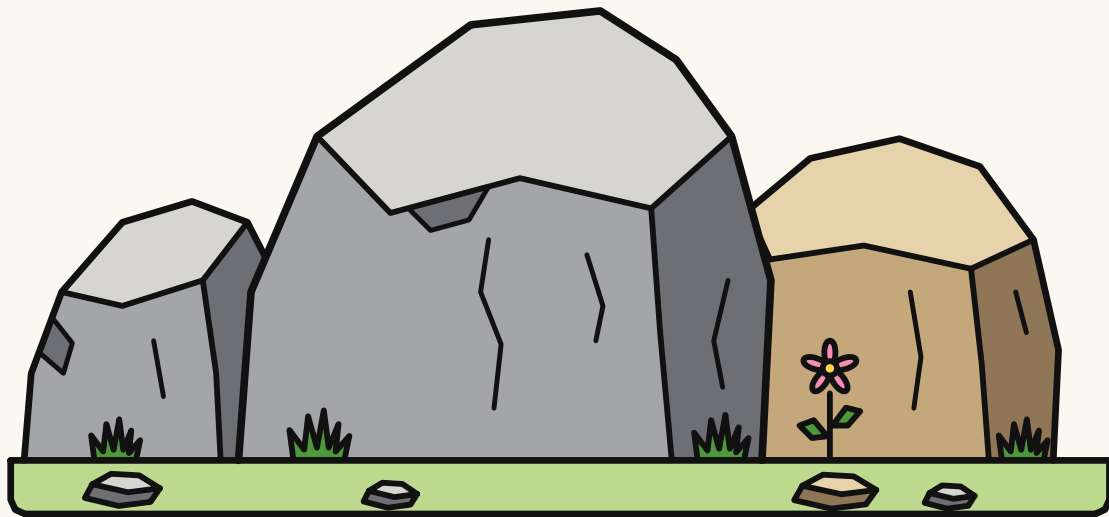


How to Draw Rocks

11 easy steps for beginners



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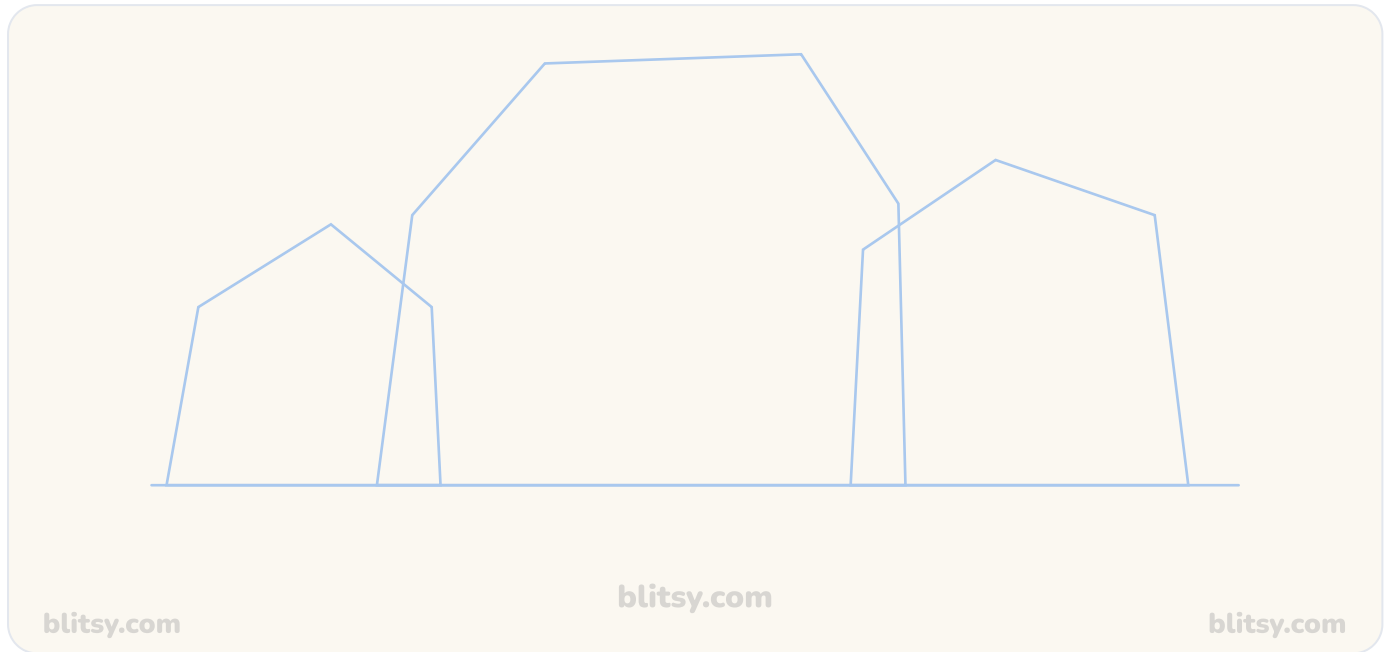
What you'll need

- A pencil
- An eraser
- A black fineliner
- Colored pencils in grays, tan and green
- Paper turned sideways

How to use this guide

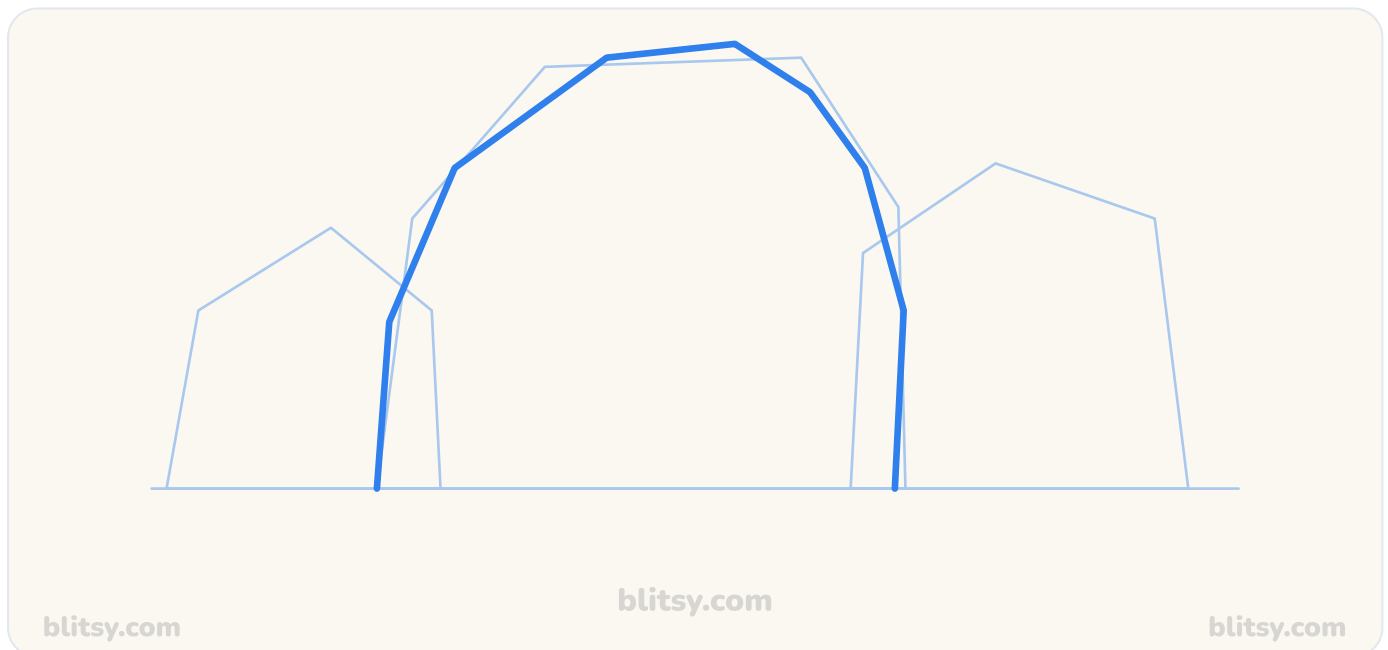
New lines for each step are shown in **blue**; lines you already drew are gray. Draw lightly first, then ink and erase near the end.

[Read the full tutorial online →](#)

STEP 1 Sketch a ground line and three blocks

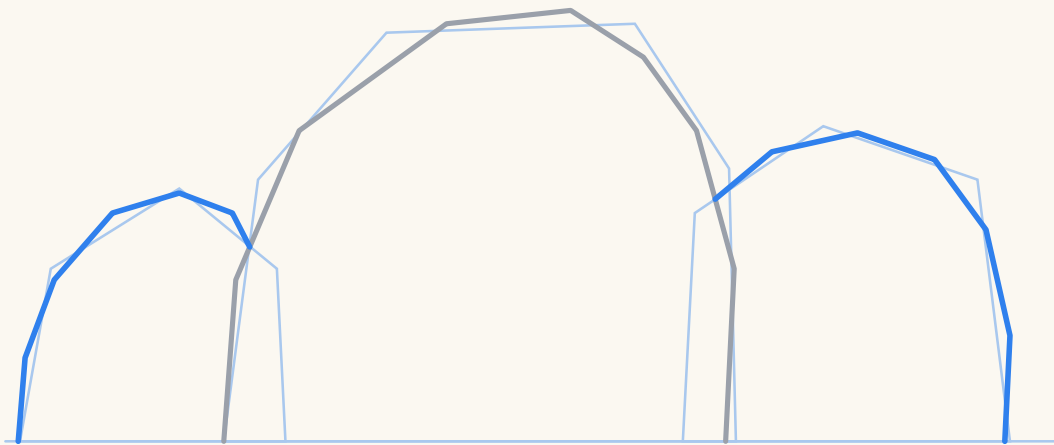
Draw one long, level line across the lower part of the page. On it, sketch three rough blocks with straight sides: a tall one in the middle, a short one on the left and a medium one on the right. Let the side blocks overlap the middle one a little. I always start rocks as boxy shapes, because a box already has corners, and corners are what make stone look hard.

 **Tip:** If any block looks round at this stage, straighten its sides before moving on.

STEP 2 Outline the big boulder

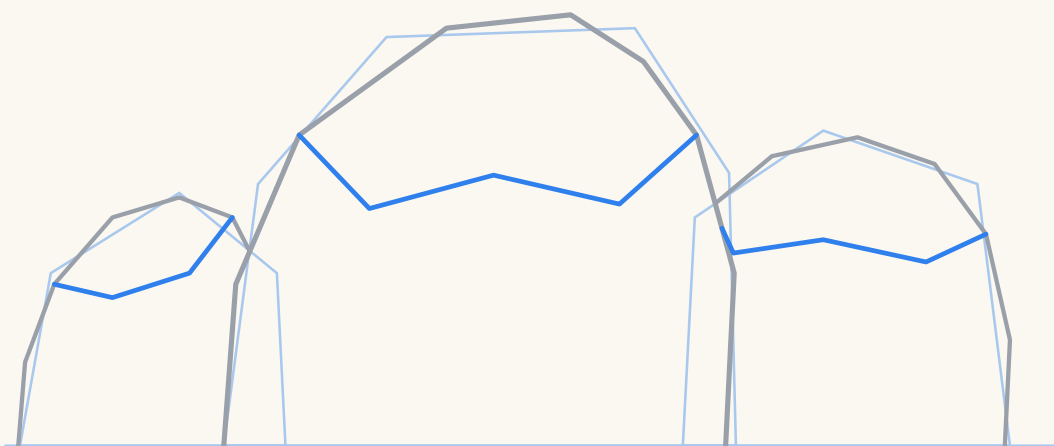
Inside the middle block, draw the boulder's outline with short straight lines that meet at clear angles. Think of a gem that has been rolled around for a while: wide at the base, narrower at the top, with six or seven corners along the way. Both sides should land on the ground line.

 **Tip:** Count your corners. Fewer than five and the boulder starts to look like a bubble.

STEP 3 Add the two rocks behind it

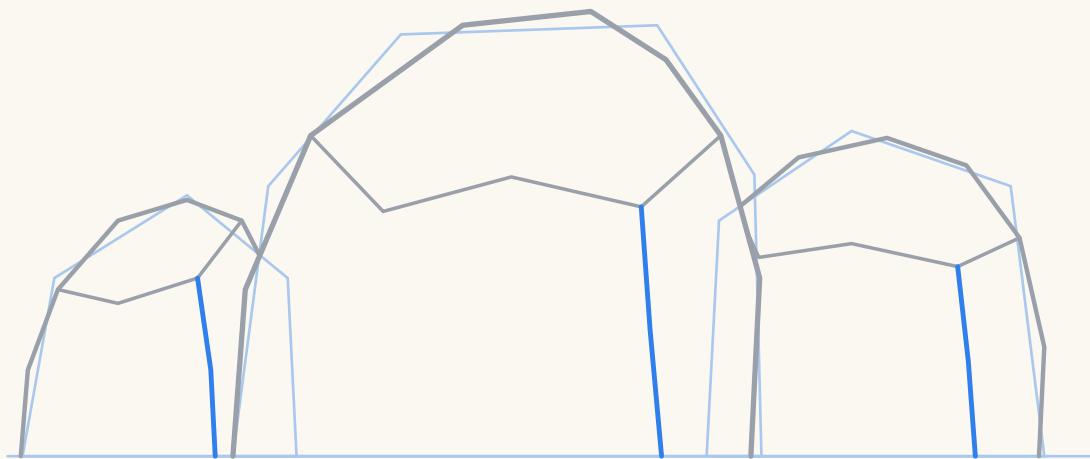
Now outline the left and right rocks the same angular way. Their inside edges stop as soon as they reach the boulder, because they sit behind it. That single overlap is what tells the eye which rock is closer. Keep both a bit lower than the big one so it stays the hero of the picture.

 **Tip:** Trace the back edge with your finger first, and lift the pencil the moment it touches the boulder.

STEP 4 Mark the top plane on each rock

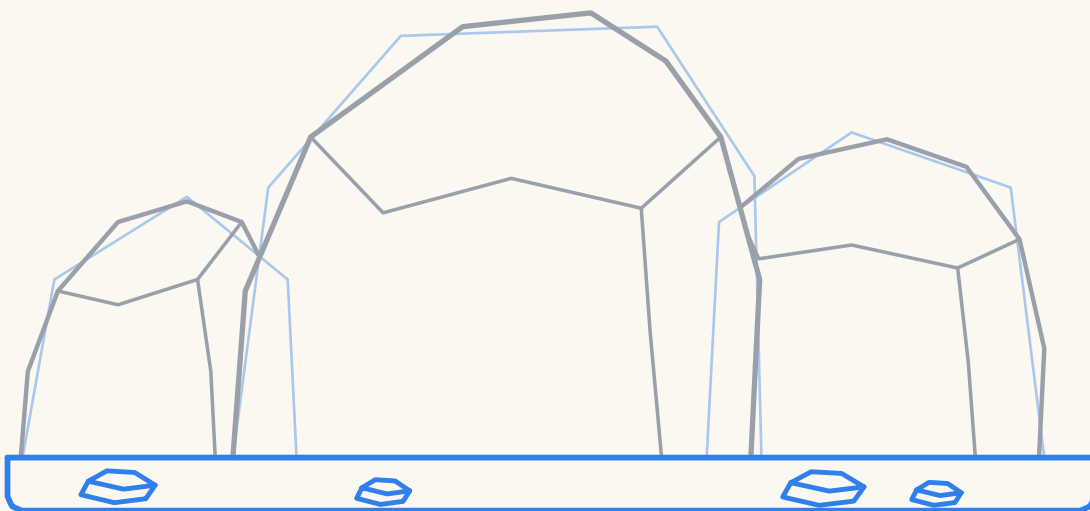
Here's the step that changes everything. Across the upper part of each rock, draw a zig-zag line from one side of the outline to the other. The area above it is the flat top of the rock, which faces the sky. On the big boulder this top takes up roughly the upper third. When I skip this line, my rocks instantly go back to looking soft.

 **Tip:** Let the line dip and rise a little. A perfectly level top edge looks like a lid.

STEP 5 Split the front from the side

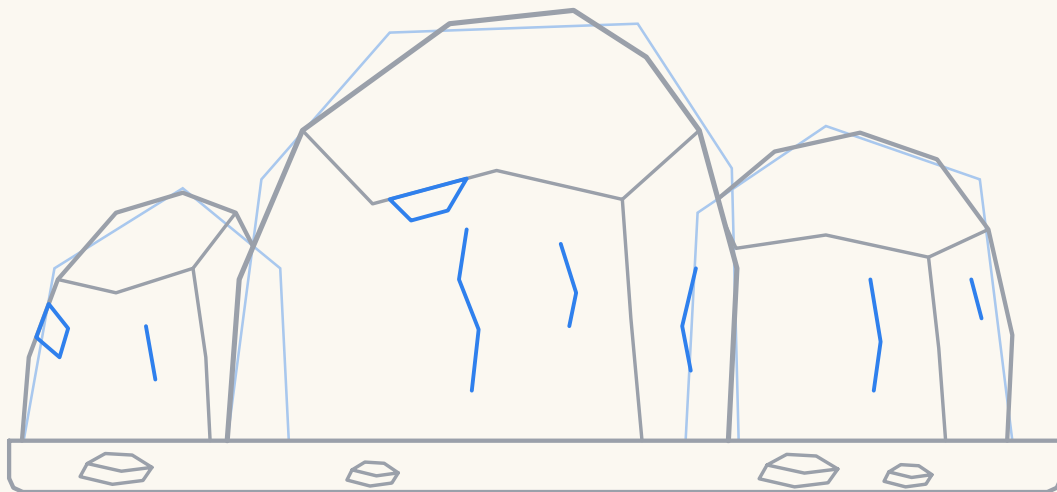
From the right end of each top line, drop an almost vertical line down to the ground. Everything left of it is the front of the rock; everything right of it is the side. You now have three flat planes per rock. Picture the sun up on the left: the top gets the most light, the front a bit less, and the side sits in shadow.

 **Tip:** Put this line about two thirds of the way across, not in the exact middle.

STEP 6 Draw the ground strip and pebbles

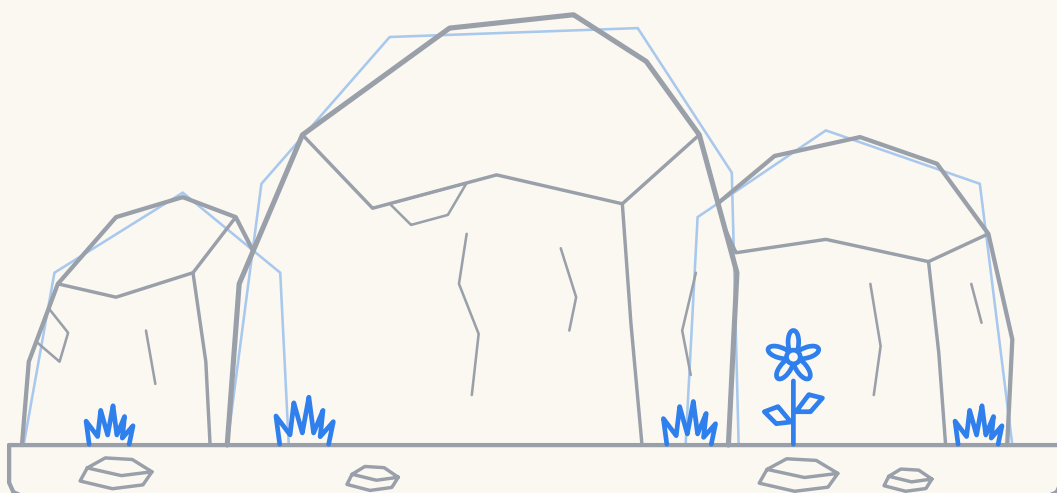
Trace the ground line firmly and close a shallow band underneath it, rounding the two bottom corners. Then scatter four pebbles inside the band. Each pebble is a tiny version of the big rocks: a flat, angular outline plus one line that separates its top from its lower side.

 **Tip:** Vary the pebble sizes and gaps so they don't sit in a neat row like buttons.

STEP 7 Add cracks and chips

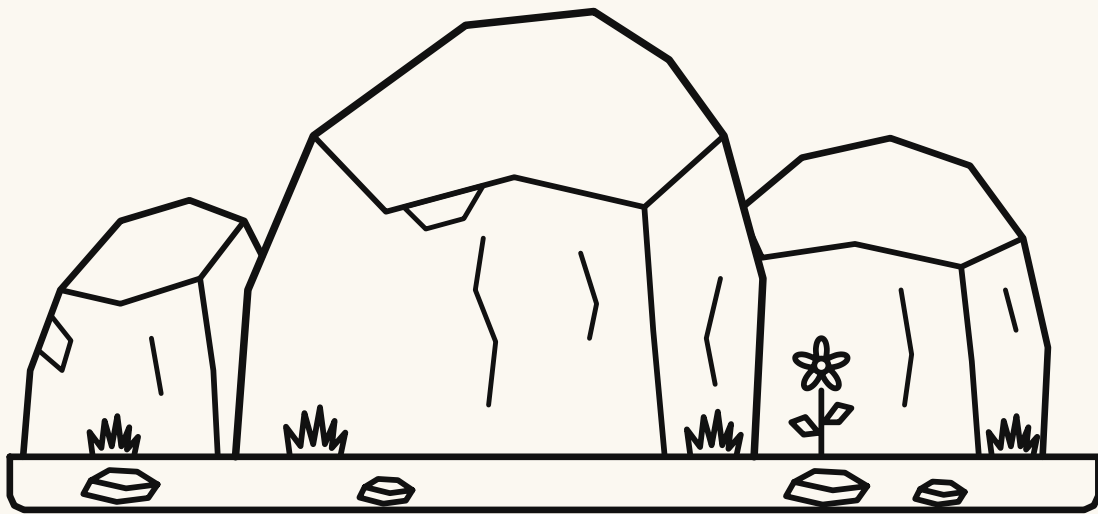
Give each rock one or two cracks: short lines that wiggle and change direction once or twice. Then draw a chip, a small four-sided patch where a piece of stone has broken off an edge. I put one under the boulder's top edge and one on the left rock's outline. A couple is plenty; too many and the rock looks shattered.

 **Tip:** Run cracks mostly up and down. Real stone tends to split along its height.

STEP 8 Grow some grass and a little flower

At the foot of the rocks, draw small grass tufts: a row of thin spikes of different heights that rest on the ground line. Place them on the rock faces, away from the corner lines. Then add a five-petal flower on a straight stem in front of the tan rock, with a leaf on each side. Living things next to stone make the rocks feel heavy and still by contrast.

 **Tip:** Younger artists can draw each tuft as three simple strokes in a fan.

STEP 9 Ink the lines and erase the guides

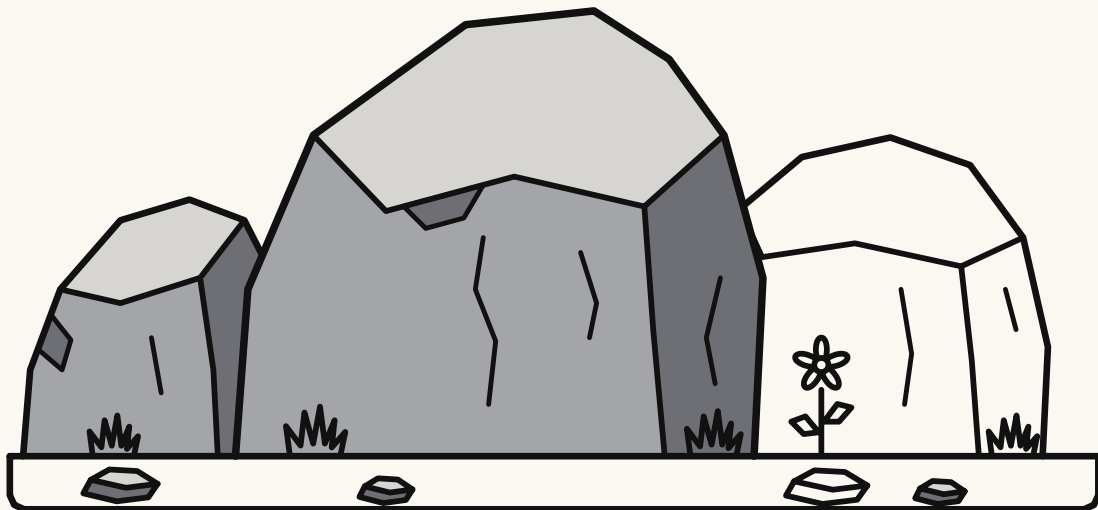
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Go over every line you want to keep with the black fineliner. I use a slightly heavier hand on the outer outlines and a lighter one on the cracks, which helps the big shapes read first. Wait a minute for the ink to dry, then erase the pale blocks from step 1 along with the ground guide.

 **Tip:** Turn the paper as you ink so you're always pulling the pen toward you.

STEP 10 Shade the gray stones

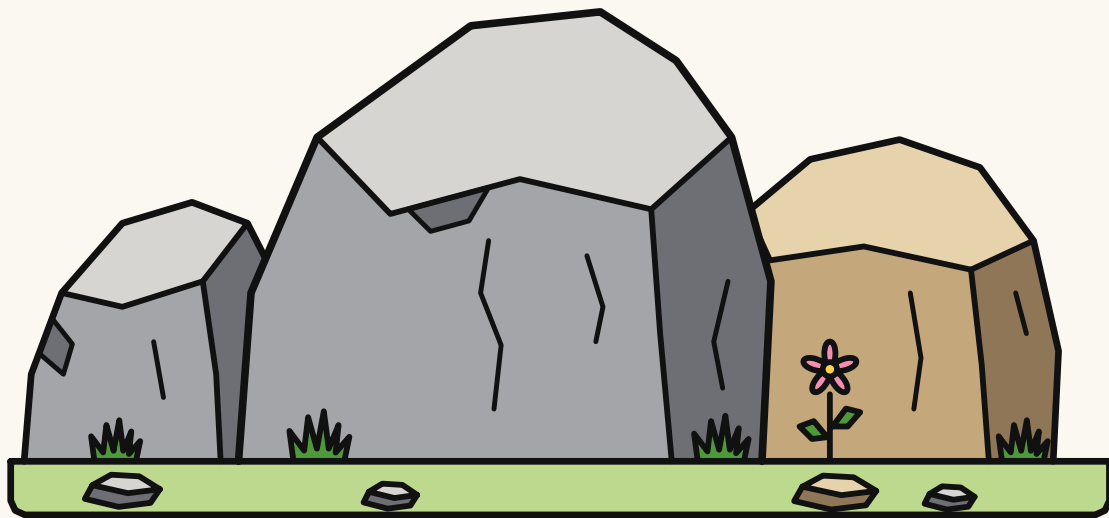
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Color the top planes light gray, the fronts a medium gray and the right-hand sides dark gray. Fill the chips with dark gray too, since a broken spot faces away from the light. Do the same on the gray pebbles: pale top, dark underside. Honestly, this is where the drawing turns from lines into stone.

 **Tip:** Keep the same light direction on every rock. One rock lit from the other side breaks the whole scene.

STEP 11 Color the tan rock, grass and flower

The right rock gets warm tan: pale on top, medium on the front, and a darker brown-tan on its side. The same goes for the tan pebble. Fill the ground strip light green and the tufts and leaves a deeper green. Finish with pink petals around a yellow middle.

 **Tip:** Press harder with the same tan pencil to get the dark side if you only own one brown.