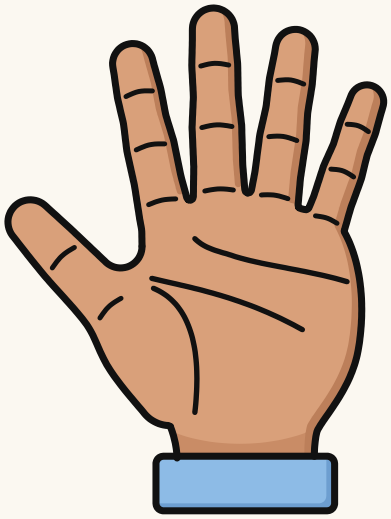
How to Draw Hands

12 easy steps for beginners



What you'll need

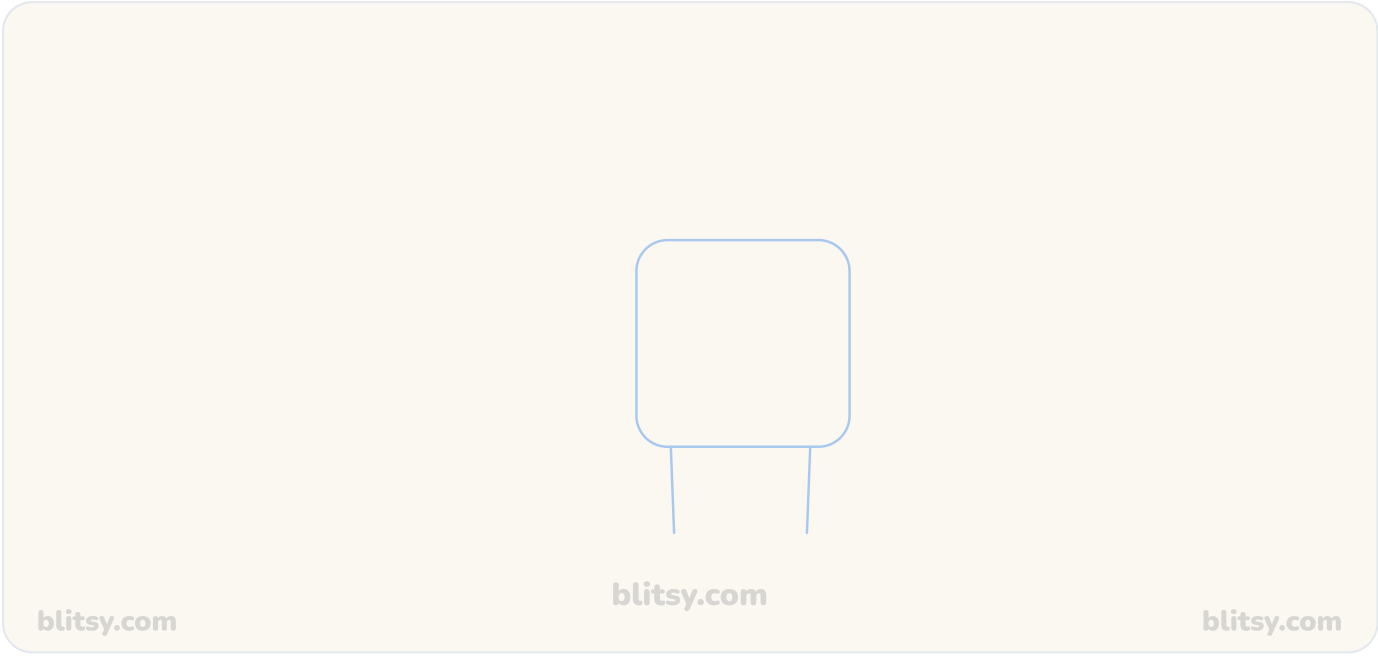
- A pencil
- An eraser
- A black fineliner
- Brown and blue colored pencils
- White paper

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 →

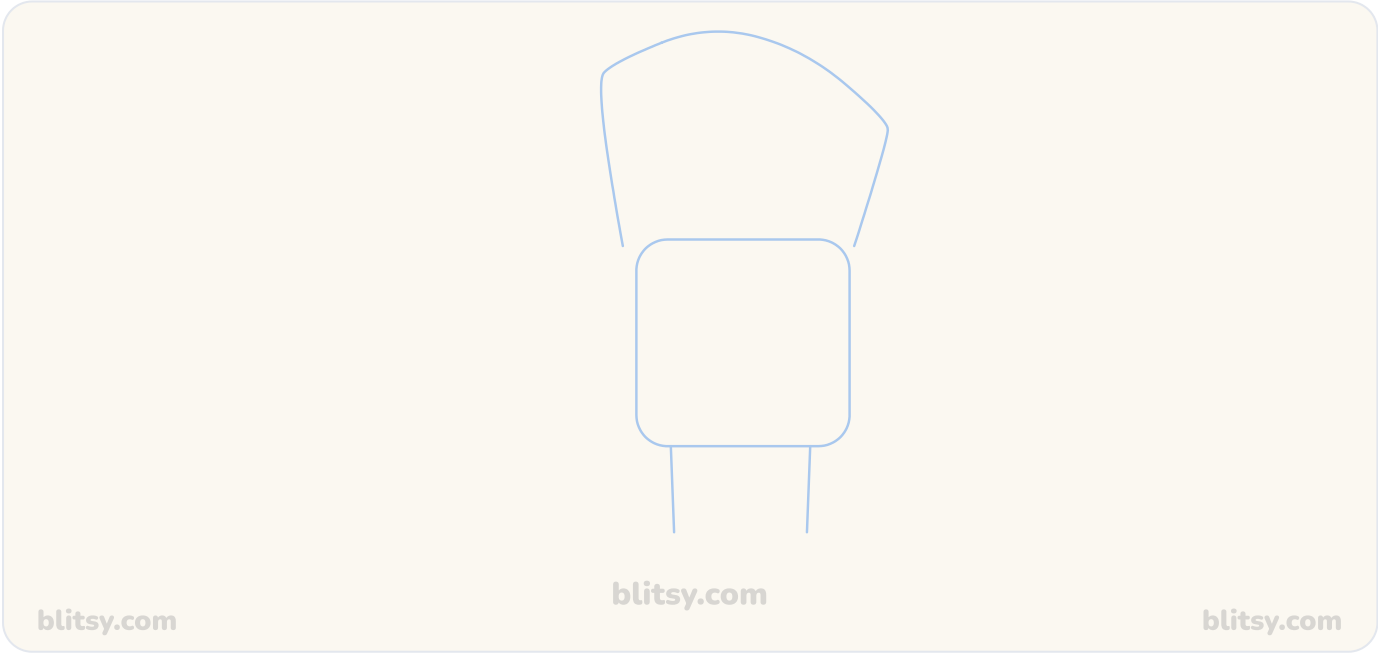
STEP 1 Draw a rounded square for the palm



Start in the lower half of the page with a square that has soft corners, almost as tall as it is wide. Below it, add two short wrist lines, a little narrower than the square. I always begin with the palm because the fingers and thumb hang off it, so its size sets the size of the whole hand.

💡 **Tip:** Leave a lot of empty paper above the square. The fingers need almost as much height again.

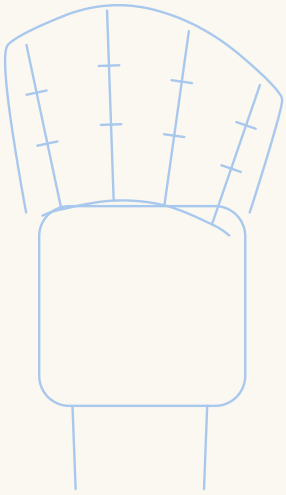
STEP 2 Add a mitten shape for the fingers



On top of the square, sketch a rounded shape like the top of a mitten. A handy rule: the palm is about as long as the middle finger, so make the mitten roughly as tall as the square. Let it fan out a bit wider than the palm, since the fingers are slightly spread.

💡 **Tip:** Hold your own hand up next to the paper and compare the heights before you go on.

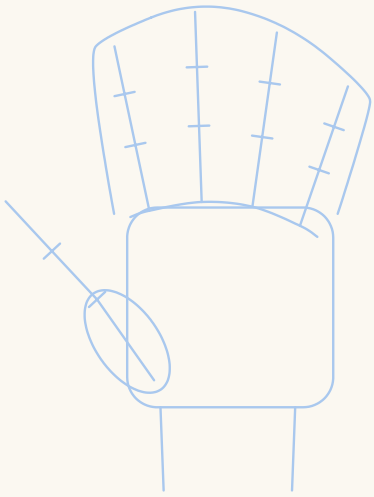
STEP 3 Mark the knuckle arc and finger lines



Across the top of the palm, draw a gentle curve that dips down on the pinky side. The fingers start on this arc. Draw four lines fanning out from it: the middle line reaches the mitten top, the ring and index lines stop a little lower, and the pinky line stops lowest. Two small ticks on each line split it into three segments.

💡 **Tip:** Check the pinky: its tip should land near the top joint tick of the ring finger.

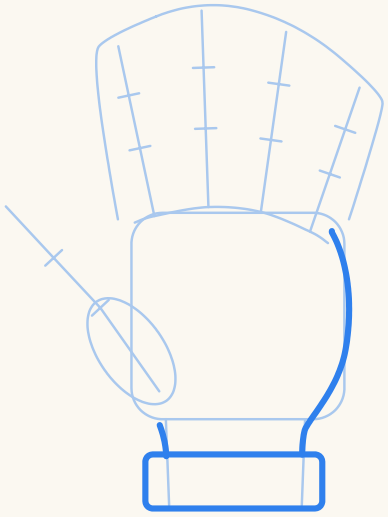
STEP 4 Place the thumb line and thumb pad



Here's where most hand drawings go wrong. The thumb doesn't grow from the top corner of the palm. It starts low, near the wrist, on the side of the palm. Draw a line from there going up and out at an angle, with two ticks for the two joints you can see. Then add an oval around its lower part for the fleshy thumb pad.

💡 **Tip:** Lay your thumb flat against the palm guide on the paper. You'll see how low it starts.

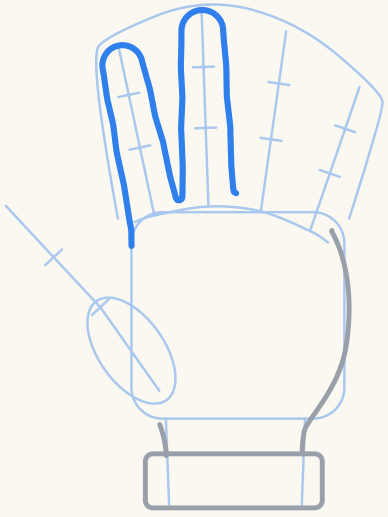
STEP 5 Outline the palm edge, wrist and cuff



Now the first real lines. On the pinky side, draw the palm edge with a slight outward bulge, then curve it in to meet the wrist. Add a short wrist line on the thumb side too, and a rounded rectangle across the wrist for a sleeve cuff. The cuff gives the arm a clean ending, so you don't have to decide where a wrist stops.

💡 **Tip:** Press a little harder now than you did for the guides, but not yet full strength.

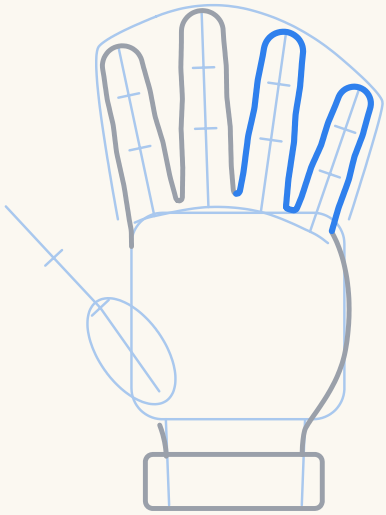
STEP 6 Draw the index and middle fingers



Wrap each finger line with an outline about a quarter of the palm wide. Go up one side, round off the tip, and come back down. Let the fingers get a touch narrower toward the tips. Where two fingers meet the palm, join them with a small U shape instead of a sharp V.

💡 **Tip:** Draw the fingertip as a rounded dome, not a flat end, or the finger looks cut off.

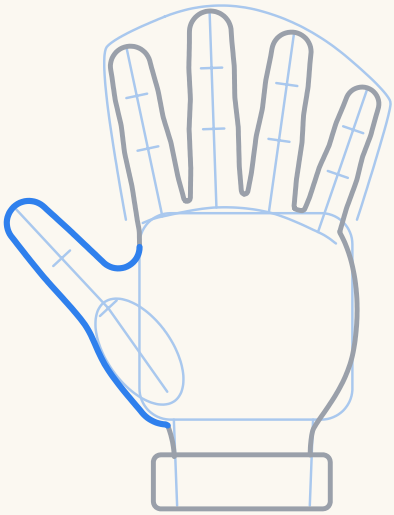
STEP 7 Draw the ring finger and pinky



Repeat the shape for the ring finger, just a bit shorter than the middle one. The pinky is the slimmest finger and starts lower on the palm. Bring its outer edge down so it flows into the palm edge from step five. Count your fingers now: four, plus the thumb still to come.

💡 **Tip:** Keep the gaps between fingers narrow near the palm and a little wider at the tips.

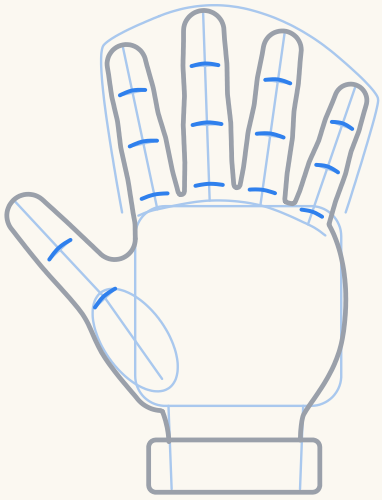
STEP 8 Shape the thumb



Follow the thumb line from the tip down. The top segment ends in a rounded tip, the second is slightly wider, and below that the outline swells over the thumb pad before it reaches the wrist. On the inside, draw a deep, soft curve back up to the index finger. That curve is the skin web, and it should look roomy, like a C.

💡 **Tip:** Make the thumb a little thicker than the index finger. A thin thumb looks like a sixth finger.

STEP 9 Add the joint lines



On the palm side you see creases instead of knuckles. Draw a short, slightly curved line across each finger at both tick marks, and one more where the finger meets the palm. The thumb gets two creases: one at its middle joint and one where it joins the pad. Leave a small gap at each end so the creases don't touch the outline.

💡 **Tip:** No fingernails here. From the palm side you only see the soft finger pads.

STEP 10 Draw the three main palm lines



Three creases are enough to say palm. The top one starts near the pinky edge and curves up toward the gap between the index and middle fingers. The second starts at the thumb web and slopes gently across the palm. The third begins in the same spot and curves around the thumb pad toward the wrist. I skip the dozens of tiny lines on purpose.

💡 **Tip:** Keep palm lines thinner than the outline so they read as skin folds, not cuts.

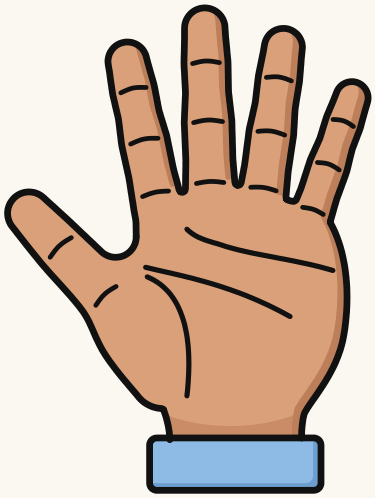
STEP 11 Ink the keeper lines and erase the guides



Trace every keeper line with your black pen. Use one steady stroke per finger side if you can, since short scratchy strokes show badly in ink. Wait a minute for the ink to dry, then erase the square, the mitten, the finger lines and the thumb oval.

💡 **Tip:** Ink the outline first while your hand is fresh, then the small creases.

STEP 12 Color and shade the hand



Fill the whole hand with light brown and the cuff with light blue. For shading, imagine the light coming from the top left. Add brown along the right side of each finger and along the pinky edge of the palm, then a band of tan across the wrist just under the palm. A strip of darker blue on the cuff's lower right edge finishes it.

💡 **Tip:** Color in small circles with light pressure, then add a second layer where you want it deeper.