Draw a Realistic Snake: S-Curve, Scale Rows, and Shading

Original tasks 1, 2 / complete keys

Task 1

Draw a light S-curve 12 cm long with two bends. Mark head and tail ends. Offset the body width so it is widest 3 cm from the head and narrows to a point at the tail. Draw two guide bands and fill them with diamond scales that follow the curve. Shade the lower edge darker.

Answer: A smooth S-curve with a tapered body, two diamond-scale bands following the curve, and darker shading along the lower edge.

Reason: The S-curve provides the body guide; offsetting the width creates taper; diamond scales follow the curve; lower-edge shading gives roundness.

Check: Trace the curve for smoothness, check that width changes gradually, and confirm that scale rows bend with the body rather than staying parallel to the page edge.

Task 2

Draw a 10 cm S-curve with one gentle upper bend and one lower bend. Draw three guide bands. Fill the middle band with oval scales and the other two bands with soft rectangle scales. Compress the rows on the inside of each bend. Add a light shadow on the right side.

Answer: An S-curve body with three bands of scales, compressed on the inner side of bends, and a consistent right-side shadow.

Reason: Different scale shapes per band are allowed; compression on the inner side of bends shows cylindrical form; a single shadow side keeps light logic consistent.

Check: Check that each band uses one scale shape, that rows compress on the inside of bends, and that the shadow stays on one side.

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Original tasks 3, 4 / complete keys

Task 3

Draw a 14 cm S-curve and taper the body to a fine tail point. Draw four guide bands. Reduce scale size and row spacing gradually from head to tail. Shade the lower-right side in three layers: light tone, darker lower edge, and small highlights on upper scales.

Answer: A tapered S-curve body with four scale bands that shrink toward the tail, plus three-layer shading on the lower-right side and highlights on upper scales.

Reason: Gradual reduction in scale size and spacing supports the taper; layered shading builds roundness; highlights reinforce the chosen light direction.

Check: Measure that scale size decreases from band to band, check that the tail tapers to a point, and confirm that shading layers are visible without dark outlines on every scale.

Task 4

Draw a 16 cm S-curve with a neutral head and closed mouth. Add a small oval eye. Draw three guide bands and fill them with oval scales. Erase construction lines lightly. Check that no scale row runs parallel to the page edge and that the head is not in a strike pose.

Answer: A complete snake drawing with a neutral head, closed mouth, small eye, three oval-scale bands following the curve, and no strike pose.

Reason: The neutral head stays within the brief; oval scales follow the body; erasing construction lines keeps the scale pattern readable.

Check: Confirm the mouth is closed, the eye is a small oval, scale rows follow the curve, and construction lines are faint or erased.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] S-curve has two smooth bends and no sharp corners.
- [ ] Body width tapers gradually from head to tail.
- [ ] Scale rows follow the body curve and compress on the inner side of bends.
- [ ] Scale size and row spacing decrease gradually toward the tail.
- [ ] Shading uses one consistent light direction and groups scales into light and shadow zones.
- [ ] Head is neutral, with a closed mouth and no strike pose.
- [ ] Valid alternatives: oval, diamond, or soft rectangle scales are accepted if row direction and size change are consistent.

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