Simple Pen Animal Drawings: Contour and Hatching Basics

Original tasks 1, 2 / complete keys

Task 1

Draw a simple side-view cat about 10 cm wide. Use one closed body contour, a head contour, two ear triangles, one tail curve, and two leg lines. Add hatching from upper right to lower left on the lower left side only. Leave the upper right side open.

Answer: A recognizable cat silhouette with a closed body, joined head, two ear triangles, a curved tail, and two leg lines. Hatching appears only on the lower left side and runs consistently from upper right to lower left. The upper right side remains mostly open.

Reason: The task tests contour closure, feature selection, and a single hatch direction. Keeping hatching on one side prevents a noisy result and makes the light direction readable.

Check: Look from a step back: is the animal recognizable? Are all contour lines joined? Do at least eighty percent of hatch strokes run in the stated direction? Is the upper right side mostly open?

Task 2

Draw a simple side-view bird about 8 cm wide. Use a closed body contour, a head circle joined to the body, a beak triangle, one wing line, and two leg lines. Hatch the underside of the body with strokes about 2 mm apart, then add a second layer about 1 mm apart in a small patch near the tail. These spacing values are hypothetical examples.

Answer: A simple bird with a closed body, joined head, beak triangle, wing line, and two legs. The underside shows wider hatching first, then a small darker patch near the tail with closer spacing. The back remains open.

Reason: The exercise practices two hatch spacings and limits the darker layer to a small area. The bird shape stays readable because the contour is simple and the hatching is confined.

Check: Measure a few hatch gaps with a ruler: are they close to the stated hypothetical values? Is the darker patch small? Does the bird silhouette read clearly from a step back?

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Original tasks 3, 4 / complete keys

Task 3

Draw a simple side-view fish about 9 cm wide. Use one closed body contour, a tail triangle, one fin line, and one eye dot. Hatch the lower half with gently curved strokes that follow the body curve. Keep the upper half open. Do not add scales.

Answer: A simple fish with a closed body, tail triangle, fin line, and eye dot. The lower half has curved hatching that follows the body, while the upper half is open. No scale pattern is present.

Reason: Curved hatching tests whether strokes follow form rather than the page edge. Omitting scales keeps the study in the contour-and-hatching boundary.

Check: Do the hatch strokes curve with the body outline? Is the upper half mostly open? Is there any scale pattern? Is the fish silhouette recognizable?

Task 4

Draw a simple side-view mouse about 7 cm wide. Use a closed body contour, a head contour, two ear circles, one tail curve, and two leg lines. Choose one light direction and state it beside the drawing. Hatch only the shadow side. Then check your drawing against the rubric.

Answer: A recognizable mouse with joined contours, two ear circles, a tail curve, and two legs. A stated light direction appears beside the drawing, and hatching is limited to the shadow side with a consistent direction.

Reason: This task adds an explicit light-direction decision, which makes the hatching choice checkable. The small size encourages simple contour and restrained hatching.

Check: Is the stated light direction consistent with the hatched side? Are the contours closed? Does the drawing meet at least four rubric items? Are valid alternative ear or tail shapes accepted if the silhouette reads clearly?

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Contour is closed and the animal silhouette is recognizable from a step back.
- [ ] At least three identifying features are present, such as ear, muzzle, tail, or leg proportion.
- [ ] Hatching follows one main direction and is mostly parallel or gently curved with the form.
- [ ] Lit side is mostly open and dark areas are limited to one or two small patches.
- [ ] Line spacing is deliberate and checkable against the chosen pen width.
- [ ] Valid alternative styles are accepted if the contour and hatch direction remain clear.

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