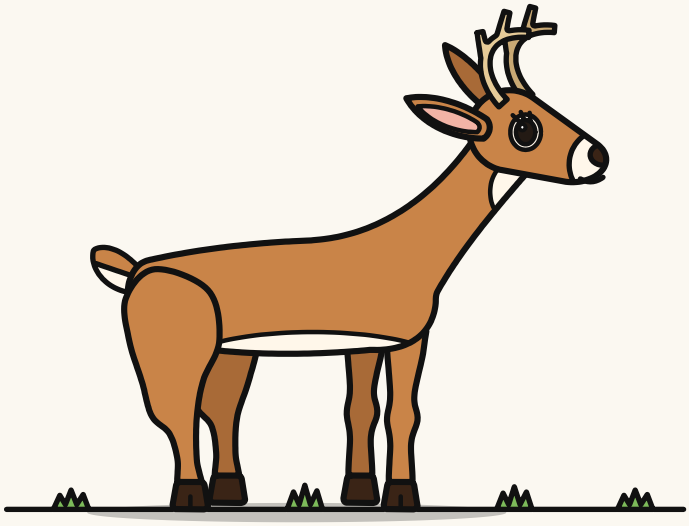
How to Draw a Deer

12 easy steps for beginners



What you'll need

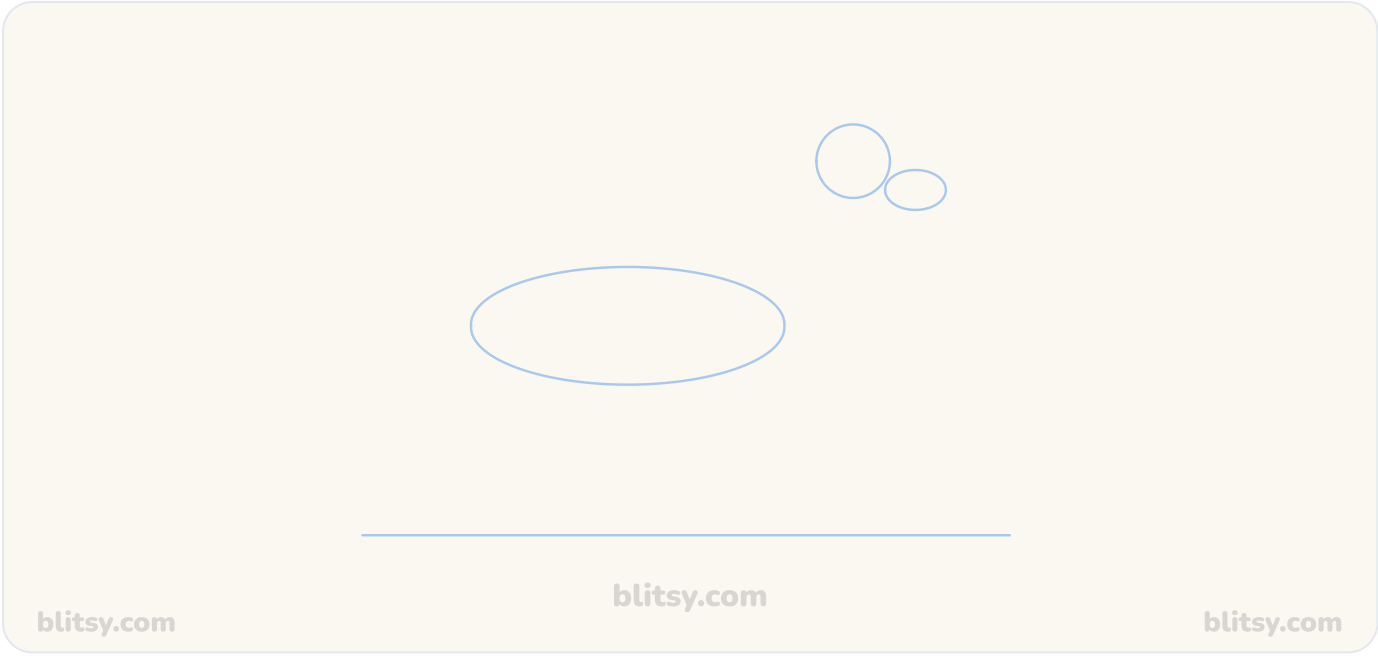
- A pencil
- An eraser
- A black fineliner
- Colored pencils or crayons
- Plain paper

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 →

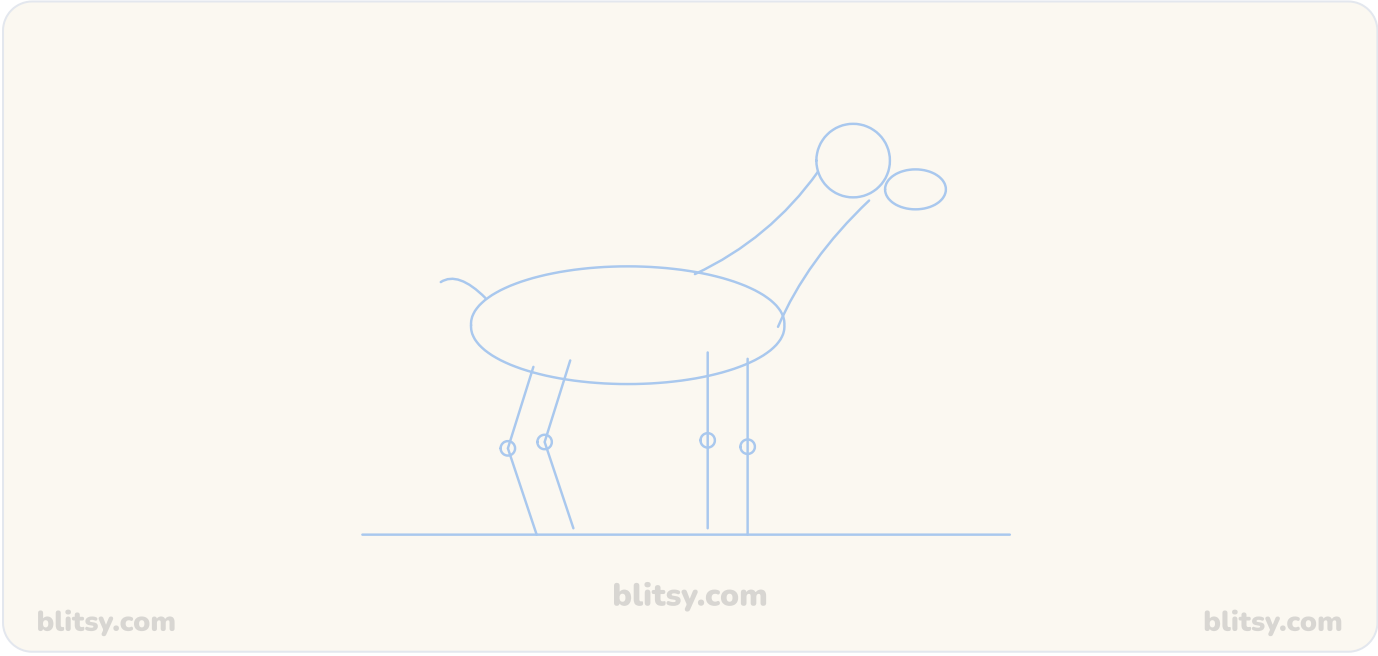
STEP 1 Draw a long body oval and two head circles



Lightly draw a ground line near the bottom. A little below the middle of the page, sketch a long, flat oval for the body, closer to the left side. Then move up and to the right and draw a circle for the head with a smaller oval touching its front for the snout.

💡 **Tip:** The head circle should sit about one body height above the oval. Any lower and the deer looks like it's grazing.

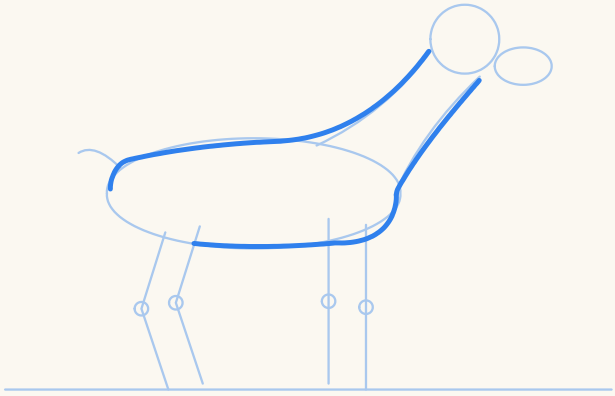
STEP 2 Add neck, leg and tail guide lines



Connect the front of the oval to the head with two lines that lean forward. For the front legs, drop two straight lines to the ground. The back legs are different: each one goes down, bends backward at a small circle, then goes down again. Finish with a tiny curve at the back for the tail.

💡 **Tip:** That backward bend on the hind leg is the hock. It's what makes the legs look right.

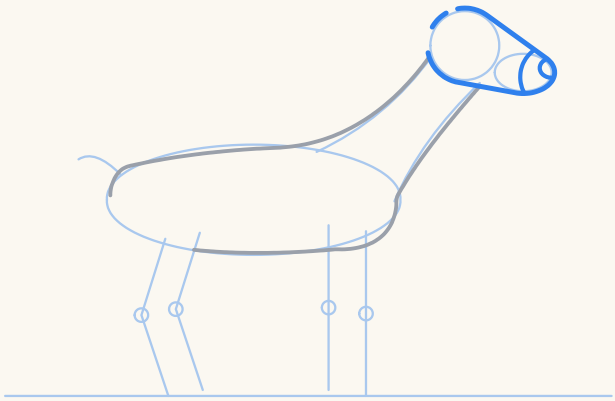
STEP 3 Outline the body and the graceful neck



I draw the back first, nearly level, and let it curve smoothly up into the neck and on to the head. Come back down the front of the neck to a rounded chest and run a gentle belly line toward the rear. I make the neck wide at the shoulders and narrower under the head.

💡 **Tip:** Don't make a sharp corner where the back meets the neck. One smooth swoop looks more elegant.

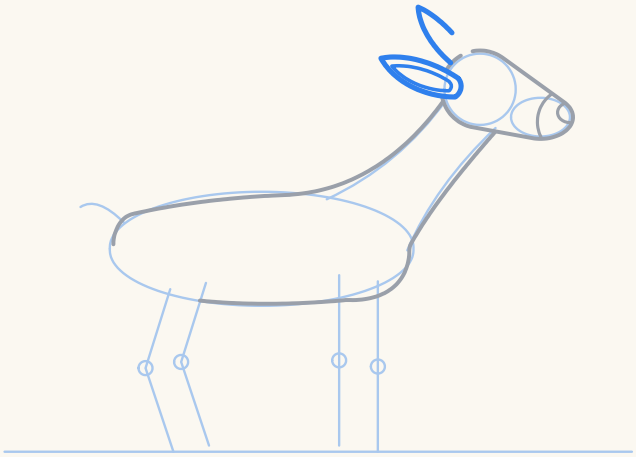
STEP 4 Shape the head with a slim snout



Wrap a line around the head circle and the snout oval so they join into one shape that narrows toward the nose. At the tip, draw a small round nose and a curved line behind it to mark the light muzzle. I keep the snout a little lower than the top of the head, which gives the face a gentle downward tilt.

💡 **Tip:** A deer's face is long and narrow. If the snout ends up as wide as the head, it starts to look like a dog.

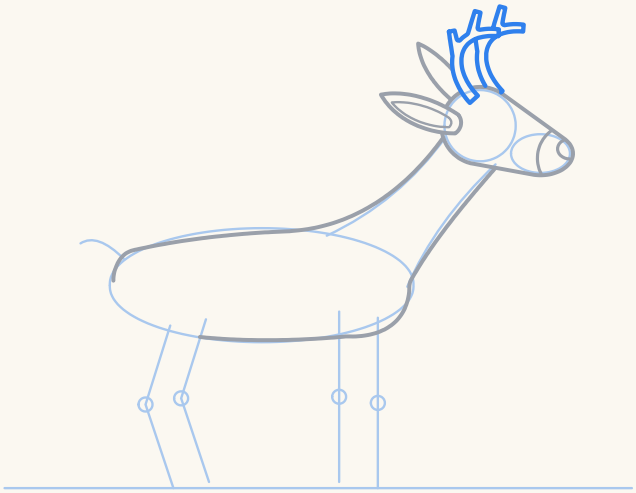
STEP 5 Draw two big ears



Deer have large ears for the size of their heads, so I tell beginners not to be shy here. Draw a big leaf shape coming out of the back of the head and pointing back, then a smaller leaf inside it. Behind it, add the second ear pointing more upward, partly hidden by the head.

💡 **Tip:** Each ear can be almost as long as the head itself. Small ears make the deer look like a goat.

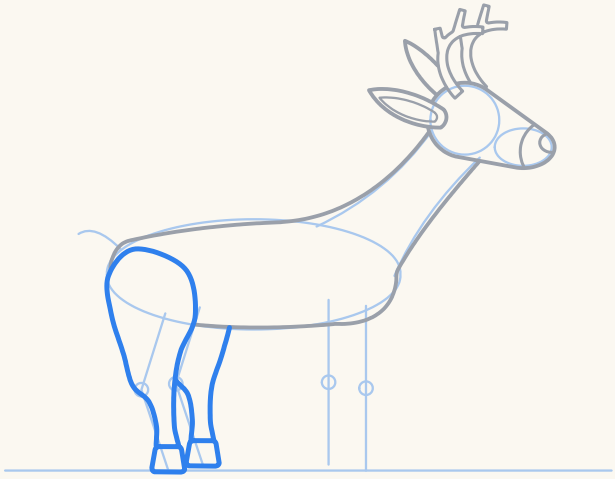
STEP 6 Add small branching antlers



From the top of the head, draw a thin curved branch that leans back first and then bends forward, like a hook. Add two short points sticking up from it. Draw the second antler the same way, a little to the right and slightly behind the first.

💡 **Tip:** Draw each antler as a narrow tube with two sides, not a single line, so you'll have room to color it later.

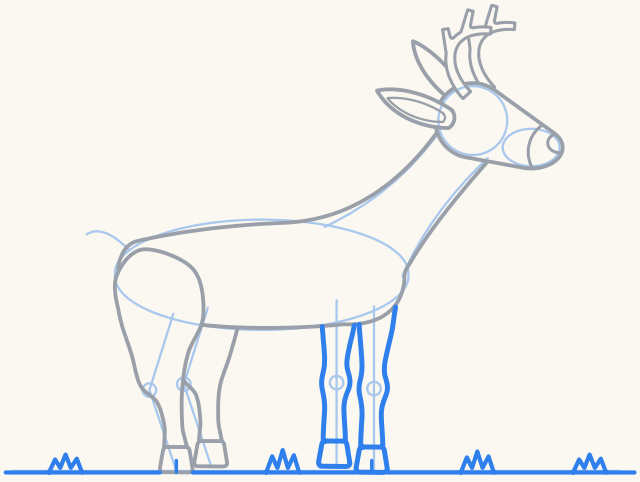
STEP 7 Draw the back legs with a bend



Start with a big rounded thigh shape over the back of the body. From there, the leg narrows as it goes down, pokes backward at the hock and then drops straight to a small hoof. Draw the far back leg just to the right, partly hidden by the near one.

💡 **Tip:** Keep the lower leg really thin, about as wide as the hoof. That's where a deer gets its light, springy look.

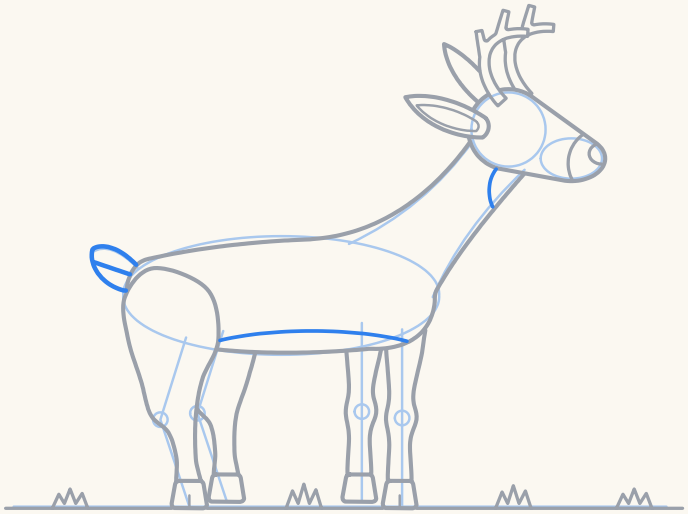
STEP 8 Add slim front legs and hooves



The front legs are straighter, the easiest part of the deer. Draw each one as two long, thin lines with a small bump for the knee, ending in a little hoof. Put the far front leg slightly to the left of the near one. Then draw a short line up the middle of each near hoof to split it, add the ground line and a few grass tufts.

💡 **Tip:** Let all four hooves rest on the same ground line, otherwise the deer will look like it's floating.

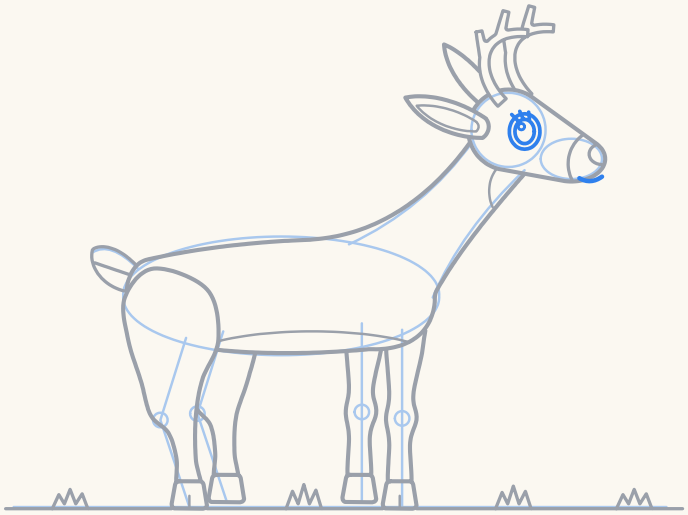
STEP 9 Draw the tail, belly and throat patches



At the top of the rump, draw a short, round tail that flicks up and back, with a line across it to mark the white underside. Next, draw a soft curve along the belly to mark the white tummy. Finish with a small rounded patch on the throat just under the chin.

💡 **Tip:** The white tail is why this deer is called a white-tailed deer.

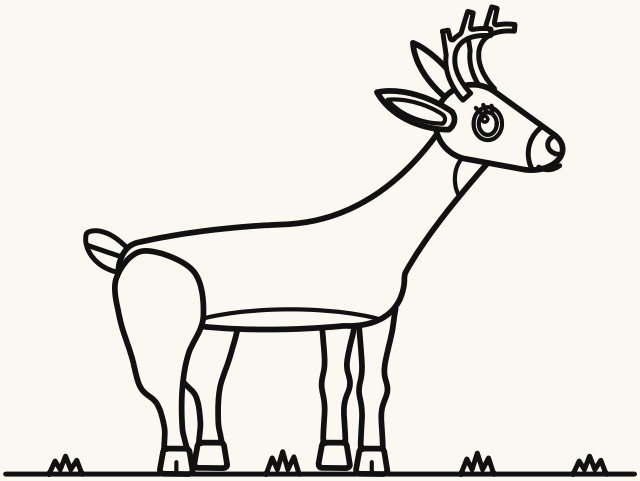
STEP 10 Give it a gentle eye and a smile



Place a large oval eye on the side of the head, a bit behind the middle. Draw a ring around it for the pale fur deer have there, then leave a small shine dot inside and add three short lashes. Under the nose, a tiny curve becomes the smile.

💡 **Tip:** Big eyes set wide apart are what make deer look so calm. Make this one generous.

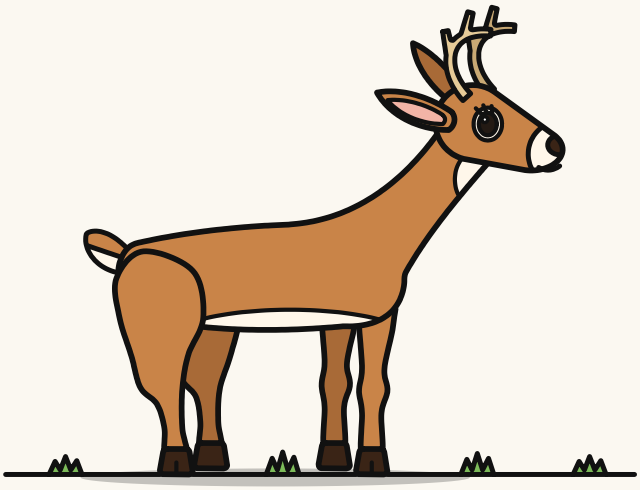
STEP 11 Ink the deer and erase the guides



Trace over all your keeper lines with the fineliner, from the antlers down to the hooves. Skip the oval and the circles, plus the straight guide lines. Once the ink has dried, erase every bit of pencil that's left.

💡 **Tip:** Ink the thin legs with slow, steady strokes. Quick strokes tend to wobble on long, narrow shapes like these.

STEP 12 Color your deer



Light brown goes on the whole body and head, including the near legs and the top of the tail. Use a slightly darker brown for the far legs and far ear, so they sit back. Leave the belly and throat white, along with the muzzle, the eye ring and the tail underside. Then add tan antlers and a dark brown nose and hooves. Pink goes inside the ear, green on the grass.

💡 **Tip:** Press lightly with the light brown first and go over the back a second time. A darker back and lighter sides look more natural.