



Tibetan Mandala Craft Activity Pack

Create your very own Tibetan mandala to represent the Buddha and his teachings, based on traditional sand mandalas made in Tibet.

You will need:

- This activity pack!
- A printer
- Plain paper
- Glue
- Froot Loops (colorful cereal)
- Colored pencils



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Discover Tibet

The cultural homeland of the Tibetan people is the **Tibetan Plateau**. This is the world's highest and largest plateau. It is often called "The Roof of the World." The Himalayas mountain range is at the southern edge of the plateau.

In 1951, the Chinese army took control of Tibet. Today, the Tibetan Plateau is divided between the **Tibet Autonomous Region** and other regions of China, but many Tibetans want Tibet to be an independent country.



<https://www.map-of-china.org/relief-map.htm>



<https://www.tibettour.org/tibet-map/tibet-regional-maps.html>

Mount Everest, the tallest mountain in the world, is here!

Tibet AR Fact File

Capital: Lhasa

Languages: Tibetan
Mandarin Chinese

Population: 3.2 million (about half the population of Indiana)

Size: 474,300 square miles (13 times the size of Indiana)

Glossary

An **autonomous region** is part of a country and can make some of its own decisions, but is not independent.

A **plateau** is a high area of land that is quite flat, like the Colorado Plateau in North America.

"TIBET" in Tibetan script...

...and in Mandarin Chinese.

བོད་
西藏

Find out more!

- Using a world atlas or a globe, can you find China / Tibet / Lhasa / Mount Everest?
- Go to Google Images and search for "Tibet animals." What kinds of animals can you find on the Tibetan Plateau?
- Visit the Free Tibet website to learn about the struggle for Tibetan independence: <https://freetibet.org/>

Buddhism in Tibet



[myself](#), [CC BY-SA 3.0](#), via Wikimedia Commons

Watch this short cartoon of Buddha's life:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nsN7NLs-0jl>

Who was the Buddha?

In the 5th century BCE (2500 years ago), Siddhartha Gautama was born. His family was rich, but Siddhartha looked around him and saw that life was full of hardship. He understood that money and pleasure were not the way to true happiness, so he left the easy life behind to live a life of **meditation** and teaching. He taught that you can only be truly happy if you are content with what you have and show **compassion** to all living creatures. After his death, he became known as Buddha, which means "Awakened One" or "Enlightened One," and people who follow his teachings are called Buddhists.

What about Tibetan Buddhism?

More than a thousand years after Siddhartha Gautama Buddha lived, the rulers of the Tibetan Empire brought Buddhism to Tibet. Today, Buddhism is kept alive in **monasteries** like this one. Buddhist **monks** live away from the outside world. They spend their time studying the Buddha's teachings, meditating, and praying.



Glossary

There are different kinds of **meditation**, but a person who meditates is often sitting quietly, thinking about a question or an idea, and looking for answers.

Compassion is seeing other people's pain and unhappiness and showing them kindness.

A **monastery** is a place where monks live. A **monk** is a man who has decided to live a simple life of prayer. There are monks in many religions, including Christianity.

What is a Mandala?



At special events, monks often create mandalas. These are geometric pictures usually made from colored sand. They help people understand the Buddha's teachings and how to be more like him.

First, the monks use a compass and a ruler to draw the outline of the mandala.



Then they use a special tool called a chakpur. They fill the funnel with colored sand and use it like a pen to fill in the details of the mandala.

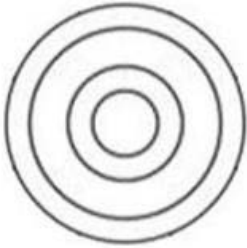
The many colors and symbols come together to create a masterpiece!



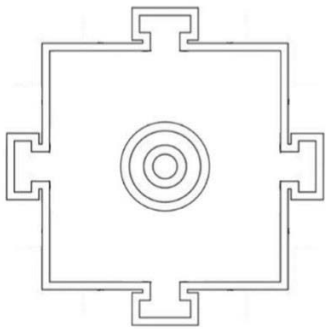
Watch a mandala being made:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GA3su0ECdPc>

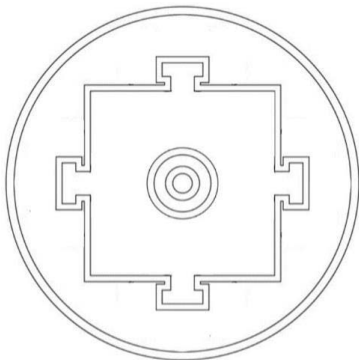
Some Mandala Symbols



The inner circle shows where the Buddha lives in the temple and represents the **pure*** mind of the Buddha. The outer circle represents the Buddha's teachings.



The next layer represents the four gates of the Buddha's temple. It shows the way to achieve the pure mind of the Buddha.



The last circle represents wisdom and compassion. These are what you need if you want to enter the temple and reach enlightenment.

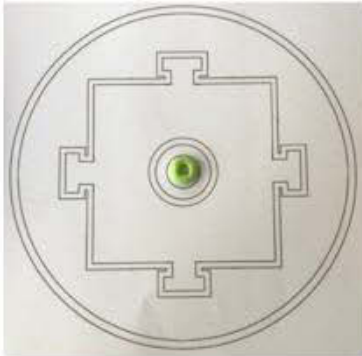


You might also see the lotus flower, a symbol of pure body, speech, and mind.

***pure** means perfectly clear, clean, or good.

How to Make Your Own Mandala

1. Print off a mandala template.
2. Glue a Froot Loop on the inner circle to represent the Buddha.



3. Glue a ring of Froot Loops around the second circle to represent the Buddha's teachings.



4. Take colored pencils and draw the **eight** petals of the lotus flower that represent pure body, speech, and mind.



5. Outline the temple and its four gates with alternating colors of Froot Loops.



6. For the final outer circle, add alternating colors of Froot Loops to represent the flames of wisdom and compassion.



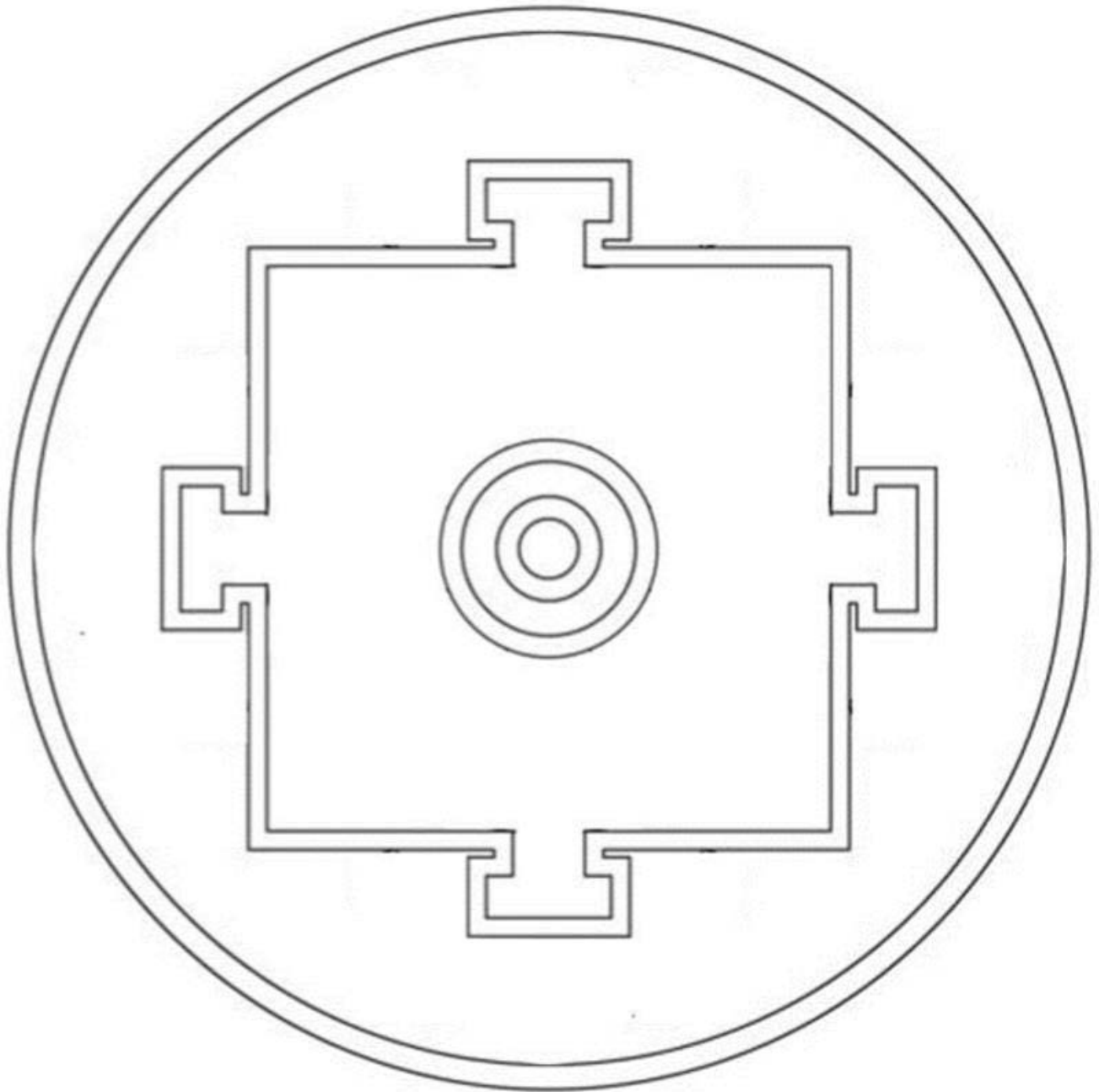
7. Lastly, color the rest of the mandala as you like.



You could do the coloring first and stick the Froot Loops on after if it is easier. Also, you could give your mandala some sparkle by adding glitter!

My Tibetan Mandala

Name: _____



Follow-Up Questions

1. Discover Tibet

- a. What is the Tibetan capital and what languages do they speak there?
- b. What is another name for the Tibetan Plateau?

2. Buddhism in Tibet

- a. What did the Buddha say is the secret to being happy?
- b. How is Buddhism kept alive in Tibet?
- c. What activities do monks participate in?

3. What is a Mandala?

- a. What are mandalas made from?
- b. What three tools are used to make a mandala?

4. Some Mandala Symbols

- a. What does the innermost circle represent?
- b. What does the outermost circle represent?