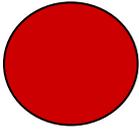


# SHAPES: A Kids Yoga Class

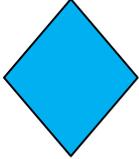


## Teaching Shapes with Yoga

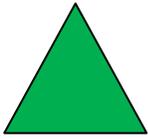


### Why Learn Shapes

Shapes are everywhere. They provide us with a way to organize and make sense of our world. Once you are familiar with basic shapes, you see them all around you. You begin to combine shapes to make other shapes.



Learning shapes is a fundamental ability for pre-school and elementary students. A solid foundation in recognizing and understanding shapes is conceptual glue for many math skills including geometry, graphing, percentages, fractions, algebra, computer graphics and more.



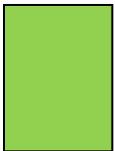
Shapes also assist with language learning as children distinguish straight lines and curved lines, patterns and repetition. Many children then transfer this knowledge to language, recognizing letters and words by their 'shape.'



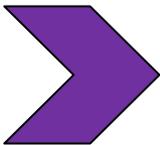
Familiarity with shapes improves spatial awareness and understanding. This impacts children's understanding of their location and the location of objects in relation to their own bodies. When a child has a firm grasp on spatial awareness they are better able to discuss locations, use comparative terms, measure distance and give directions.



Using yoga as a tool to learn shapes is fun, kinaesthetic learning at its best.

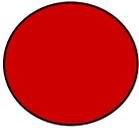


Children are able to become the shapes in various forms and sizes, using their hands, their bodies and their friends. This is an ideal way for children to experience and explore the world and move from non-verbal, physical understanding to abstract, mental comprehension. Performing shape yoga helps children grasp, internalize, and retain concepts in a creative and informative manner. In addition, using yoga to teach shapes improves communication, cooperation, problem-solving, creative thinking, analysis, observation and other skills key to success in school and life.

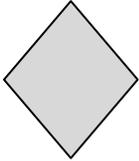


Shape yoga makes learning playful, novel and enjoyable: exactly what young children love. The booklet is packed with ideas on how to create shapes using yoga including mudrās (hand gestures), individual, partner and group poses, breathing exercises, mindfulness techniques, and a guided visualization. There are also numerous additional resources (games, music, crafts, books, flashcards) to support your shape yoga experience. Have fun and play shape yoga today!

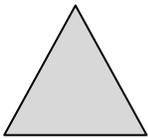
## Circle:



**Hands** – make a circle with your hands, tiny ones with forefingers to thumbs (look glasses), larger ones with both hands, even bigger one with arms reaching to touch overhead



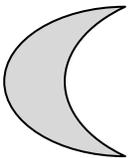
**Body** – to make a circle with our body sit cross legged, hands on knees. Circle your torso gently around and around, speed up, slow down, stop, make circles in the other direction.



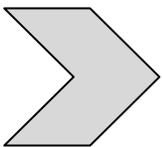
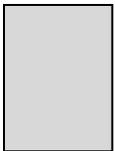
**Body** – extend your legs in front of you while seated. Draw circles with your toes gently going around and around, first one direction, and then the other. This is challenging for pre-school children and they may need some help.



**Body** – sit with your knees tight to your chest. Gently roll back and then forward, like a ball rolling on the floor. **Version II:** roll back and as you roll forward come all the way to standing without using your hands, then roll back onto the ground. The easiest way to do this is with legs crossed. Repeat.



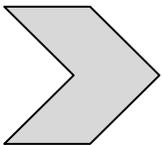
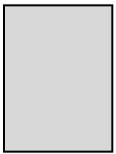
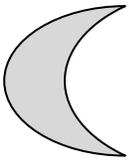
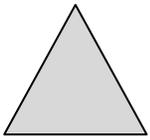
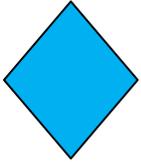
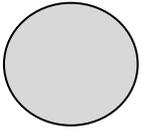
**Body** – kneeling on the ground tucked in tight, roll over to the right until you come back to your knees on the floor. Roll back to the left. **Version II:** Lie down and roll over to the right, back to the left. Rolling while extended is a higher level skill. **Partner Version:** You can also do this as a partner pose with two students lying on the floor, head to head, holding hands. Have them roll over together without letting go of their partner. They will have to roll in tandem, working together.



**Family Yoga Partner Pose** – Have children sit in parent's lap while both are sitting in Easy Pose/Criss-cross (sukhasana). Hang on and roll back and forth together, repeating numerous times. Kids love this and it's a great core workout for parents.



## Diamond:



**Hands** – make a diamond with your hands, fingers up, thumbs down. Make a wide diamond, then a narrow one by moving your hands further apart then close together while keeping contact with fingers and thumbs.

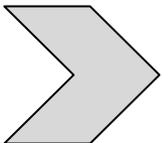
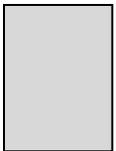
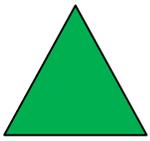
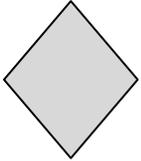
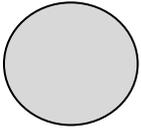


**Body** – sit in Diamond Pose with the soles of the feet together in front of you the knees bent out to the sides (an extended baddha konasana). Notice how your legs create a diamond shape. Bring the knees up toward one another for a narrow diamond, open your knees toward the floor for a wide diamond. Sparkle your diamond by lifting and lowering your knees repeatedly.

**Partner Pose** – sit facing your partner with legs wide, feet touching one another (wide angle forward fold), creating a diamond shape with your legs. Reach and grasp your partner's hands. Gently lean forward and back like a seesaw. Slowly make a circle with your hands within the diamond shape as if you are stirring a large pot of soup together. Switch directions and stir the other way.

**Family Yoga Partner Pose** – make a Down Dog Tunnel by having parents come on to hands and knees close to one another, shoulder to shoulder. In unison move into Downward Facing Dog (adho mukha svanasana). While parents hold down dog all the children crawl under the tunnel and out the end. Parents are free to tickle children as they pass under.

## Triangle:



**Hands** – make a triangle with your hands, fingers up, thumbs flat to form the base.

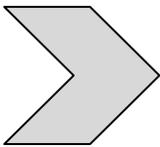
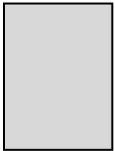
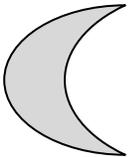
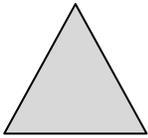
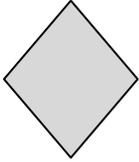
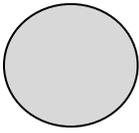


**Body** – Step 1 – while kneeling make a triangle with your arms by intertwining the fingers and bending the elbows, this is your rabbit hole. Step 2 – move into Rabbit Pose (sasangasana) by placing your arm triangle on the floor in front of you. Place the crown of your head in the ‘rabbit hole’ (arm triangle). Curl the toes and lift your hips by straightening your legs. Press into the floor with your arms and pull the shoulder blades down your back to provide lots of space for your neck.

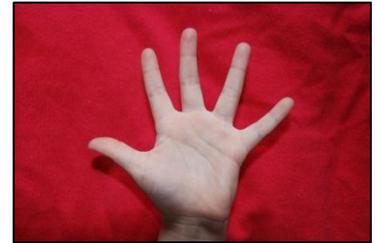
**Body** – make a standing triangle with Triangle Pose (trikonasana). Stand with legs wide apart. Turn one foot out 90 degrees. Extend your arms at shoulder height. Gently reach toward turned foot and allow your arms to tip over to touch your knee/shin/floor. Count how many triangles you have made with your body. Inhale and come up. Repeat on the other side.

**Partner Pose** – Double Triangle – stand back to back with a partner. Working together perform Triangle Pose (as above) and create a connection by placing extended arms one on top of your partner’s. Feel your partner at your back, lean gently toward them without toppling over. Come up and perform the pose on the other side.

**Star:**



**Hands** – hold one hand out and imagine a star in your palm. Gradually make your star shine: bright, bright, brighter. Back off a little (70% intensity is a safe zone). Discuss having a star within that shines brightly and that we share our light with others, that others follow our light.

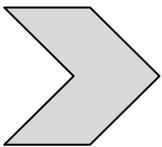
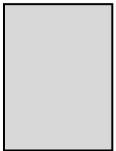
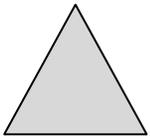
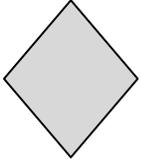
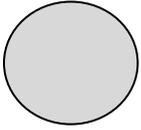


**Body** – stand tall with legs wide. Extend your arms at shoulder height. Count how many points are in your star (1 hand, 2 foot, 3 other foot, 4 other hand, 5 head). Twinkle your fingers, toes, eyes. Now sing *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star* while shifting your weight from side to side and lifting one leg at a time. Move slowly and with control. It is harder to do this slower and keep the leg raised for a moment, balancing on one foot. Enjoy this [Star Pose video](#).

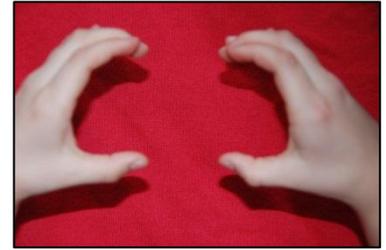
**Body** – lie on the floor and extend your arms and legs making Star Fish Pose. Stretch energetically out through the arms and legs, and then allow your body to soften and relax into the sea floor. Close your eyes and feel the waves gently wash over you, rising and falling.

**Listening Game** – Star Bright/Black Hole (Star/Circle): Make a 5 pointed star with your body while standing. This is the ‘Star’ shape. Then jump your legs together and curl your body over tight making a ‘Black Hole’ or ‘Circle’ shape. Repeat ‘Star’ and ‘Black Hole’ to acquaint the body with the shape. To play the game participants listen to the teacher as he/she says and demonstrates one shape at a time in a random pattern. The teacher does not necessary have to say and do the same thing. For example teacher says ‘Star’ but does ‘Black Hole.’ Students need to do the pose they hear, not what they see. Go slow at first, and then gradually faster. Soon everyone will be laughing. Discuss the power of our vision as the principal sense for informational input. Have students close their eyes and play the game again. Very few will make any mistakes once they remove the conflict between what they see and what they hear.

## Crescent:



**Hands** – using one hand at a time curve your fingers and thumb to make a gentle crescent shape

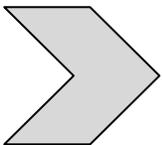
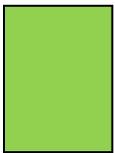
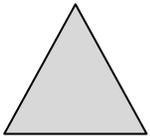
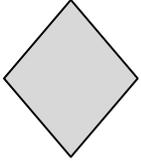
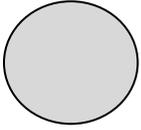


**Body** – while sitting in Easy Pose/Criss-cross (sukhasana) rest one hand on the floor. Reach the other hand to the sky alongside your head. On an exhale gently lean toward the hand on the floor while maintaining a nice long stretch from extended fingertips to the hip. Breathe. On an inhale come back to center. Repeat on other side. Do the pose a second time on each side. This time once you have settled into the stretch, roll your heart toward the sky, looking underneath your arm for the ceiling, keeping your raised palm facing the floor.

**Body** – stand with feet hip distance apart. Intertwine fingers, press palms away from you, straightening arms and lifting them overhead. Inhale extend up, exhale reach to one side making a lovely crescent shape by stretching the side body. Inhale back to center, exhale reach to the other side. Inhale back to center. Change how you intertwine your fingers to the awkward way with the opposite thumb on top. Repeat the pose on both sides.

**Partner Pose** – stand beside your partner. Hold hands. Reach the outside arms overhead and clasp hands each person creating a crescent shape to form a full moon. Twist by reaching your top hands down, bottom hands up, and then returning making your moon wax and wane.

## Rectangle:



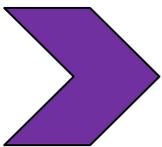
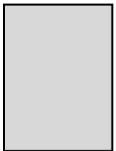
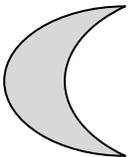
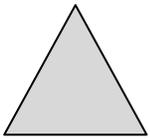
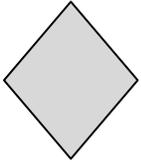
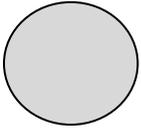
**Hands** – make an L shape with both hands, thumbs extended toward one another, fingers straight. Flip over one L and touch thumb to fingers, fingers to thumb. This is a challenge for young children and they may require additional assistance. Flip your rectangle horizontal and vertical.



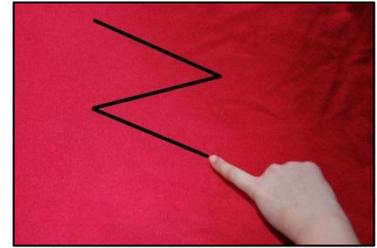
**Body** – make a rectangle by coming onto your hands and knees in Table Position. Make sure students can see the rectangle their bodies have made. Flip your rectangle by lifting one hand off the ground and reaching it behind you until it touches the floor. The feet will rotate until the soles come to the floor. Lift your hips off the floor into a Crab Walk Position. Really press into the ground with your feet and your hands to lift the hips and make a rectangle. Flip back.

**Partner Pose** – stand facing your partner. Grasp wrists. Begin to walk your feet away from one another as you hinge forward from the hips and extend the arms. Once your torso is parallel to the floor, lean away from your partner and breath into the pose.

**Zig Zag:**



**Hands** – raise your hand and using the index finger trace a zig-zag in the air back and forth from top to bottom, saying “zig, zag, zig, zag” as you go. Do it again using the same hand. Switch hands and repeat.

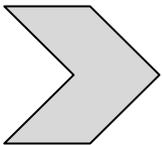
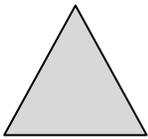
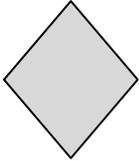
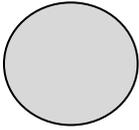


**Body** – lie down on your back with knees bent, feet close to hips. Slowly take the knees off to one side into a gentle reclined twist and say “zig.” Bring the knees back to center. Lower to the other side and say “zag.” Repeat slowly at first. Then gradually getting faster until everyone is giggling.

**Body** – standing with feet together, inhale and raise your arms overhead. Exhale and bend your knees as if sitting in an imaginary chair coming into Chair Pose (utkatasana). As you say “zig” reach up into your arms. As you say “zag” sink deeper into your hips. Repeat zig and zag lowering your hips more each time until you are seated on the floor.

**Partner Pose** – Double Downward Dog – have one partner come into Downward Facing Dog (adho mukha svanasana). The other partner will place their hands on the floor 12-18 inches in front of their partner. Gently lift one foot and place it on their partner’s lower back, finally raise their other foot to join the first, coming into a raised downdog. Hold for a few breaths. Carefully come down.

## Heart:



**Hands** – make a heart with your hand by curving the fingers together while reaching the thumbs down.



**Body** – standing in Mountain Pose (tadasana) on an inhale lift arms out to the side and overhead, gently bringing the tips of the fingers to the top of the head forming the top of the heart. Exhale lower the hands to your sides. Repeat mindfully.

**Body Awareness** – make a fist. That is the size of your heart. Ask students if they know where the heart is located in their body. Show them by placing your right fist on your sternum then tilting it slightly to the left.

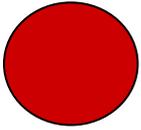
**Heart Rate Mindfulness** – place a hand on your heart or on your neck to see if you can feel your heart beating. Most often it is difficult to feel a resting heart beat. Have everyone stand up and begin to run in place. Start gently, pick up the pace, lift your knees high, kick your butt, and end with a 10-15 second sprint. Stop. Once again place a hand on your heart or your neck and feel your heart beating. This is easy after a little cardio. Discuss how your heart is a muscle that loves to be used. To keep your heart strong and healthy you need to have it beat hard for some time every day.

**Partner Breathing** – sitting back to back feel one another's breath move. Talk about how we are all connected through the breath, our heart beats, our life force, divine connection.

**Group Pose** – have students work together to create a heart shape on the floor using their bodies. The size of the heart will vary depending on the number of students. A minimum of 6-8 students is ideal. It's fun to take a picture of the completed heart then show it to students when they stand up. If desired you could print off copies and have each child write a heart filled message to someone they care about.

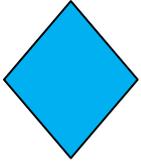


## Additional Resources

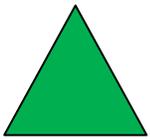


### Games

#### What Shape Am I



One person gives a clue to describe a shape, for example “My shape has three sides. What shape am I?” Someone else guesses the shape, “Triangle.” Add more clues, if needed, until someone guesses the shape. Everyone then practices the yoga shape. The next person does the same with another shape. Repeat shapes if the class is large.



#### Lost My Shape

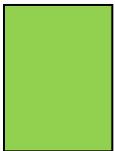
Have students sit in a circle.



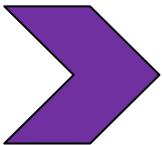
**Step 1:** Have 3-6 students (or more if you have a large group) in the middle of the circle each assigned a different shape using the shapes cards p.14-15. Show them the card and verify they know how to make it. Don’t make it with their body until the singing begins. **Step 2:** One other student is “IT” and he/she randomly picks one card from the shape cards used in Step 1. Don’t show it to anyone. This student skips/walks around the circle during Step 3. **Step 3:** Everyone sings to the tune of “Skip to My Lou”



Lost my shape, what do I do,  
 Lost my shape, what do I do,  
 Lost my shape, what do I do,  
 Skip to my lou, my darling.



During the singing students in the circle make their shapes while “IT” skips around. When the song is over “IT” picks the student from the middle to match their shape card.



#### Shape Tumbling



Using a number of mats create a tumbling line. If the class is large use two or three lines so students have more turns and less waiting time. Line up at one end of the tumbling line. Each student in turn will work their way down the mats combining any number of poses in any way they want. For example the first student may create a body heart, hand triangle, body rectangle, body crescent and hand diamond. Once they are done they move to the end of the line. The next student then begins their shape tumbling.

## Shape Patterns

In groups of 4-6 people have students create a pattern using shapes and their bodies. For example: student 1-hand heart, student 2-body star, student 3-hand heart, student 4-body star. Repeat a number of times encouraging variations and challenging patterns.

## Music

[Shapes](#) – Kiboomu

[The Shape Song Swingalong](#) – Steve Songs

[The Shape Song #1](#) – Super Simple Songs

[The Shapes Song](#) – KidsTV123, AJ Jenkins

[Shapes Song](#) – Dream English

## Crafts/Worksheets

Cool Kids Craft Ideas shapes

<http://www.cool-kids-craft-ideas.com/shape-activities.html>

<http://www.cool-kids-craft-ideas.com/shapes-crafts.html>

Crayola shape worksheets including mandalas

[http://www.crayola.com/free-coloring-pages/search.cfm?txt\\_search=shapes](http://www.crayola.com/free-coloring-pages/search.cfm?txt_search=shapes)

DLTK's shapes printables & worksheets

<http://www.dltk-teach.com/shapes/index.htm>

Education.com shapes in pictures – town, garden, outer space

<http://www.education.com/worksheets/?q=%22Shapes+in+Pictures%22>

Kids Learning Station worksheets

<http://www.kidslearningstation.com/preschool/teach-shapes.asp>

Kidsparkz printables & worksheets

<http://www.kidsparkz.com/shapes.html>

TLSBooks shapes worksheets

<http://www.tlsbooks.com/preschoolshapes.htm>

Printable Mandalas

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/lightwork-art/sets/72157624916446356/with/4974161164/>

Diamond Mandalas [http://www.amind.co.kr/bbs/board.php?bo\\_table=squaremandala](http://www.amind.co.kr/bbs/board.php?bo_table=squaremandala)

Heart Mandalas [http://www.amind.co.kr/bbs/board.php?bo\\_table=heartmandala](http://www.amind.co.kr/bbs/board.php?bo_table=heartmandala)

Square Mandalas <http://www.education.com/worksheet/article/make-a-mandala-14/>

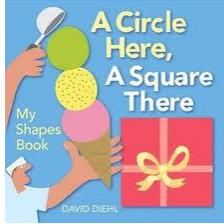
Star Mandalas [http://www.amind.co.kr/bbs/board.php?bo\\_table=starmandala](http://www.amind.co.kr/bbs/board.php?bo_table=starmandala)

Triangle Mandalas <http://www.education.com/worksheet/article/make-a-mandala-15/>

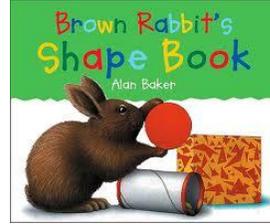
[http://www.amind.co.kr/bbs/board.php?bo\\_table=trianglemandala&wr\\_id=10](http://www.amind.co.kr/bbs/board.php?bo_table=trianglemandala&wr_id=10)

## Books

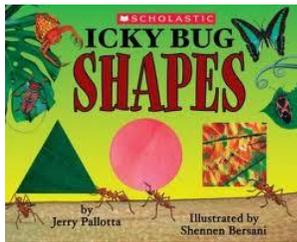
*A Circle Here, A Square There* by David Diehl



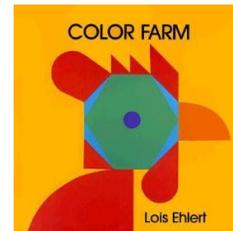
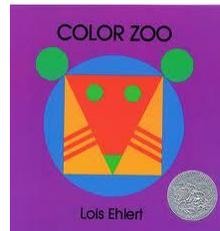
*Brown Rabbit's Shape Book* by Alan Baker



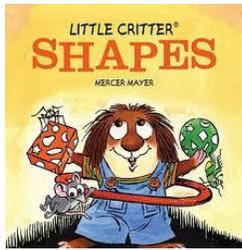
*Icky Bug Shapes* by Jerry Pallotta



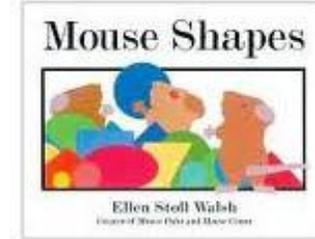
*Color Zoo and Color Farm* by Lois Ehlert



*Little Critter Shapes* by Mercer Mayer



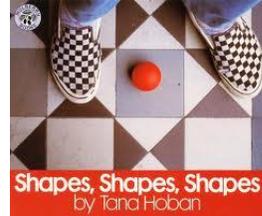
*Mouse Shapes* by Ellen Stoll Walsh



*Sea Shapes* by Suse MacDonald

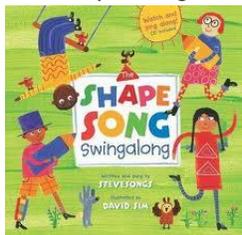


*Shapes, Shapes, Shapes* by Tana Hoban

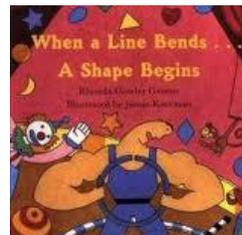


Maze printable <http://www.susemacdonald.com/mazeact.html>

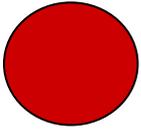
*The Shape Song Swingalong* by Steve Songs and David Sim



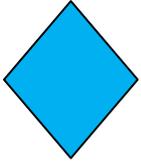
*When A Line Bends, A Shape Begins* by Rhonda Gowler Greene



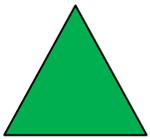
## SHAPES Guided Visualization



Rest in corpse pose. Inhaling and exhaling gently and slowly.



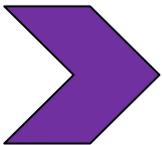
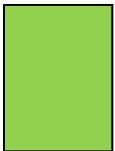
Imagine a large flat screen TV or movie theatre screen. In your mind's eye paint a circle on your screen. It can be whatever size and color you want it to be. Make your circle perfectly round. With your next exhale change the circle into a diamond. See the pointed corners or your brilliant diamond. Feel the texture of a cool, smooth diamond. Inhale, exhale and imagine a triangle with three straight sides and three corners. Allow the triangle to drift away and a star to float in. Let your star shine and twinkle brightly. Sense the energy that comes from deep within the star. With your next exhale make a crescent appear, gently rounded.



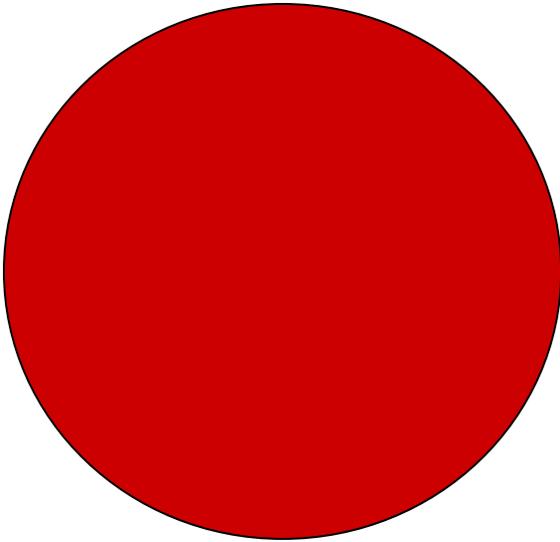
Next make a rectangle with two long sides and two short sides. Breathe deeply into your shape. Allow the rectangle to fade away and replace it with a zig-zag, darting from side to side across the screen. Inhale and exhale. Now draw a heart. Make it nice and big so that it can hold all the love you feel for yourself, your family, your friends and other's you have yet to meet. Now allow all the shapes to drift away, clearing your mind, resting in stillness, feeling the joy and peace in your heart.



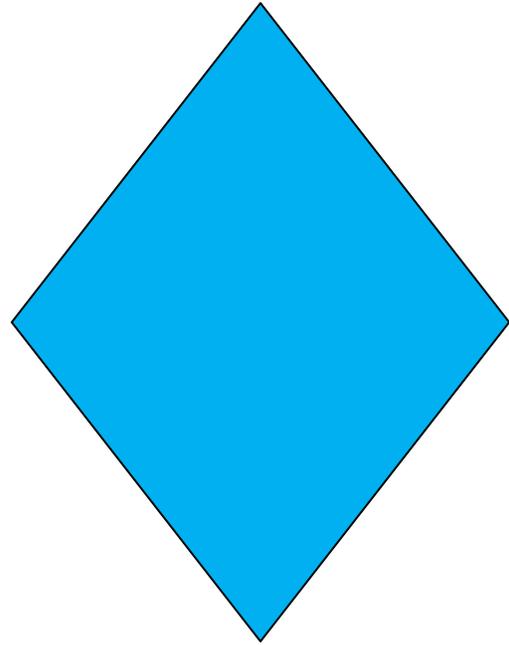
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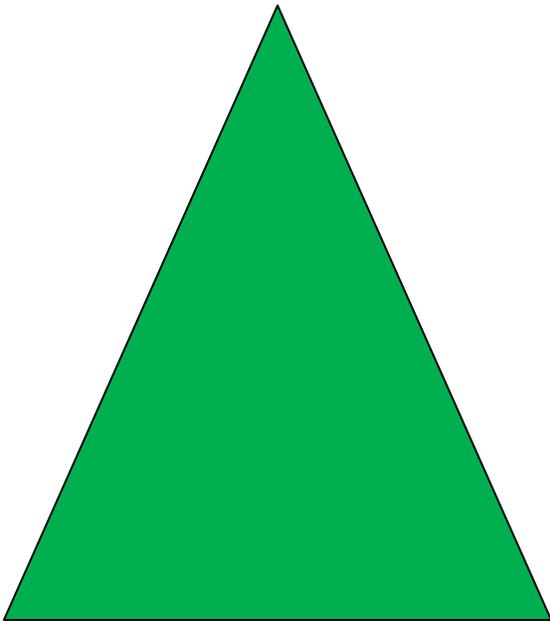
**Circle**



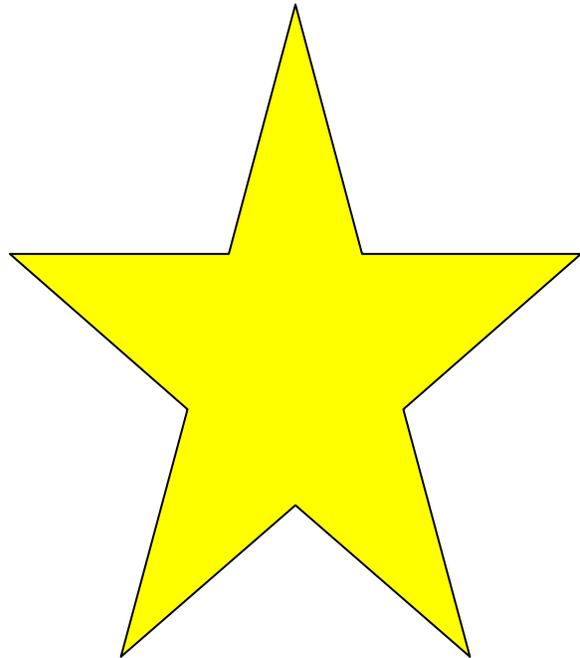
**Diamond**



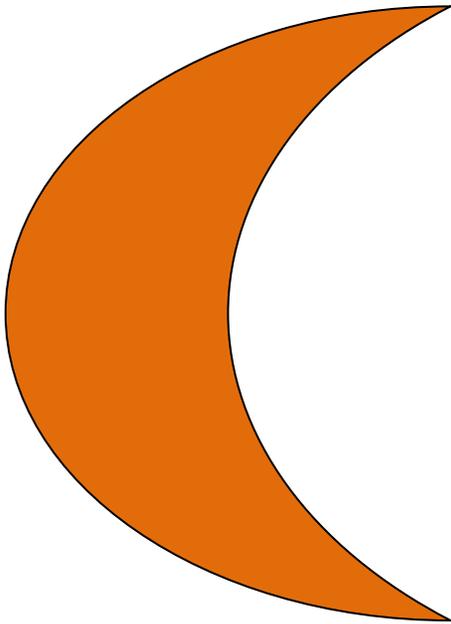
**Triangle**



**Star**



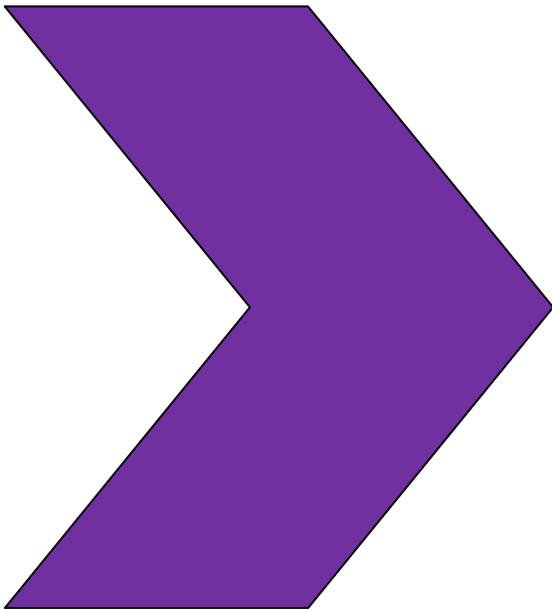
**Crescent**



**Rectangle**



**Zig Zag**



**Heart**

