

Southbank Centre: Easter Rangoli Worksheet

About the artist

My name is Geetika Alok. I am a graphic designer and type designer. Born in India and currently based in London, I always had a love for creativity, right from a very young age. My earliest memory is drawing sketches, sitting next to my painter father. Following my interests in typography, I travelled to the UK in 2008 for my postgraduate studies at the Royal College of Art. As a designer, my work involves playing with shapes, colours and text to communicate clear messages and thoughts across to my audience.



What Is Rangoli?

Rangoli is a traditional floor decorative art that is practised in India. Women decorate their house and courtyard making beautiful patterns on the floor. These can be simple geometric forms, flowers, figures or

even elaborate designs crafted together by many people. Rangoli is usually created during religious occasions to welcome Gods or as an everyday ritual for a fresh start of the day.

Patterns are usually made with rice powder, coloured spices, turmeric, vermilion, petals and flowers, all of which will naturally degrade and won't harm the environment.

The history of Rangoli is ancient and can be traced back to 3000BC and archeologists have unearthed symbols like triangles and circles and found floral designs at altars.



U OK NO, patterns made with South Indian women

How to make Rangoli?

Rangoli can be created by anyone who loves getting imaginative! If you fancy creating rangoli, it's fun and can be created following simple steps. The guide below will help you get started making your own rangoli using materials you can find around the house.

Materials

Some ideas of materials you can use to make your rangoli are:

- Sand
- Pebbles
- Rice
- Salt

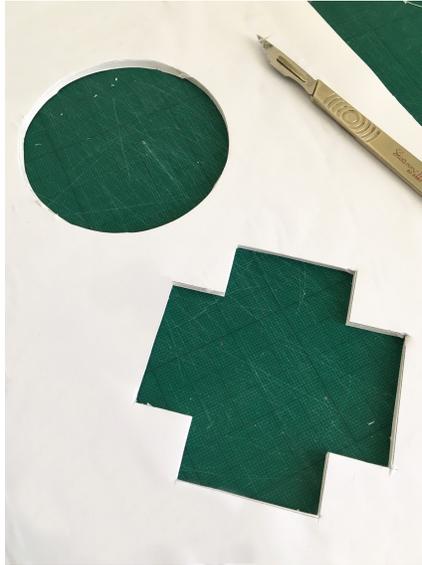
To make a stencil for your design you'll also need some cardboard. You could use a cereal or shoe box.

You'll also need a flat, hard surface such as a table, an area of your floor, or a tray. You can do it indoors or outdoors.

Step 1

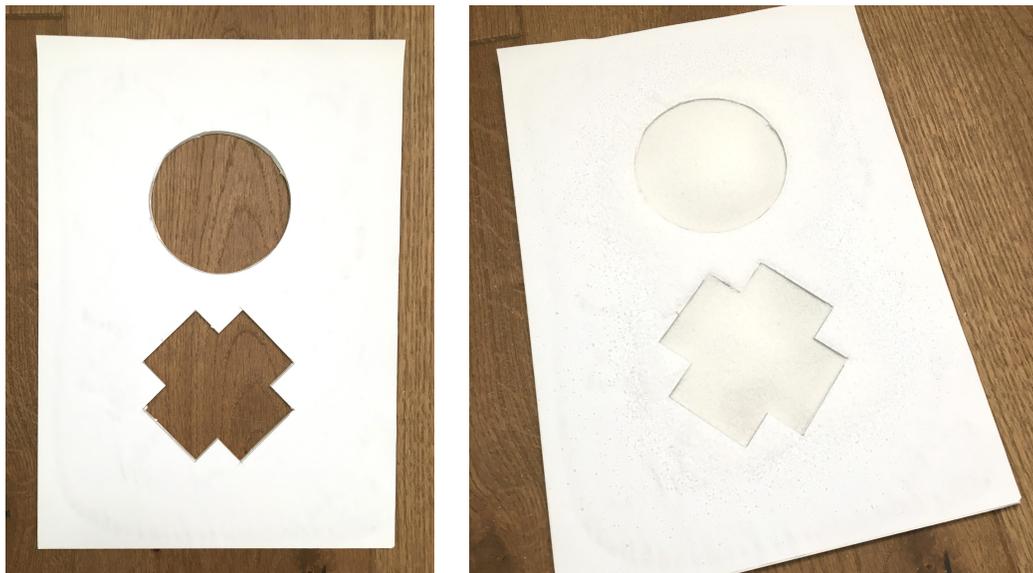
Think of a design that you'd like to create. It's a good idea to go simple to begin with, maybe a basic shape like a triangle or diamond.

Draw your design onto your piece card then carefully cut out the inside of your shape to make your stencil.



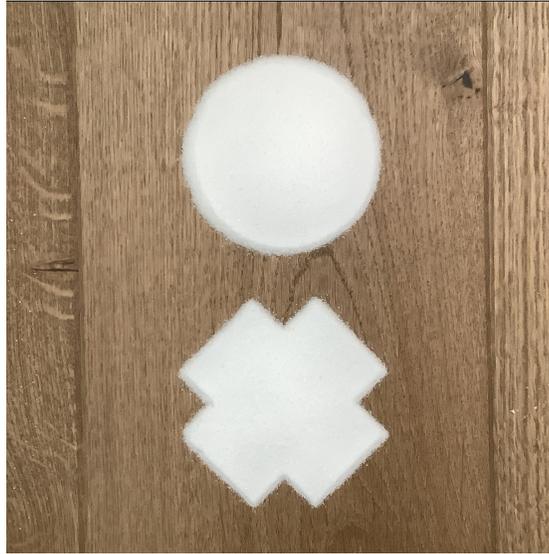
Step 2

Lay your template onto your surface and sprinkle your small objects into the shape. I chose salt to create rangoli this time.



Step 3

Lift off the template and you'll be left with your first Rangoli pattern. It's as simple as that!



Once you've created your first Rangoli you can start getting even more adventurous and creative. Here are some ideas:

- Using the same stencil try using different materials to make your Rangoli patterns with. How does it make the pattern look different?
- Try making some more exciting stencils for your patterns. You can put different shapes next to each other to cover a larger area and make a bigger pattern.
- You could make some stencils in the shape of letters of the alphabet. Why not try spelling out your name, or the title of your favourite song.

If you're feeling extra creative you can also have a go at creating rangoli without a stencil. I decided to use fennel seeds from my kitchen cupboard to create a design on my floor.



Some tips for this:

- You could use any material to create your freehand rangoli – lego, pebbles or even leaves. So many fun options.
- Make a sketch of your design before you start making it. This can help your idea for the design remain clear as you focus on making the Rangoli.
- Start with a small quantity of material to start creating the shape, then add more if you need it. It's much easier to manage this way.
- It's a good idea to use a brush or pencil to move the materials around to get your shape.

I hope you enjoy making your own Rangoli patterns at home this Easter. Being creative is a great way to self-care and look after our mental health.