Cross-Contour Animal Drawing: Wrapped Surface Lines

Original tasks 1, 2 / complete keys

Task 1

A simplified animal torso is drawn as a circle 6 cm across. Draw two cross-contour lines wrapping left-to-right. Line A is near the top, line B is near the middle. Describe the expected spacing change and give one check.

Answer: Both lines bow with the circle. Near the left and right edges the gap between A and B should be smaller than at the center, because the surface turns away at the edges. Check by comparing the A-B gap at the left edge and at the center: the edge gap should be visibly smaller.

Reason: A circle curves away at its edges, so wrapped lines crowd there. The center is flatter, so spacing widens. This follows the spacing rule without needing fur detail.

Check: Measure the gap between A and B at the left edge and at the center using a ruler; confirm the edge gap is smaller.

Task 2

An animal leg is drawn as a tapered tube 4 cm wide at the top and 2 cm wide at the bottom. Draw three cross-contour lines wrapping around the leg. Where should spacing be tightest, and how do you verify endpoints?

Answer: Spacing should be tightest near the bottom where the tube narrows and turns away more sharply. Each line should start at the outer edge and end at the inner edge of the leg. Verify by tracing each line from outer to inner edge and confirming no line stops mid-surface.

Reason: A narrowing tube has stronger curvature near the narrow end, so lines crowd there. Clear endpoints keep the wrapping readable.

Check: Trace each line with a finger from outer edge to inner edge; confirm three complete traces and tighter gaps near the bottom.

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Original tasks 3, 4 / complete keys

Task 3

A head is drawn as an oval 5 cm wide and 4 cm tall, tilted slightly. You choose a wrapping direction from crown to muzzle. Draw two lines and state one consistency check across the head and torso.

Answer: Draw two lines from crown edge to muzzle edge, bowing with the oval and tightening near the crown. The consistency check is that both head lines and the torso lines follow the same relative direction, adjusted for tilt. Trace each line to confirm it ends at a visible edge.

Reason: A tilted oval still has a crown-to-muzzle surface direction. Keeping that relative direction across masses makes the whole animal coherent.

Check: Compare the direction of head lines to torso lines; confirm they share the same relative wrap and each line has two visible endpoints.

Task 4

A front leg overlaps a back leg in side view. You draw cross-contour lines on both legs. When is a crossing line allowed, and what check confirms it is valid?

Answer: A crossing line is allowed only where the front leg genuinely overlaps the back leg, because two surfaces overlap there. Check by confirming the crossing occurs at the overlap boundary and that each line still starts and ends at a visible edge or joint. Lines that cross away from the overlap are invalid.

Reason: Cross-contour lines describe one surface; crossing is meaningful only when surfaces overlap. The overlap boundary is the only valid crossing location.

Check: Locate the overlap boundary and confirm any crossing happens there; trace each line to a visible endpoint and reject crossings elsewhere.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] All cross-contour lines start and end at a visible edge or a real joint.
- [ ] Wrapping direction is consistent across torso, head, and legs, with adjustments for angle.
- [ ] Spacing changes between adjacent lines match the intended curvature of each mass.
- [ ] No fur-texture rendering is used to carry volume; lines alone show form.
- [ ] Lines do not cross unless two surfaces genuinely overlap.
- [ ] The drawing can be checked by tracing each line and comparing two gap measurements.

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