# How to Draw Flames

12 easy steps for beginners




## What you'll need

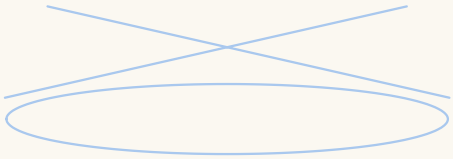
- A pencil
- An eraser
- A black marker
- Colored pencils
- Plain paper

## 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 →**

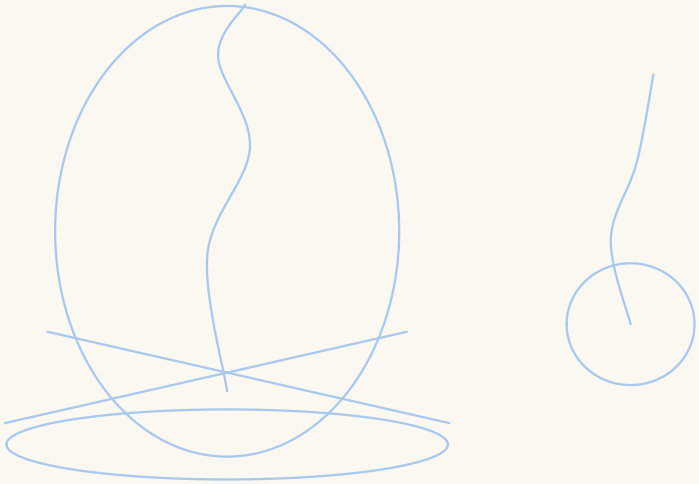
## STEP 1 Sketch a fire ring and two log lines



Near the bottom of the page, draw a wide, flat oval. That's the ground where the stones will sit. Then add two long slanted lines that cross above the oval's middle, like a stretched letter X. Each line marks the center of one log, so let them reach a little past the oval on both sides.

💡 **Tip:** Press so softly that the lines almost disappear.

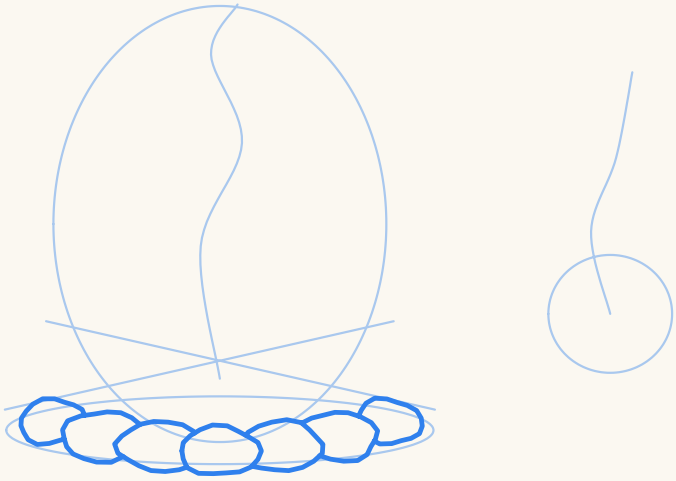
## STEP 2 Add a tall flame oval and an S-curve



Above the logs, draw a tall egg shape that sits on the ring. It tells you how wide and how high the fire can go. Through its middle, draw one wavy line from bottom to top, bending left, then right, then left again. I call this the S-curve, and every flame tongue in this drawing follows it. To the right, sketch a small circle with a shorter S-curve rising from it for the flame icon.

💡 **Tip:** Keep the S-curve loose; a stiff line makes stiff fire.

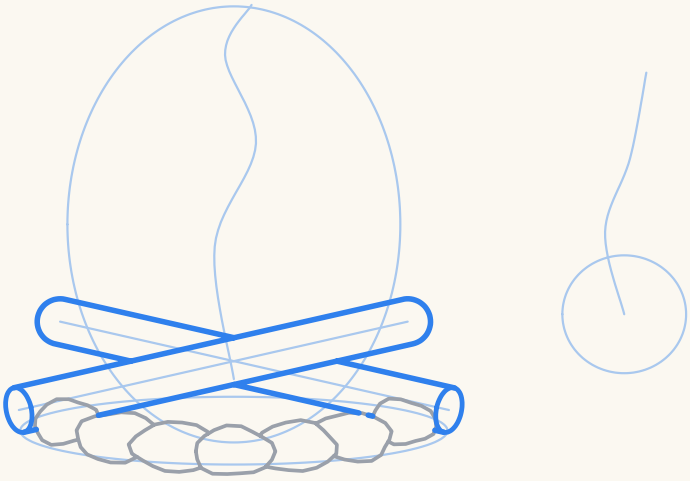
## STEP 3 Draw the stones along the front



Along the front edge of the ring, draw a row of seven rounded rocks. Make the middle ones the biggest and lowest, and the end ones smaller and a bit higher. That small change makes the row curve around the fire instead of sitting in a flat line. I start with the stones because they're in front of everything, so nothing ever gets drawn through them.

💡 **Tip:** Lumpy rocks look more natural than perfect ovals.

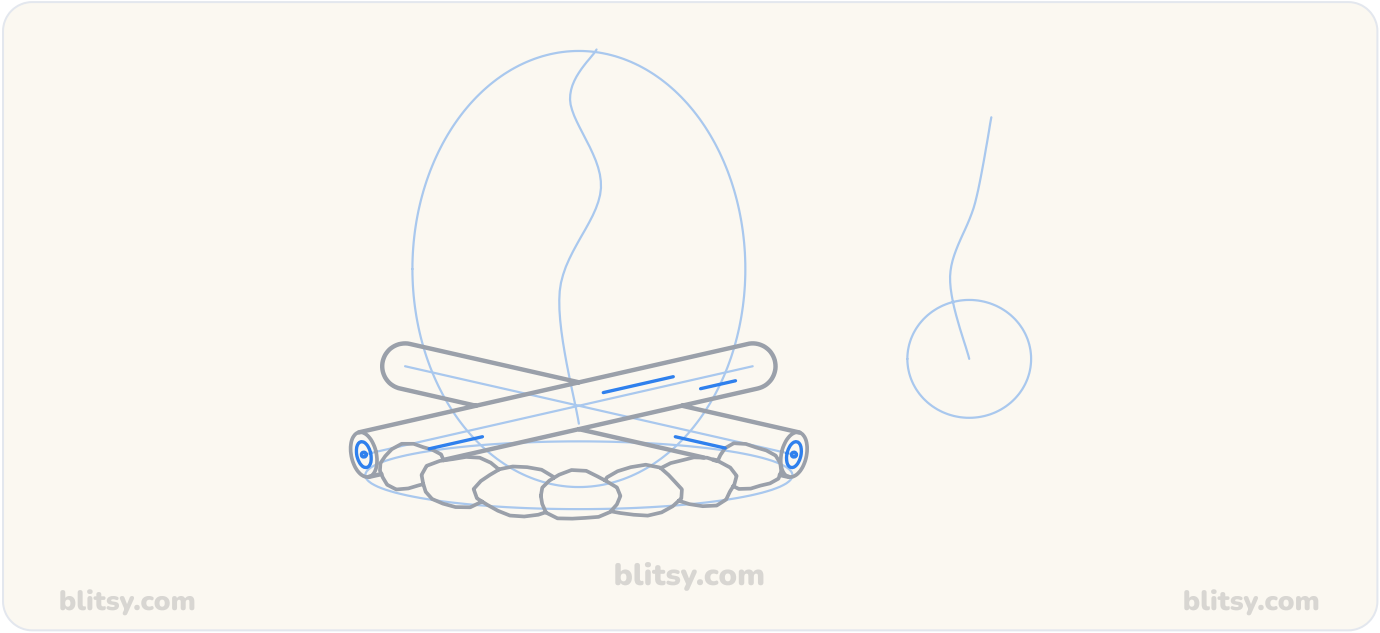
## STEP 4 Wrap two crossed logs around the lines



Turn each slanted guide into a thick log by drawing a line above it and one below it, about a finger's width apart. Round off the upper ends. The front log stays whole, while the back log stops where the front one crosses it. At each lower end, close the log with a narrow upright oval. That oval is the cut end you see when wood is sawn.

💡 **Tip:** Stop the back log's lines right at the front log's edge.

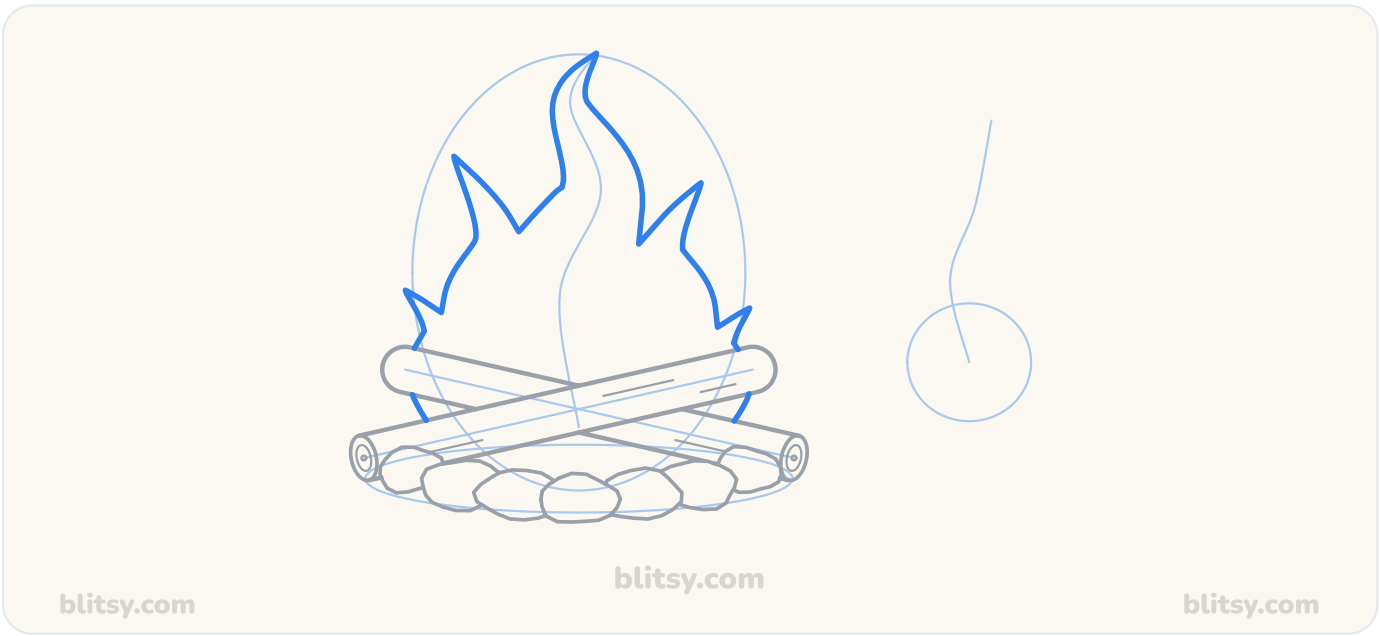
## STEP 5 Add rings and bark lines to the logs




Inside each cut end, draw a smaller oval and a dot in the middle. Those are the tree rings, and they instantly say wood. Then add a few short lines along each log, pointing the same way as the log. Two or three per log is plenty; more than that starts to look like stripes.

💡 **Tip:** Draw bark lines in short broken strokes, never one long line.

## STEP 6 Draw the outer flame with S-curved tongues




This is the big moment. Start behind the logs and draw the outer flame as five tongues: a tall one in the middle that follows your S-curve to a sharp point, a medium one on each side, and a short one at each outer edge leaning outward. Each edge of a tongue curves in and then out, like a ribbon twisting. Join neighboring tongues with soft round dips, and let the bottom disappear behind the logs.

💡 **Tip:** Make the tips sharp and the dips between them round.

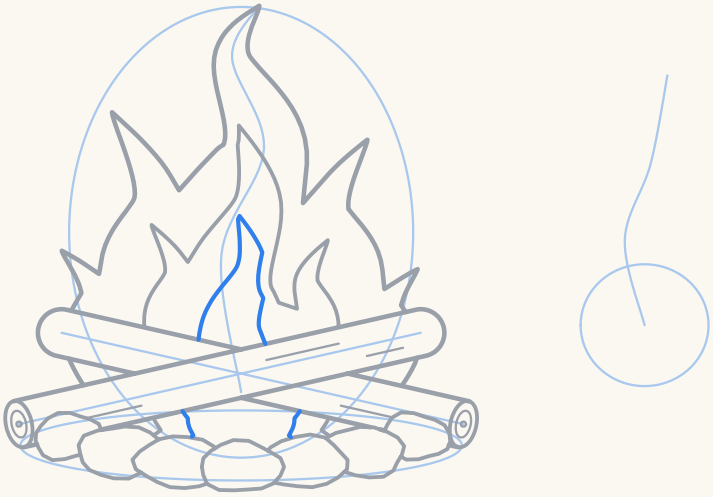
## STEP 7 Nest an orange flame inside



Inside the outer flame, draw a smaller copy with only three tongues. Leave a gap of about a finger's width all around, because that gap becomes the red band later. The center tongue should copy the same S-bend as the big one, just shorter. In my experience this is where the fire starts to look real, because the layers suggest heat glowing inside.

💡 **Tip:** Copy the bend of the big tongue so the layers move together.

## STEP 8 Finish with a yellow core



In the center of the orange flame, draw one simple teardrop with a slightly wavy point. Keep it low, about halfway up the orange shape. The core is the hottest part of a real fire, so it sits deep inside, right above the logs. A tall core makes the whole flame look flat.

💡 **Tip:** Smaller core, hotter look.

## STEP 9 Scatter sparks and loose flames




Above the fire, add three tiny wiggly flame shapes floating on their own, each one a mini S-curve with a point on top. Then sprinkle five little four-point sparkles around them. Space them unevenly so the fire seems to pop. Keep every spark clear of the flame outline so the main shape stays clean.

💡 **Tip:** Odd numbers of sparks look more random than even ones.

## STEP 10 Draw a simple flame icon




Now use the small circle and S-curve on the right to draw fire in its simplest form. Start at the pointed tip, curve down the left side into a round bottom, then come back up the right side with a gentle inward bend. Add a yellow teardrop inside, low and centered. I like adding this second flame because it shows that one shape alone can still read as fire.

💡 **Tip:** Practice this icon a few times on scrap paper first.

## STEP 11 Ink the lines and erase the guides



Trace every keeper line with your black marker: the stones, logs, rings, bark, all three flame layers, the sparks and the icon. Use a slightly lighter hand on the small details. When the ink is completely dry, erase the ring, the X lines, the tall oval and both S-curves.

💡 **Tip:** Wait a full minute before erasing near fresh ink.

## STEP 12 Color the campfire



Color the yellow core first, then the orange layer, then the red outer flame, adding a darker red along the right edges for depth. Give the logs a medium brown with a darker strip underneath, and make the cut ends tan. Use gray for the stones with a darker gray along their bottoms. Finish the loose flames in orange, the sparks in yellow and the icon in red and yellow.

💡 **Tip:** Work from light colors to dark so yellow stays bright.