Draw a Walleye: Body Shape and Fin Placement Guide

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

A walleye drawing has L = 24 cm. Using the guide, calculate body depth at 0.28 L and eye distance at 0.18 L from the snout tip.

Answer: Body depth = 0.28 × 24 = 6.72 cm total (about 3.36 cm above and below the midline). Eye distance = 0.18 × 24 = 4.32 cm from the snout tip.

Reason: Multiply the fraction by L, keeping units in cm. Split depth above and below the midline for a balanced outline.

Check: Re-measure with a ruler on your paper; the two depth halves should sum to 6.72 cm within your drawing tolerance.

Task 2

Place the first dorsal start at 0.35 L and the anal fin at 0.75 L on an L = 30 cm drawing. State both distances from the snout tip and explain why the anal fin is not at 0.50 L.

Answer: First dorsal start = 0.35 × 30 = 10.5 cm. Anal fin = 0.75 × 30 = 22.5 cm. The anal fin is far back because walleye anal fins sit near the caudal peduncle, opposite the second dorsal, not mid-belly.

Reason: Use the fractions as position markers along the midline; the anal fin position is a walleye-specific feature.

Check: Confirm the anal fin is behind the midpoint and roughly opposite the second dorsal by measuring both distances.

Task 3

Sketch a walleye with L = 16 cm. Mark the eye at 0.18 L, the first dorsal at 0.35 L, and the second dorsal ending at 0.70 L. List the three distances in cm and check that the second dorsal ends before the tail fork.

Answer: Eye = 2.88 cm; first dorsal = 5.6 cm; second dorsal end = 11.2 cm. The tail fork is at 16 cm, so the second dorsal ends 4.8 cm before the fork.

Reason: Convert each fraction to cm and compare positions along the body length.

Check: Measure from the snout tip to each mark; the second dorsal end should be less than L.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

A learner draws one merged dorsal fin and puts the anal fin at mid-belly. Identify the two walleye-specific errors and state the corrected positions using L = 20 cm.

Answer: Error 1: merged dorsal fin; correct by drawing a spiny first dorsal starting at 0.35 L = 7.0 cm and a separate soft second dorsal behind it. Error 2: anal fin at mid-belly; correct by moving it to about 0.75 L = 15.0 cm, far back near the caudal peduncle.

Reason: Walleye fin arrangement requires two dorsals and a rear-set anal fin; the fractions give checkable corrected positions.

Check: Verify two separate dorsal fins with a gap and an anal fin behind the midpoint, using ruler measurements.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Body is elongated and slightly compressed, with depth between 0.25 L and 0.33 L.
- [ ] Head length is about 0.20 L and the eye is high and slightly forward.
- [ ] Two dorsal fins are present: spiny first dorsal and soft second dorsal, with a gap.
- [ ] Anal fin is set far back, opposite the second dorsal.
- [ ] Pelvic fins are forward under the belly; pectoral fins sit behind the gill cover.
- [ ] Labels are legible and follow the x-height convention; valid handwriting alternatives are accepted.
- [ ] Markings are subtle and reference-supported, not invented bright stripes.

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