How to Draw a Snowflake

12 easy steps for beginners



What you'll need

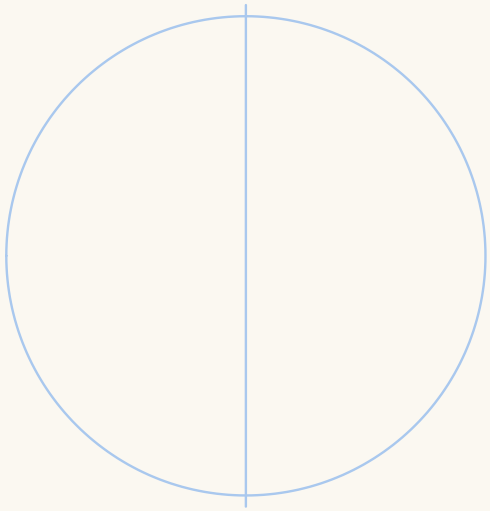
- A pencil
- A ruler
- An eraser
- A black marker
- Colored pencils
- Plain paper

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 →

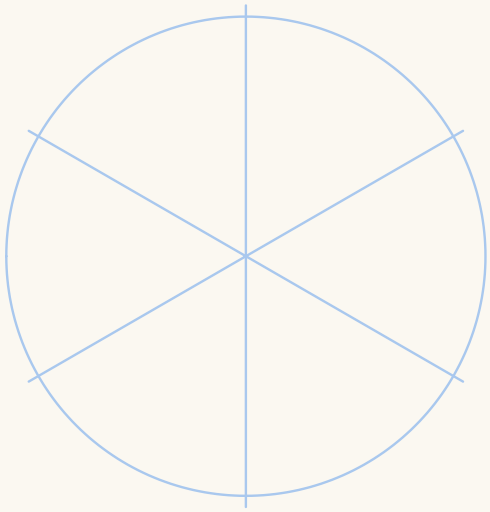
STEP 1 Draw a guide circle and one straight line



Draw a big light circle in the middle of your paper. It sets how far each arm will reach, so all six end up the same length. Then rule one straight line from top to bottom right through the center, running a little past the circle on both ends.

💡 **Tip:** Trace around a cup or a roll of tape if your freehand circles come out lumpy.

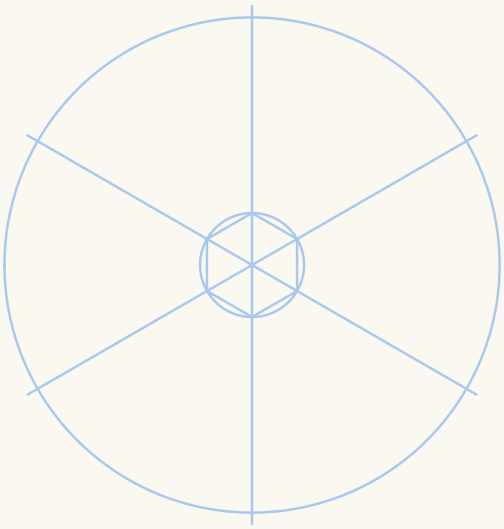
STEP 2 Add two more lines, 60 degrees apart



Now rule two more lines through the same center point, slanting so all three lines split the circle into six equal slices, like a pizza cut three times. Each line sits 60 degrees from its neighbors. Snowflakes grow six arms because ice crystals have six sides, and these lines show exactly where the arms go.

💡 **Tip:** Check the slices by eye: if one looks fatter than the others, nudge that line before you go on.

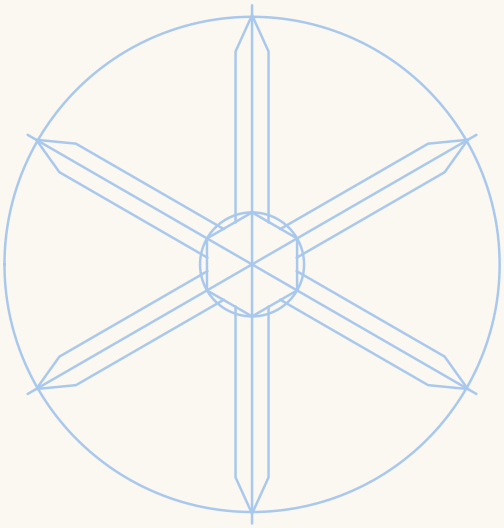
STEP 3 Draw a small hexagon in the center



Around the center point, draw a small circle about one fifth as wide as the big one. Inside it, connect the six spots where the guide lines cross the little circle with straight lines. You get a hexagon whose corners point along the guides, which is where the arms will grow from.

💡 **Tip:** Keep the hexagon small. A big middle squeezes the arms and makes the flake look like a wheel.

STEP 4 Sketch six light arm strips



Along every guide line, draw a narrow strip from the hexagon out to the big circle, ending in a point. Keep these light, since only parts of them stay. I treat each strip as two parallel lines hugging the guide, about a finger width apart, and I draw all six at the same width.

💡 **Tip:** Turn the paper as you go so you are always drawing the strip straight up, away from you.

STEP 5 Add the big V branches



Mark a dot on each arm a bit less than halfway out. From each dot, draw two tapered branches angling outward, one on each side, so each arm gets a V. Each branch runs parallel to the next arm over, which is why the flake looks so tidy.

💡 **Tip:** Draw the same branch on all six arms before starting the other side. Repeating one move six times keeps them even.

STEP 6 Add small V branches near the ends



Further out, about two thirds of the way along each arm, add a second, smaller pair of branches at the same angle. These should be roughly half as long as the first ones. Small ones near the tip and big ones near the middle is the pattern that makes the arm look like a little frosted tree.

💡 **Tip:** If you run out of patience, skip this pair. A flake with one V per arm still reads fine.

STEP 7 Give every arm a diamond tip



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At the end of each arm, draw a diamond shape that is a bit wider than the arm itself, with its front point touching the big guide circle. The diamond gives the snowflake its crisp, crystal look. Only draw the edges that stick out past the arm strip.

💡 **Tip:** All six diamond points should land right on the guide circle. That is how you know the arms are equal.

STEP 8 Trace the arms and the center



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Now firm up the arm strips, but only the parts between the branches, so each arm becomes one smooth outline that flows into its spikes. Do the same with the hexagon edges between the arms. Most beginners trace the whole strip and end up with lines cutting across the bottom of every branch, so stop wherever a branch begins.

💡 **Tip:** Press harder on this pass so you can tell the keeper lines apart from the guides.

STEP 9 Draw the inner pattern



Inside the hexagon, draw a second, slightly smaller hexagon and a small six-pointed star in the middle. Then draw a long thin diamond down every arm, a slim one inside each big branch and a tiny diamond inside each tip. These get the dark blue later and make the flake look like carved ice.

💡 **Tip:** Make the inner shapes thin. Fat ones swallow the light blue and the arms turn muddy.

STEP 10 Add two tiny snowflakes and sparkles



Off to the sides, draw two small snowflakes the same way in miniature: a circle, three crossing lines, six arms with one V each and a small hexagon center. Tilt them slightly so they look like they are drifting. Then add a handful of four-point sparkles in the empty corners, a couple bigger and the rest small.

💡 **Tip:** Keep the tiny flakes simple. They are there for company, not to compete with the big one.

STEP 11 Ink the outlines and erase the guides



Go over every keeper line with a black marker. I ink the big flake first, one arm at a time, rotating the paper, then the inner pattern with a lighter touch. After the ink dries, erase the circle, the three guide lines and the leftover strip lines until only the clean crystal remains.

💡 **Tip:** Wait a full minute before erasing. Marker smudges are the hardest thing to fix on a white snowflake.

STEP 12 Color it icy blue



Fill the big snowflake and the two small ones with light blue, keeping your strokes soft so the ice looks pale. Use sky blue for the hexagon ring, dark blue for the center star, the arm diamonds and the tip diamonds, and medium blue for the tiny flakes' centers. Light yellow sparkles finish it off.

💡 **Tip:** Leave a few thin white gaps in the light blue. They look like glints of light on real ice.