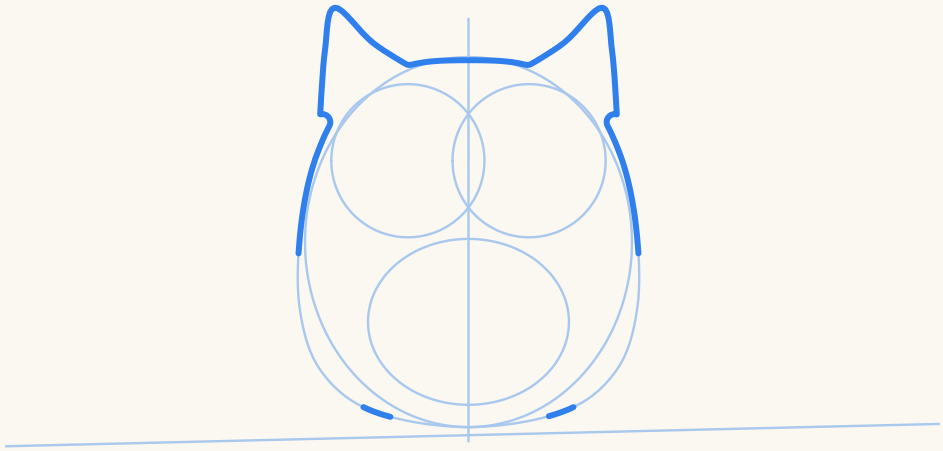
STEP 2 Add the face and belly guides



Near the top of the egg, draw two circles side by side that overlap a little on the center line. Together they cover most of the upper half. Below them, sketch an oval for the belly, leaving a small gap under the circles. I always check that both circles match before going on.

💡 **Tip:** Turn your paper upside down for a second. Uneven circles jump out when you see them flipped.

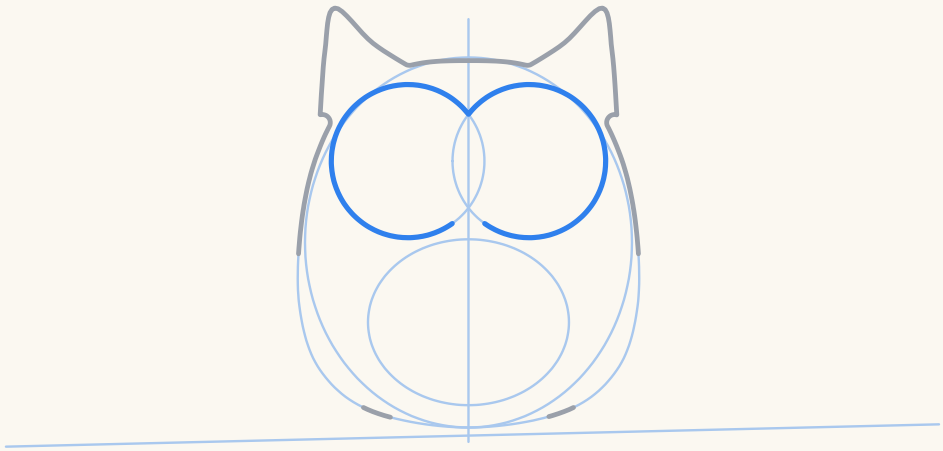
STEP 3 Draw the body with two ear tufts



Trace around the egg with a smooth, darker line, but flatten the top a little. At each top corner, pull the line up into a pointed tuft, then bring it back down the side. These tufts look like ears, but on real owls they're just feathers. Keep the bottom wide and round so the owl looks heavy and settled on its perch.

💡 **Tip:** Draw one tuft, then copy the other to match it. Check them against the center line.

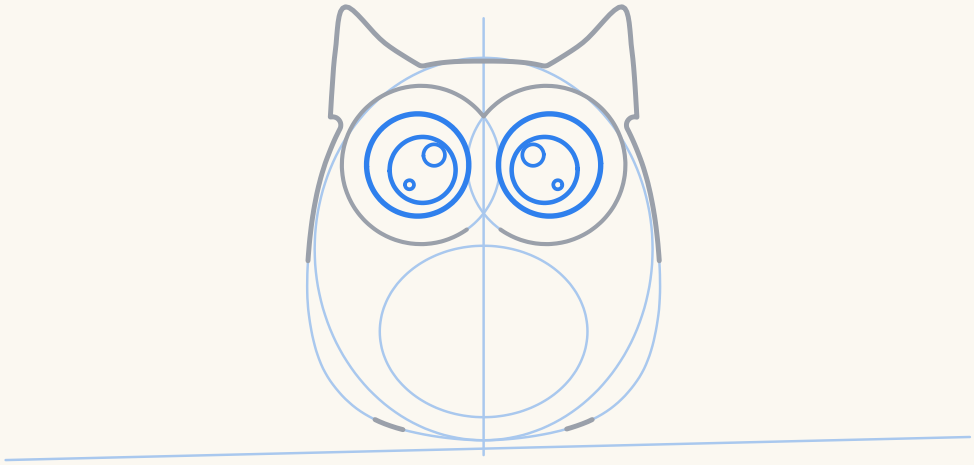
STEP 4 Outline the two-circle face



Go over the two face circles with a clear line, skipping the small part where they overlap in the middle. What's left is a wide shape with a dip at the top and bottom, like a pair of glasses. Owls really do have a flat, round face like this. It's called a facial disc, and it helps steer sounds toward their ears.

💡 **Tip:** If the circles drift apart, fix them now while everything is still pencil.

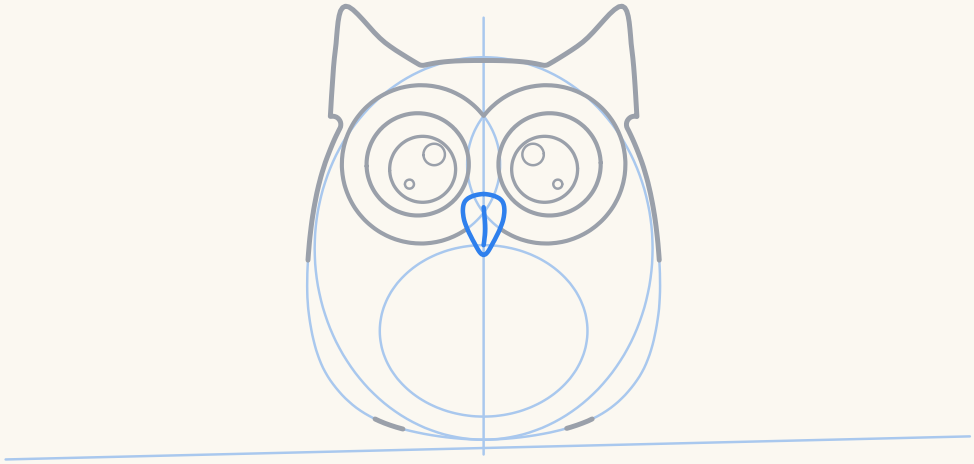
STEP 5 Draw big round eyes



Inside each face circle, draw a slightly smaller circle for the eye. Then add a large pupil in each one, nearly filling it, and two tiny shine circles: a bigger one up and to the left, a small one lower down. Put the shines in the same spot in both eyes. Matching sparkles make the owl look alive.

💡 **Tip:** Big pupils look cute and sleepy-soft. Small pupils make the owl look surprised.

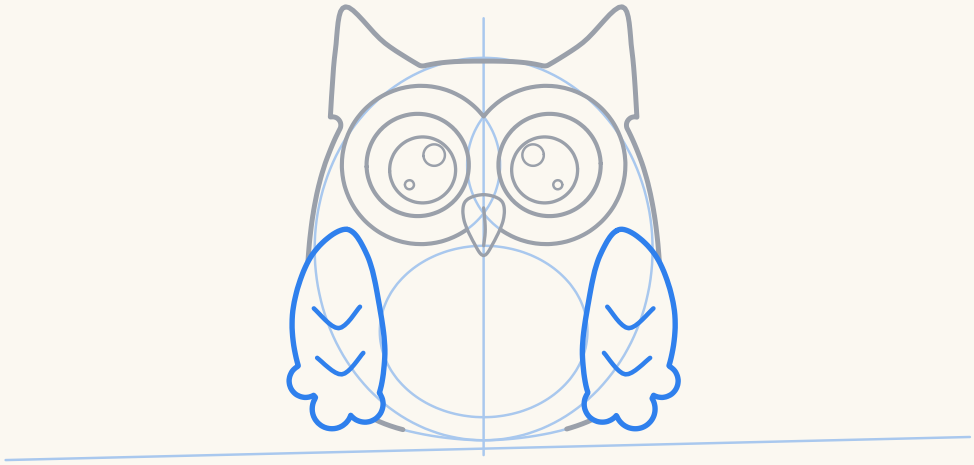
STEP 6 Add a small hooked beak



Right between the eyes, where the two face circles meet at the bottom, draw a small rounded shape that narrows to a point facing down. Add a short line down its middle. Most beginners draw this beak far too big. On an owl it's tucked into the feathers, so it should be no wider than the gap between the eyes.

💡 **Tip:** A beak pointing down reads as an owl. One pointing sideways turns it into a parrot.

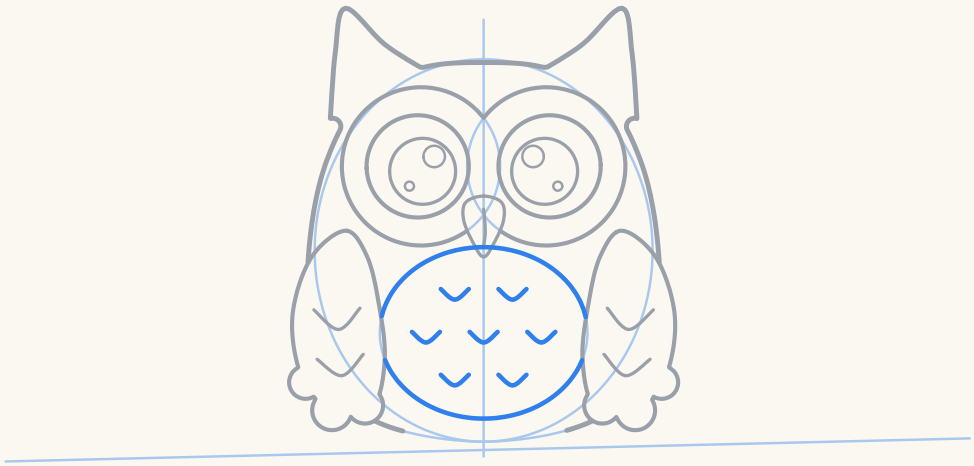
STEP 7 Draw the folded wings



On each side of the body, below the face, draw a long wing shape that bulges slightly past the body edge. Finish the bottom of each wing with three round bumps, the folded feather tips. Inside, add two shallow V lines for layered feathers. Where a wing covers the body, the body line underneath simply stops.

💡 **Tip:** Finish one wing first, then draw its twin. Doing both at once usually makes them uneven.

STEP 8 Draw the belly and feather marks



Trace the belly oval between the wings. Its sides tuck behind the wings, so stop the line where they meet. Fill the belly with small U shapes in three rows: two, three, then two. These little marks hint at soft feathers without you drawing every single one.

💡 **Tip:** Space the U marks out like bricks in a wall. Neat rows look stiff; staggered ones look fluffy.

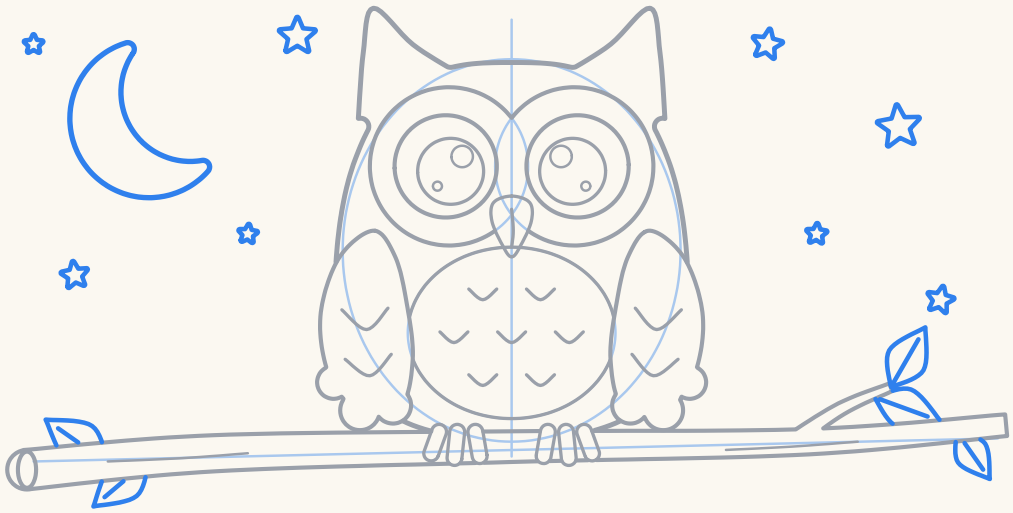
STEP 9 Add the branch and talons



Over the branch guide, draw two long lines that come closer together toward the right end. Close the left end with a small oval so it looks like a cut branch, and add a short twig on the right. Then draw the talons: three short, rounded toes on each foot, curling over the front of the branch. They should sit under the belly, a little apart.

💡 **Tip:** Draw the toes over the branch line, not behind it, so the owl really grips the wood.

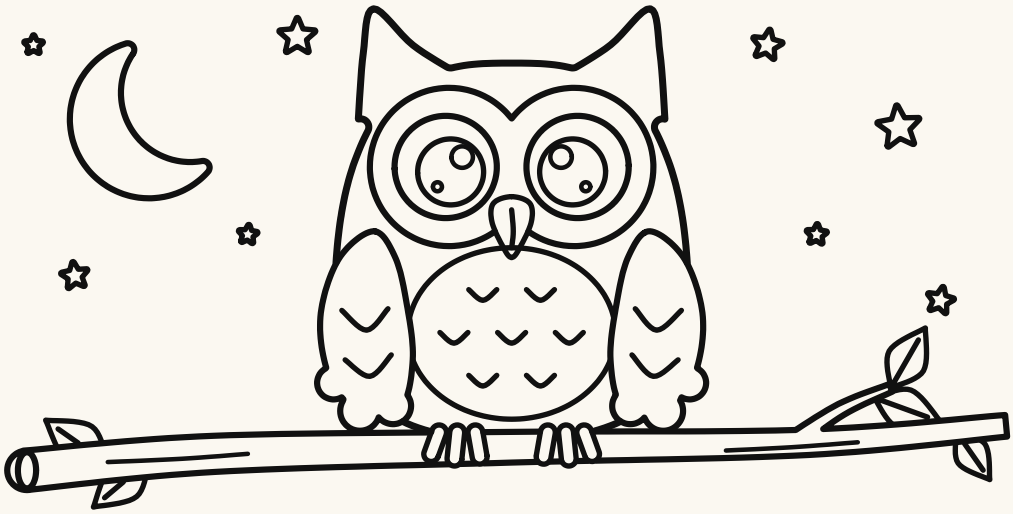
STEP 10 Draw the moon, stars and leaves



In the upper left corner, draw a crescent moon by sketching a circle and cutting a bite out of its right side. Scatter small five-point stars around the owl, keeping clear of the ear tufts. Finish with a few pointed leaves near both ends of the branch, each with one vein line down its middle.

💡 **Tip:** Mix big and tiny stars. All the same size starts to look like wallpaper.

STEP 11 Ink the lines and erase the guides



With the fineliner, trace every line you plan to keep. I work from the face outward, because the eyes are where a shaky line shows most. Skip the egg, the center line and the guide circles. When the ink is fully dry, erase all the pencil guides gently.

💡 **Tip:** Before erasing, touch a corner of the ink with a clean fingertip. No smear means it's ready.

STEP 12 Color your night owl



Color the head and body warm brown, then use dark brown on the wings so they stand out. The face and belly are cream, the eyes orange and the pupils black, with the white shines left uncolored. Make the beak and talons gold. Finish the scene with a brown branch, green leaves, a pale yellow moon and golden stars.

💡 **Tip:** Leave the eye shines as plain white paper. Coloring over them is very hard to undo.