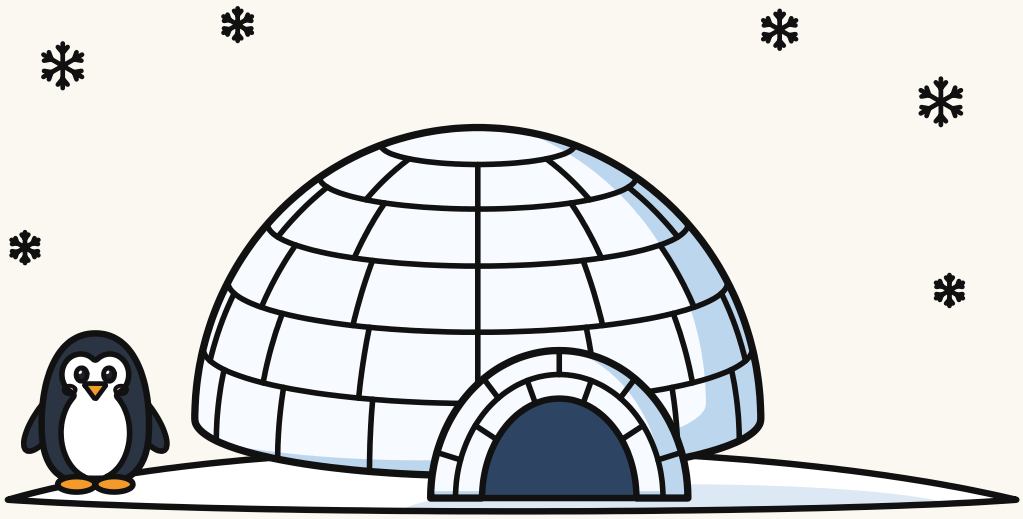
How to Draw an Igloo

11 easy steps for beginners



What you'll need

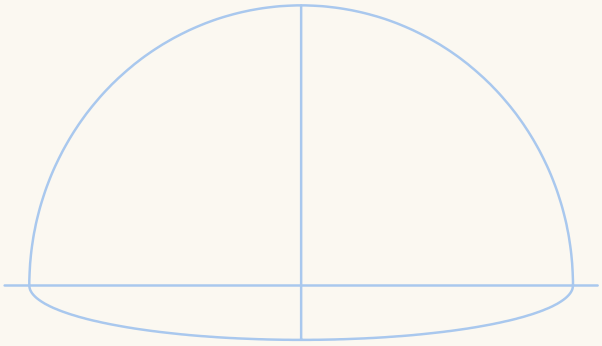
- A pencil
- An eraser
- A black marker or fineliner
- Colored pencils or crayons
- Plain paper

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 →

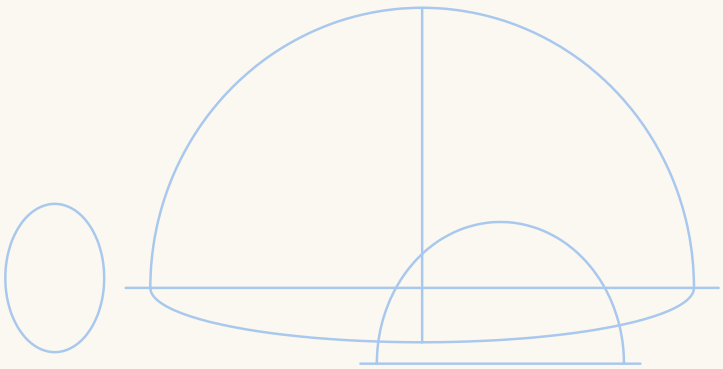
STEP 1 Draw a base line and a half-dome



I always start an igloo with a light flat line across the page, a bit below center. On top of it, sketch a big half circle, a little taller than half its width. Then add a shallow curve under the line that dips down like a smile, from one end of the dome to the other, and a straight line down the middle.

💡 **Tip:** That smile curve under the base is what makes the igloo look round instead of flat, so don't skip it.

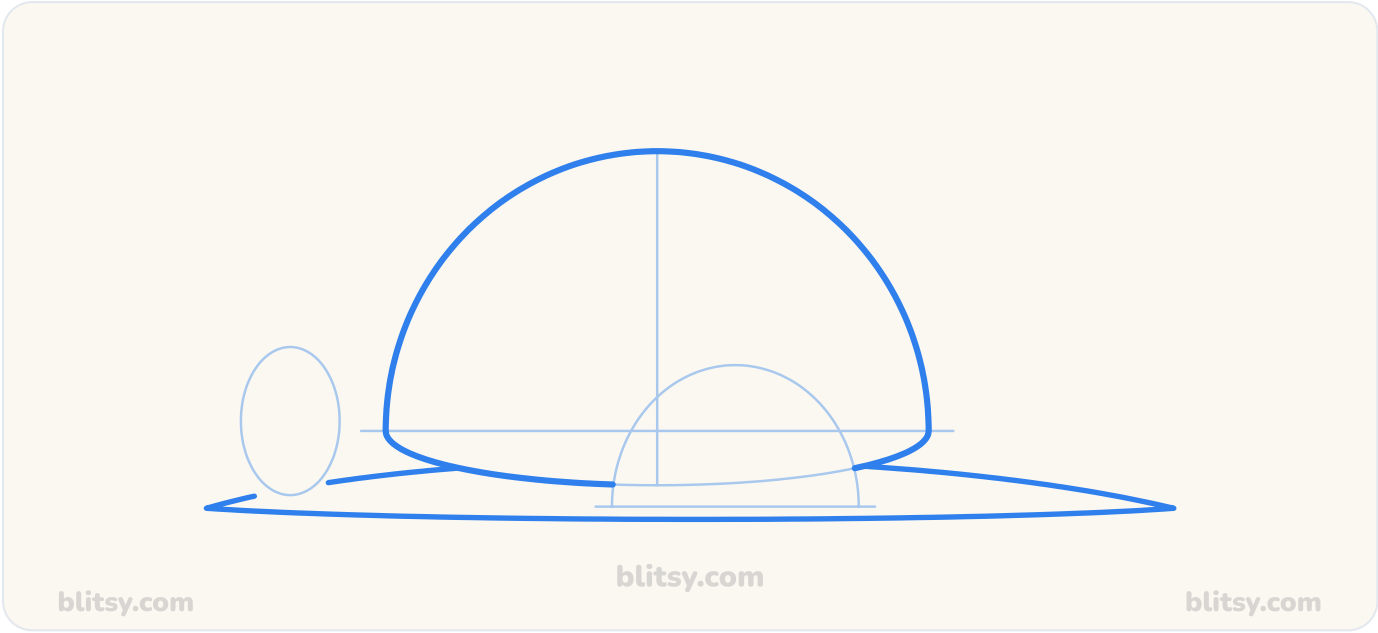
STEP 2 Sketch the tunnel and penguin guides



The tunnel sits in front of the dome, a little to the right of the middle line. Draw a smaller arch whose bottom sits lower than the dome's base, because it's closer to you. Close it with a short flat line. Far on the left, outside the dome, sketch a tall oval for the penguin.

💡 **Tip:** Make the tunnel arch about half as wide as the dome. Any wider and the igloo starts to look like a garage.

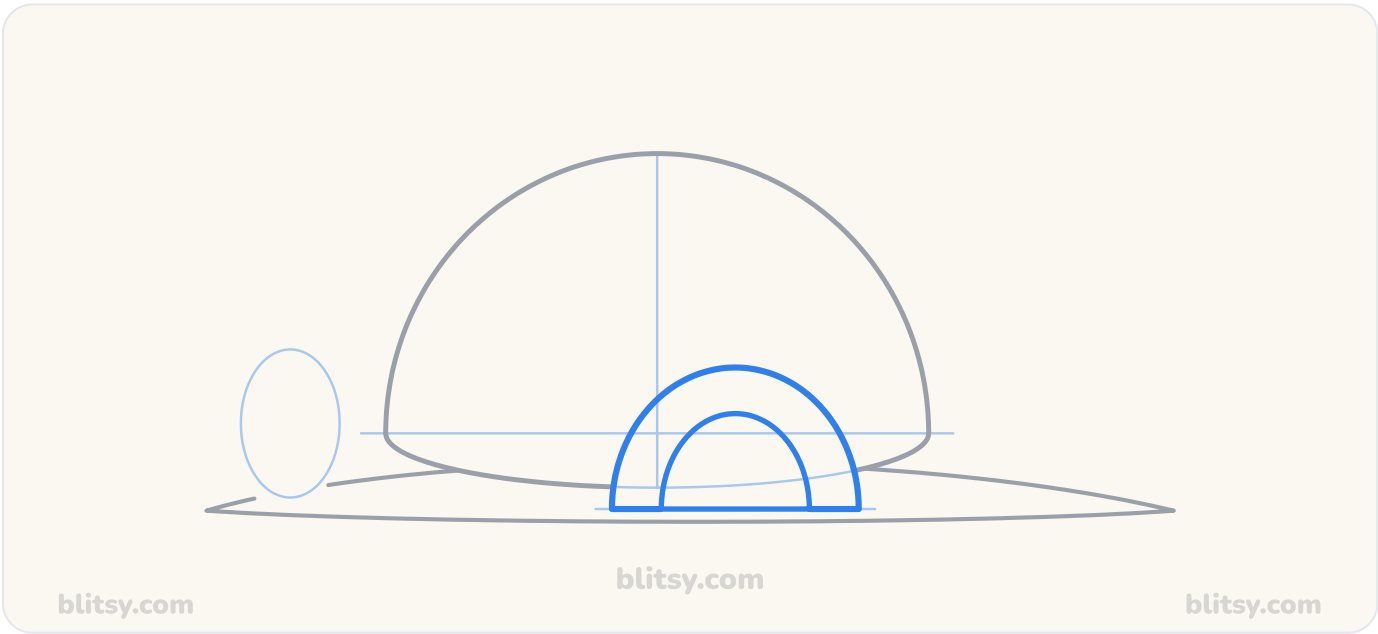
STEP 3 Outline the dome and the snowbank



Trace the half-dome with a firmer line, including the smile curve at the bottom, but stop where the tunnel will cover it. Now draw the snowbank: a long, low mound that starts beyond the penguin and ends past the right side of the igloo. I let its top edge rise gently under the dome and keep the bottom almost flat.

💡 **Tip:** Leave a gap in the snowbank line where the penguin's feet will stand.

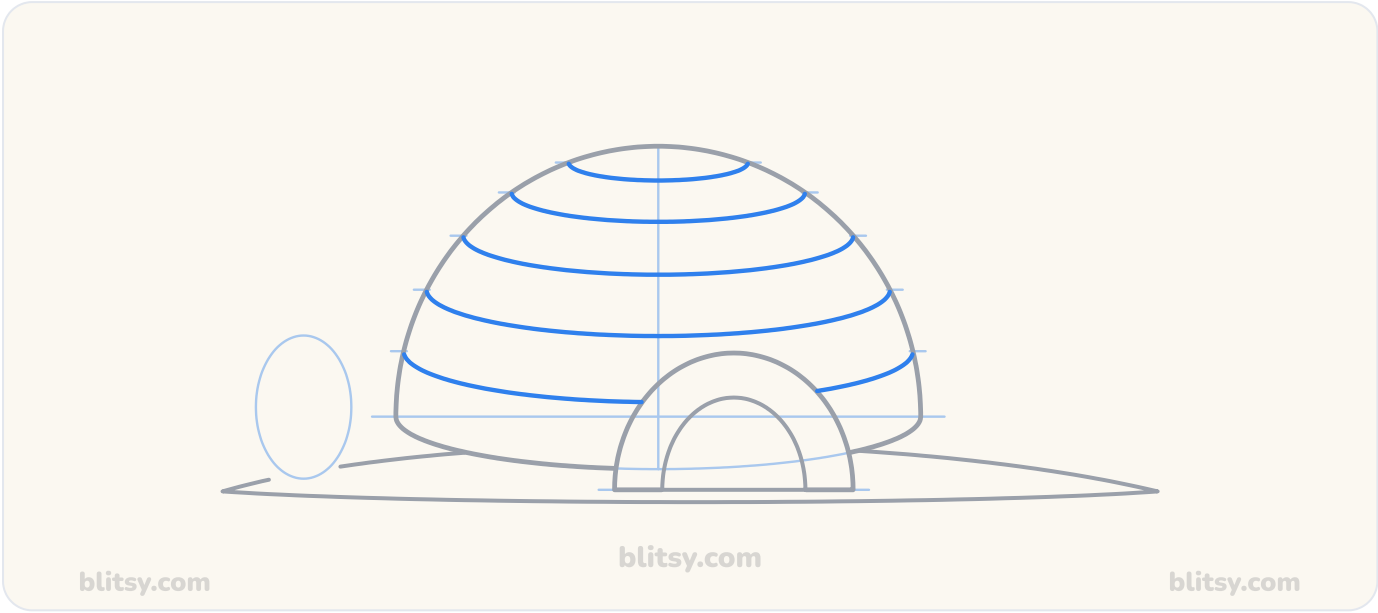
STEP 4 Draw the tunnel and the dark doorway



Go over the tunnel arch with a firm line and give it a flat bottom. Inside it, draw a second, smaller arch for the doorway. Leave a band of about a finger's width between the two arches on the sides, a little more at the top. That band is where the tunnel blocks go later.

💡 **Tip:** Keep both arches the same shape, just different sizes, so the band around the door stays even.

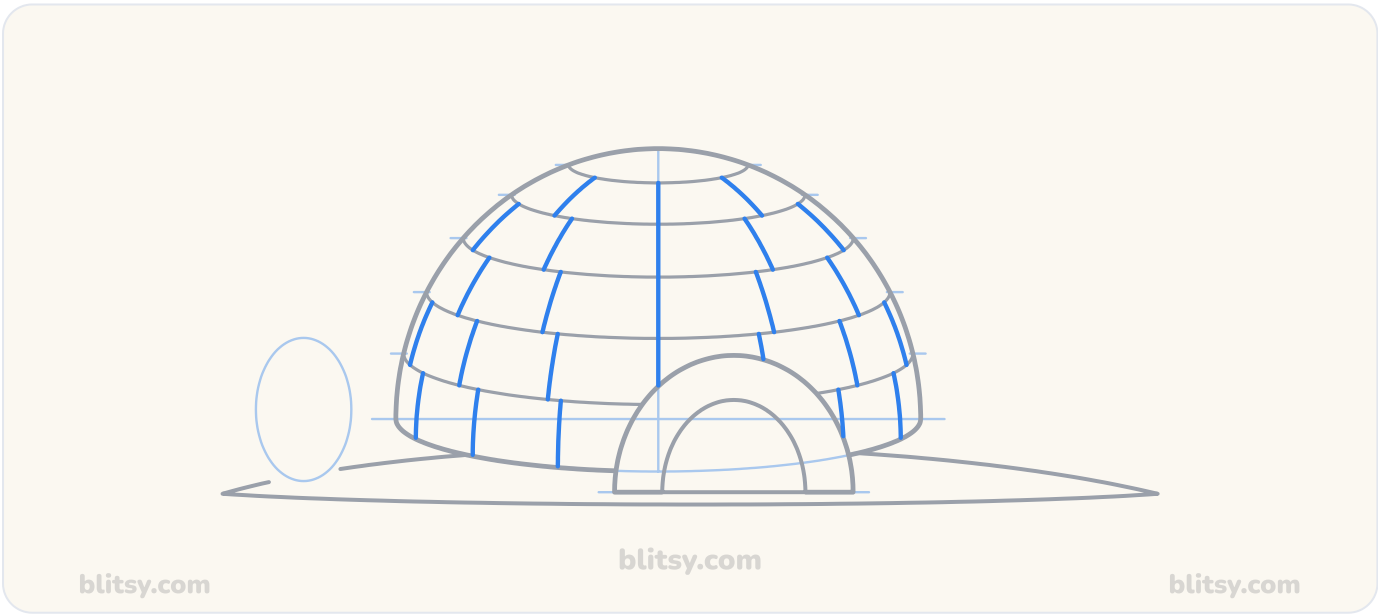
STEP 5 Curve the block rows



When I teach igloos, this is the step everyone remembers. Put five small tick marks up each side of the dome, with the gaps getting smaller as you go up. Connect each pair of ticks with a curve that dips down in the middle, just like the smile at the base. The low rows dip the most and the top row is a small, shallow oval cap.

💡 **Tip:** Never draw the rows as straight lines. Straight rows turn the dome into a flat sticker.

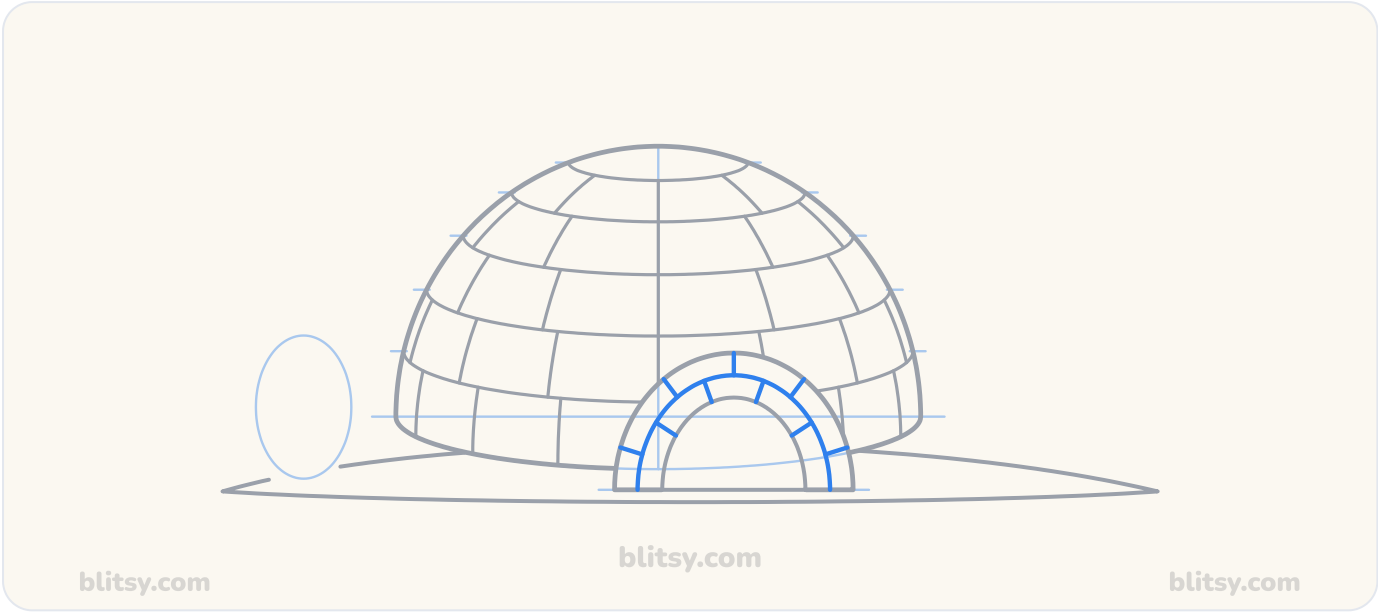
STEP 6 Add staggered joints between the blocks



Now split each row into blocks with short lines. They shouldn't stand straight up. Lean each one so it points toward the top of the dome, the same way lines of longitude run on a globe. Shift the joints in each row so they land between the joints of the row below, like bricks in a wall. Use fewer blocks as the rows get shorter.

💡 **Tip:** I start each row with the joint nearest the middle line, then work outward. It keeps the spacing even on both sides.

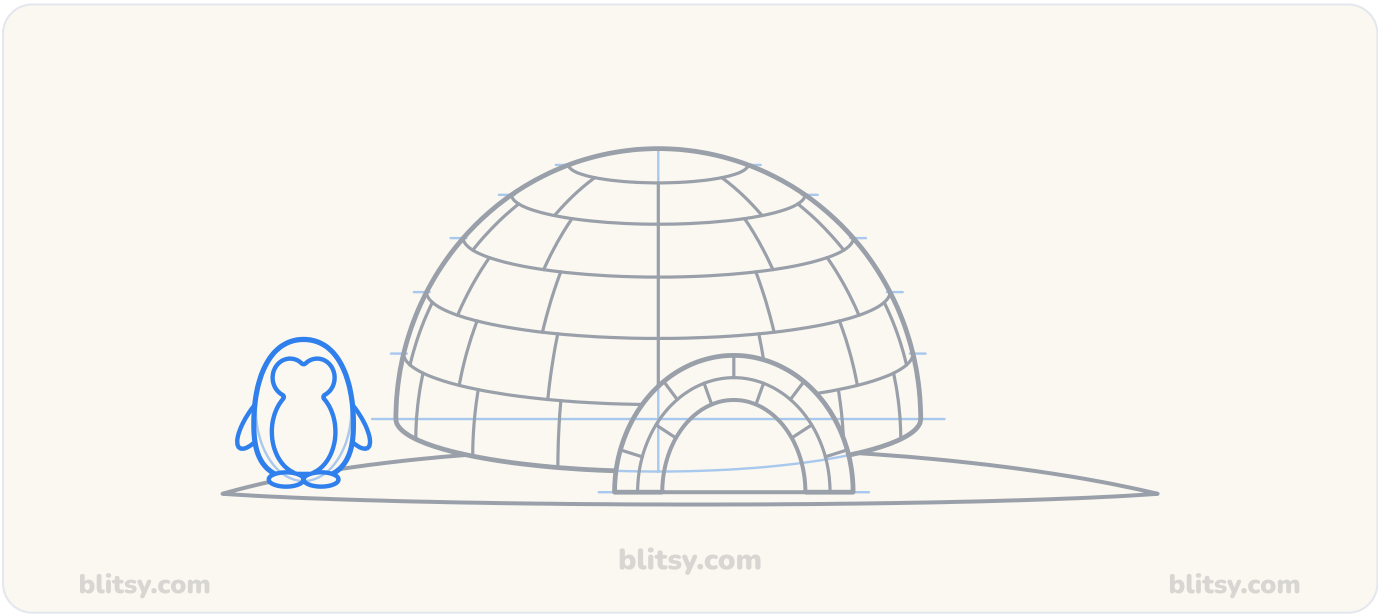
STEP 7 Add the blocks around the door



Inside the band around the doorway, draw one more arch halfway between the two you have. That gives you two curved rows. Split them into blocks with short lines that point toward the middle of the doorway, like the spokes of a wheel. Shift the outer row's joints so they sit between the inner ones.

💡 **Tip:** Four or five blocks per row is plenty. Tiny blocks around the door get messy fast.

STEP 8 Draw a little penguin friend



Inside the oval, draw an egg shape for the body, rounder at the bottom. Add a flipper on each side, slanting outward like the penguin is about to wave. Inside the body, draw the white belly: a big oval below, with two round bumps on top that make a heart-shaped face patch. Two flat ovals at the bottom are the feet.

💡 **Tip:** Most beginners draw the penguin too big. Keep it about half the igloo's height, or it won't look like it fits through the door.

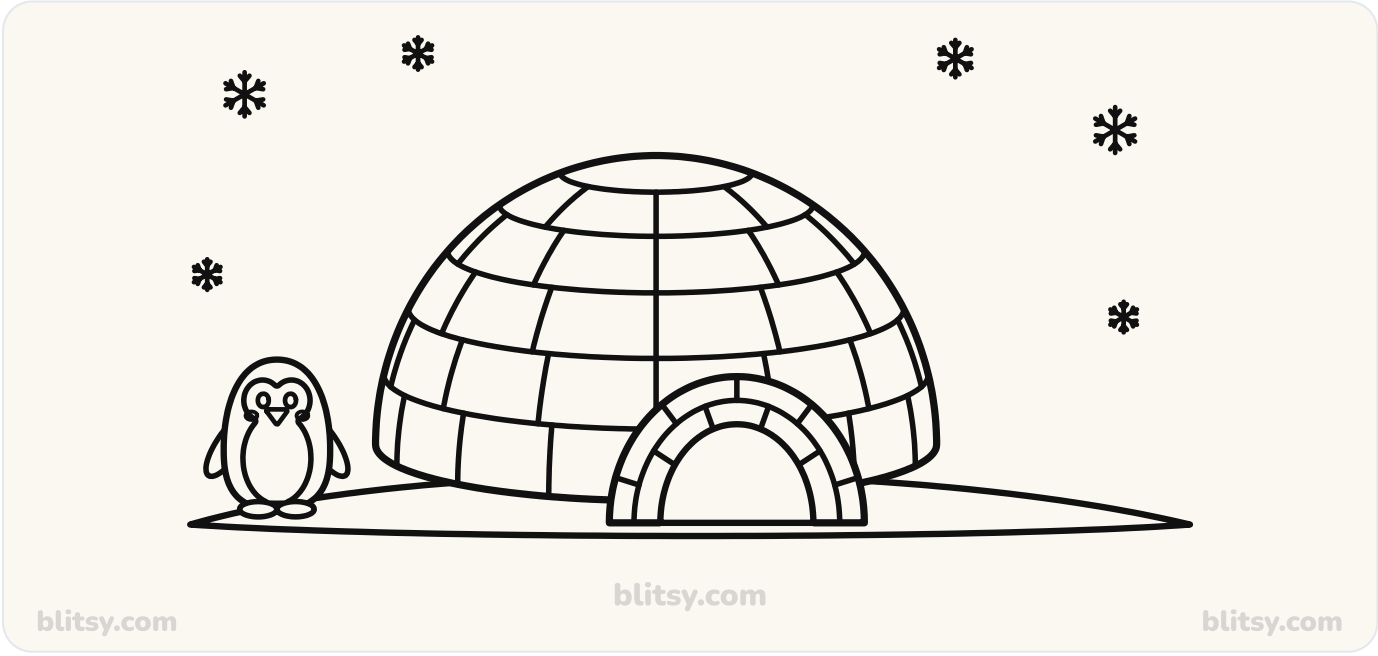
STEP 9 Give the penguin a face and add snowflakes



Put two oval eyes on the face patch, one in each bump, and a small triangle beak between them pointing down. Tiny ovals on the cheeks make it look friendly. Then scatter a few snowflakes in the sky: three crossing lines make six arms, and a little V on each arm turns a star into a snowflake.

💡 **Tip:** Make the snowflakes different sizes and keep them away from the dome's outline so the sky doesn't feel crowded.

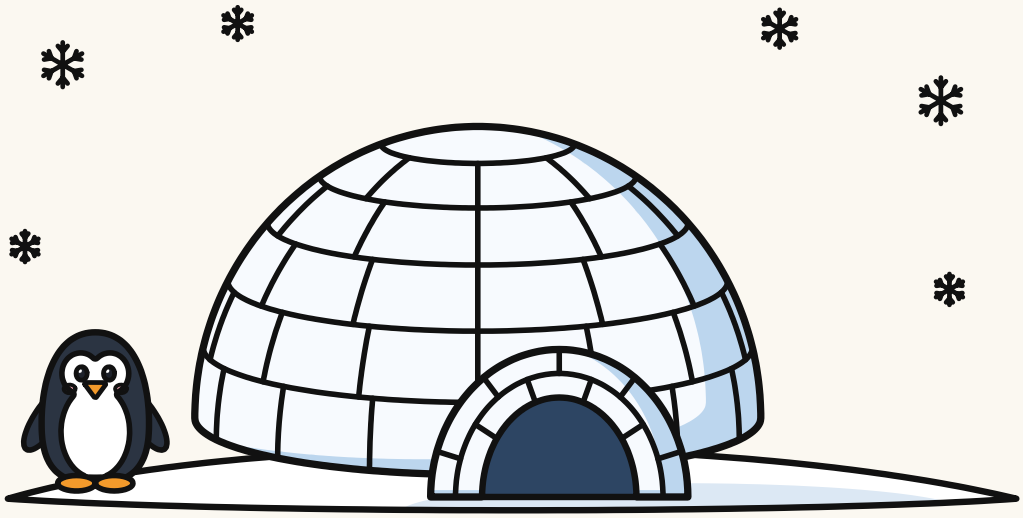
STEP 10 Ink the igloo and erase the guides



Trace every keeper line with the marker. I do the dome outline and the rows first, then the joints, and leave the snowflakes for last since they're the fiddliest. Skip the tick marks, the middle line and the guide ovals. When the ink is dry, erase all the pencil.

💡 **Tip:** Turn the paper as you ink the curved rows so your hand always pulls the line toward you.

STEP 11 Color your igloo



Leave the blocks and the snowbank white. Color a pale blue strip down the right side of the dome and the tunnel, and a soft blue shadow on the snow to the right; that one shaded side is enough to make the igloo look round. Fill the doorway dark blue. The penguin is black with a white belly, orange beak and feet, and pink cheeks.

💡 **Tip:** Press very lightly with the light blue and build it up. I find snow shading looks best when it's barely there.