

Making Mandalas in the Sand



What does it involve?

Heading down to a beach / sandy spot to draw or carve a pattern in the sand.

Areas of the 5 Ways to Wellbeing

Notice – slowing down and really focusing on what you can see, and what you're doing.

Active – by getting out and walking (however short a route from the car!) to the sand and by walking around and creating the pattern, you are being active. You can increase this by walking further and spending longer making either many mandalas or a mandala of greater size.

Other information



Requires a fair level of mobility



Family friendly – if you really get into it, why not add to the piece with pretty shells/stones



Time dependent – check the tide to ensure there will be enough sand and that the location is safe to visit. This also works best on wet sand, so low tide ...on a hot day may not work as well



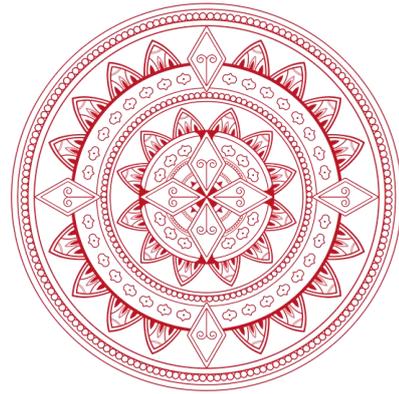
Free!



Time slot – half an hour

What are mandalas?

Mandalas are a traditional Buddhist ritual, also appearing in Hindu and Jainism. The word itself means 'circle.' They serve two purposes; either a visual representation of the universe or a guide for meditation, and they can be constructed in two ways; either painted on wood/fabric/walls or made out of a temporary material such as sand. The temporary mandalas take weeks to make, and once finished are ceremoniously destroyed, and the sand/stone filings are released back to nature via a river or similar.



What do I need?

- Half an hour
- A sandy beach with wet sand and enough space from the changing tide
- A pebble or stick to carve with (usually found)

How to do it...

Find a fair sized area of relatively undisturbed wet sand and a suitable pebble or stick for drawing in the sand. It's easier to start from the inside of your shape, so start with a simple circle or square, and add to the design in a symmetrical fashion expanding outwards.

Don't be afraid to repeat elements of the design as you get further out. Dots, small circles, semi-circles and lines are all suitable. If you get really into it, there's no harm in adding small pebbles and shells from the beach into the design, just stick to natural and found objects.

As long as you are concentrating on what you're doing and not thinking of anything else, you're doing well! Whilst traditionally the practice is taken very seriously and done very slowly with precision, it's about the process, not the end result. When you're finished, the sea will eventually reclaim the sand, wiping your design clear. It's a lesson not to hold onto things, but to accept that things change with time, season and tide.

Create as many mandalas as you feel like – it can become addictive! Just try to steer clear from criticism and competition – even with yourself, as that brings you out of the moment and the activity into a different headspace of judgement and striving. Instead try to notice the thoughts with curiosity and come back to the sand and continue making marks.