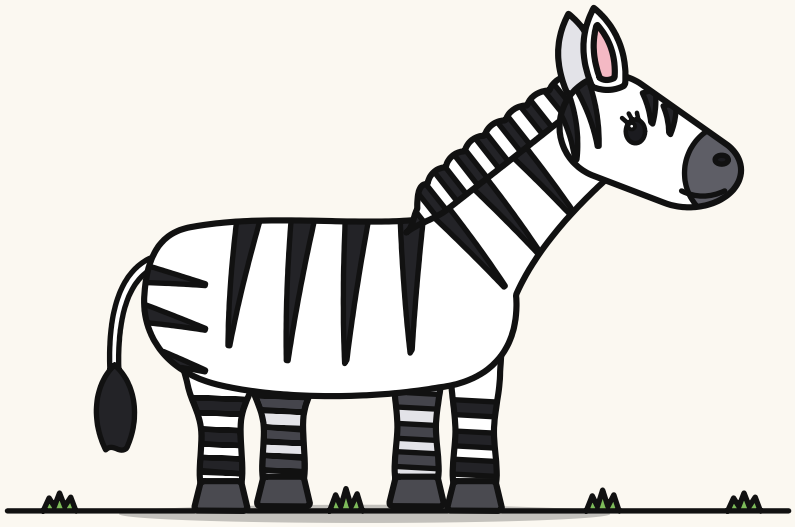
How to Draw a Zebra

12 easy steps for beginners



What you'll need

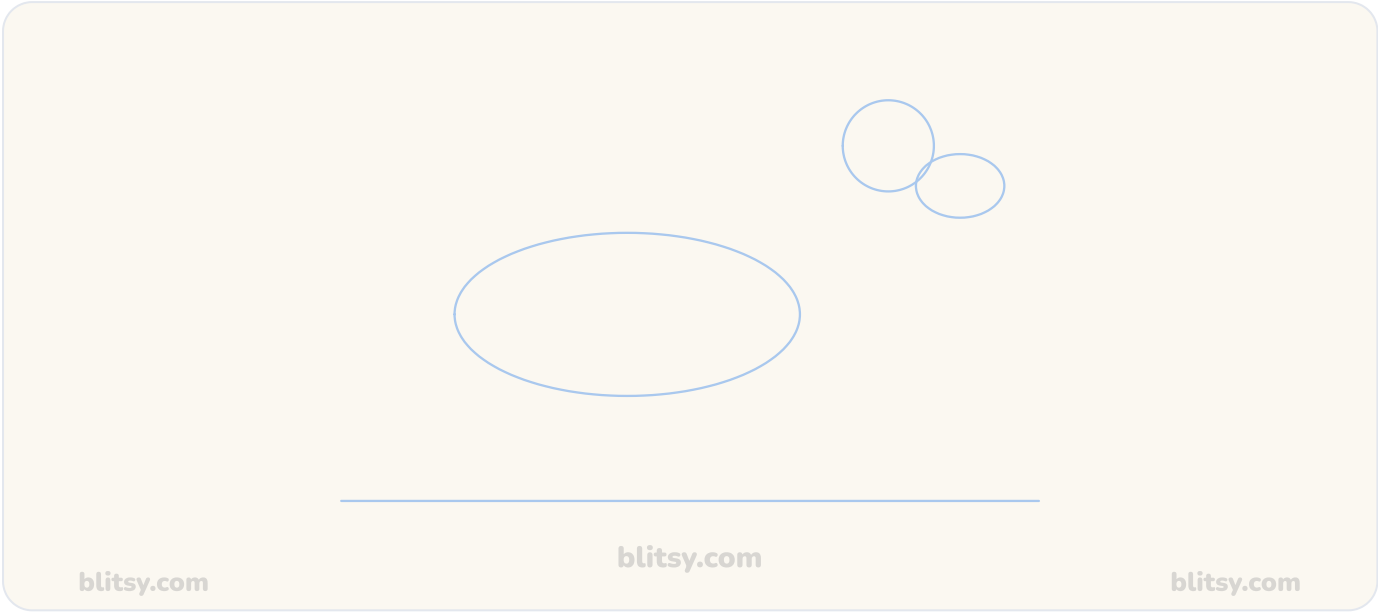
- A pencil
- An eraser
- A black marker
- Gray crayons plus pink and green
- Plain paper

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 →

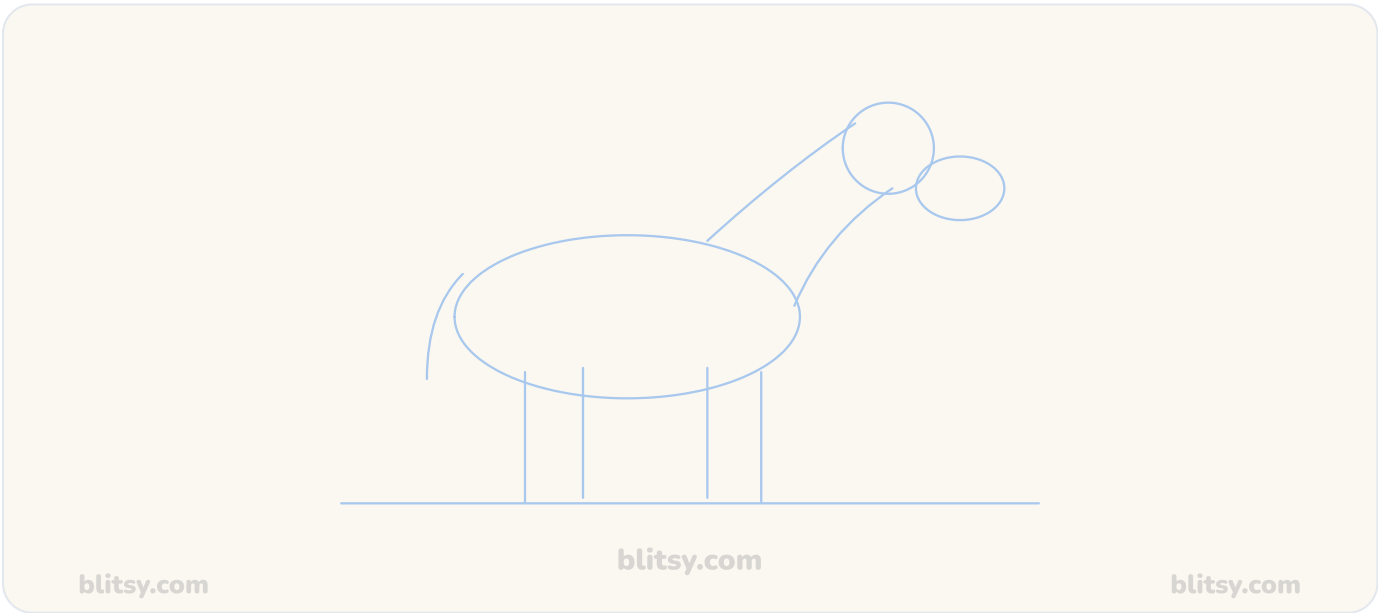
STEP 1 Sketch the body oval and the head circles



Draw a light ground line near the bottom of the page. Above it, sketch a long, wide oval for the body, a bit left of the middle. Up and to the right, add a circle for the head, then a smaller oval for the snout that overlaps the lower right of that circle.

💡 **Tip:** Leave a gap of about one head width between the oval and the head circle. That gap becomes the neck.

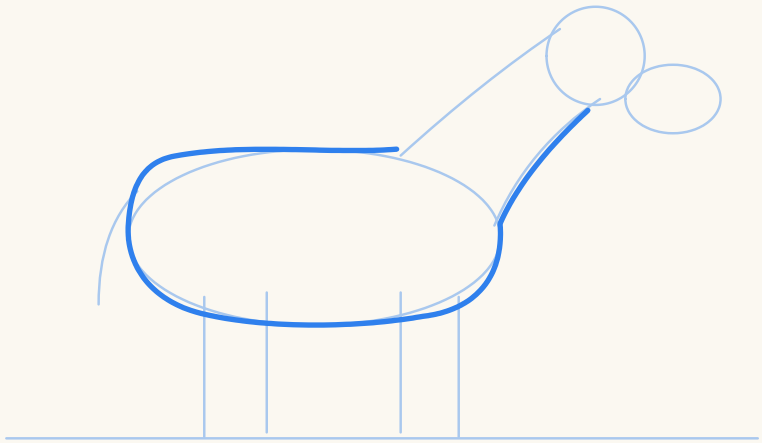
STEP 2 Add guide lines for neck and legs



Join the body to the head with two curved lines: one from the top of the oval to the back of the head, and one from the chest to the bottom of the snout. Drop four straight lines from the body to the ground for the legs, two near the front and two near the back. A short curve hanging off the rear is the tail.

💡 **Tip:** Keep the two front leg lines close together and the two back ones close together. Spread evenly, they look like a table.

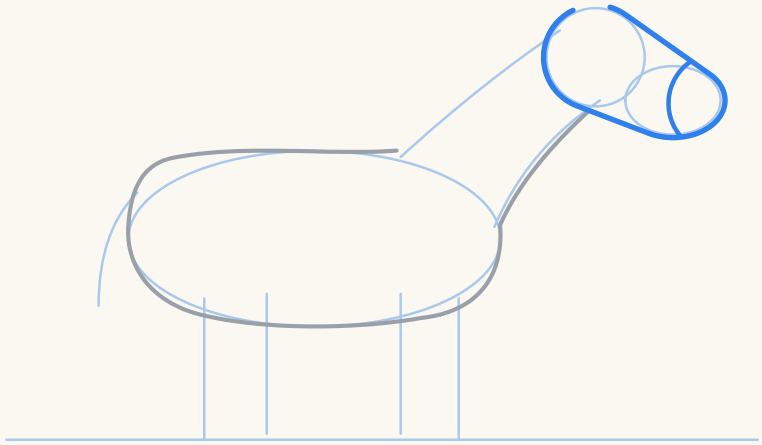
STEP 3 Outline the round body and thick neck



Now trace one smooth, firm line around the oval and up the neck. Let the back dip just a little behind the shoulders, and let the chest bulge out at the front. The neck should be thick where it meets the body and narrower near the head.

💡 **Tip:** A cartoon zebra looks friendlier when it's a little chubby, so don't slim the belly.

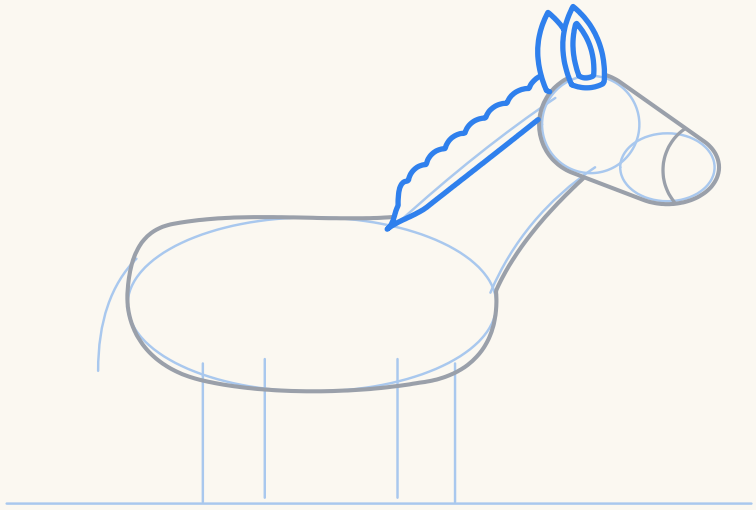
STEP 4 Draw the big head and dark muzzle



Wrap a line around the head circle and the snout oval so they become one rounded shape, a bit like a peanut. Then draw a curve across the front of the snout. Everything in front of that curve becomes the dark muzzle later.

💡 **Tip:** I make the head bigger than a real zebra's on purpose. Big heads read as cute.

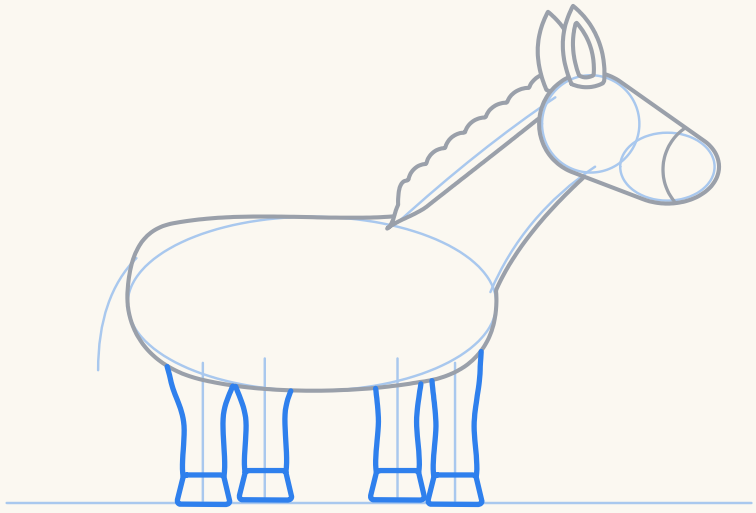
STEP 5 Add pointed ears and an upright mane



Put two leaf-shaped ears on top of the head, one in front and one peeking out behind it, with a smaller leaf inside the front ear. Then draw the mane along the top of the neck. A zebra's mane stands straight up like a brush, so give it a short, bumpy top edge instead of long hair falling down.

💡 **Tip:** If your mane flops over the neck like a horse's, it stops looking like a zebra. Keep it short and standing.

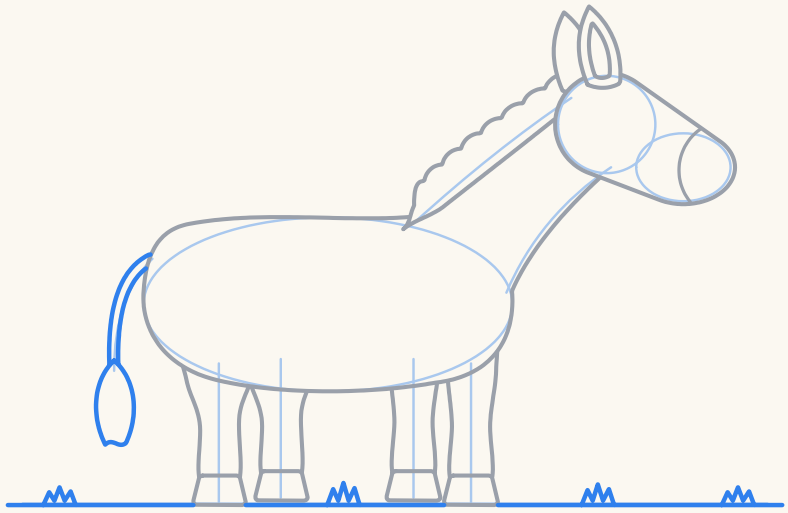
STEP 6 Draw four legs with hooves



Turn the two nearest guide lines into sturdy legs, each about as wide as a thumb on your paper, with a flat dark hoof at the bottom. The two far legs go just behind them. Only their lower parts show, because the near legs and the body cover the rest.

💡 **Tip:** Draw the near legs first. Then you can see exactly how much of each far leg is still visible.

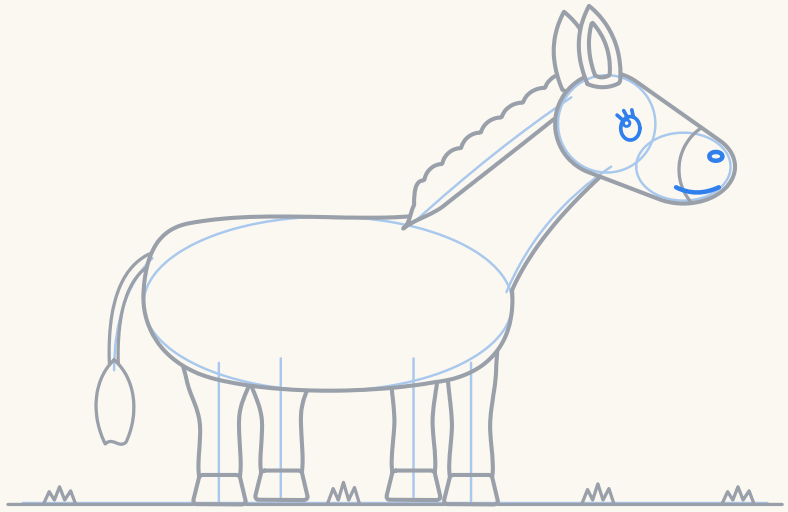
STEP 7 Give it a tail tuft and some grass



Follow the tail guide with two thin lines that hang down from the rump. At the end, add a teardrop-shaped tuft with a couple of small points at the bottom. Finish the scene with the ground line and a few little grass tufts.

💡 **Tip:** Keep the tail thin. A thick tail makes the tuft look small.

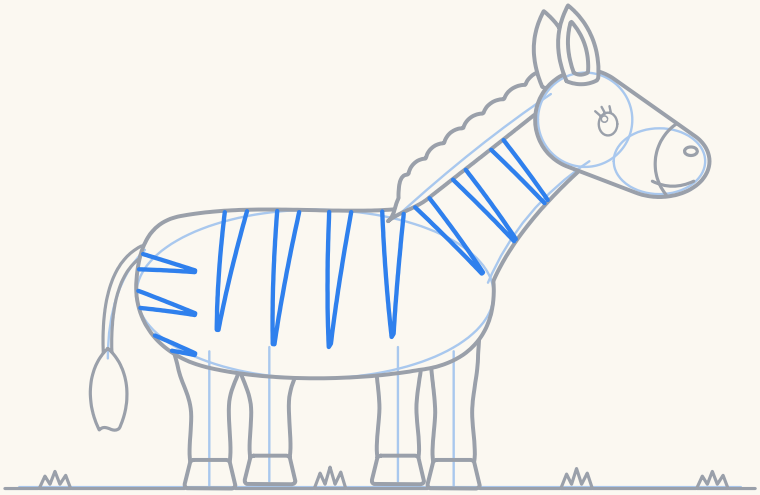
STEP 8 Draw the eye, nostril and smile



Place a small oval eye in the head circle, slightly above the middle and toward the front, with a tiny circle for the shine and three short lashes. On the muzzle, draw a small oval nostril near the top and a gentle smile curve along the bottom.

💡 **Tip:** Put the eye closer to the ears than to the nose. Halfway down the face makes it look like a cow.

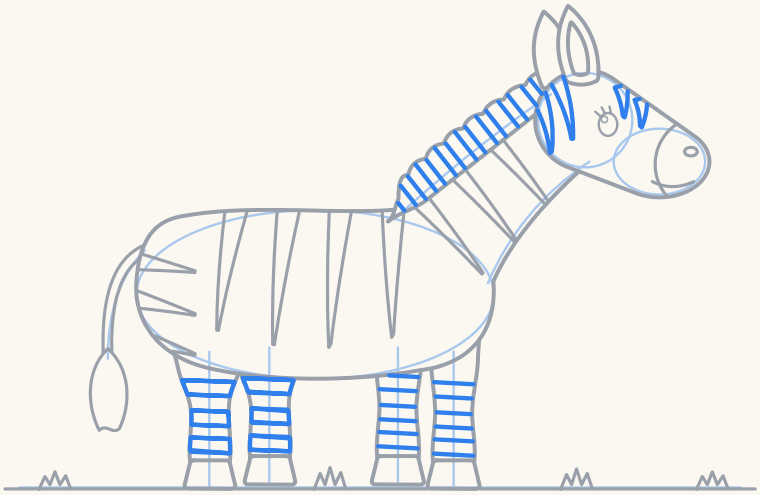
STEP 9 Draw stripes on the body and neck



This is the fun part. On the body, draw tall stripes that start wide at the back line and narrow to a point before they reach the belly. On the rump, the stripes run sideways from the back edge. On the neck, draw bands that go across from the mane toward the throat.

💡 **Tip:** Leave white gaps that are roughly as wide as the stripes. Too many thin stripes turn into gray mush once colored.

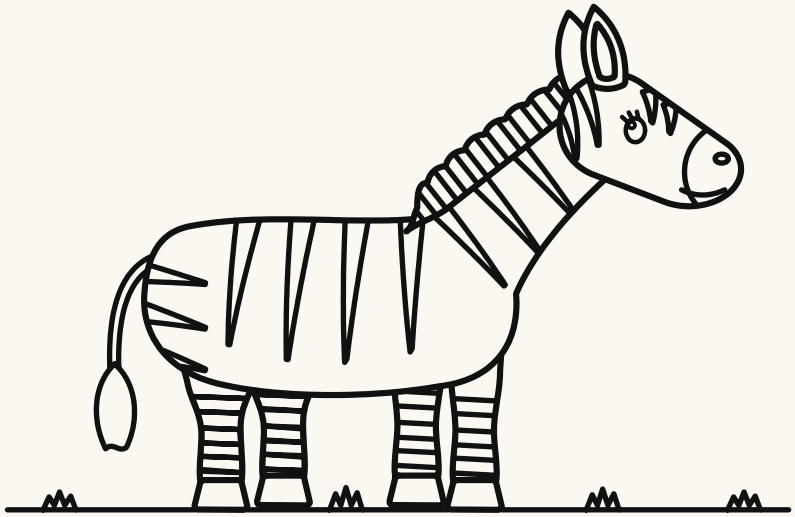
STEP 10 Stripe the legs, then the head and mane



Wrap three bands around each leg, running straight across. Add two stripes on the back of the head and two short ones on the nose bridge, keeping them away from the eye and the muzzle. Last, divide the mane into black and white sections with lines that cross it.

💡 **Tip:** Check that every stripe ends at an outline or comes to a point. Loose ends look like scribbles.

STEP 11 Ink the zebra and erase the guides

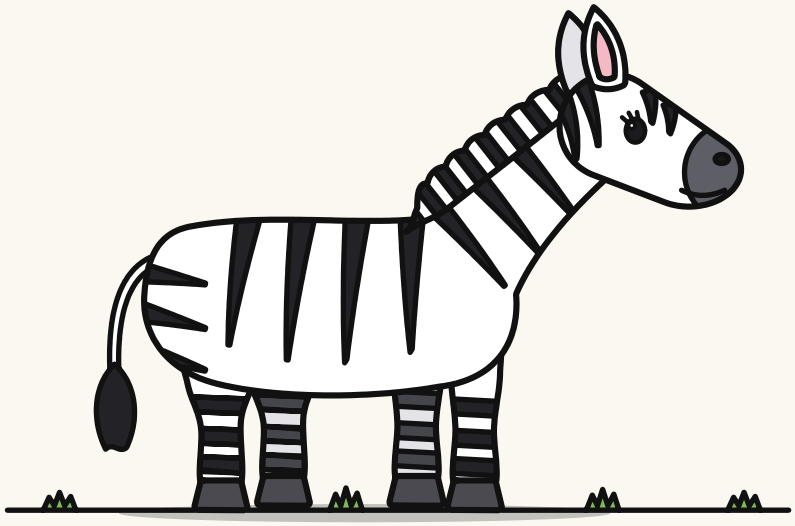


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Trace every keeper line with the black marker, stripes included. I go slowly around the stripe tips so they stay sharp. When the ink is completely dry, erase the oval, the circles and the stick lines.

💡 **Tip:** Rub the eraser in one direction only. Scrubbing back and forth can smear fresh marker.

STEP 12 Color your zebra



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Fill every stripe, the mane bands and the tail tuft with black. Leave the body and head white, and the near legs too. The muzzle and hooves get dark gray, and the two far legs and the far ear get light gray so they sit behind. Finish with pink inside the ear and green on the grass.

💡 **Tip:** Color the stripes first, then go back with a light gray only where you want shade. White paper does most of the work.