

Hello, I'm David Sibley, and here are the steps I use to draw a Saltmarsh Sparrow.

Start with an oval for the body, slightly angled up to the right. Draw a smaller circle at the top of the oval, slightly rolling off to the right, this will be the head.



Add a straight line for the tail, horizontal and extending left from the left end of the body.



Draw the outline of the bill. With a short straight line, horizontal and above the middle of the head. Draw a line from the top of the head to the tip of the bill, and then a matching line below to form a triangular bill around the straight line you started with. The eye is in the middle of the head and just above this straight line through the middle of the bill.



Add the details of the base of the bill, a triangle with the point just below the front of the eye. And draw smooth curves following the outline of the body and into the tail. The back end of the belly is a little bit fluffy.



For the head markings, draw a narrow band of dark color along the top of the head, with some angled streaks down the back of the neck. A thin line directly behind the eye angles down and broadens to form a dark triangle. Another dark line circles around below the eye to the front and above, with a matching broader line from the point at the base of the bill coming back below the eye, then a grayish rectangle below and behind the eye. Finally, a thin dark streak from the lower edge of the bill to the body.



Add broad dark streaks on the back, and feathers overlapping the edge of the wing at the front.



A curved line across the middle of the wing marks the tips of the wing coverts, and each covert has a dark streak near the tip.



The larger wing feathers form the back half of the folded wing, and are long and straight, pointing back to the tail.



Streaks on the breast radiate from the thin streak on the throat, and curve to follow the body contours. Two rows of narrow streaks continue down the flanks just below the wings, curving down at the back.



Put the feet under the center of the body, toes gripping the grass, and the thin, straight legs angled up to the body. Add a little shading on the grass stem under the body.



Finally, add some shading on the belly and chin, and add a few more curved stems of grass.



That's it!
Have fun, experiment, and please share what you've created

#sketchwithsibley



Drawing by David Allen Sibley

