

Steps for Drawing Lewis Structures

1. Count the valence electrons.
2. Bond the outer atoms to the central atom ($2 e^-$ per bond).
3. Fill the octets of the outer atoms (duet for hydrogen).
4. Pair-up the remaining electrons on the central atom.
5. Reassign outer lone pairs to bonding positions if needed to obtain an octet for the central atom (creates multiple bonds).
6. Assign formal charges.
7. Reduce the formal charges, if possible, by reassigning lone pairs to bonding positions (creates multiple bonds).