

Mandala is a Sanskrit word that means "circle" which represents wholeness or completion. A mandala is a spiritual and ritual symbol in Hinduism and Buddhism representing the center of the universe which is a point of ultimate consciousness. The circular design symbolizes the idea that life is never-ending and everything is connected. The mandala also represents a spiritual journey within the individual viewer.

The mandala's purpose is to help transform ordinary minds into enlightened ones and to assist with healing. When a mandala is created it becomes a window for exploring one's inner self. It is used for insight, healing, and self-expression in a circular design, reflecting the wholeness of the person creating it.

Creating Your Mandala

Take time to consider the reason for creating a personal mandala. The layout and design of your mandala will vary depending on your underlying purpose. Mandalas incorporate a variety of shapes, from circles to stars, hearts, flowers and animals. A simple mandala can be made with repeating shapes that you find appealing, but for a more meaningful mandala you will want to choose images and shapes that represent your goals, desires, and values.

Consider the meaning of some common symbols to determine if they belong in your mandala.

- **Circles:** Circles can represent eternity or the infinite. In religious terms, a circle symbolizes unity, wholeness and protection. It can also symbolize the sun.
- **Triangles:** Triangles represents the trinity – either the Christian trinity of the father, Son and Holy Ghost or the trinity of body, mind and spirit. Triangles with the point facing upward may symbolize spiritual growth, while those with the point down make represent the physical world.
- **Flowers:** Flowers typically represent life and renewal.
- **Leaves:** Leaves and vines often represent eternity or rebirth.
- **Hearts:** Hearts are the universal symbol of love and compassion.

Color is of particular importance in Buddhist art, as the concept of enlightenment is often represented by "pure light," or the encapsulation of all the colors of the rainbow.

- **White:** Openness, Peace, Contemplation, Faith
- **Red:** Power, the Life Force, Memory
- **Yellow:** Humility, Nourishment, Effort
- **Blue:** Infinity, Purity, Life, Wisdom, Healing
- **Green:** Nature, Balance, Meditation
- **Gold:** Sun, Fire
- **Black:** Darkness, Everything and Nothing