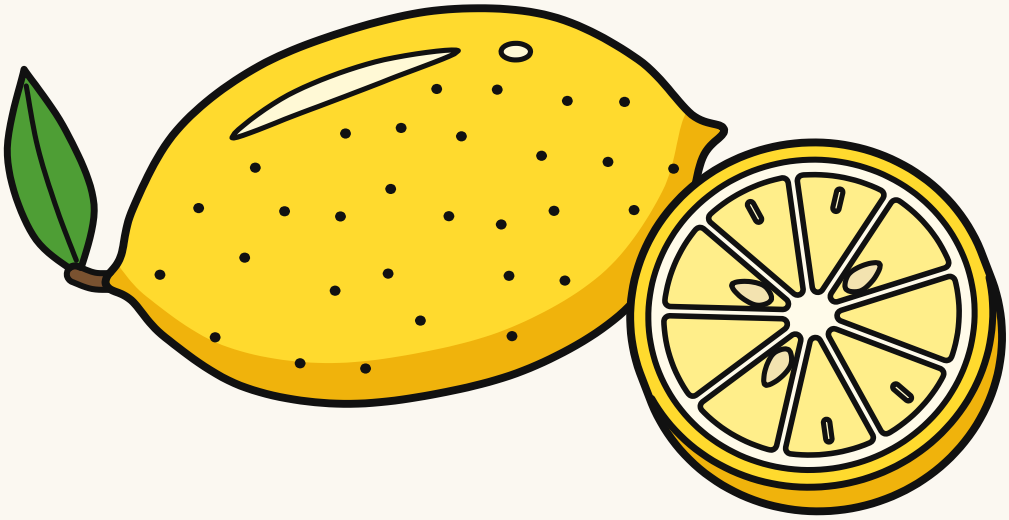
How to Draw a Lemon

10 easy steps for beginners



What you'll need

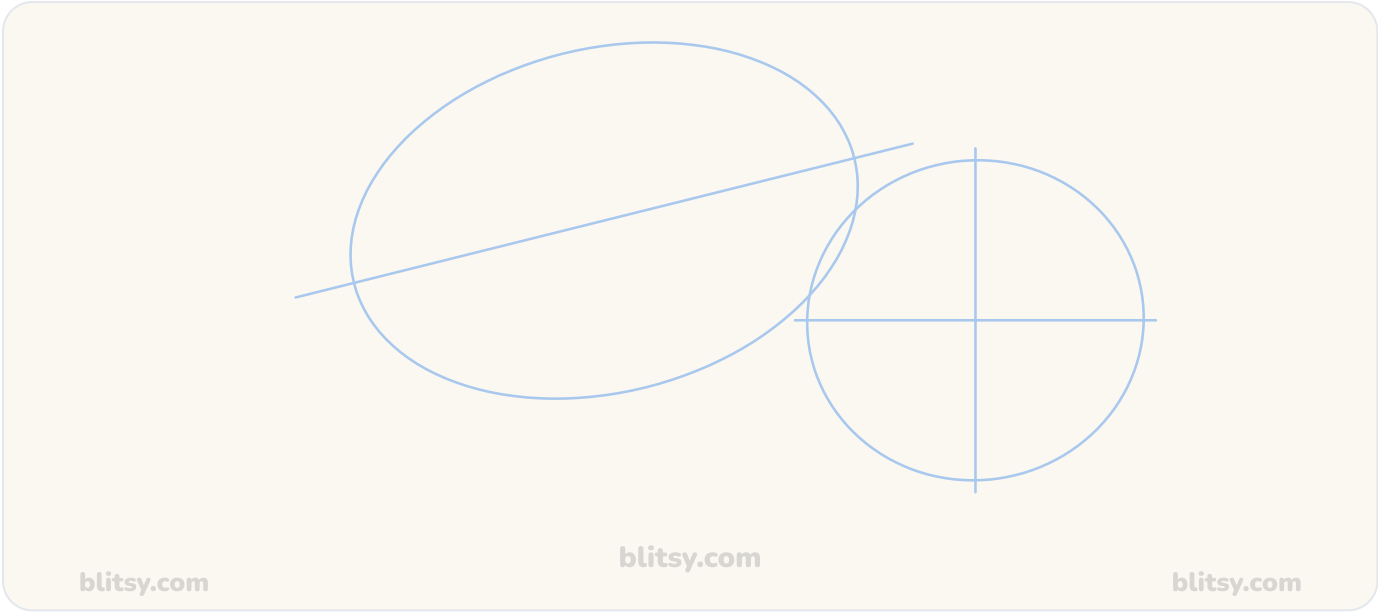
- A pencil
- An eraser
- A black marker or fineliner
- Colored pencils or crayons
- Plain paper

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 →

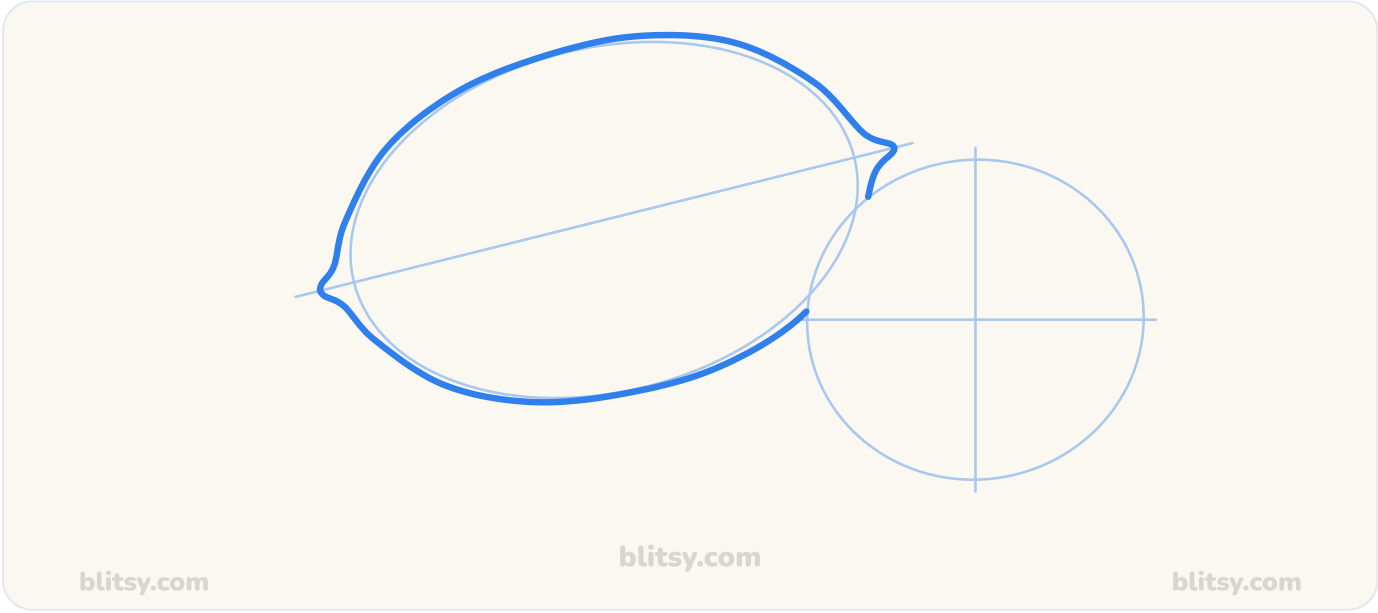
STEP 1 Sketch a tilted oval and a circle



Draw a wide oval on the left, tipped so its right end sits a little higher than its left. I like that tilt because a lemon lying perfectly flat looks stiff. Run a light line through it from end to end; that line tells you where the two pointed tips go. On the right, overlapping the oval's lower corner, draw a circle with a cross through it for the slice.

💡 **Tip:** Keep the oval about one and a half times as wide as it is tall. Any rounder and it starts to look like an orange.

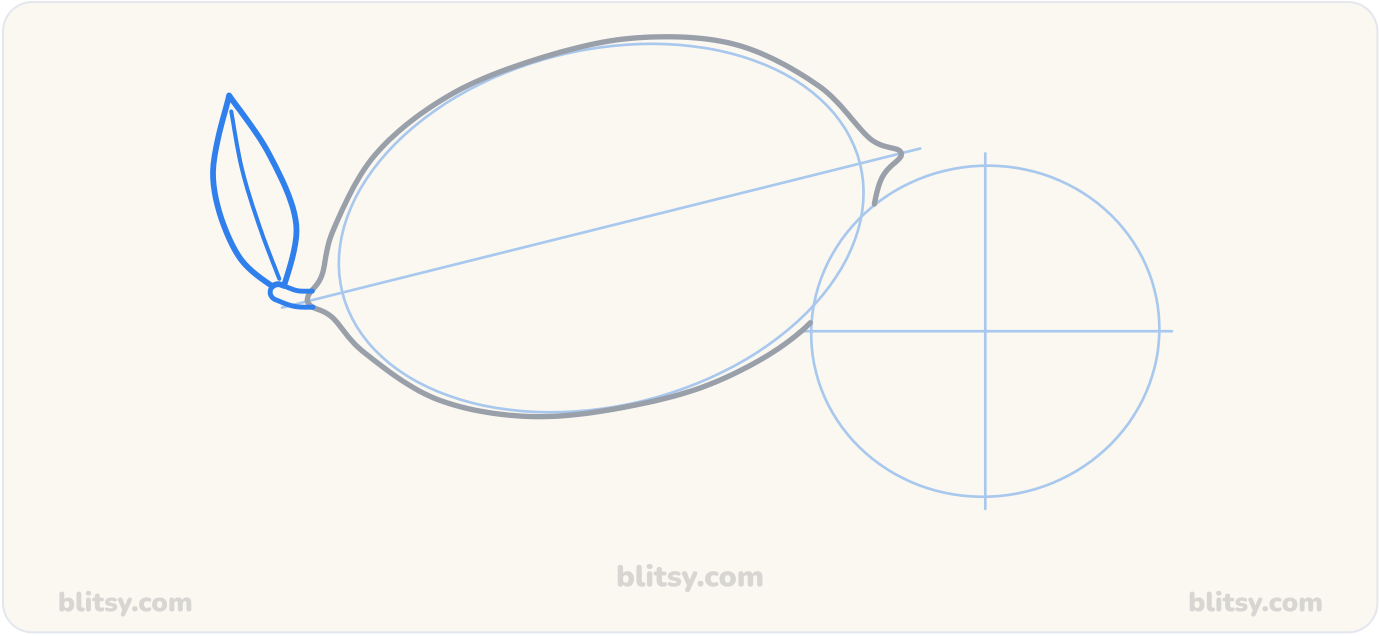
STEP 2 Shape the lemon with pointy ends



Now trace around the oval with your real lemon line. Where the line meets the guide at each end, pinch it out into a small bump. I make the right tip a bit sharper than the left, because real lemons are rarely even. Stop the line where it reaches the circle, since the slice will sit in front.

💡 **Tip:** The tips should be tiny. If they stick out like a football's points, the whole fruit turns into a lime or a melon.

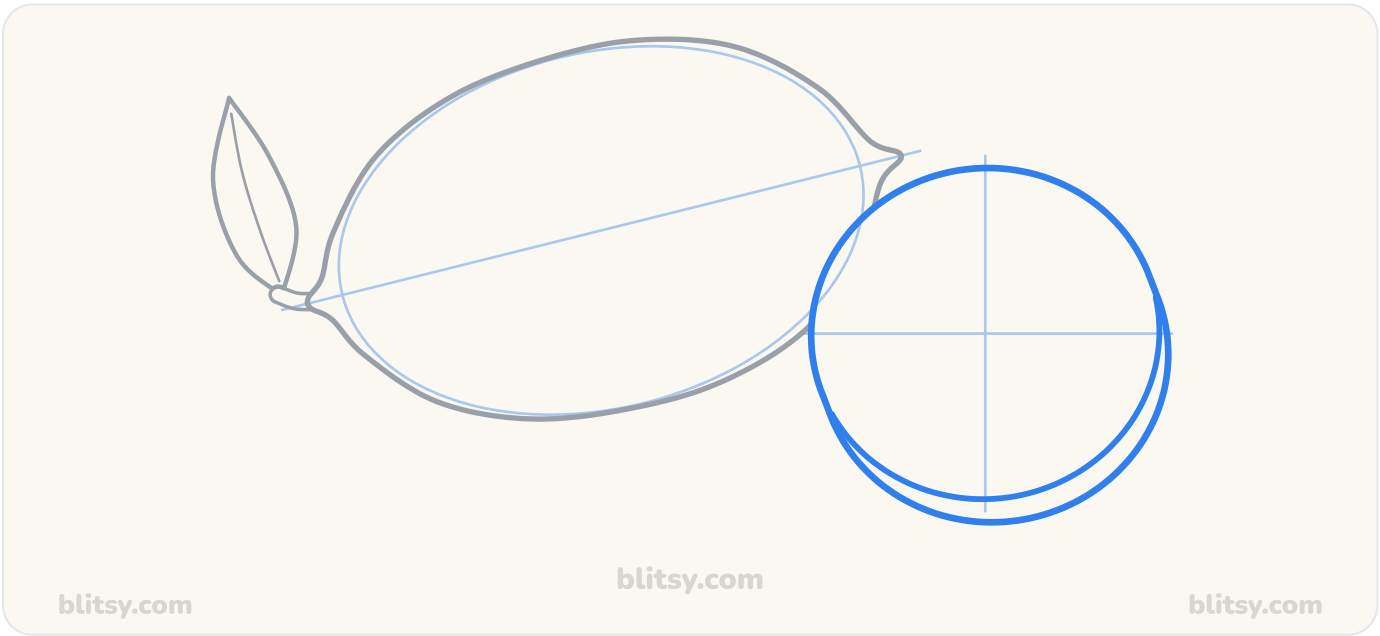
STEP 3 Add a tiny stem and a leaf



At the left tip, draw a short stubby stem pointing out and slightly up. From the end of the stem, draw a slim leaf that rises up and away from the fruit. Add one curved line down its middle for the vein.

💡 **Tip:** Let the leaf lean out, away from the lemon. A leaf lying flat on the peel hides the nice pointed tip.

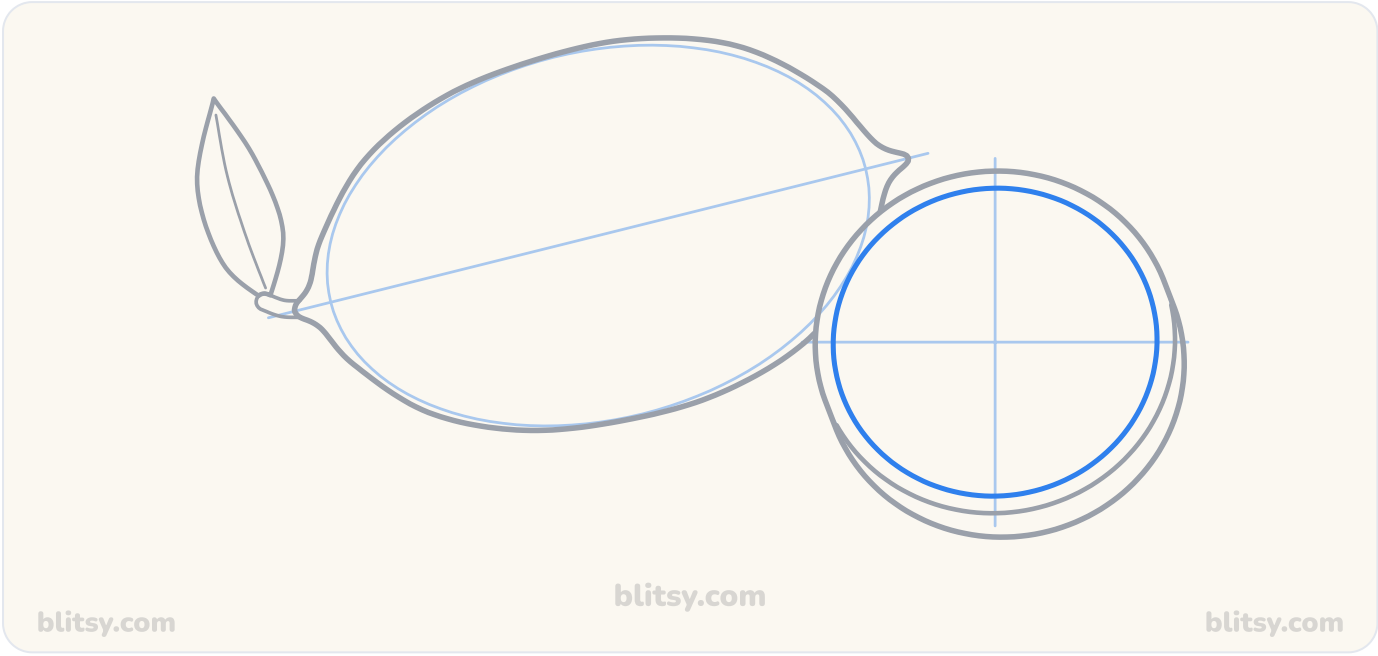
STEP 4 Draw the round slice



Go over your guide circle with a firm line. Then draw a second curve just below it, following the bottom half and joining up at the sides. That thin band is the thickness of the slice, and it's what makes it stand up instead of looking like a flat sticker.

💡 **Tip:** Keep the band thin, about the width of your fingertip on the page. Thicker and it reads as a whole lemon cut in half.

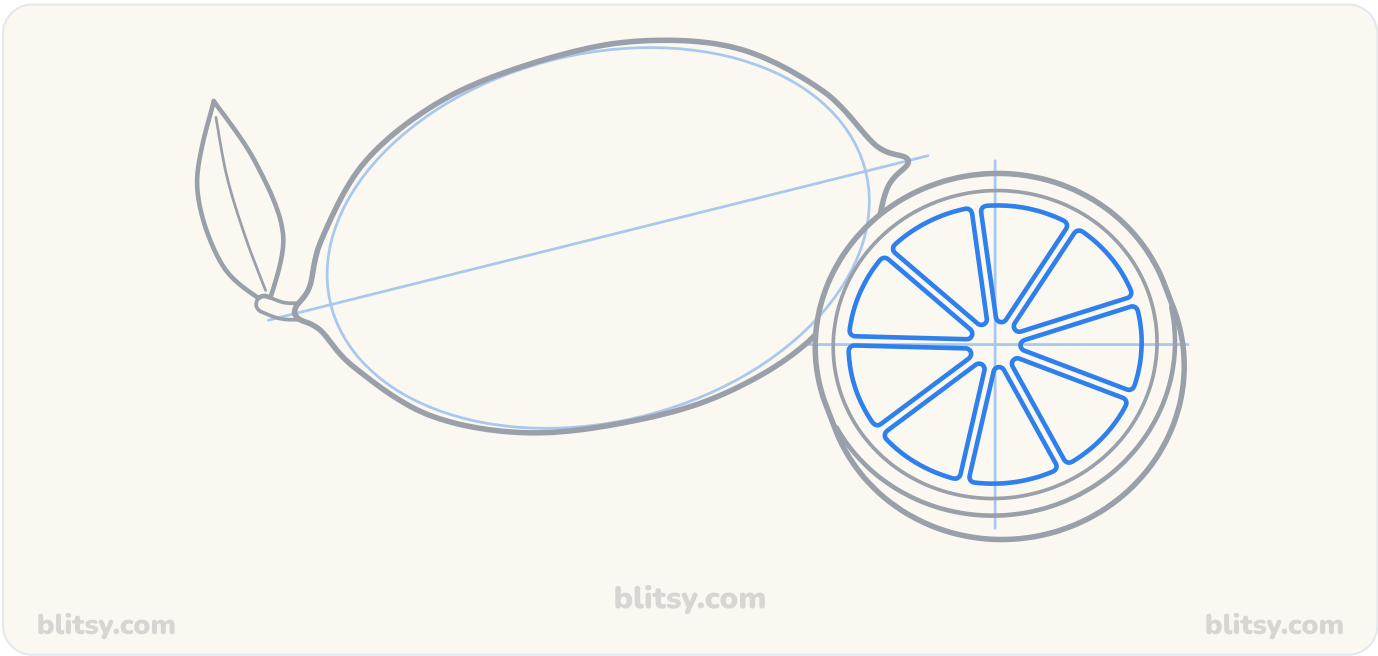
STEP 5 Draw the pale pith ring



Inside the slice, draw a second circle close to the edge. The narrow gap between the two lines will be the yellow rind. Everything inside this new circle is where the pith and the juicy wedges go.

💡 **Tip:** Turn your paper as you go. A circle is much easier to keep even when your hand is moving in its most comfortable direction.

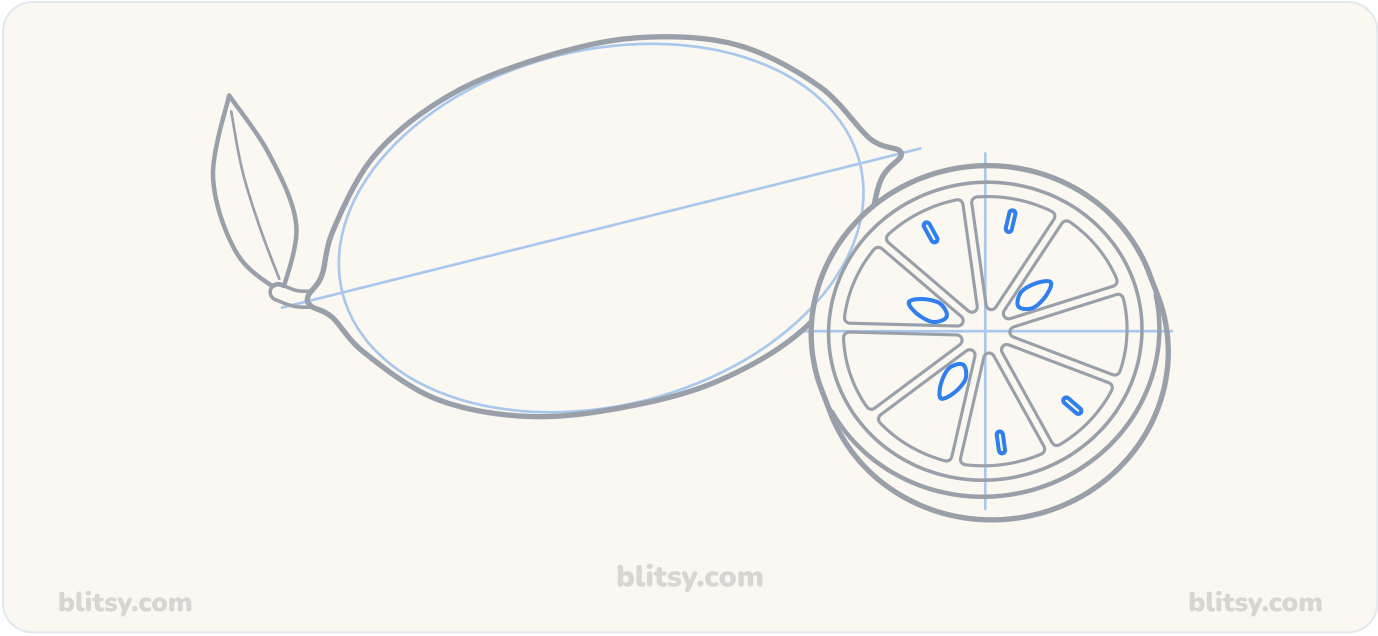
STEP 6 Fill the slice with wedge segments



Mark a small dot in the center. Around it, draw nine long, skinny wedges, like slices of a pie with rounded corners. When I teach this, I always point out the gaps: leave a thin space between every wedge and at the outer edge too, because that white space is the pith.

💡 **Tip:** Draw the top, bottom, left and right wedges first, then fit the others in between. Your spacing stays much more even that way.

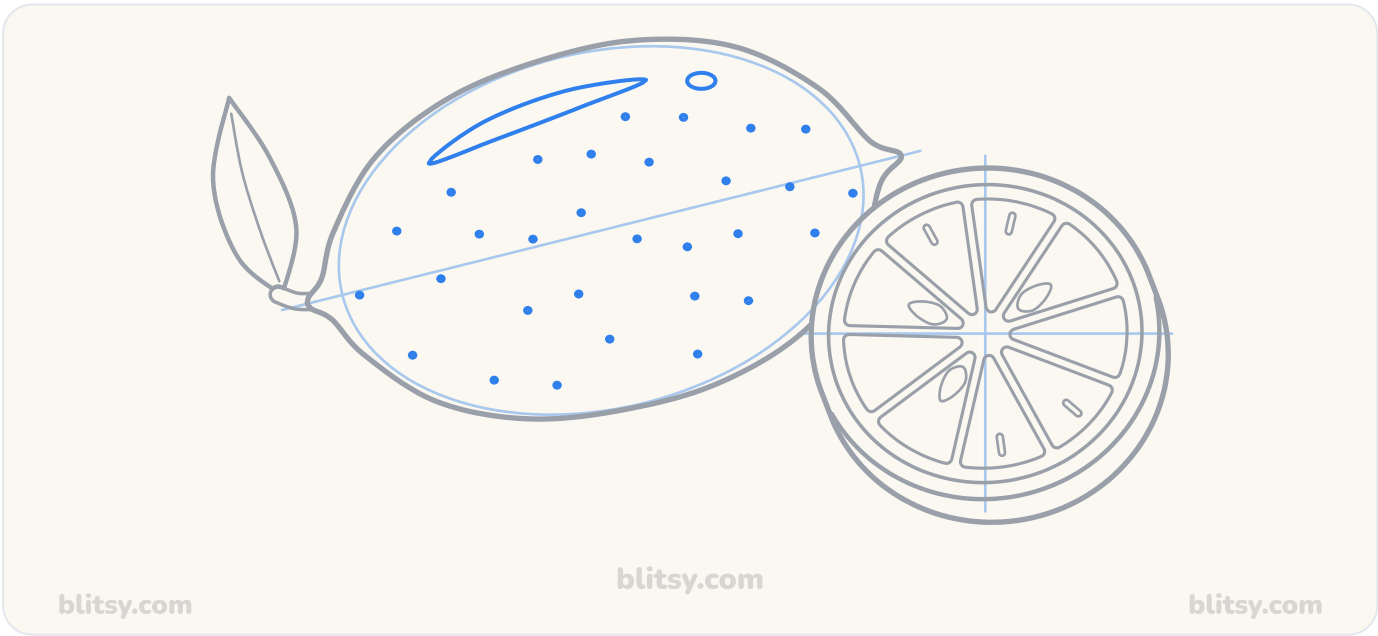
STEP 7 Add seeds and juicy marks



Pick two or three wedges and draw a small teardrop seed near the center, with the pointed end toward the middle. In some of the other wedges, add one short straight dash. Those little dashes look like the shine on juicy pulp.

💡 **Tip:** Three seeds is plenty. With a seed in every wedge, the slice starts to look like a watermelon.

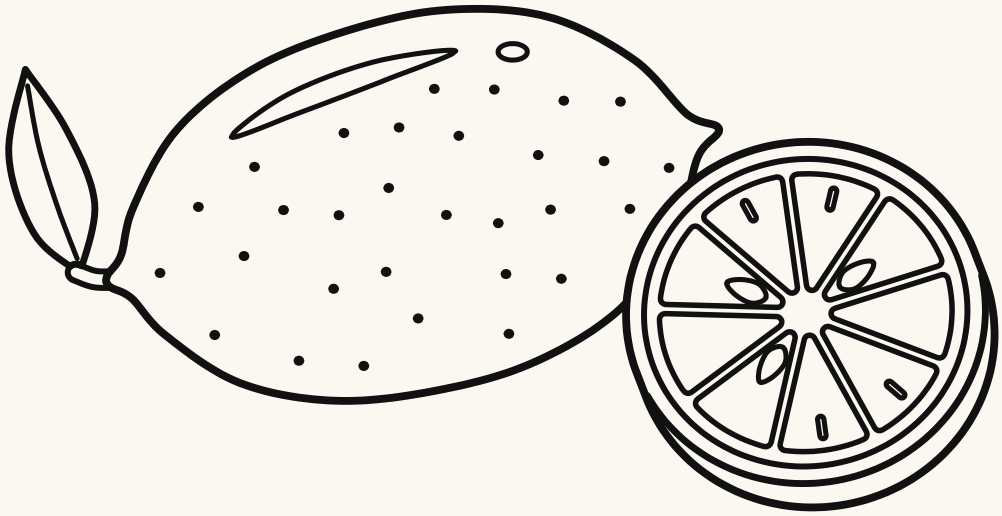
STEP 8 Dot the peel and add a shine



Sprinkle small dots over the whole lemon. Real lemon peel is covered in tiny pits, and these dots are what turn a smooth yellow shape into textured skin. Near the top, draw a long thin shine shape and one small oval beside it. I keep the dots away from the shine so it stays clean.

💡 **Tip:** Space the dots unevenly, some closer and some farther apart. Neat rows of dots look like a pattern on fabric.

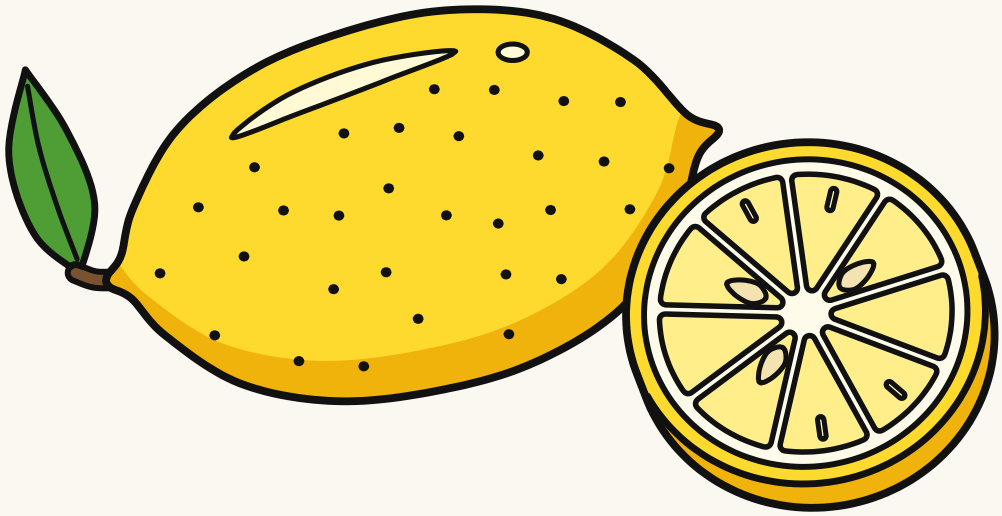
STEP 9 Ink the lines and erase the guides



Trace every keeper line with a black marker: the lemon, the stem and leaf, the slice, the wedges, the seeds and the dots. Give the ink a minute to dry. Then erase all of the oval, the circle and the cross lines.

💡 **Tip:** Ink the big outlines first and the dots last, so your hand doesn't drag through wet marker.

STEP 10 Color your lemons



Color the peel and the rind ring yellow. Add golden yellow along the bottom of the whole lemon and on the thin band under the slice; that shading gives both of them weight. Fill the wedges with a light yellow, leave the pith and the shine white, then color the leaf green and the stem brown.

💡 **Tip:** Color the light yellow wedges with soft pressure. Pressing hard makes them as strong as the peel, and the slice loses its fresh look.