Zebra Contour Line Drawing: Edge Study Without Stripes

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

Draw a zebra contour from memory using only the silhouette and mane tufts. Do not draw stripes. After drawing, mark any gap longer than 5 mm (hypothetical example) and redraw it.

Answer: A valid drawing shows a closed silhouette, continuous mane tufts, and no parallel body stripes. Gaps longer than the chosen threshold are marked and redrawn as single strokes.

Reason: The task isolates silhouette and mane continuity, which are the core contour edges. The 5 mm value is a hypothetical example; measure your own paper and adjust.

Check: Trace the silhouette with your finger; confirm no unexplained gap. List all drawn lines and confirm each is an allowed edge.

Task 2

Copy a simple zebra side view but omit the muzzle closure. Then redraw only the muzzle so the upper and lower lip curves meet at one nose tip point. Describe how you checked closure.

Answer: The first drawing has an open muzzle. The redrawn muzzle is a closed curve with one meeting point at the nose tip. Closure is checked by finger tracing and by confirming no gap remains.

Reason: Muzzle closure is a named edge zone in the convention. A single meeting point prevents ambiguous open contours.

Check: Place your finger at the nose tip and trace both lip curves; they must meet without crossing or stopping short.

Task 3

Draw one zebra leg as two outer edges meeting at the hoof, plus one joint crease. Then draw a second leg behind it, stopping the front leg edge where the rear leg overlaps. Explain each stop.

Answer: The front leg has two converging edges and one joint crease. The rear leg is drawn behind, and the front leg edge stops at the overlap. Each stop is explained by the rear leg covering the front leg edge.

Reason: Overlap is the only valid reason to stop a contour line without closing a shape. This exercise practices overlap logic.

Check: Confirm each leg has two edges meeting at the hoof. Confirm every stop coincides with an overlap line.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

Take a contour drawing that includes three parallel body stripes. Remove the stripes and replace one with a shoulder crease if it describes an edge. State which lines remain and why.

Answer: The three parallel body stripes are removed because they are pattern, not contour. If one stripe coincides with the shoulder crease, it may remain as an inner contour. The remaining lines are silhouette, mane tufts, muzzle, jaw, shoulder crease, leg joints, and hooves.

Reason: The convention excludes stripe pattern but allows a stripe that describes an edge. This exercise tests the boundary between pattern and contour.

Check: List every remaining line and match it to the allowed edge list. Any line not on the list is erased.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Silhouette closes at all four anchor points: top of mane, muzzle tip, front hoof, rear hoof.
- [ ] Mane edge is continuous, with stops only at overlaps.
- [ ] Muzzle is a closed curve with one nose tip meeting point.
- [ ] Each leg has two converging edges and at least one joint crease.
- [ ] No parallel body stripes or shading marks are present.
- [ ] Inner contours are limited to jaw, shoulder crease, ear outline, and eye rim.
- [ ] Line weight choice is consistent or clearly varied by edge type.
- [ ] Revision shows at least one gap corrected and one excluded mark removed.

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