

How to Draw Eyebrows on Paper

By Darlene Nguyen - December 7, 2016



Hey guys! In this tutorial, I'm going to show you how to draw realistic and subtle eyebrows. Learn how to draw eyebrows that compliment a drawing instead of sticking out like a sore thumb!

The structure of this tutorial will be similar to my previous one on [eyelashes](#): examples with explanations and then application in a step by step format.

Tools I Used ([You can find all my recommended tools here](#)):

- H and 2B pencils
- Mechanical Pencil with 4B Ain (Pentel) Lead
- Kneaded Eraser
- Canson Bristol Paper

Stroke Quality

Keep your strokes fairly thin. I always try to keep the tip of my pencil as sharp as possible for each stroke. Once your pencil starts to become blunt, individual hairs will blur together and eventually disappear as they blend in with each other.



Stroke Direction and Curve

I see a lot of people draw eyebrows like this:



While that's great for cartoons and manga, it's quite unrealistic.

We want to draw hairs that point in **3 main directions**: Up, down and from left to right (or right to left if you're drawing the left eyebrow).



Eyebrow hairs also come in a variety of shapes such as the ones below. Find the right combination/grouping to get your desired look or just go with the flow.



Stroke Length

Eyebrow hairs are usually shorter at the end of the eyebrow and as a rule of thumb, the lighter the hair, the shorter it is.

Root Placement

Slow down and carefully plan the placement of each stroke you make and try to make them as unpredictable as possible. Avoid predictable patterns like the ones below.



Random = natural. Do not make the mistake of drawing a single row of hairs in an attempt to cover the entire eyebrow. More on that later.

Eyebrow Shape, Length and Position

With your fingers, put some pressure along your eyebrow and move the skin up and down. You'll find that your eyebrows grow along the brow bone. The brow bone is the protruding area directly above your eye socket. When you don't know where to draw an eyebrow, visualize the eye socket around the eye.

Eyebrow length varies from person to person, but the average length is only slightly longer than the length of the eye itself. As for the shape, there's no one correct way. Just play around with different shapes while following along the brow bone.

How to Draw Eyebrows Step by Step

If you want to draw clean, sharp eyebrows, shade the area above the eye and blend it out first before you start. It doesn't have to be perfect. This step eliminates the amount of shading and blending you'll have to do later on.



Step 1:



With an H pencil, use my [shadow-lining](#) technique to outline the shape you want the eyebrow to have. If you use this technique, your outlines will blend in perfectly when you draw the actual hairs later.

Do not outline it like the image below. It will be very obvious in your final drawing and a complete pain to erase!



Step 2:



We're going to draw hairs going in several different directions. Using a sharp 2B pencil, let's start by drawing a single row on the bottom and go from left to right. These hairs grow in the upward direction and start pointing downward near the end of the eyebrow.

Step 3:



Now, add an additional row or two. Remember to draw hairs at the beginning of the eyebrow longer than ones at the end.

Step 4:



Make slight changes in the hair direction and amount of curve. Join some hairs together by their ends as well.

I'm not adding any more hairs on the left side of the eyebrow because I don't know if that will be enough yet. I'll be able to decide later when I draw the upper portion of the eyebrow.

It's up to you how you want to design your eyebrow, so you can add more hair if you want.

Step 5:

In this step, I didn't add any new hairs. I just looked at which ones were overlapping and used the sharpest edge of my 4B mechanical pencil to darken those areas. This will make the eyebrow look more interesting.



Step 6:

Time to draw the upper portion of hair. I usually draw the first row really thin/light and then increase the thickness/darkness with the following rows.

Your ultimate goal is to get a smooth transition from upward pointing to downward pointing hairs.



Step 7:



Add an additional layer or two. As the ends of the hairs start coming in contact with the upward pointing hairs, allow your strokes to slowly merge into the same direction.

Step 8:



When filling in the middle portion of the eyebrow, focus on drawing hairs that flow in the direction that seems most natural to you.

If you used the [shadow lining](#) technique for your outline in step 1, you will notice that it has blended in well and there should be no need to erase it.

Step 9:



If you see any inconsistencies in value or you think you'd like a darker eyebrow, go over some hairs with a sharp 4B mechanical pencil and darken overlapping hairs or individual hairs that you want to stand out more than others.

Be very careful not to overdo it. It's hard to erase thin lines. If you *do* need to erase any hairs or make them appear lighter, pinch your kneaded eraser until it looks as sharp as a knife and then press it directly on the hair to lift a layer of graphite away.

Step 10:



Can you spot what's different in the image for this step? I've added shadows in the forest of hair. If you shaded the skin as light as mine, use a 2B pencil to shade over your entire eyebrow. Don't press too hard.

At this point, the eyebrow still looks like it's sort of pasted onto the face. We'll fix this in the next step.

Step 11:



Okay, last step! We just added some shadows **inside** the boundary of the eyebrow. Now it's time to draw shadows around the **outside**. If your light source is coming from the top (like mine), draw your shadows directly below the eyebrow and/or sides only. Subtle shadows will do. Avoid hard edges!

If you think it still looks pasted on, use a sharp H pencil to draw really light hairs around the top and side.

And that's it!

I just want to send a big **thank you** out to all of you guys who take the time to leave a comment or connect with me via email or Facebook. Your kind messages remind me that what I do makes a difference and helps give me the motivation to keep going! You guys are awesome! :)