

How to Draw a Mandala

What is a mandala?

A mandala is a complex abstract design that is usually circular in form. In fact, "mandala" is a Sanskrit word that means "circle". Mandalas generally have one identifiable center point, from which emanates an array of symbols, shapes and forms.

Mandalas can contain both geometric and organic forms. They can also contain recognizable images that carry meaning for the person who is creating it.

In essence, mandalas represent the connection between our inner worlds and outer reality. Designing your own mandalas can be both inspirational and therapeutic.

Create your own mandala

When you create your own mandala, think of it as an echo of your soul. Drawing and coloring a mandala can be a highly enriching personal experience in which you look inside yourself and find the shapes, colors and patterns to represent anything from your current state of mind to your most deeply-desired wish for yourself, for a loved one, or for humanity.

You can design a mandala to symbolize a state of mind that you would like to achieve. Mandalas are great tools for meditation and increasing self-awareness. Many different cultures around the world use mandalas in their spiritual practices.

The best thing about designing your own mandals is that you have the freedom to choose whatever shapes and colors that you feel express your sense of self and your view of reality. Your mandala is *yours*, and you have the freedom to use your creativity to create a mandala drawing that is uniquely you.

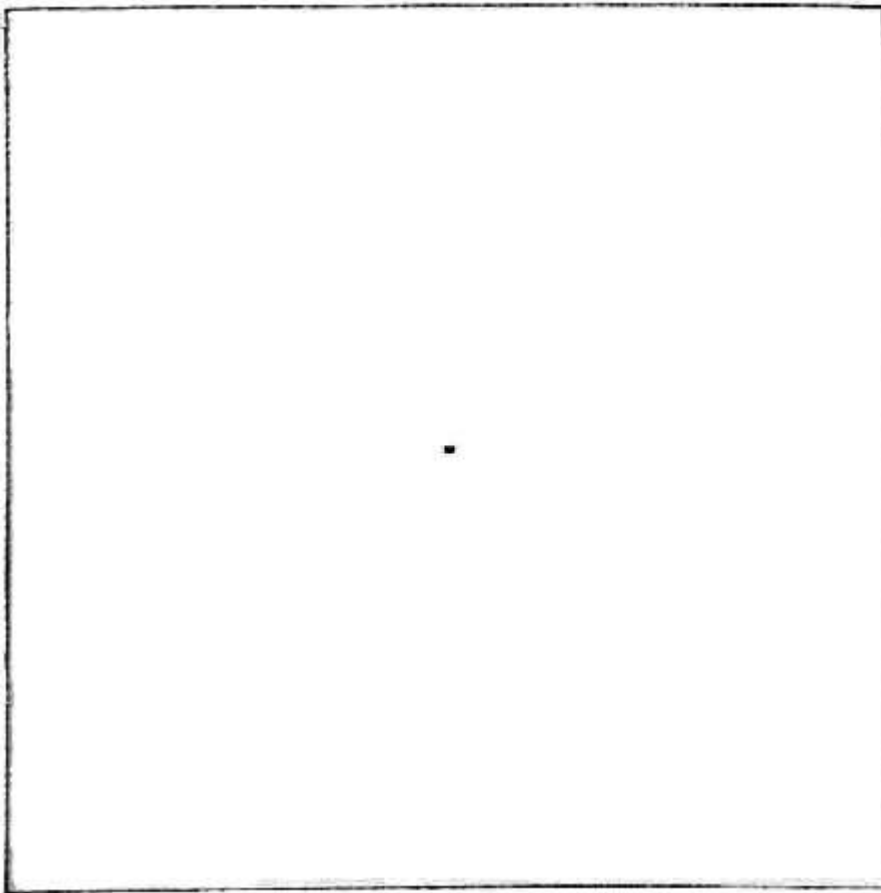
Once you know the basic steps of how to draw a mandala, you can try now new designs and new colors each time you draw a new mandala.

Materials needed:

You don't need many materials to learn how to draw a mandala. All you need is: paper, a pencil, a ruler, and an eraser.

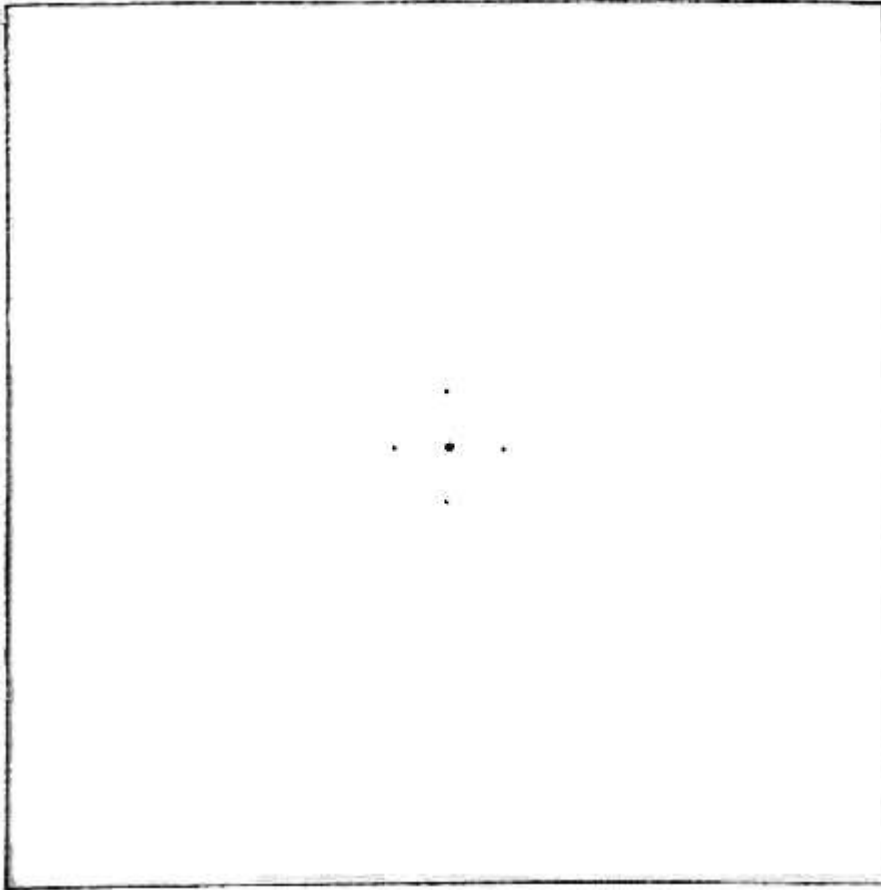
To color in your mandala: your choice of [colored pencils](#), [watercolors](#), [crayons](#), or any other type of art material for coloring. You can also use a [compass](#) if you like - this will be covered in the steps below.

Let's get started!



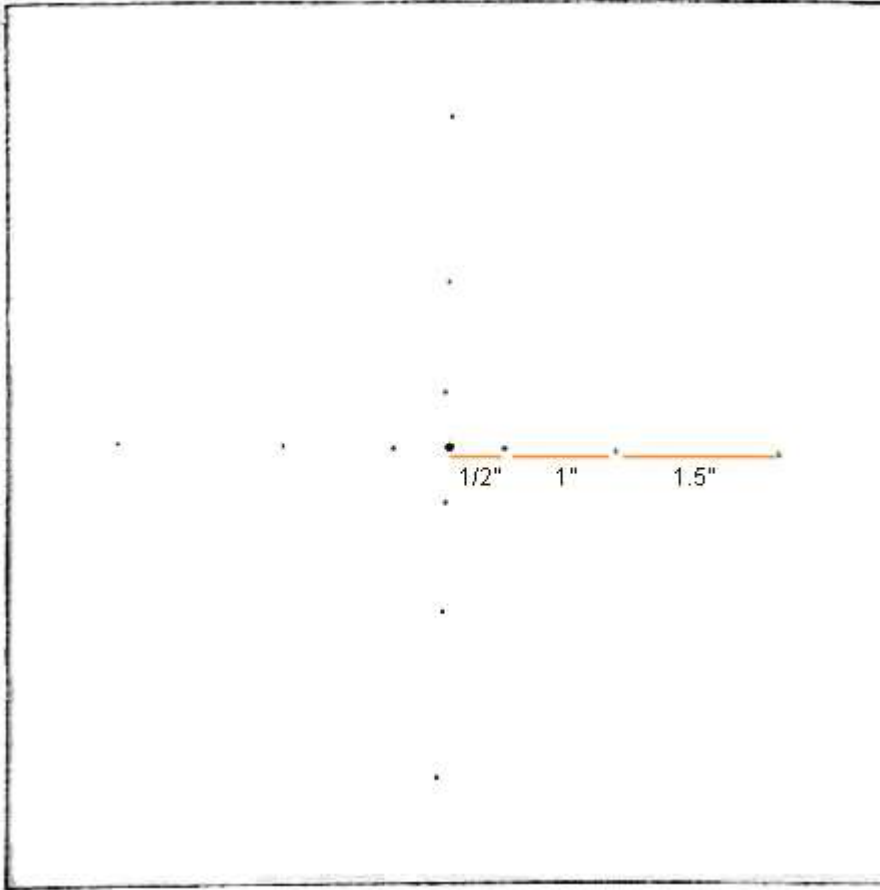
The first step in how to draw a mandala is to measure out your paper into a square shape. The square can be as big or as small as you like. The bigger the square, the more room you will have for putting in lots of detail and color. I made my square 8" x 8".

Next, use your ruler and a pencil to draw a dot in the very center of the square, as shown above.



The next step in how to draw a mandala is to draw a series of circles around this dot. Once you've drawn the dot in the center of your square, one easy way to draw circles is to use a compass. If you don't have a compass, don't worry - drawing circles is easy if you follow these steps:

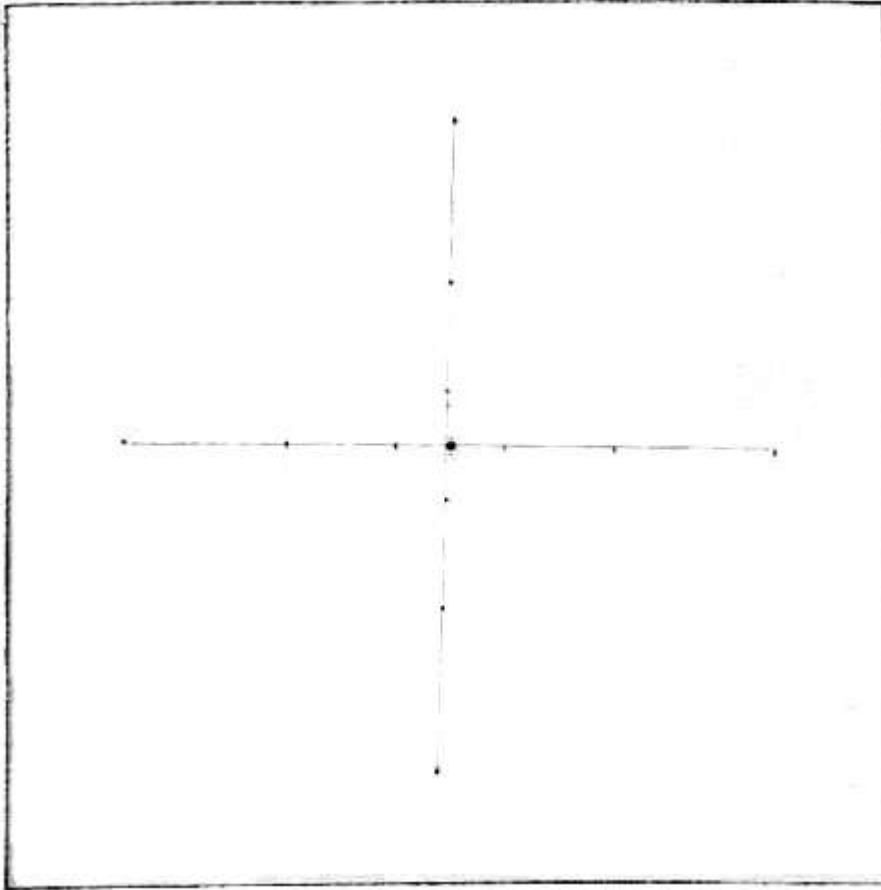
Using your ruler, measure out 1/2" (or more or less - depending on your preference) from the center dot. Make a mark 1/2" above, below, to the left and to the right of the center dot, as shown above.



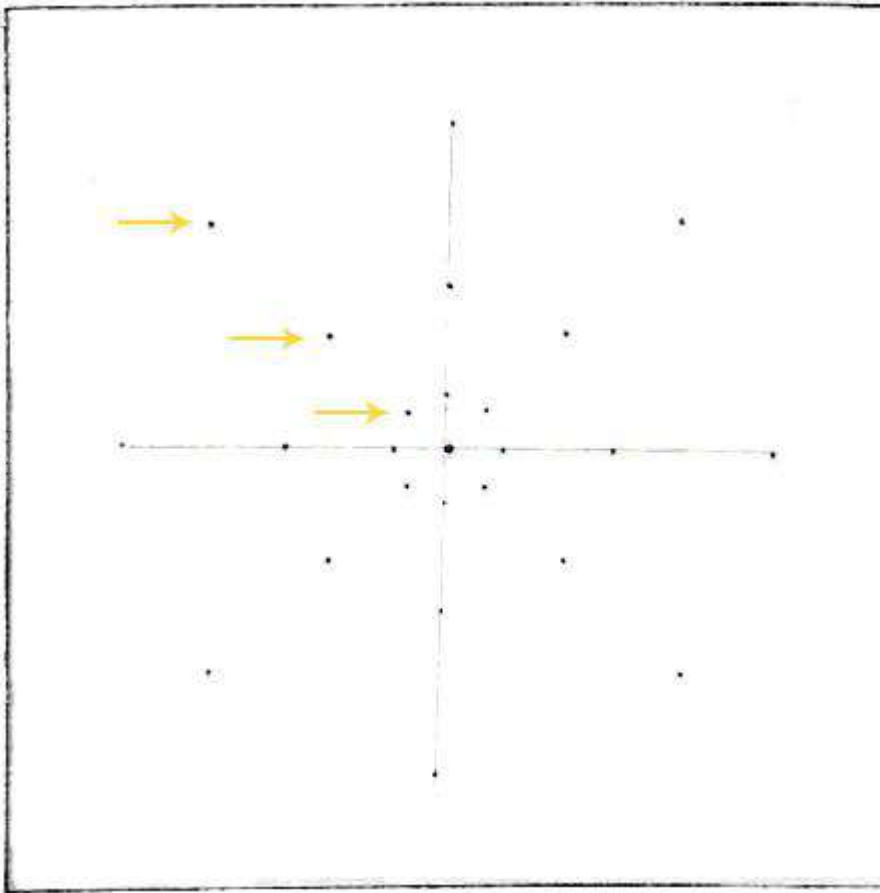
Next, measure out another distance from the center dot. I chose 1.5" from the center dot. Using the same process as before, make a mark at this same distance on top, below, to the left and to the right of the center dot.

You can continue making as many rows of these dots as you like. I chose to make 3 rows of dots, as you can see above.

The important thing is to make sure that the dots you make are all equidistant from the center dot.

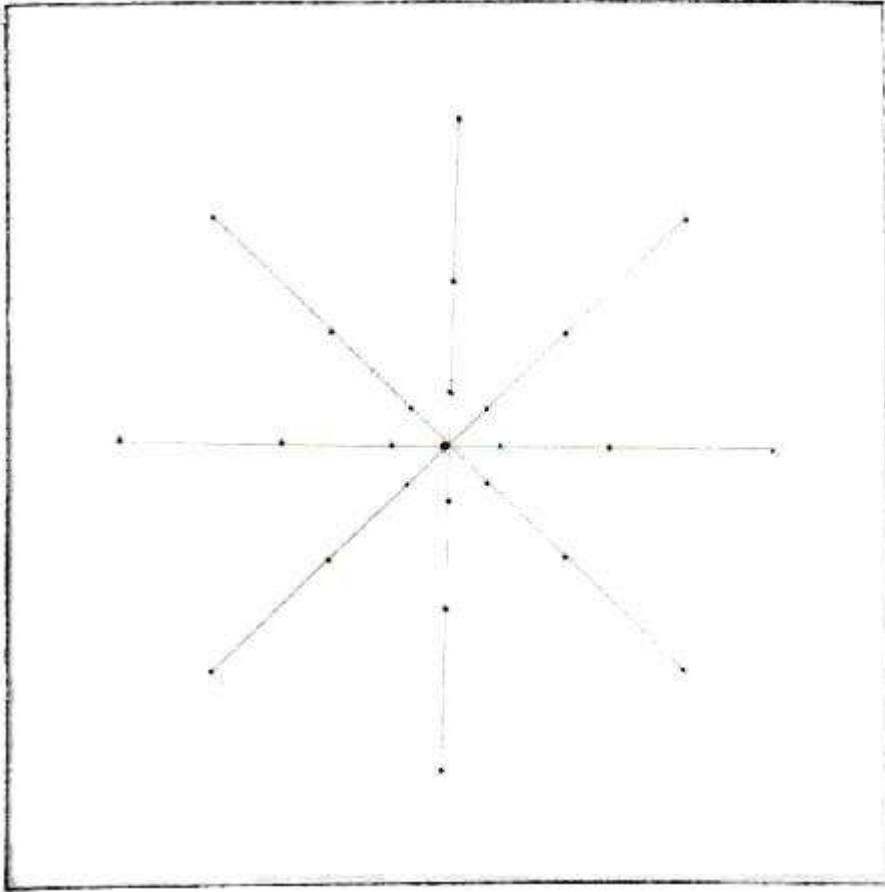


Now that you've drawn your dots, it's time to connect them. Draw a straight vertical line connecting the dots that go up and down, and a straight horizontal line connecting the dots that go one either side. See above for an example of this step in how to draw a mandala.

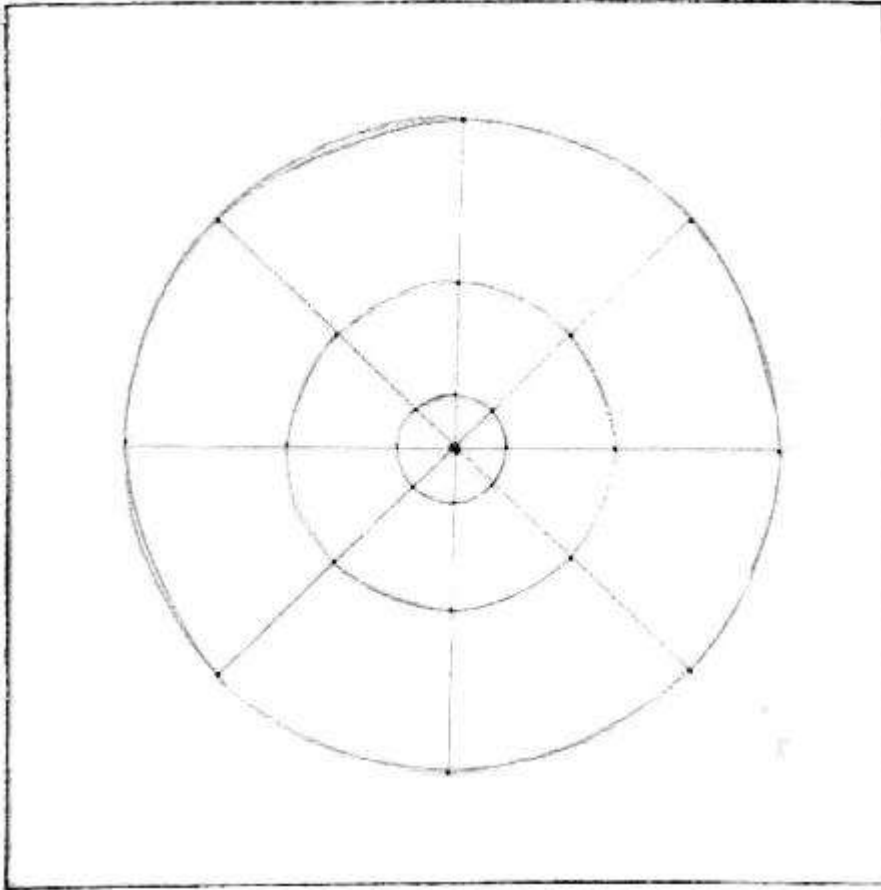


Next, draw another series of dots at the same distances from the center as your first series of dots. See the example above. The yellow arrows point to where the new row of dots will be located. Try to make them at a 45 degree angle to the perpendicular lines.

Draw four rows of dots, making a large x shape. See the example above.



Next, use your ruler to connect the dots you just made. Now your picture should look like the picture above.

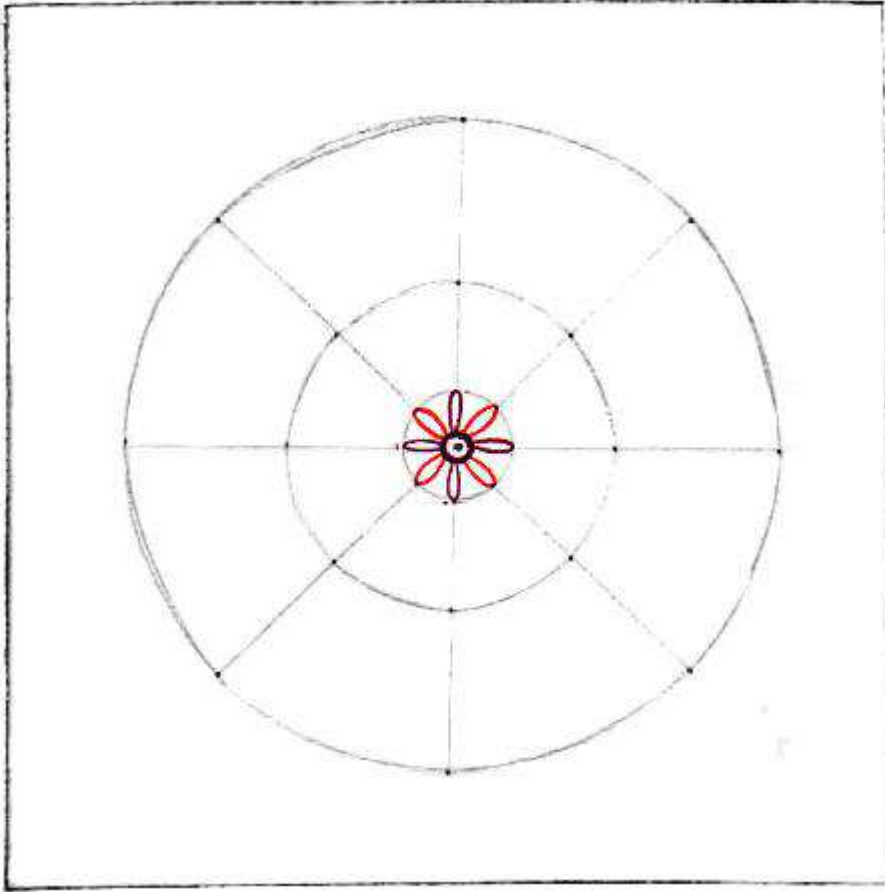


Now you'll want to connect the dots into circles. To do this, start at one dot, and draw a curved line to the next dot, and so on.

Don't worry about making the circles "perfect". We're not worried about perfection here! Just take it one step at a time, going from dot to dot.

It's okay if you make mistakes. In the example above, you can see 2 instances in the outermost circle where I made a mistake the first time around. If this is your first time learning how to draw a mandala, trust me - it will be even easier the next time you do it.

Just make sure you draw lightly enough that you can easily erase any mistakes.

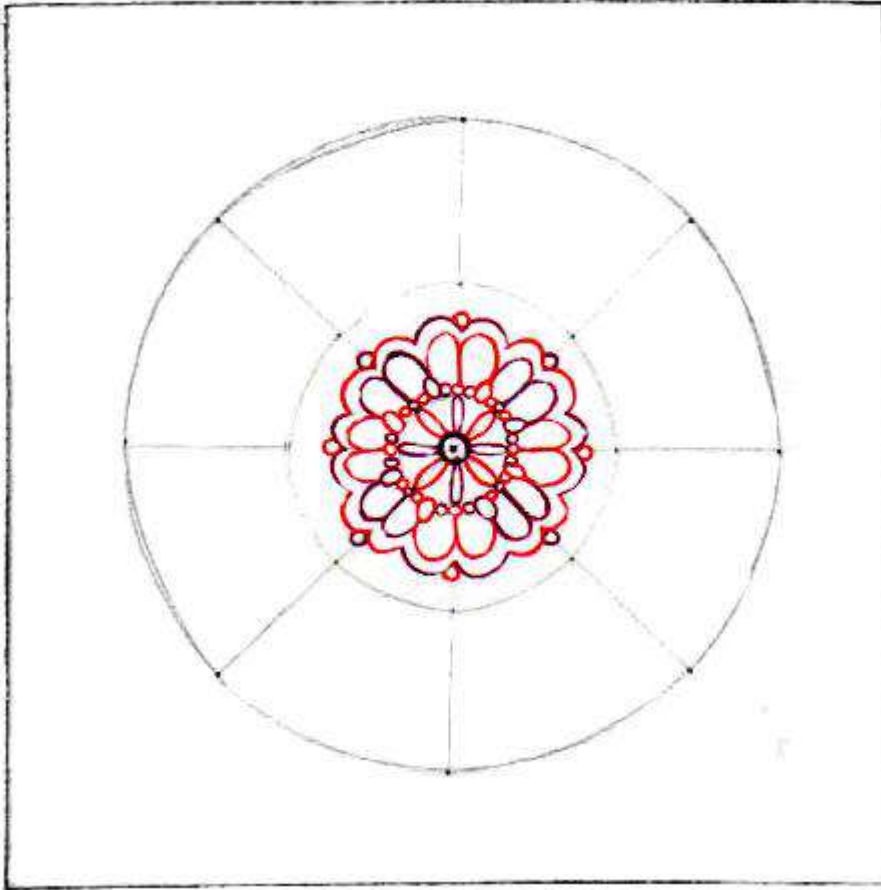


Now that you've drawn the basic outline for your mandala, you can begin drawing designs in your mandala!

You can use a pencil, colored pencils, ink, crayons, or whatever you choose.

I chose to use two different colors of colored pencil to draw in my design.

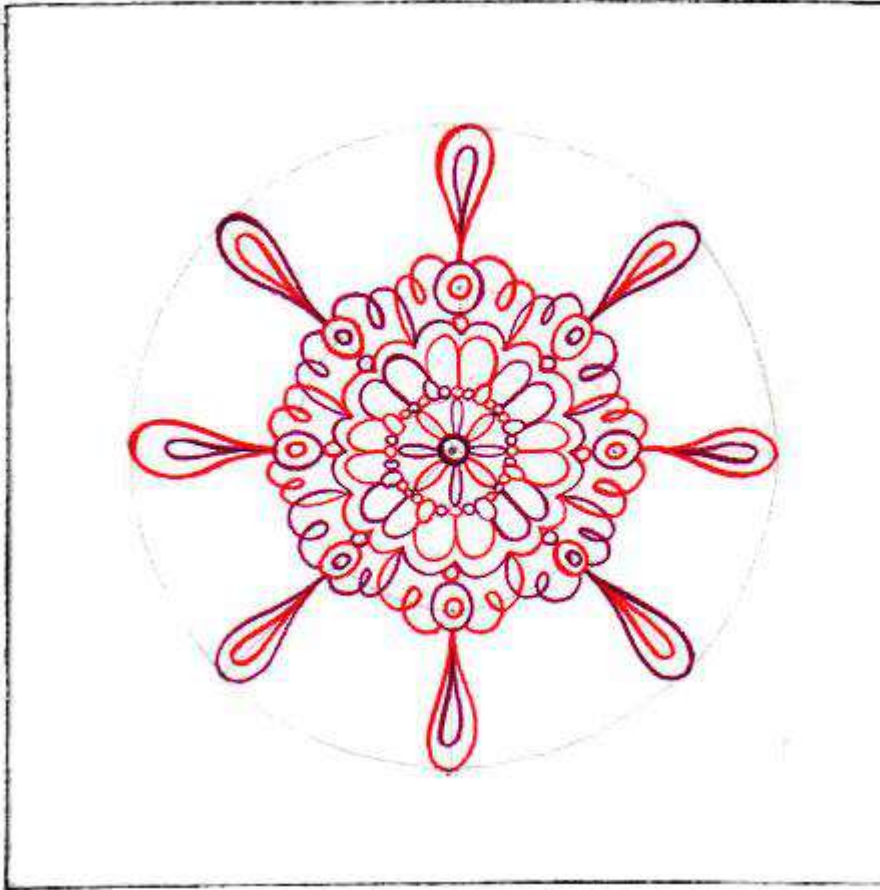
You can start from the center, or you can start from anywhere where you feel inspired to make some marks.



Using the lines and circles you drew as guidelines, you can draw shapes like circles, triangles, raindrops, loops, etc.

The important this is to repeat your pattern. For example, if you draw a circle on one of the lines, be sure to draw it in the same spot on the other lines.

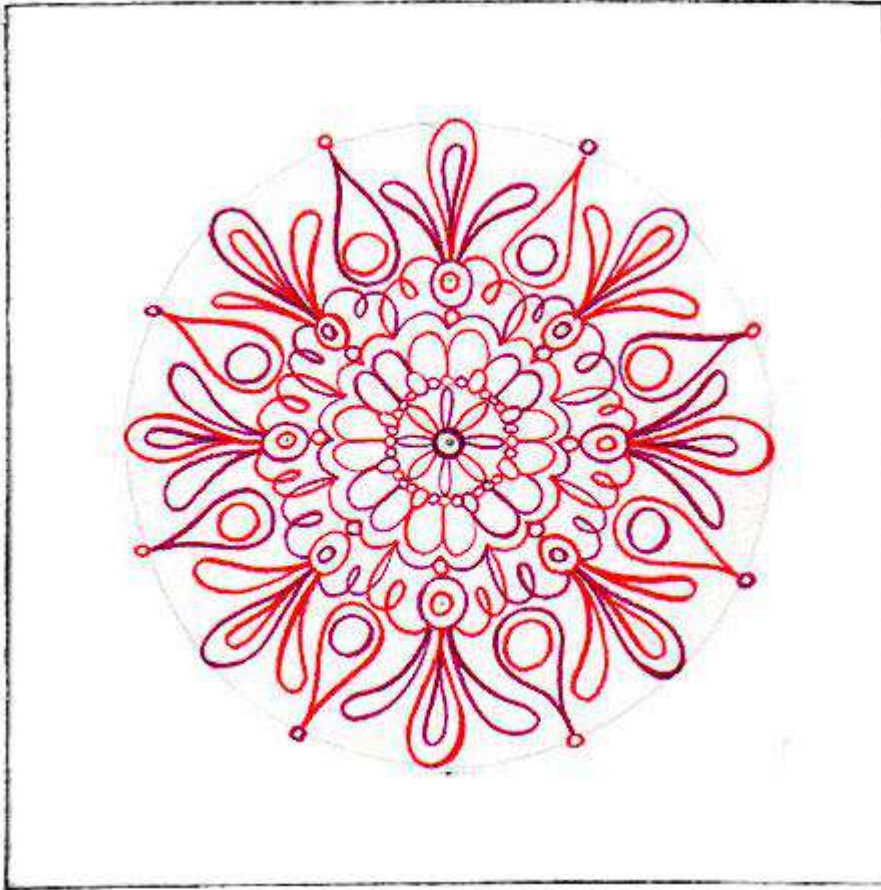
This creates repetition, which is a key element in creating a mandala.



As you draw more and more designs, your mandala will start to look more complex.

The key is to take it slowly, drawing one shape at a time and going around the whole circle drawing that one shape in the right place.

Then you build on that shape by drawing other shapes around the circle in the same manner.



Here is how the mandala looks with all the designs drawn in. Pretty cool!

You can leave your mandala just like this, or you can choose to color it in.

I decided to color my mandala with watercolors...