Draw a Cougar: Body Proportions, Head and Paw Construction

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

Draw a side-view cougar with a body axis of 10 cm (hypothetical). Set head length to 2 cm and tail length to 6.5 cm. Describe your oval placement and one check.

Answer: Place shoulder and hip points 10 cm apart. Draw a ribcage oval forward of midpoint and a hip oval at the rear. Add a head oval 2 cm long and a tail curve 6.5 cm long. Check: head length is about one-fifth of body length (2 cm vs 10 cm).

Reason: The body axis sets scale; head and tail are fractions of that axis. The check confirms proportion.

Check: Measure head length and body axis with the same ruler; compare ratio.

Task 2

Construct a cougar head with a vertical symmetry guide and an eye-level guide. Place the nose at the lower third and ears high. State how you check muzzle length.

Answer: Draw a head oval, add a vertical guide and a horizontal eye-level guide slightly above middle. Place nose at lower third and ears high. Check muzzle length by comparing eye-to-nose distance to eye-to-skull-top distance; eye-to-nose should be about half.

Reason: Guides keep features aligned; the ratio check prevents a long domestic-cat muzzle.

Check: Measure eye-to-nose and eye-to-top distances; compare ratio.

Task 3

Draw a front paw using a pad oval and four toe ovals. Make the paw width equal to a 2 cm muzzle length. Describe the toe arrangement and one weight cue.

Answer: Draw a pad oval 2 cm wide, add four toe ovals in an arc with the middle two slightly forward, and connect with short curves. Add a slight wrist bend above. Shade under the paw for weight.

Reason: The pad-and-toe structure gives a broad cougar paw; the width check ties paw to head proportion.

Check: Measure paw width and muzzle length; they should match in this exercise.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

Draw a complete side-view cougar on a blank frame using a 14 cm body axis (hypothetical). Set head length to 2.8 cm, tail to 9 cm, and paw width to 2.8 cm. List two proportion checks you would perform.

Answer: Draw the 14 cm axis, ribcage and hip ovals, neck, head oval 2.8 cm, tail 9 cm, and front paw 2.8 cm wide. Checks: head length vs body axis (about one-fifth) and tail length vs body axis (about two-thirds).

Reason: A complete drawing combines body, head, and paw construction; checks catch proportion errors.

Check: Measure each stated length with the same ruler and compare ratios.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Body proportions: head about one-fifth of body length; tail about two-thirds; legs long and lean.
- [ ] Head construction: broad skull, short wide muzzle, rounded ears high on skull, eye line slightly above middle.
- [ ] Paw construction: broad pad oval with four toe ovals in an arc; wrist or ankle bend shown.
- [ ] Line quality: light construction lines and darker final lines; construction lines erased or faint.
- [ ] Consistency: all measurements use the same unit; proportion checks are stated.

Reflection: What did you check, what did you change, and what will you try next?