
DOTTING *with* FRIENDS



SUNSET MANDALA

Hi! This is Shalene from Dotting with Friends! I'm so glad you found my website and that you are interested in getting started with dot mandalas!

This is a very simple beginner-friendly mandala that will fit easily onto a 4x4 mini-canvas or piece of cardstock. And this guide will give you some of the same tips and tricks that I provide in my other patterns. But don't let the simplicity of this mandala fool you! You will be practicing many of the same elements that are common to most dot mandalas!

After completing this mandala, you will have practiced:

- Creating uniform dots with rods
- Walking the dots with styluses
- Creating teardrops with a rod and mechanical pencil
- Placing top dots over the base dots and teardrops
- Creating dots that are spaced evenly and symmetrically

SUPPLY LIST FOR 4-INCH SUNSET MANDALA:

If you are brand new to dotting, you are going to need some tools. Dotting is not an expensive hobby – you will be using the same tools over and over again. If you do not have any of these tools, I have included links to purchase from Amazon. I am an Amazon Associate, so these are affiliate links and I will receive a small commission should you choose to purchase with them – thank you!

Supplies:

4x4 canvas board or cardstock	Cotton Swabs and small cup of water
Dotting tools	Damp paper towels
White watercolor pencil	Damp rag
Paint Palette	Mechanical pencil

Paints:

These are the paints that I used – you do not have to use EXACTLY these paints, but the consistency is important.. more about that soon! I don't provide the Amazon links because the prices are so much better at your local craft stores. And you can use any colors you prefer or have on hand, but this is what I used (all paints are **DecoArt Americana paints** – the consistency is great!):

Iris	Royal Fuchsia
Purple Pizazz	Tuscan Red
Canary Yellow	Black
Orange Canyon	White
Magenta	

Dotting Tools:

Most dotting kits include similar items: Rods and styluses. Rods are long and acrylic and have flat ends of the same size at both ends. Styluses have two different steel balls at each end. Most also include a set of styluses with huge balls on the ends – those are really not useful for dot art, they are better suited for working with clay. I always discard mine.

DO NOT USE THE SMALL WHITE PENCILS THAT COME IN THE KITS – THE LINES WILL NOT COME OFF.

Optional but handy tools:

Lazy susan	Stencils
Arm rest (if your hand shakes)	Flow aid for proper consistency
Wrist rest (put on top of the arm rest)	

GETTING STARTED:

Prepping your surface:

If you are using a white canvas or canvas board, I would recommend painting the surface black. You can use either a flat-ended paintbrush or a foam brush. Save some of this paint to go over possible drips or mistakes that you can't wipe up with the cotton swabs.

Now use a stencil to draw on your guidelines. This pattern uses an 8 segment design. If you don't have a stencil, you can always draw lightly from corner to corner with a ruler to find the center of the canvas. Then draw a vertical and horizontal line in the middle of the canvas. Then use a compass to draw concentric circles to aid in keeping your dots even. The spacing of the circles isn't as important as just keeping the dots at the same level. Trust me, the stencils make life so much easier!

Paint consistency:

The ideal consistency for dotting is something like a thin cake batter or yogurt. Definitely thicker than water! If your dots are too thin, they will slowly spread out and come into contact with one another. Paints that come out of a tube are generally too thick, unless you're going for the Hershey's kisses look with your mandala. Sometimes people do have peaks when dotting rocks, but generally, you want your paint to just form a light peak when you stir it and then flatten out slowly go down flat again or possibly with a small mound. Generally, peaks mean your paint is too thick.

Using the rods and styluses:

Do not hold your rods like a pencil; you want the flat ends perfectly even with the canvas, so hold the rod very straight up and down with all fingers on one side and the thumb on the other. The styluses can be held like a pencil, since the ball is the same surface no matter how it comes into contact with the paper.

Other Tips and Tricks:

- The most important thing about dotting is to take your time and to dot slowly – especially as you are developing a rhythm for dotting.
- To have consistent sized dots, remember to dip your tool in the paint between each dot.
- To achieve a tapering effect, dip your tool several times, building up paint, then dot in a line without re-dipping your tool. We call this “walking the dots”
- “Kiss don't squish” – you get better shaped dots if you allow the paint to flow off the tool rather than mushing your tool on the surface.
- Be sure to use enough paint! If your dot's surface is rough, either you squished the tool or your paint is too thick
- Remember – distance is our friend! If you look at your work from a few feet away, your eye takes in the beauty of the symmetry rather than any slight imperfections that we tend to see when looking at our work very closely.
- To create a teardrop, put several layers of paint onto a dot to build up a nice mound, then use a mechanical pencil to drag down to create a tip. Then go back and fill in the sides.

I hope you enjoy painting this Sunset Mandala. Please explore my Dotting with Friends website (it's a work in progress!), Facebook and Instagram pages for more patterns for purchase and information about [upcoming classes at the 577 Foundation!](#)

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach me at shalene@dottingwithfriends.com.

Thanks, Friend!

COMMON DOTTING TOOL CONVERSION CHART

Diameter	Amazon Tools	DIY Mandala	Hapy Dotting Company
0.5 mm		1	0.5
1 mm		2	1
1.5 mm		3	1.5
2 mm		4	2
2.5 mm		5	2.5
3 mm	Small Clear	6	3
3.5 mm		7	3.5
4 mm	Medium Clear	8	4
4.5 mm		9	4.5
5 mm	Largest Clear	10	5
5.5 mm		11	5.5
6 mm	Purple	12	6
6.5 mm		13	6.5
7 mm		14	7
7.5 mm		15	7.5
8 mm	Blue	16	8
8.5 mm		17	8.5
9 mm		18	9
9.5 mm		19	9.5
10 mm	Pink	20	10
10.5 mm		21	10.5
11 mm		22	11
11.5 mm		23	11.5
12 mm	Yellow	24	12
12.5 mm		25	12.5
13 mm		26	13
13.5 mm		27	13.5
14 mm		28	14
14.5 mm		29	14.5
15 mm	Green	30	15

Step	Tool	Paint	Directions
1	Green Rod	Iris	Place your center dot
2	Large Clear Rod	Canary Yellow	Place 8 dots, one on every other guideline, starting at 12 o'clock
3	Green Stylus, Large End	Canary Yellow	Place 2 small verticle dots between each of the dots from step 2
4	Purple Rod	Canyon Orange	Place a dot directly above the dots from step 3
5	Green Stylus, Large End	Canary Yellow	Make a triangle at the top of the orange dots from step 4
6	Blue Stylus, Large End	Canary Yellow	Load up the paint on the stylus, then dot all the way down each side of the dot
7	Blue Rod and Mechanical Pencil	Magenta	Starting at 12o'clock, place a dot above and between each of the orange/yellow petals. Go back a few times to build up the paint. Then drag the tail of the teardrop with the mechanical pencil and fill in the sides, leaving some space for walking the dots (see pic)
8	Green Stylus, Large End	Royal Fuchsia	Make a triangle at the top of the teardrops
9	Blue Stylus, Large End	Royal Fuchsia	Walk the dots down each side of the teardrop

ALLOW THE FIRST LAYER OF DOTS TO FULLY DRY BEFORE PLACING TOP DOTS

TD - 1	Blue Rod	Purple Pizzaz	Top dot the Iris center dot of step 1
TD - 2	Small Clear Rod	Canyon Orange	Top dot the yellow dots of step 2
TD - 4	Medium Clear Rod	Tuscan Red	Top dot the orange dots of step 4
TD - 7	Purple Rod	White	Tope dot the fuchsia teardrops of step 7