







ZENTANGLES

A Zentangle is an abstract, patterned drawing created in pen and ink.

Using the standard format of a 3.5-inch square tile, the artist creates a structured pattern according to his or her whim following a basic set of pen and ink guidelines and techniques. A special focus is on line/dot weight, spacing and density so that a wide array of values can be created.

Here are a few characteristics of a Zentangle and what I am looking for when you are evaluated.

- Each tile should not have an "up" or a "down" - it is **without orientation**. There is no definite direction you need to look at the square.
- The contents of each square should not be representative of any certain recognizable object; rather, it should be abstract. We call this type of art work "**Non-objective**" art. A simple thing to remember about non-objective art is that "nouns" are not drawn (no people, places or things)
- Each square in a Zentangle drawing should be completed in **black ink on white paper**.
- No two squares are identical.
- **Complex patterns with small pen strokes, variations in value and techniques take more time, but look more aesthetically pleasing and far more visually interesting!**
- Crisp, clear and controlled dots and lines are keys to success!
- Keep white areas of your paper clean! It is needed to create bold images with lots of contrast.

HOW TO MAKE GREAT ZENTANGLES

- 1) **Start with the right supplies.** The Zentangles are drawn on plain white, smooth, unlined paper. Paper is usually divided into 3.5" squares.
- 2) **Draw a border.** Use a pencil to draw a light square border around the edges of your paper. The pattern you make will be drawn inside the perimeter of the border.
- 3) **Draw a string or wire.** Take your pencil and draw a "string" inside the border. Your string can be a straight line or lines, curved line(s) or a squiggle that will lend structure to your design. The pattern you create will emerge according to the contours of your string. It should be a lightly-sketched, simple, abstract form that divides the border into sections.
 - *don't press down too hard with your pencil as you draw the string. It should not be visible once your Zentangle is finished. It is meant to serve as a guide for your pattern.*
- 4) **Start creating a tangle.** A "tangle" is a pattern drawn in pen created along the contours of the string/wire for guides. One Zentangle may have just one tangle, or a combination of different tangles. Use your pen to begin drawing whatever pattern comes to you - there's no right or wrong move inside a Zentangle.

As you work, keep the following in mind:

- Tangles should be composed of very simple shapes. A line, a dot, a circle, a squiggle, or an oval are all acceptable. Anyone can draw these simple things so anyone can learn to create Zentangles!
- Value can be added by applying pen and ink techniques for shading to the tangles. This adds complexity and detail to your work which generates more visual interest.
- Value can also be added by thickening line weight or filling in areas solid and leaving other areas with the white paper showing. This helps to create more depth and visual interest in your work.