## Contents:

1. Easy Steps to Drawing a Drake Mallard ........................................... 3-10
2. Mallard .................................................................................. 11
3. Canvasback ........................................................................... 12
4. American Wigeon .................................................................. 13
5. Gadwall .................................................................................. 14
6. Northern Shoveler ................................................................. 15
7. Green-winged Teal ................................................................ 16
8. Wood Duck ............................................................................. 17
9. Northern Pintail ..................................................................... 18
10. Different Approaches to Drawing ........................................... 19-20
11. Three Quick Steps to Drawing Ducks ..................................... 21-23
12. Parts of a Duck ....................................................................... 24
13. Parts of a Wing ........................................................................ 25
14. Duck Drawings ....................................................................... 26-32
15. Six Simple Tips for Quick Bird Identification ......................... 33
16. Drawing Tips for the Junior Duck Stamp Contest .................. 34
17. References ............................................................................. 35-37
Follow the directions on the next few pages to practice drawing a drake (male) mallard. When you draw the mallard, pay attention to its body shape, feather colors, and the background. For example, what characteristics do you see? It has a green head, a white ring around its neck, and a yellow bill with black tip. These are some of the characteristics that stand out in a mallard.

Remember that you cannot copy someone else’s photo or drawing. Observe ducks, take your own photos, look at many references, and then make a plan for your own creation.
Let's start with the head and body. Draw a circle for the head and an oval shape for the body. You can measure the size of the body by comparing it to the size of the head. The oval shape should be about four “head” sizes in length. Draw the line lightly; this way you do not have to erase it as much.
Drake Mallard

Step II: Add Major Features
- Bill
- Wing
- Neck

The next step is the bill, a triangle shape, and the wing, a slanted rectangle shape. Draw two lines from the head to the body to make a neck.
In order to make this mallard look realistic, you are going to shape-up the mallard. Use curved lines to do this. You will also need to add the eye.
In this step, you are going to draw detailed lines and background.
In this step, use the basic colors shown on this mallard. It has a green head, a brown chest, and a black rear end. Part of the wings and body are white, so they do not need to be colored. Color the background water, creating a pattern for movement.
You are going to add shadows to create a more realistic picture. Shade in the dark areas where the sun does not hit. For example, part of the chest is darker; shade it in. Continue to do this with other dark areas, and you will notice that the mallard is looking fuller and not so flat.
This is the last stage. Color lightly to repeat steps 3-6 to add more detail and make the picture look more realistic. Use a variety of color pencils to shade in gradation. Use more pressure to create a lighter to a darker shade. Now your drawing is looking more like a real mallard!
Mallard

**Male characteristics**
- metallic green head and neck
- narrow white collar
- greenish-yellow bill with black tip
- chestnut breast
- blue / purple speculum with white edging
- bright orange legs and feet

**Female characteristics**
- mottled brown head and body
- orange bill with spots or blotches
- bright orange legs and feet

Mallards are often seen in shallow freshwater ponds, lakes, streams, and swamps.
Canvasbacks are found in deep freshwater marshes and rivers.

**Male characteristics**
- cinnamon head and neck
- red eye with black pupil
- long, sloping black bill
- black breast with white body
- gray legs and feet
- short, narrow black tail

**Female characteristics**
- brown head
- pale gray-brown body
- long, sloping black bill
- black eye
American Wigeon

Female

Male

White forehead with green eye stripe

Female characteristics
- grayish head with light cinnamon body
- dark patch around the eye
- bluish bill with black tip
- bluish gray feet and legs

Male characteristics
- white forehead with green eye stripe
- brownish cheek
- light cinnamon body
- bluish bill with black tip
- white and green patches on the wing
- black and white tail feathers
- gray feet and legs

American wigeons are found in marshes and freshwater areas with exposed shoreline, lakes, and islands.

Photo: Frank S. Todd

Photo: John Muegge
Gadwalls live in marshes, ponds, and lakes. They often use islands for nesting.

**Male characteristics**
- high forehead
- intricate patterns of gray on the flanks, chest, back, and head
- black bill
- white belly
- black rump
- white, black, and chestnut patches on the wing

**Female characteristics**
- orange bill with black spots and blotches
- grayish head with brown and tan body
- yellow legs and feet
- white belly

Photo: John Muegge
Northern Shoveler

Male characteristics
- green head and neck
- yellow eye with black pupil
- large black spoon-shaped bill
- white breast with brownish red flanks
- pale blue, white, and green patches on the wing
- short, orange legs and feet

Female characteristics
- pale brown head and body
- large orange spoon-shaped bill
- orange legs and feet

Northern shoveler inhabits both deep and shallow waters and prairie meadows.

Photo: John Muegge
**Green-winged Teal**

**Male characteristics**
- chestnut head and neck
- dark green eye stripe, outlined in white
- dark gray bill
- patterns of gray on the flanks
- yellowish breast with brown speckles
- white side bar extending from breast to shoulder
- cream colored rear
- gray legs and feet

**Female characteristics**
- mottled brown head and body
- grayish bill
- green and black speculum

Green-winged teal are usually found in marshes, ponds, and temporarily flooded fields.
Wood Duck

Male characteristics
- green head with white stripes and crest
- red eye with black pupil
- reddish bill with yellow outline toward the face, black tip
- white collar
- brownish red breast with triangular white speckles
- white side bar near wing
- blue secondaries
- long green tail

Female characteristics
- grayish head with crest
- white patch around the eye
- long gray tail
- short, yellowish legs and feet

Wood ducks are found in wooded wetlands.
Northern Pintail

Male characteristics
- brown head with long, slender, white neck
- slim gray body
- brownish green speculum with white edging
- black rear end with long, pointed tail feathers
- bluish gray and black bill

Female characteristics
- brown head and neck
- gray legs and feet
- brown body with long brown tail

Northern pintails are found in shallow, temporary wetlands. They nest in open, short grass areas.
Different Approaches to Drawing

There are many different ways to draw ducks. In this approach, look at the whole bird and draw it from top to bottom.

Step 1: Outline the head, bill, and neck.

Step 2: Outline the body shape.

Step 3: Add the tail, wing, feet, and eye.

Step 4: Add the basic outline to separate the different color tones. For example, the head is darker than the neck, so draw a line to distinguish it.

Step 5: Add detail lines and gradations. Also add a background to your drawing.

Northern Pintail
Different Approaches to Drawing

Here is another approach to drawing a duck. For this technique consider the image you want to create and draw each of the body parts separately. Then combine the body parts to create your whole bird.

Step 1: Draw a line shape for the head and neck.

Step 2: Outline the head and body shape.

Step 3: Add the tail and draw another line to form the neck.

Step 4: Add legs, eye, and bill.

Step 5: Add detail lines to distinguish the various features.

Step 6: Add more detail and gradation.

White-Fronted Goose
Three Quick Steps to Drawing Ducks
Follow these three steps to draw different ducks.

Step 1: Shape / outline
Step 2: Detail / fine line
Step 3: Shading / detail

Northern Shoveler
Northern Pintail
Step 1: Shape / outline
Step 2: Detail / fine line
Step 3: Shading / detail

Bufflehead

Canada Goose
Step 1: Shape / outline

Step 2: Detail / fine line

Step 3: Shading / detail

Hen Wood Duck

King Eider
Parts of a Duck

**Crown**
The top of the duck’s head, located between the forehead and the back of the head

**Eye-ring**
A narrow ring of bare skin around the eye

**Nape**
The back of the neck

**Culmen**
The ridge extending along the upper part of the bill

**Bill**
The duck’s beak

**Nares**
The nostrils

**Breast**
The upper chest area

**Flanks**
The sides of the duck right above the legs

**Mantle**
The plumage (feathers) located on the upper part of a duck’s back

**Scapulars**
A group of shoulder feathers that are located between the upper back and the primaries

**Primaries**
The large flight feathers that are attached to the wing and extend beyond the duck’s body

**Speculum**
A colorful patch on the back of the wing

**Abdomen**
The belly of a duck

**Tarsus**
The straight part of a bird’s foot above its toes

**Tail**
The cluster of feathers closest to the duck’s rear

**Eye-ring**
A narrow ring of bare skin around the eye

**Crown**
The top of the duck’s head, located between the forehead and the back of the head

**Nape**
The back of the neck

**Culmen**
The ridge extending along the upper part of the bill

**Bill**
The duck’s beak

**Nares**
The nostrils

**Breast**
The upper chest area

**Flanks**
The sides of the duck right above the legs

**Mantle**
The plumage (feathers) located on the upper part of a duck’s back

**Scapulars**
A group of shoulder feathers that are located between the upper back and the primaries

**Primaries**
The large flight feathers that are attached to the wing and extend beyond the duck’s body

**Speculum**
A colorful patch on the back of the wing

**Abdomen**
The belly of a duck

**Tarsus**
The straight part of a bird’s foot above its toes

**Tail**
The cluster of feathers closest to the duck’s rear
Parts of a Wing

Learning the parts of a duck’s wing will help you pay attention to detail when creating your picture.
Duck Drawings

Here are some drawings of different ducks. You can look at these and compare them to your drawings.

Northern Pintail

Mao Vang
Canvasback
Green-winged Teal
Gadwall
American Wigeon
Northern Shoveler
Wood Duck
Memorize the following six tips to help you to identify birds. With practice, these tips will come to mind automatically when you look at a new bird and will help you to remember its important features. If possible, write what you have seen in a notebook at the time of sighting.

1. **What is the bird’s relative size?**
   Compare the bird with other birds that are well known to you. If larger than a SPARROW, is it larger or smaller than a PIGEON? If larger than a PIGEON, is it smaller than a HAWK?

2. **What is the shape and color of the bird’s beak?**
   The shape of its beak is a guide to what it eats, classifying the type of bird it is. Is the beak short and round like that of a songbird or powerful and hooked like that of a hawk? What color is its beak? Many birds have blackish beaks but some are brightly colored.

3. **What length and color are the bird’s legs?**
   Does the bird have unusually long wading legs, short, perching legs, etc.? Are its legs a distinctive color?

4. **What plumage colors or markings do you notice?**
   Bold markings, colors, or bars on the bird’s wings, tail, breast, or above the eyes should be noted. Also note that in some bird species the males are brightly colored and the females tend to be camouflaged.

5. **In what habitat do you see the bird?**
   The habitat in which the bird is seen is another important clue to the kind of bird it is. Is it in a garden, in water, in grassland, in the forest, etc.?

6. **What is the bird doing?**
   Is it walking, hopping, wading, or swimming? Does it peck at the ground, probe in mud, or feed in a tree? Try to detail its behavior as closely as possible.

Often the details of a bird’s structure, plumage, or behavior are soon forgotten, and the observer may spend much time trying to recall them. If these six points are remembered or noted at the time of the observation an analysis can be made later at leisure.

![Image of a bird](image-url)
Drawing Tips for the Junior Duck Stamp Contest

Here are some helpful hints for teachers and students to remember for the Junior Duck Stamp contest.

- Be sure the species you choose is a native North American or Hawaiian duck, goose, or swan.
- Create original art, not copies of someone else’s work.
- Your duck should be the predominate part of the painting, and it should be accurately represented as well as in the proper habitat.
- A good drawing makes a good painting. The time to tweak your design is at the drawing stage, not after you’ve painted it. Be aware of the size requirements. Entries must be horizontal, 9”X12”. Entries not conforming to this standard must be disqualified.
- Balance all the elements of the design (ducks, habitat, etc.). Look at other duck stamps to get an idea for layouts. One way to plan your composition is to use shapes in place of objects for your design layout. Seeing abstractly helps encourage originality.
- Look for ways to “pop” your painting.
  - Contrast: Use both dark against light and complementary colors (colors that are opposite each other on the color wheel), for example red and green. Red and green colors are strong and vibrant when put next to each other.

- Use bright, bold, and warm colors.
- Accent darks and lights as needed.
- Make crisp edges.
- Put the detail on your duck.
- Leave space in your design for all the elements to be included in the stamp, such as the $5 price.
- Consider what your artwork would look like as a small stamp.
- Keep the background appropriate, but simple. Avoid making your image too busy. Don’t overdo background scenes.
- Master the medium. If the painting is finished off well, it will stand out from the others.
- Get critiques of your work. Ask other artists, teachers, taxidermists, ornithologists, etc. Listen to their expertise.

Bee Lee, 17 yrs old


14. *Ducks at a Distance,* Hines, Bob. Southwest Natural and Cultural Heritage Association, Albuquerque, NM.


