Realistic Owl Drawing: Feather Texture and Eye Highlights

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

On scrap paper, make three value patches labeled light, medium, and dark using your pencil. Then shade a small oval with the light patch and add five short dark feather tips at its lower edge. Describe your result.

Answer: A light oval with five distinct darker tips at the lower edge, showing a clear value difference between undercoat and tips.

Reason: This isolates the layering skill: soft base first, sharp tips second. The label check keeps your handwriting consistent without requiring a single style.

Check: Compare the oval to your three patches. The oval should match the light patch and the tips should match the dark patch.

Task 2

Draw two circles as pupils. With an upper-right light source, place a small highlight on each pupil and shade around it. State where each highlight sits.

Answer: Each highlight sits at the upper right of its pupil, and the shading darkens the lower left side.

Reason: Highlight position must follow the chosen light direction, and both eyes must agree.

Check: Draw an arrow for the light source. Confirm both highlights are on the same side as the arrow.

Task 3

Shade a facial disk around two eyes using radiating strokes. Keep the cheek lighter and darken under the brow. List two value changes you made.

Answer: Under the brow is darker than the cheek, and the area beside the beak is darker than the outer disk.

Reason: The facial disk needs soft direction and a clear light-to-dark transition to avoid flatness.

Check: Squint at the drawing. You should still see a lighter cheek and a darker brow area.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

Draw a small owl body outline. Add three feather patches: one light, one medium, one dark. Put sharp tips only at patch edges. Explain how you avoided outlining every feather.

Answer: The patches have different values, and sharp tips appear only where patches meet; the interior of each patch stays soft.

Reason: Grouping feathers creates realistic texture without a cartoon outline.

Check: Count the sharp tips. They should be at patch edges, not scattered evenly across every patch.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Light direction is marked and consistent with highlight placement.
- [ ] Feather texture shows at least three passes: soft undercoat, directional strokes, sharp tips.
- [ ] Eye highlights are small, bright, and placed consistently on both eyes.
- [ ] Facial disk shading radiates around the eyes and keeps the cheek lighter.
- [ ] Value range includes clear dark, medium, and light areas.
- [ ] Valid alternatives are accepted: highlight shape may be a dot or short oval, and feather groups may vary in number if texture reads clearly.

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