Draw a Raccoon

One way to draw nearly anything is to look for the simple shapes that make up the object and use lines to connect and fine-tune those shapes.

When you begin drawing your raccoon, use a pencil and sketch light, faint lines. If you mess up, it’s easy to erase the lines or simply draw over the top of them. When your sketch is finished, you can darken the lines with a marker or crayon.

1: Draw an egg. This will be the raccoon’s body. Draw a small oval on top of the egg. This will be the raccoon’s head. Add four skinny triangles for arms and legs.

2: Draw a rectangle for a tail. Add two rounded triangles for ears. Add circles with dots in their centers for eyes. Add a black nose. Draw a smiling mouth.

3: Draw a small triangle at the end of each arm and leg. These will become paws. On each side of the head, draw a line straight down until it nearly touches the arm. From there, draw a line slightly up toward the raccoon’s chin. These triangles will become cheeks.

4: Add stripes to the tail and five fingers to each paw. To make the raccoon’s mask, draw a W between the eyes. Add two short diagonal lines to form pointy eyebrows. Draw curved lines to connect the eyebrows to the cheeks. Draw a half circle over the mouth and nose to complete the mask.

5: Add small rounded triangles inside the ears to make the inner ears. Color the inner ears, mask, paws, and tail stripes black.

6: Draw fur over the head, body, arms, legs, and tail. If you want your raccoon to wear a hat, draw a skinny oval between the ears. Draw a triangle on top of the oval, and a circle on top of the triangle, then add stripes.
Fireflies talk to each other with light. A male firefly’s twinkling tush is like a neon sign. “Here I am,” it blinks. “Do you like me?” Female fireflies hiding in the grass blink back when they spot a male they fancy.

More than 150 kinds of fireflies live in North America. Many species live in the same place, so males and females of different species are a problem for love. When a male arrives hoping for love, the female fires fly grabs him and eats him for supper. Sometimes, love hurts.

Why did the firefly dump her boyfriend? The answer is hidden in this series of blinks. Use the key to crack the code.

This key is based on International Morse Code, which uses dots and dashes (short and long) of lights or sounds. Yellow circles represent dots, and black circles represent dashes. A message here, "here" is "hi" in Morse code, which is.


**FACTS**

He was not very bright.
Nearly 40 kinds of warblers wander through Missouri in May. Some stay here to nest. Others grab a quick bite to eat and keep flying north. Woodlands throughout the state serve as "gas stations" for these colorful, insect-eating birds. Read the names of the birds and use them to answer the questions on the quiz. The correct answers are located at the bottom of the page.
Hungry swallows swallow insects—and not much else. So, when bugs bug out in the fall, swallows split for Central and South America. Before they leave, the birds gather in ginormous flocks on power lines and near wetlands. This offers a great opportunity to see all six kinds of swallows that nest in Missouri. Practice your swallow ID on this puzzle, then grab some binoculars and get outside to see the real thing!

**Swallow Swarm**

It's a swallow bon voyage party! How many of each kind can you find in the flock above? (Hint: there are 316 total.)

- Barn Swallow
- Bank Swallow
- Cliff Swallow
- Purple Martin
- Rough-winged Swallow
- Tree Swallow
Animals make their homes in all sorts of places. When it looks out its “bedroom window,” can you match each critter to the view it sees?

Golden crayfish: 3; Muskrat: 5; Gray squirrel: 6; Little brown bat: 2; Pileated woodpecker: 4; Eastern mole: 7; American robin: 8; Three-toed box turtle: 9; Eastern chipmunk: 1