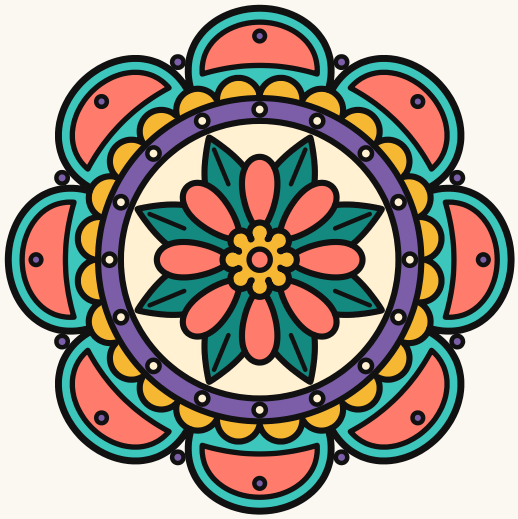
How to Draw a Mandala

12 easy steps for beginners



What you'll need

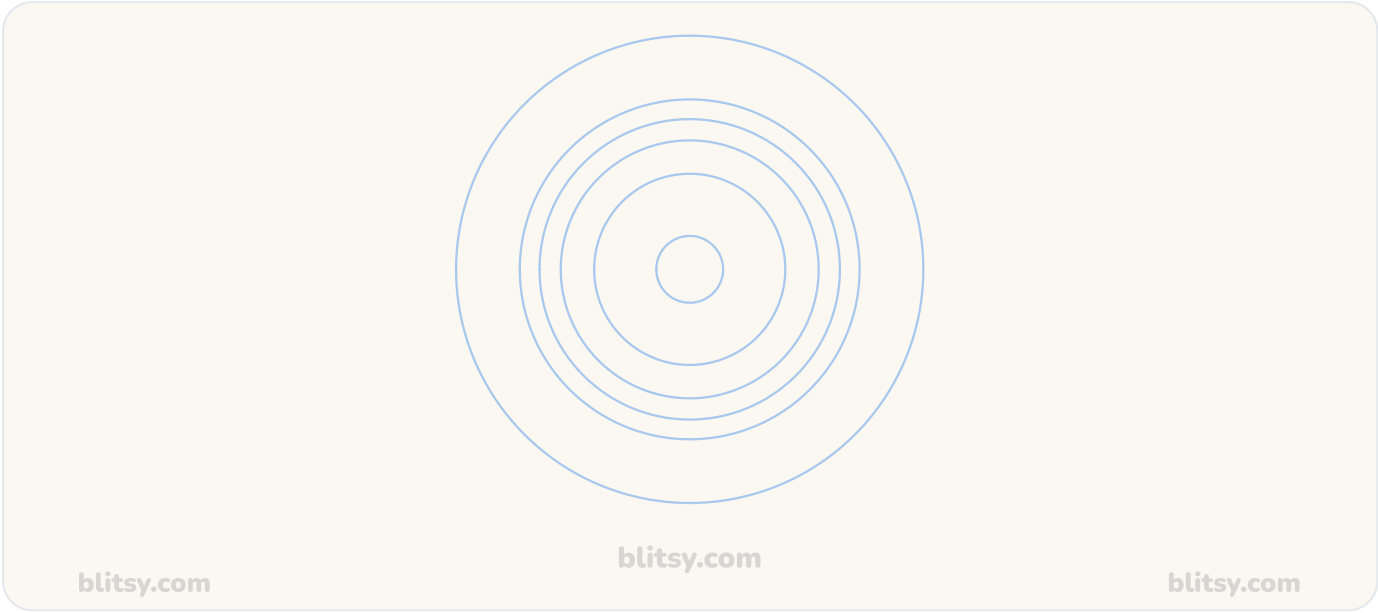
- A pencil and eraser
- A compass or round objects to trace
- A ruler
- A black fineliner
- Colored pencils or markers

How to use this guide

New lines for each step are shown in **blue**; lines you already drew are gray. Draw lightly first, then ink and erase near the end.

Read the full tutorial online →

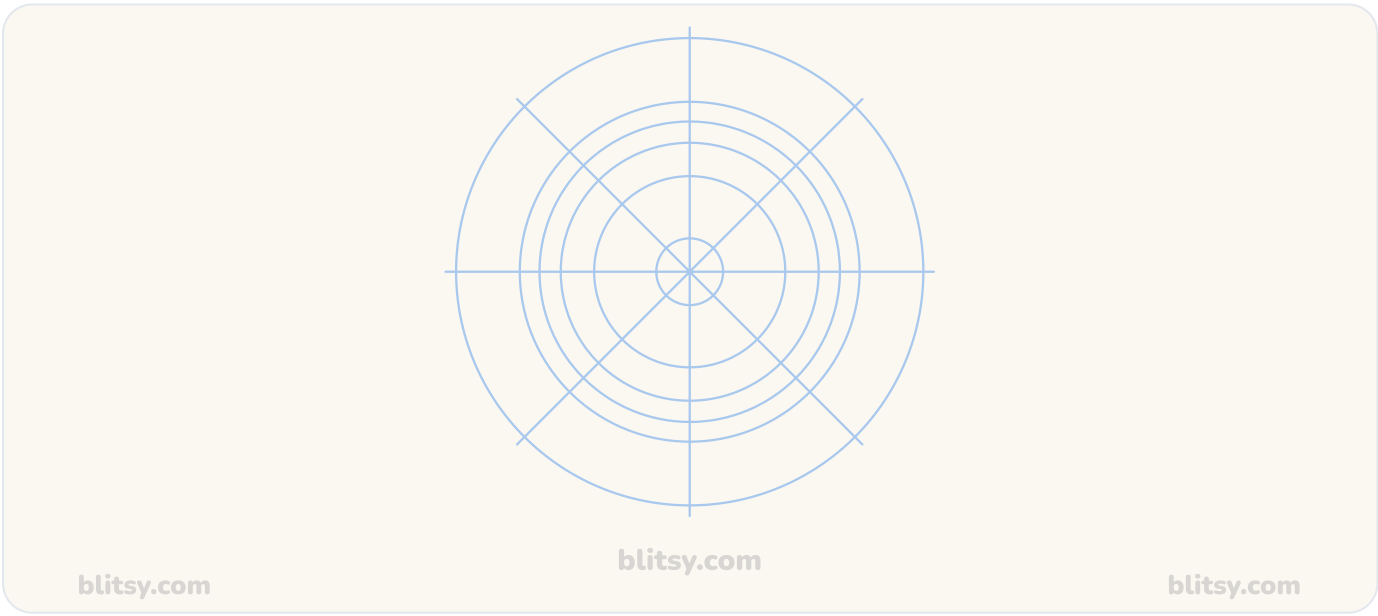
STEP 1 Draw six guide circles



Mark a dot in the middle of the page. Draw six circles around it, very lightly: a tiny one in the center, a medium one, then three close together, and one big circle near the edge of the paper. Keep the three close circles only a finger width apart.

💡 **Tip:** Use a compass if you have one. Freehand circles drift, and a lopsided circle throws off every ring after it.

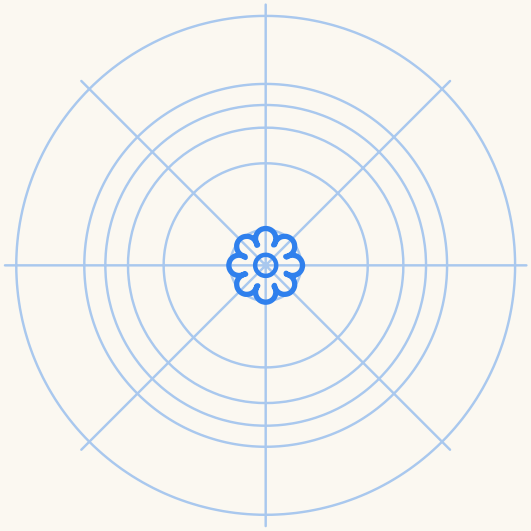
STEP 2 Add eight spoke lines



Lay your ruler across the center dot and draw a line straight up and down, then one straight across. Next, draw two diagonal lines through the middle, halfway between the first two. That gives eight spokes, like pizza slices. I line up every later shape with them, and that's what keeps a mandala even.

💡 **Tip:** Fold the paper in half twice and then along the diagonals. The creases make perfect spokes without any measuring.

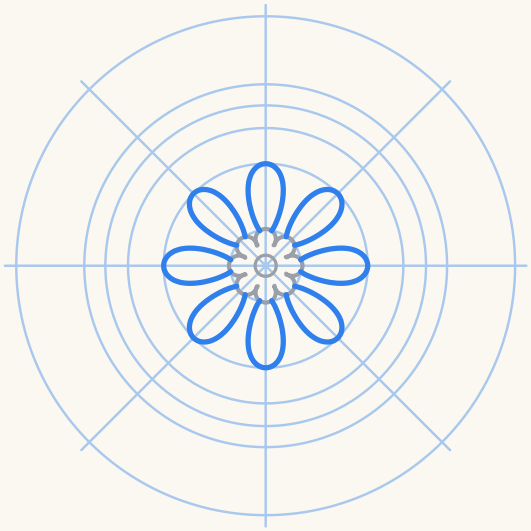
STEP 3 Draw a small flower center



Start with a small circle right on the center dot. Around it, draw a slightly bigger circle with eight little bumps, one bump on each spoke. I treat this tiny flower as a warm-up for the whole mandala, because it teaches the same habit you'll repeat later: one shape on every spoke, all the same size.

💡 **Tip:** I always place the four straight bumps first and fit the diagonal ones between them.

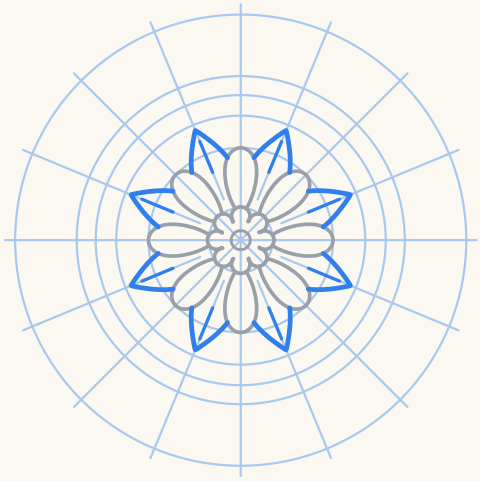
STEP 4 Add eight rounded petals



On each spoke, draw a petal that starts narrow at the flower and grows round at its tip, ending on the second guide circle. The spoke runs through the middle, so both sides should bulge the same. Leave a small gap between neighboring petals. Those gaps are where the next ring tucks in.

💡 **Tip:** Turn the paper as you go so you always draw the petal at the same angle. Your hand repeats a shape better than your eye does.

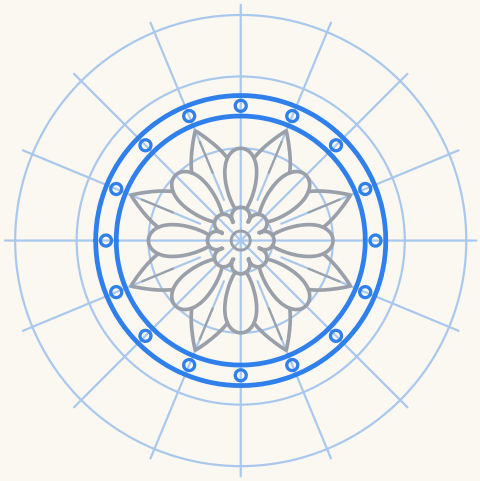
STEP 5 Tuck pointed petals between



Halfway between every pair of spokes, draw a light extra line from the center outward. On each of these new lines, draw a pointed petal that peeks out from behind the rounded ones, with its sharp tip reaching almost to the third circle. Only draw the part you can see: stop the line where it meets a rounded petal. Finish with a short center line in each point.

💡 **Tip:** Offsetting by half a step is the trick that makes rings look woven. Layered petals always alternate like this.

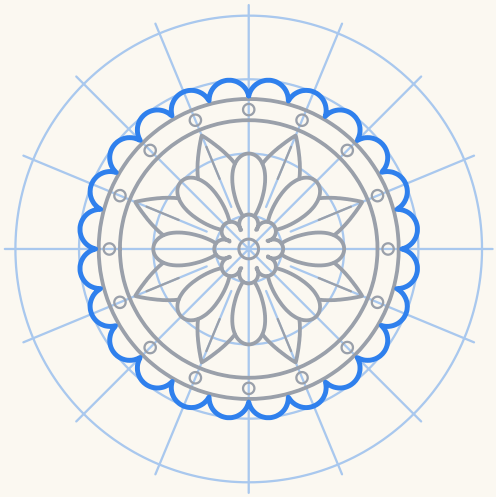
STEP 6 Draw a band with a ring of dots



Go over the third and fourth guide circles with firm lines to make a narrow band. Inside it, put a small circle on every spoke and on every halfway line, sixteen in all. Most beginners make the dots too big here. Keep each one well inside the band, with a little space above and below, so the band still reads as a clean stripe.

💡 **Tip:** Place the four dots on the straight spokes first. The rest then space themselves almost by eye.

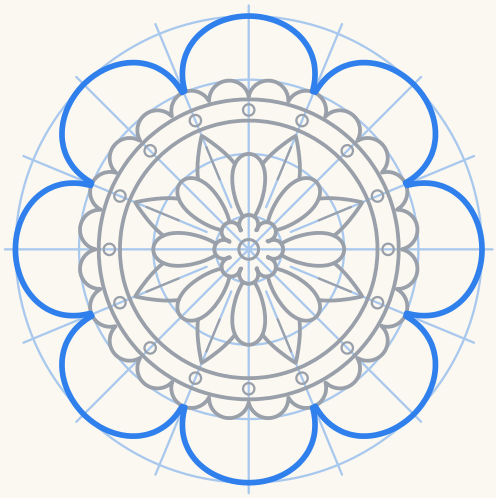
STEP 7 Add a scalloped ring



Around the outside of the band, draw small half-circle bumps that sit side by side, touching each other. Put three bumps between every pair of spokes. They should all reach the fifth guide circle, which keeps them the same height. One wide bump squeezes the others, so check each section of three.

💡 **Tip:** Mark the three bump centers in a section with tiny ticks before you draw any curves.

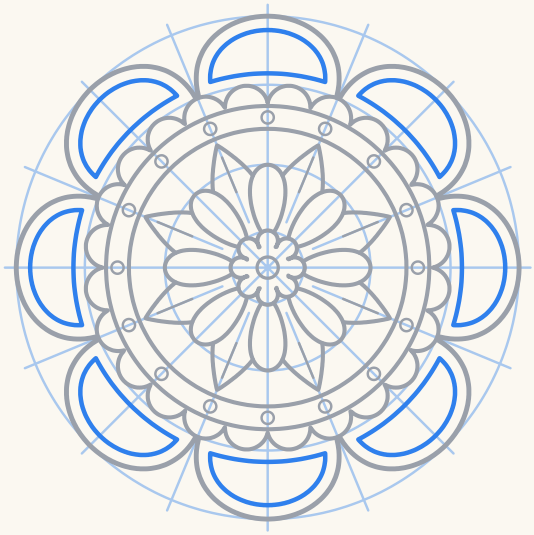
STEP 8 Draw the big outer petals



Now the largest shapes. On each of the eight spokes, draw a wide rounded arch that rises from behind the scallops and touches the outer guide circle at its top. Neighboring arches meet down at the scallops, so the edge of the mandala becomes a row of eight soft bumps. I draw the top and bottom arches first, because the gaps left over tell me how wide the diagonal ones should be.

💡 **Tip:** Each arch should cross the outer circle exactly once, right where its spoke hits it. That's your height check.

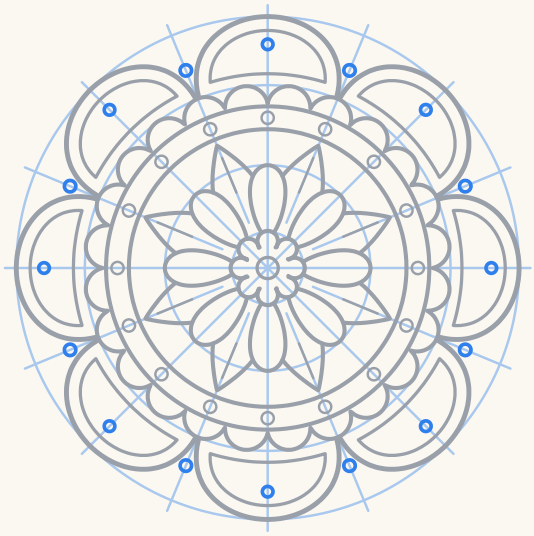
STEP 9 Draw arches inside the petals



Inside every big petal, draw a second arch that follows the outer edge about a finger width in. Close it at the bottom with a gentle curve that follows the circles. It gives each petal a border and two areas to color. Keep the border the same width all the way around each arch.

💡 **Tip:** Slide your little finger along the outer edge as you draw, as a built-in spacer.

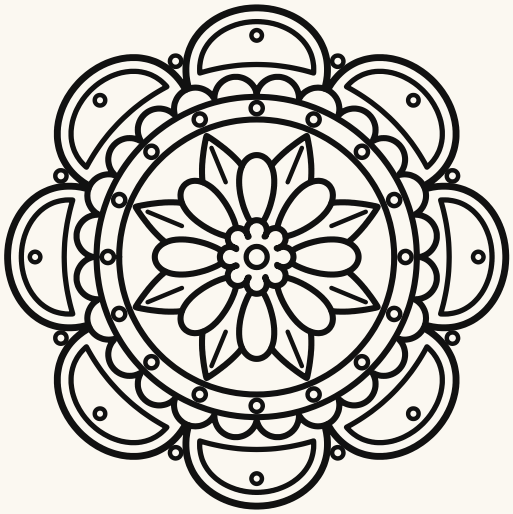
STEP 10 Sprinkle tiny accent dots



Add one small dot inside each inner arch, sitting on the spoke near the top. Then put a dot in each gap between two big petals, just outside the scallops. These dots add detail without making it busy.

💡 **Tip:** Twist the pencil slightly as you draw a tiny dot. It comes out rounder than a quick circle.

STEP 11 Ink the lines and erase guides



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Trace every keeper line with a black fineliner. Skip the guide circles and the spoke lines. Wait a few minutes until the ink is dry, then erase all the pencil, and the mandala suddenly looks clean and finished.

💡 **Tip:** Ink from the center outward so your hand never rests on fresh lines.

STEP 12 Color it one ring at a time



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Color ring by ring, using the same color for every shape in a ring. Our palette goes gold in the middle, coral petals, teal points, a cream circle, a purple band with cream dots, gold scallops, then turquoise petals with coral arches. My rule is warm, then cool, then warm again, so each layer stays easy to see. Go around the whole ring before you switch pencils.

💡 **Tip:** Color the darker rings last so the dark pigment doesn't smudge into the light ones.