# Realistic Deer Drawing: Fur, Anatomy, and Shading Practice

Original tasks 1, 2 / complete keys

Task 1

On a blank sheet, draw a side-view deer outline using a hypothetical head length of 4 cm. Make the body three head lengths long and two head lengths tall at the shoulder. Mark the shoulder, hip, knee, and hock joints. Do not add fur or shading yet.

Answer: A light construction sketch with a back line, belly line, chest wedge, hindquarter wedge, neck at about 45 degrees, and head. The body is 12 cm long and 8 cm tall at the shoulder. Joints are marked with small dots.

Reason: This exercise isolates proportion and joint placement before fur and shading are added. Using a consistent unit makes the proportions checkable.

Check: Measure the body length and shoulder height with a ruler. They should be 12 cm and 8 cm respectively, within 1 cm. Check that all four joints are marked.

Task 2

Draw a deer's neck and shoulder area only. Use short strokes to show fur flowing downward and slightly back. Use two values: a light mid-tone and a darker tone in the shadow under the neck. Assume light from the upper left.

Answer: A neck and shoulder sketch with fur strokes pointing down and back. The under-neck area is darker, and the upper-left side is lighter. Strokes vary in length and are not uniform.

Reason: This focuses on fur direction and a simple two-value shadow, which are the building blocks of realistic texture.

Check: Check that most strokes on the neck point down and back. Check that the under-neck area is darker than the upper-left side. Strokes should not all be the same length.

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Original tasks 3, 4 / complete keys

Task 3

Draw a deer's hindquarters and back half. Show fur sweeping down and back on the hindquarters and toward the tail along the back. Use three values: light, mid, and dark. Place the dark value only in the deepest shadow near the hip.

Answer: A hindquarter sketch with fur strokes following the described flows. The hip shadow is the darkest area, the back is mid-tone, and the upper hindquarter is light.

Reason: This exercise practices changing fur direction between body masses and limiting the darkest value to a small area.

Check: Check that hindquarter strokes sweep down and back, and back strokes point toward the tail. Check that the darkest value appears only near the hip and covers less than one-third of the drawing.

Task 4

Draw a complete side-view deer with light from the upper right. Use four values and fur direction on the neck, back, and hindquarters. Include a simple background shadow under the deer to ground it. Keep the hooves and muzzle crisp.

Answer: A complete deer drawing with the right side in shadow, the left side lighter, fur strokes following natural flows, and a soft shadow under the body. Hooves and muzzle have crisp edges.

Reason: This combines proportion, anatomy, fur direction, and layered shading in one plate, with a different light direction to test flexibility.

Check: Squint at the drawing: the right side should read as shadow and the left as light. Check that four distinct values are visible. Check that fur direction changes at the shoulder and hip, and that hooves and muzzle are crisp.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Proportions: body length and shoulder height are consistent with the chosen unit, and joints are marked.
- [ ] Anatomy: legs taper, hooves are small and pointed, ears and eye are placed believably.
- [ ] Fur direction: strokes follow natural flow on neck, back, and hindquarters, with smooth transitions.
- [ ] Shading: at least four values are used, with a consistent light source and clear shadow side.
- [ ] Edges: fur edges are softened where appropriate, while hooves and muzzle remain crisp.
- [ ] Overall readability: the deer reads as a solid form with volume, not a flat pattern.

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