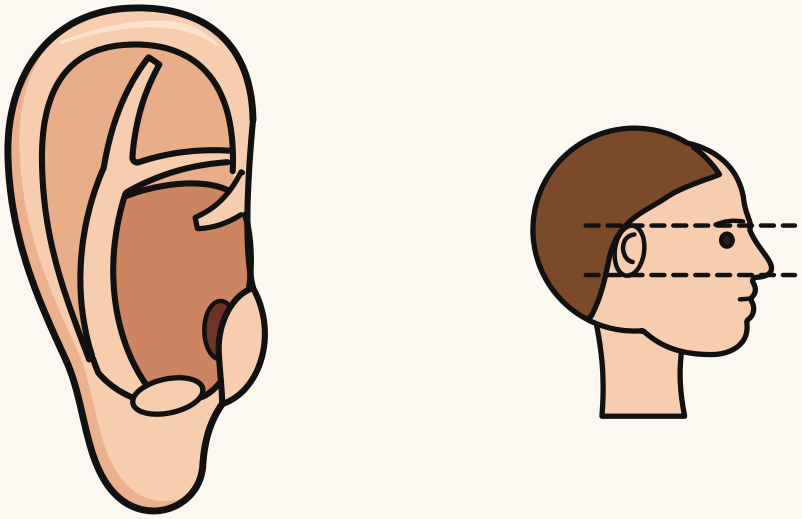
How to Draw an Ear

11 easy steps for beginners



What you'll need

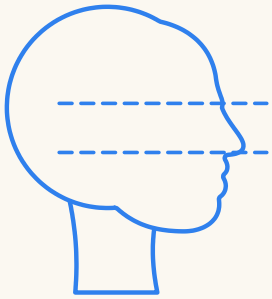
- A pencil
- An eraser
- A black fineliner
- Colored pencils
- White paper

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 small head with two lines

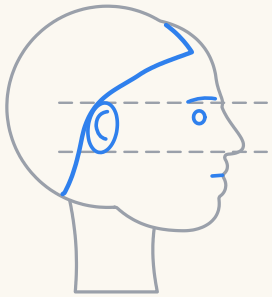


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Before the big ear, I always start with a tiny side view head on the right: a circle for the skull, a face line with a nose and chin, and a short neck. Then draw two dashed lines straight across, one at the eyebrow and one at the bottom of the nose. Those two lines are the whole secret of ear placement.

💡 **Tip:** Keep the two lines level with the paper's edge. A tilted line will tilt the ear with it.

STEP 2 Place a tiny ear between the lines

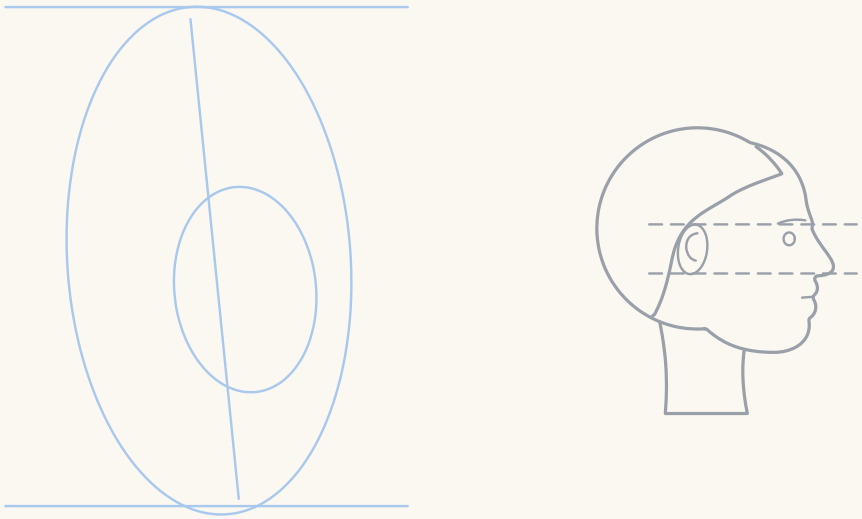


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The top of the ear lines up with the eyebrow and its bottom with the bottom of the nose. Sideways, it sits just behind the middle of the head, near the back of the jaw. Draw a small oval there with a little C inside, then add a hairline, an eye dot, a brow and a mouth line.

💡 **Tip:** Ears drawn too far forward make the face look squashed. If yours touches the cheek, slide it back.

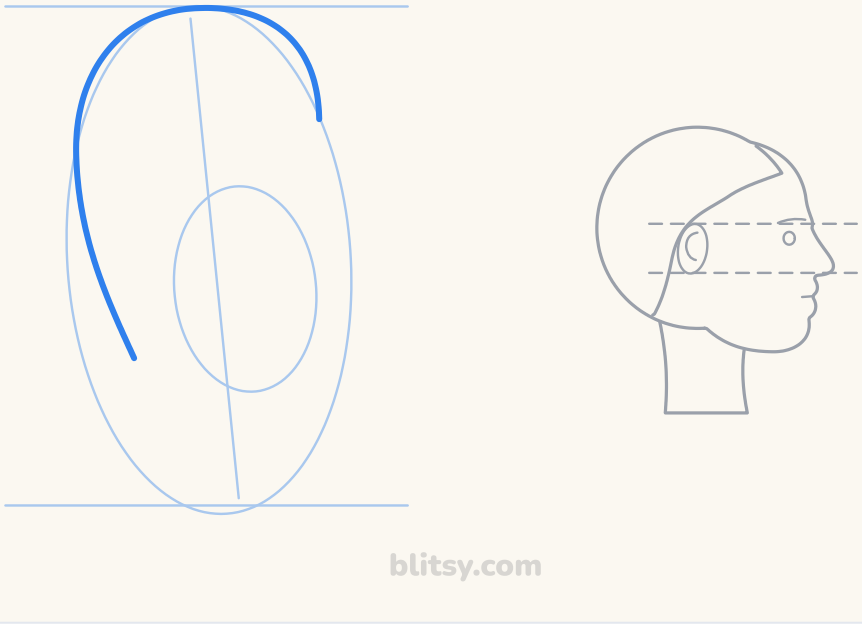
STEP 3 Sketch light guides for the big ear



On the left, draw two long level lines for the same brow and nose levels. Between them, sketch a tall oval that leans back a tiny bit at the top. Add a slanted line through the middle and a smaller oval in the lower front for the bowl.

💡 **Tip:** Make the big oval about twice as tall as it is wide. Wider than that and the ear starts to look like a seashell.

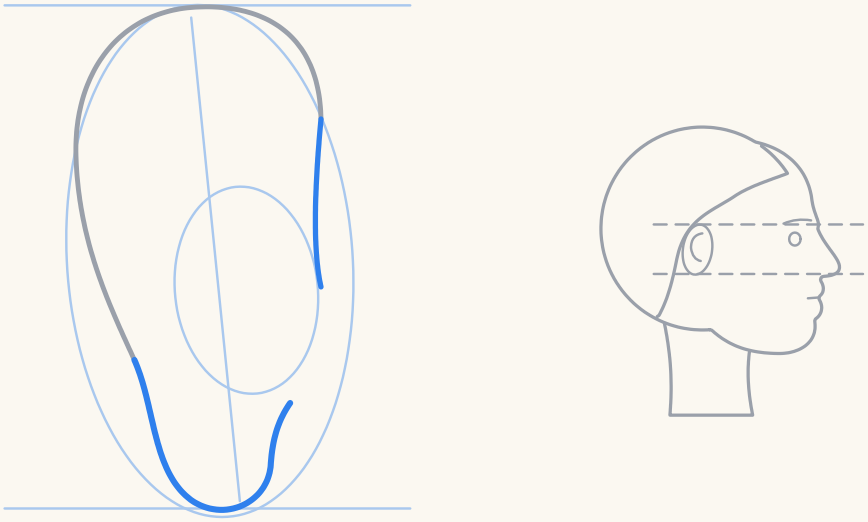
STEP 4 Draw the C-shaped outer rim



Start at the front, about a third of the way down, and sweep up over the top and down the back. This is the helix, the curled rim of the ear. It's widest across the top third, so let it bulge a little past the oval at the upper back.

💡 **Tip:** Pull the long back curve in one smooth arm movement.

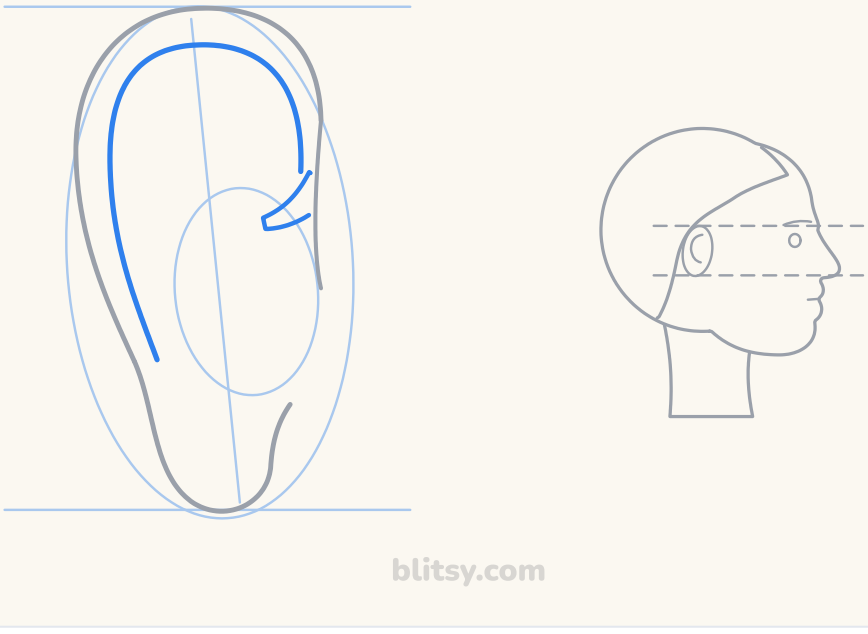
STEP 5 Add the earlobe and the front edge



Carry the back line down, let it narrow, then round it into a soft lobe that touches the lowest guide line. Curve back up on the front and stop a little above the lobe. Then draw a short front edge from the top of the rim down toward the middle, where the ear joins the head.

💡 **Tip:** The lobe is soft and fleshy, so give it a round bottom. A pointed lobe looks like an elf ear.

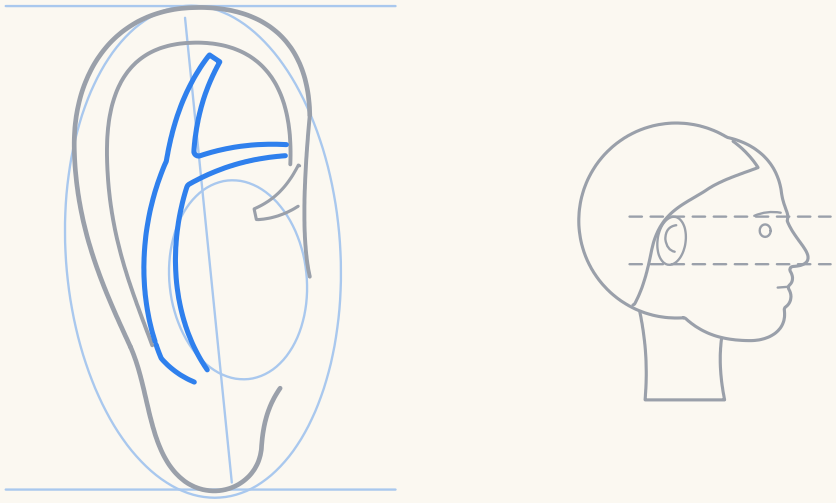
STEP 6 Draw the inner edge of the rim



Inside the outer line, draw a second curve that follows it from the front, over the top and down the back. That gap is the thickness of the rim. At the front, add a short tapered piece dipping into the middle of the ear: the root of the rim, where it starts inside the bowl.

💡 **Tip:** Leave the gap a bit wider at the top than down the back.

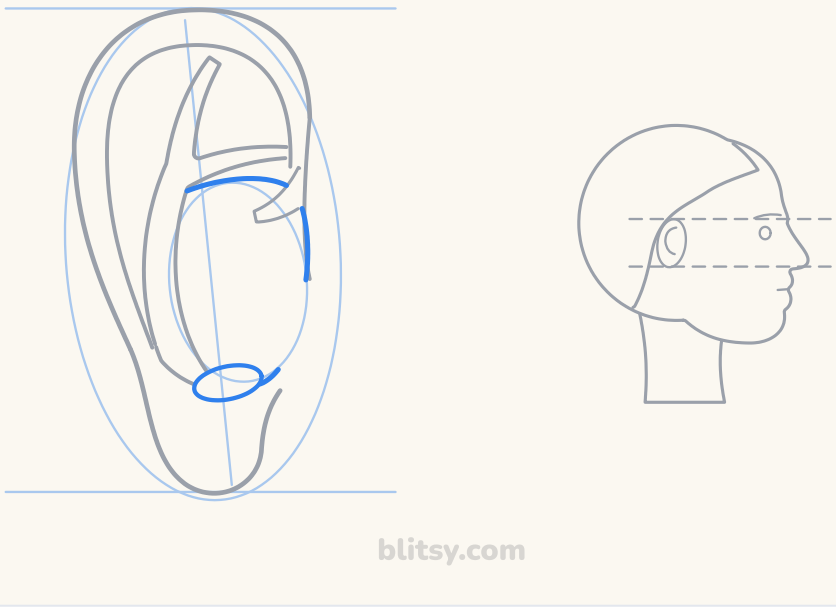
STEP 7 Draw the Y-shaped inner ridge



This ridge is the antihelix, and it's the part I see beginners leave out most. Start just above the lobe and draw a wide band running up the back, inside the rim. About level with the top of your bowl guide, split it into two arms: one goes up toward the top, one runs forward.

💡 **Tip:** Make the lower stem the thickest part and let both arms get thinner as they go. That taper sells the fold.

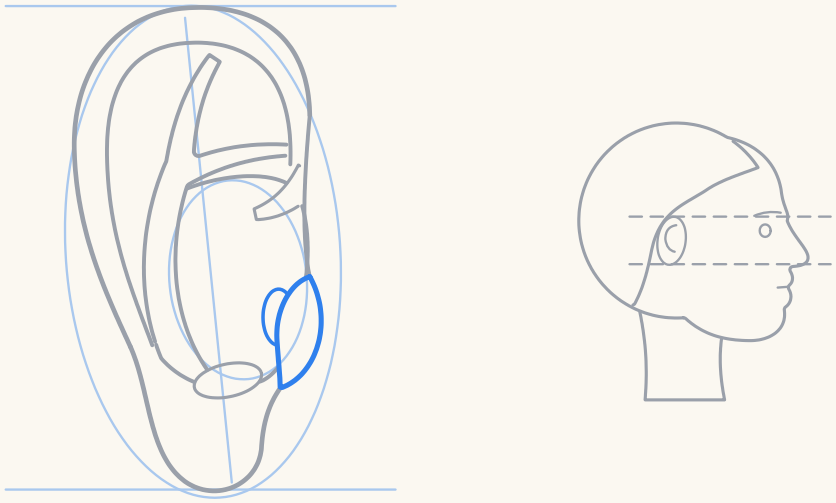
STEP 8 Shape the bowl and the small bump



Under the front arm of the Y, draw the curved top of the bowl, called the concha. The ridge already makes its back side. At the bottom of the bowl, just above the lobe, draw a small flat oval. That bump is the antitragus, and it closes the bowl from below.

💡 **Tip:** The bowl is the biggest dark area in the whole ear, so give it plenty of room. A tiny bowl makes the ear look flat.

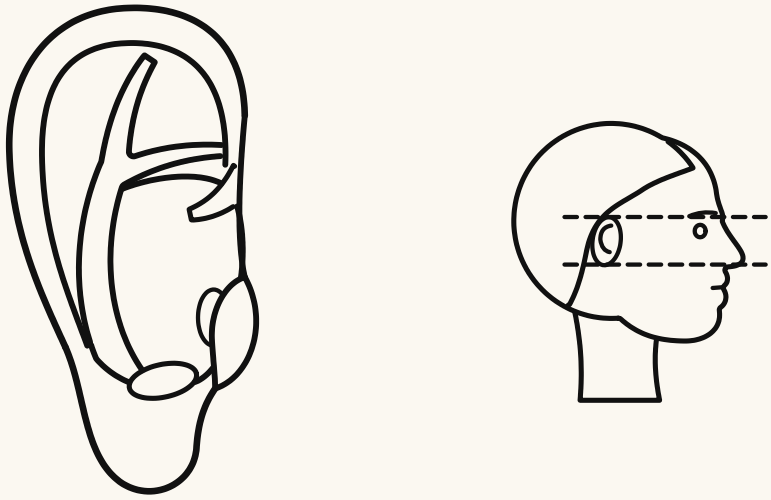
STEP 9 Add the tragus flap and the ear hole



On the front edge, across from the bump, draw a rounded flap that covers the front of the bowl. That's the tragus, the bit you press to block your ear. Just behind its inner edge, add a small dark opening for the ear hole, mostly hidden by the flap.

💡 **Tip:** Show only a sliver of the ear hole. If you draw the whole oval, the ear looks like it has a tunnel in it.

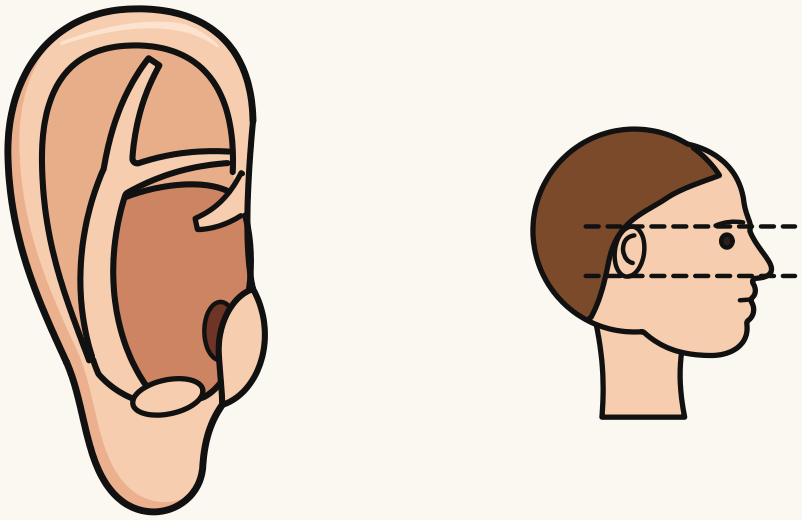
STEP 10 Ink the lines and erase the guides



Trace every keeper line with your fineliner. I ink the outer rim and lobe first, then the inner folds, and the small head last. Let the ink dry, then erase the guides. Keep the two dashed lines on the small head, because they're part of the lesson.

💡 **Tip:** Press a little harder on the outer edge than on the inner folds. Slightly thinner inside lines make the folds look softer.

STEP 11 Color the ear and the head



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Color all the skin peach: the whole ear plus the head and neck. Use light brown in the groove inside the rim and between the arms of the Y, and a deeper brown in the bowl, the deepest part. Dark brown goes in the ear hole. Add a tan shade along the back edge and under the lobe, and chocolate brown hair on the head.

💡 **Tip:** Leave a thin strip of the top rim lighter than the rest. That bit of highlight makes the rim look rounded.