

Zentangle & Doodling — Workbook

This workbook turns the course into hands-on practice. Each section matches a course module and mixes drawing exercises, fill-in worksheets, and checklists to build your tangle vocabulary, shading, and daily ritual. Work through it with a Micron 01 pen, a 2B pencil, a tortillon, and a stack of 3.5-inch tiles, and keep every page you complete as part of your dated practice record.

Foundations of the Zentangle Method

Internalise the materials and the 8-step ritual until starting a tile feels automatic.

Exercise: Read Three Tangles in the Wild

Find three patterned surfaces around you (brick, fabric, tile, foliage) and for each, sketch on scrap paper the single repeated unit and the order of strokes that builds it. The goal is to train your eye to deconstruct any pattern into one repeated stroke sequence.

- What is the smallest repeating unit of this pattern?

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- In what order would you draw the strokes of one unit?

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- Is this pattern grid-based, organic (flowing), or dimensional (overlapping)?
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Worksheet: My Minimal Kit Checklist and Notes

Record the exact supplies you have gathered so you can repurchase the same ones. Note substitutes where you did not use the official item.

Tile paper used (brand and gsm)

Tile size cut to (target 3.5 in square)

Black pen for linework (brand and nib size)

Pen for solid blacks (brand and nib size)

Shading pencil (grade, e.g. 2B)

Blending tool (tortillon, stump, or fingertip)

Total cost of kit

What I would change next time

Exercise: First Full 8-Step Tile

Complete one tile running all eight official steps in order, even if your tangle step is only simple lines and dots. The aim is the rhythm of the ritual, not a polished result. Sign and date the back when finished.

- Which step felt most calming, and which felt rushed?

- Where did the pencil border and string end up hiding in the final tile?

- How did it feel to commit pen marks with no eraser available?

Checklist: 8-Step Method Self-Check

- Paused for gratitude and a breath before drawing
- Placed four light pencil corner dots
- Connected dots into a light pencil border
- Drew a random pencil string dividing the tile
- Tangled sections in pen, one section at a time
- Added graphite shading after all pen work
- Signed discreet initials on the front
- Dated and initialled the back, then viewed from all four sides

Core Tangle Patterns

Build fluency in grid, organic, and dimensional tangles you can draw from memory.

Exercise: Nine-Box Tangle Drills

Draw a loose 3x3 grid on a tile. Fill the boxes with these nine tangles, one per box: Florz, Knightsbridge, Bales, Crescent Moon, Printemps, Mooka, Hollibaugh, Tipple, Cubine. Draw slowly, one stroke per breath, and rotate the tile for comfort.

- Which family (grid, organic, dimensional) felt most natural to you?

- Which tangle most exposed uneven spacing, and how could you slow down to fix it?

- Which two tangles would look good next to each other on a real tile?

Worksheet: Tangle Breakdown Cards

For each tangle you learn, fill in a breakdown so you can reproduce it from memory later. Complete one row per tangle in your library notebook or on an index card.

Tangle name

Type (grid / organic / dimensional)

Step 1 stroke

Step 2 stroke

Step 3 stroke

Step 4 or 5 stroke (if needed)

Where solid black goes (if any)

One tangleation idea

Exercise: Invent a Tangleation

Pick one tangle you now know and create at least two personal variations. For example, draw Tipple with squares instead of circles, or Hollibaugh with curved ribbons. Drawing your own variations is how you move from copying to owning a pattern.

- What single change did you make to the original tangle?

- Does your variation still feel related to the parent tangle?

- Would this variation work better as a filler or as a focal area?

Checklist: Tangle Fluency Check

-] Can draw Florz, Knightsbridge, and Bales without reference
-] Can draw Crescent Moon with at least two auras
-] Can coil a tight Printemps spiral and cluster several
-] Can sweep Mooka curves confidently from the wrist
-] Can layer Hollibaugh ribbons, stopping every behind line
-] Can fill awkward space with Tipple
-] Can stack Cubine into convincing 3D boxes
-] Have recorded each tangle as a breakdown card

String, Shading, and Composition

Design whole tiles using strings for structure and graphite for dramatic depth.

Exercise: Five Strings, Five Tiles

Make five quick tiles, each using a different string: a Z/S curve, a crossroads, a spiral, a grid string, and a random eyes-closed scribble. Fill each section with one tangle. Notice how the string alone changes the feel of the finished tile.

- Which string created the most interesting section shapes?

- Which string felt easiest to fill, and which was hardest?

- Where did the pencil string disappear into the pen work?

Worksheet: Shading Plan Worksheet

Before shading a tile, plan it here so your graphite looks intentional rather than smudgy. Fill this in for one composed tile.

Imagined light source direction (e.g. top-left)

Sections to shade along the border

Overlaps that need a cast shadow beneath

Crevices or spiral centers to darken

Areas left as pure white highlight

Where solid black anchor areas will sit

Blending tool used and direction (always dark to light)

Exercise: The Balanced-Tile Recipe

Draw an S-curve string making three sections. Fill one with a dark grid tangle (e.g. Knightsbridge), one with a flowing organic tangle, and leave the third mostly open with a scattering of Tipple. Shade the borders and every overlap, choosing one consistent light source. View the finished tile from all four sides.

- Does the tile have a clear dark area, a light area, and a rest area?
 - Does your eye flow across the tile, or snag on competing patterns?
 - Looking at all four orientations, which way reads best and why?
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Checklist: Finished-Tile Composition Check

-] Tile has at least one solid black anchor area
-] Heavy and light tangles are placed for contrast
-] Textures vary (grid, organic, and dimensional mixed)
-] At least one rest area gives the eye a pause
-] A single consistent light source was used for shading
-] Shading was blended dark to light, keeping clean highlights
-] Shadows added beneath overlaps for depth
-] Tile viewed and judged from all four orientations

Zendala Tiles and a Lasting Practice

Extend to radial Zendalas and lock in a sustainable daily mindful drawing habit.

Exercise: Build Your First Zendala

On a round tile or printed template, mark the center, draw three or four concentric rings, and divide into 8 equal wedges. Repeat the same tangle in every wedge of a ring before moving to the next ring outward, so motifs echo eight times around the circle. Printemps and Crescent Moon radiate especially well.

- How did repeating one motif eight times affect your focus?
 - Which ring was hardest to keep symmetrical, and why?
 - How did drawing in a circle feel different from a square tile?
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Worksheet: Mindful Drawing Ritual Setup

Design your personal ritual so the practice becomes a cue your mind recognises. Fill this in and post it where you draw.

Consistent place I will draw

Consistent time and minimum minutes (e.g. 10 min)

How I remove distractions (phone, sound)

My settling routine before the pen (e.g. three breaths + gratitude)

My pacing cue (e.g. one stroke per exhale)

What I do when my mind wanders

How I respond to a stroke I dislike (tangle over, do not erase)

Exercise: Seven-Day One-Tile Streak

Complete one finished tile a day for seven days, dating the back of each. On day seven, lay all seven tiles side by side and compare your first with your last for line confidence and shading. This streak builds the daily habit that carries the practice forward.

- What changed between your day-one and day-seven tiles?

- Which day was hardest to show up for, and what helped?

- Did any tile you almost disliked grow on you by day seven?

Checklist: Lasting-Practice Setup Check

- Started a dedicated tangle library notebook or card set
- Recorded at least eight tangles as step-by-step breakdowns
- Scheduled a consistent daily time and place to draw
- Set up a box or sketchbook to store and date finished tiles
- Tried one monotangle tile exploring a single pattern
- Completed a seven-day one-tile streak
- Kept tiles I disliked rather than discarding them
- Joined or bookmarked one community or weekly prompt source

Your Action Plan

1. Cut or buy ten 3.5-inch tiles and gather a Micron 01, an 08 pen, a 2B pencil, and a tortillon so you can start today.
2. Run the full 8-step method on one tile to learn the ritual, signing and dating the back.
3. Learn three tangles a week and record each as a breakdown card in a dedicated tangle library.
4. Drill grid, organic, and dimensional tangles in nine-box practice tiles until you can draw eight from memory.
5. Practice five different strings on five tiles to see how structure changes a whole composition.
6. Add graphite shading with a single consistent light source, blending every shadow from dark to light.
7. Compose a balanced tile using the contrast, variety, and rest-area recipe, then judge it from all four sides.
8. Build one Zendala on an 8-wedge grid, repeating each motif around the circle ring by ring.
9. Design and post your mindful drawing ritual, then complete a seven-day one-tile streak.
10. Review your dated tiles monthly to see progress, and keep adding one new tangle to your library each week.

