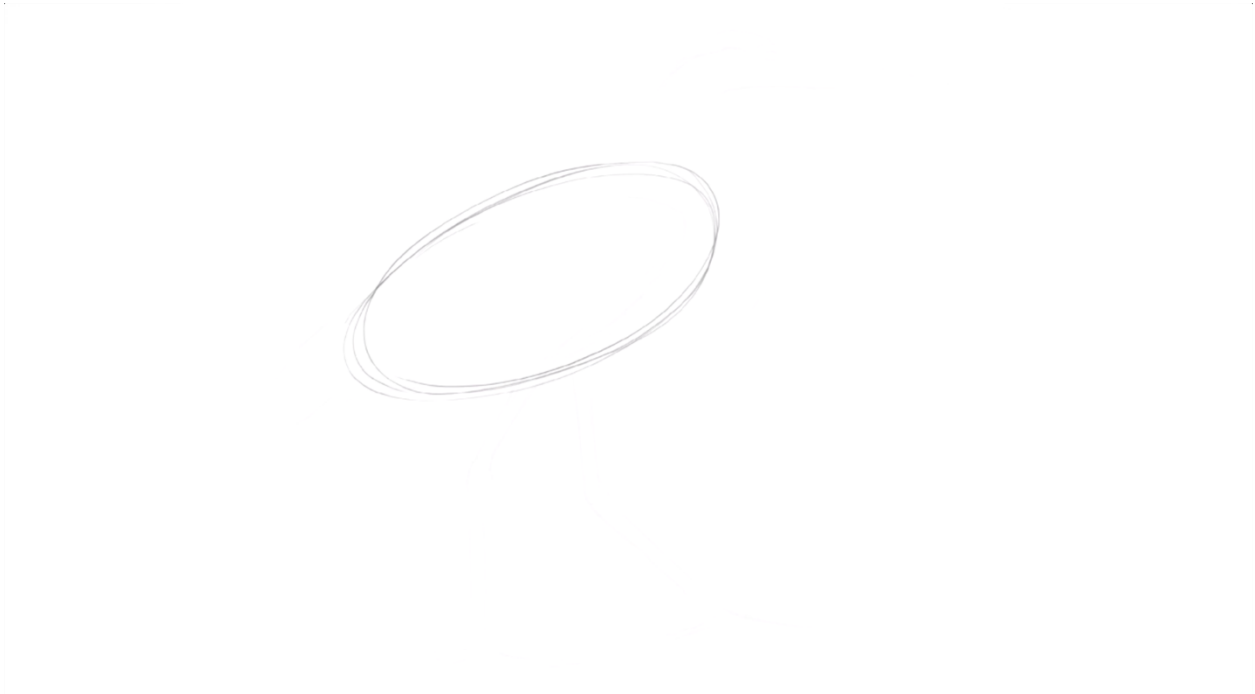
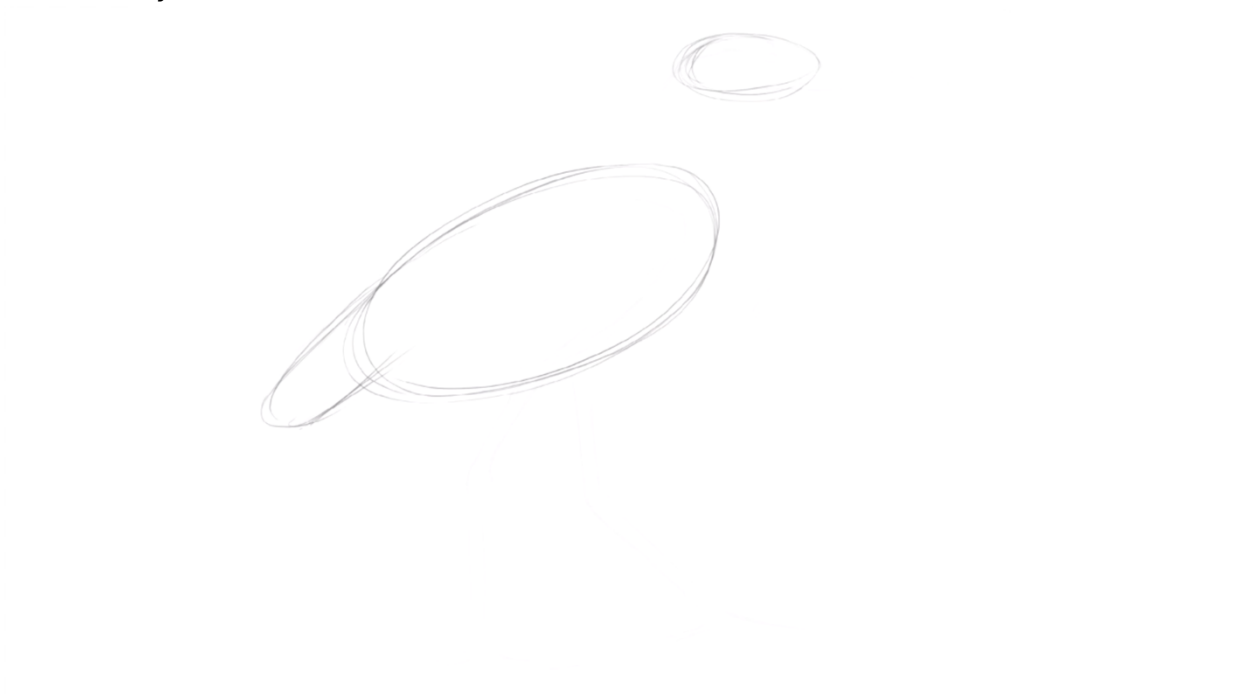


Hello, I'm David Sibley, and here are the steps I use to draw a Great Blue Heron.

Start with an oval for the body, in this case a relatively narrow oval angled up just slightly.

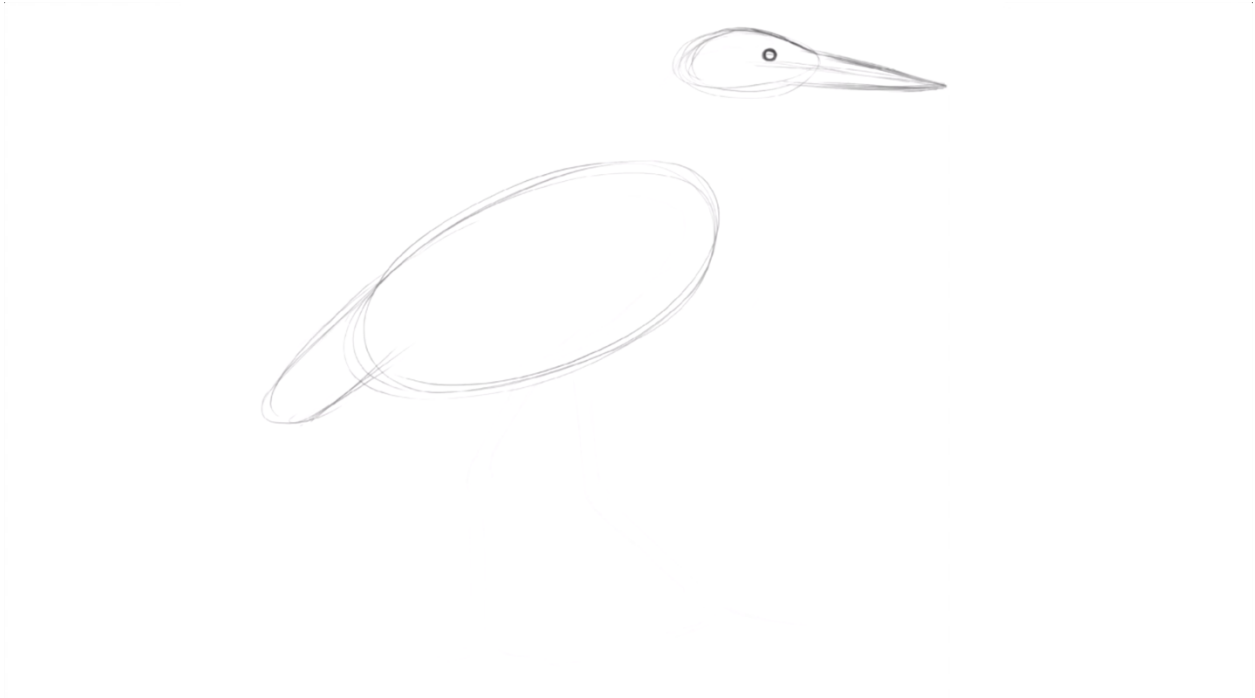


Add a smaller oval at the back of the body, coming from the top of the body and angled slightly down. Then for the head add a small narrow oval above the right side of the body.

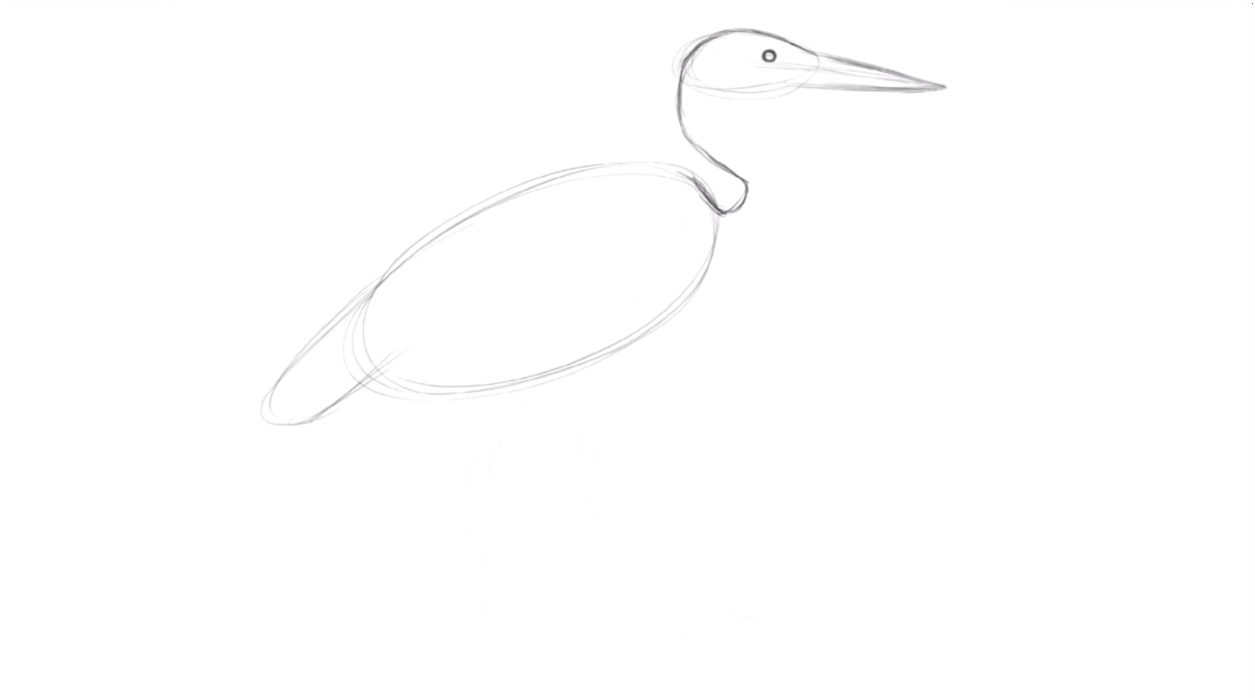


Now make a light line as a guide for the bill. Start with a straight line from the middle of the right side of the head, horizontal or angled very slightly down. Then draw lines above and below this guide to form a long narrow triangle for the bill. Continue the light guide line back into the head, and place the small eye just above this line and

slightly right of the middle of the head.



Now outline the back of the neck. The line of the top of the head is very similar to the line of the bill, so just continue that back to behind the eye and then start curving gently down. The neck then curves straight down, but before reaching the body it curves forward, then sharply back to meet the middle of the body.



The outline of the front of the neck begins on the chin and goes straight back, continuing the line of the bill, to near the line you've just drawn for the back of the neck. Then it angles sharply down and curves forward to a fairly sharp curve below

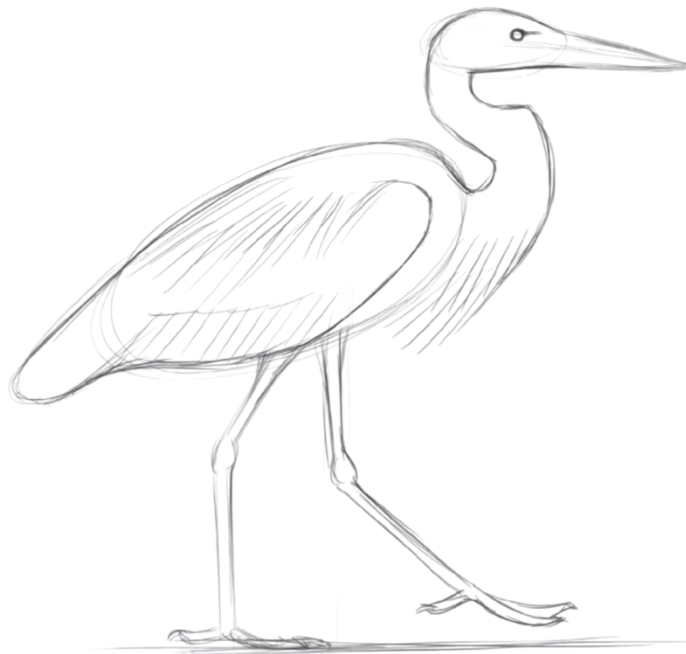
the eye, and a gradual curve to the body. The base of the neck is surrounded by long, shaggy plumes.



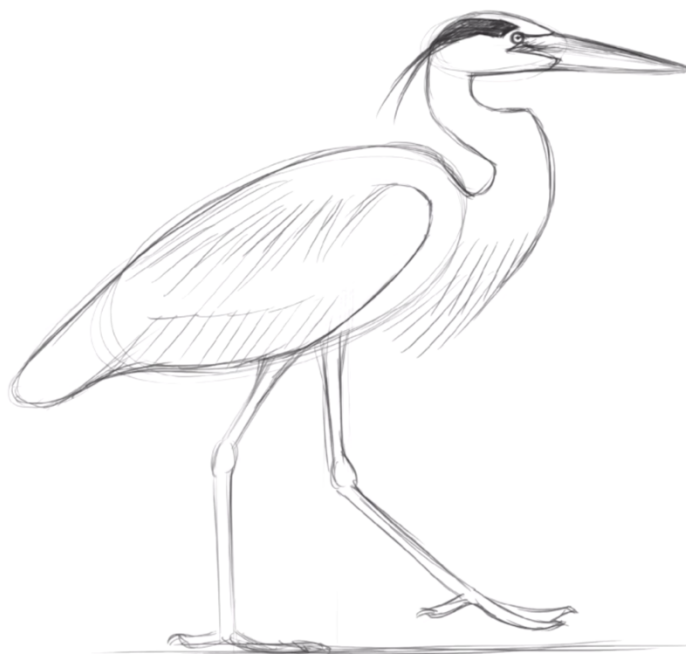
The wings are folded up against the side of the body, beginning just inside the front end of the body, draw a line angling down to the lower edge of the body and continue back into the smaller oval for the wingtips. The upper edge of the wings is overlapped by loose plumes hanging down from the back, so draw some lines more or less parallel to the back to indicate those. The lower edge of the wing is formed by the large secondary feathers, angled down along the lower edge.



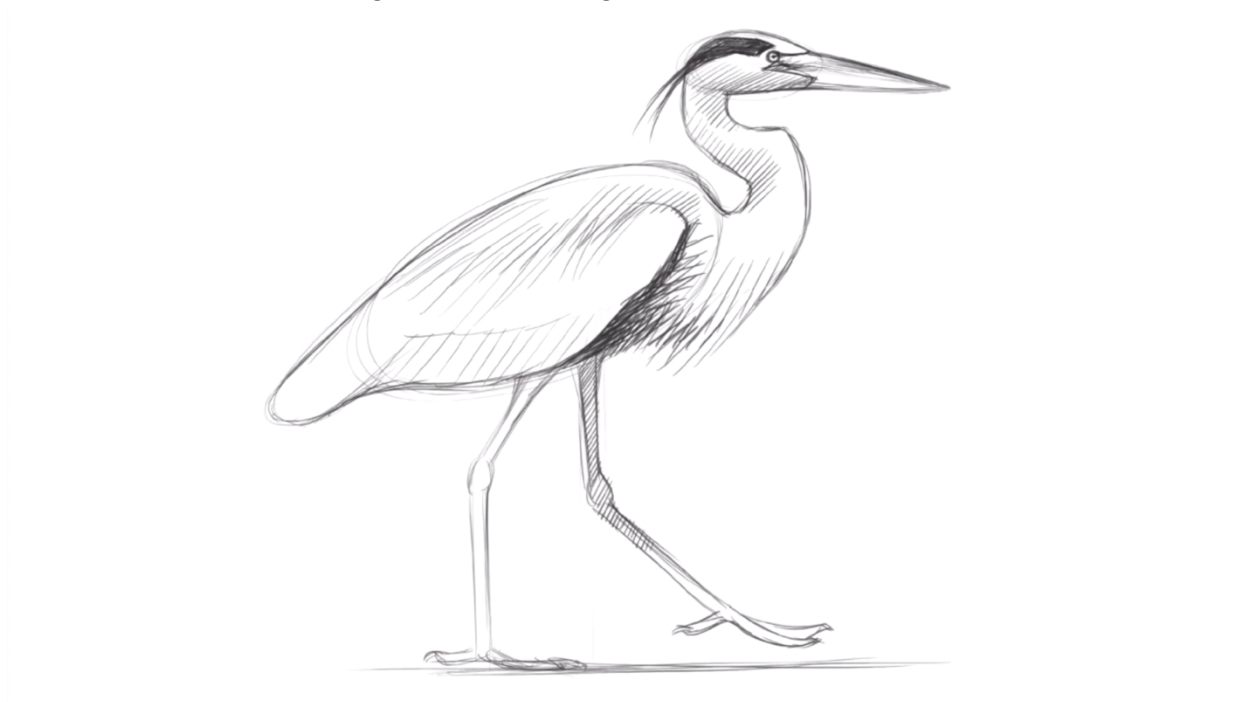
This heron is walking, with one foot forward and one back. Imagine where the body would balance and place one foot in front of that point and one behind. The long legs bend at the ankle. Add a horizontal line for the flat ground and to indicate a shadow.



Add details around the head. A line connects the top of the eye to the top of the bill. A line from the lower edge of the eye to a short point behind the eye, then angles forward to the base of the bill. A black stripe begins just behind the eye and curves down into two slender plumes on the back of the back of the head



Finally, add some shading under the chin, inside the S-curves of the neck, and some dark feathers and shading under the wings at the base of the neck



That's it!

Have fun, experiment, and please share what you've created

#sketchwithsibley



*Drawing by David Allen Sibley*

