

Scientific Drawing Guidelines

Scientific drawing is about more than just quickly sketching what you see: it is about precision and facts - and the rules about diagrams reflect this. Correct diagrams show exactly what is needed, no more, no less. They need to be clear and accurate with as few lines as possible.

How to draw a correct scientific diagram:

1. Use a very sharp lead pencil, preferably 2B.
2. Print a heading at the top of the page and underline it.
3. Draw a simple, side-on view of what you're drawing (e.g. experiment/animal/plant). Include only the essential details (e.g. if you're drawing a beaker, just draw the sides and base. If you're drawing a bird, just draw the bird but leave out the forest and sky in the background).
4. Print all labels (no running writing). Write them horizontally to the diagram and close to the relevant feature. Arrange them neatly around the drawing. Rule a straight line (no arrowheads) between the label and the feature. Labels can include the purpose of the feature (e.g. pouch: where immature young develop).
5. Rule all straight lines - including underlining headings and titles - with a ruler (don't free-draw these lines). And don't underline labels!

For example:

Simple flower

