

CREATING FOUNDATION LINES

Do not start your drawing by putting in details. Your initial strokes create the structure on which you can add detail later. Start lightly and loosely. Block in the posture, proportions and angles. Then you can add eyes beak and feathers.



1 Start with one line indicating the bird's posture or long axis of the body.

5 Add the eye-bill line indicating which way the bird is looking. The eye will sit on top of this line.

6 Draw the tail from the upper part of the body oval. The tail originates from a point inside the body. The clock trick may help you insert the tail at the right place.

2 Make an oval or egg shape that reflects the form of the body around the axis of the posture line.

3 Add a head, paying attention to size and location. It is easy to make the head too big and to place it too far forward.

7 Carve in the angles on the contour of the edge of the body. Pay attention to changes in angles where the head and tail connect. It may help to look at the negative space (shape of the air not the bird). Can you identify a bird or your sketch by its silhouette?

Visualize a line tangent with the head and body. Is it angled or vertical? This will help you place the head in the right location.

4 Stop and check your proportions. Here I realized my head was too large and made it smaller. Once you add detail, it becomes more difficult to change. It may be helpful to visualize a clock to say to yourself, "this head settles between 10 and 12".

8 Carefully note the location of the wrist (front end of the wing) and draw a line along the leading edge of the wing. Is the wing up or drooped?

9 Add a line along the rear edge of the secondary feathers.

10 Note where the legs meet the body (clock trick), as well as the angle and length of each leg (they may be different). Observe the negative space under the legs.