

Creating a seamless pattern in Procreate

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Creating a seamless pattern in Procreate

An Edge activity guide

July 2024, Ellie Dumigan

Acknowledgement

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their continuing connection to land and as custodians of stories for millennia. We respectfully acknowledge the land on which we all meet today, and pay our respects to elders past, present and emerging.

Summary

Create a seamless pattern in Procreate in two different ways.

Skills Introduced

- Basic drawing skills
- Creating a seamless pattern with an illustration
- How to export this pattern

Seamless pattern way one



Creating a seamless repeated pattern with any kind of illustration or graphic.

Step 1

Create a new canvas and ensure it is square at 300 dpi. For this example, we are using a canvas that is 3000 pixels x 3000 pixels.

Step 2

Now, either draw or import your desired image into the canvas. This example uses an illustration created using the State Library Collection as a reference ([Link](#)). When importing or creating your drawing, keep everything within the canvas borders.

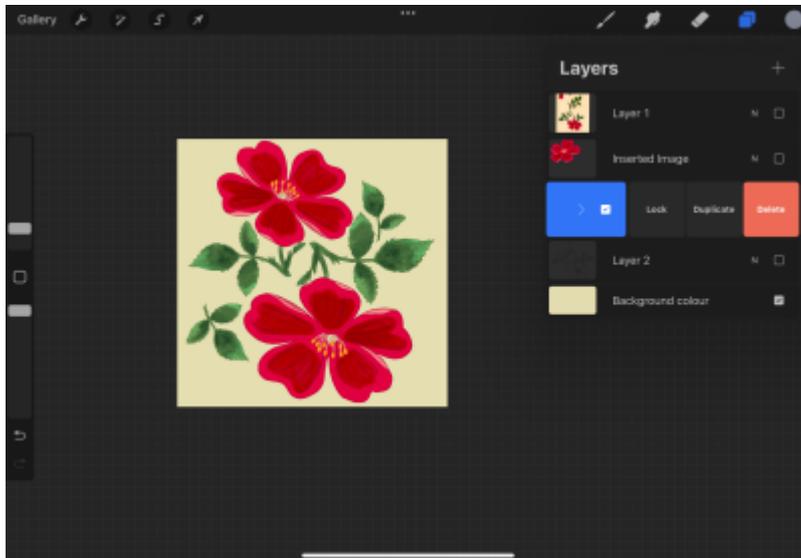
Ensuring that nothing goes over the canvas's edge will ensure a seamless repeat and make it easier for you.

Step 3

If you have multiple different drawings/graphics or elements, it is a good idea to group them all together. You can do this by swiping all the layers and clicking the group option in the layers menu.

Now you have created the basic layout of your drawing, and you want to keep this just in case as a backup. If you have multiple different drawings/graphics or elements, it is a good idea to group them all together. You can do this by swiping all the layers and clicking the group option in the layers menu.

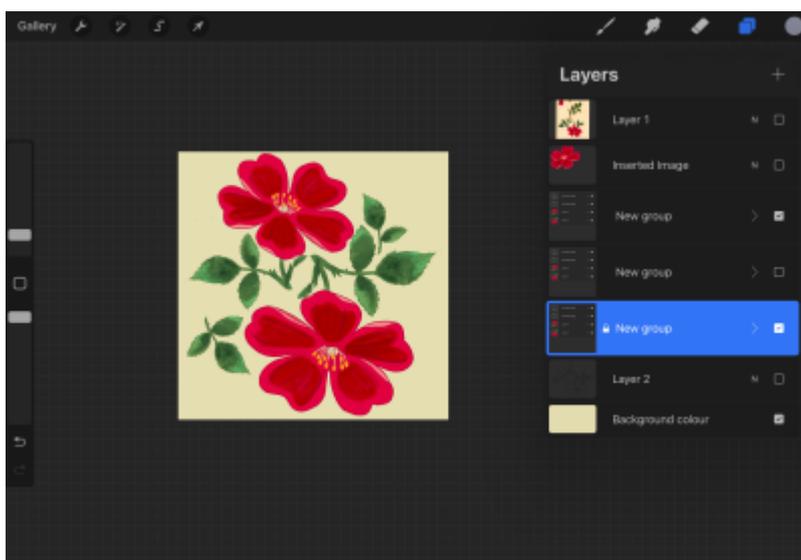
Now you have created the basic layout of your drawing, and you want to keep this just in case as a backup.



Step 4 - Creating the pattern

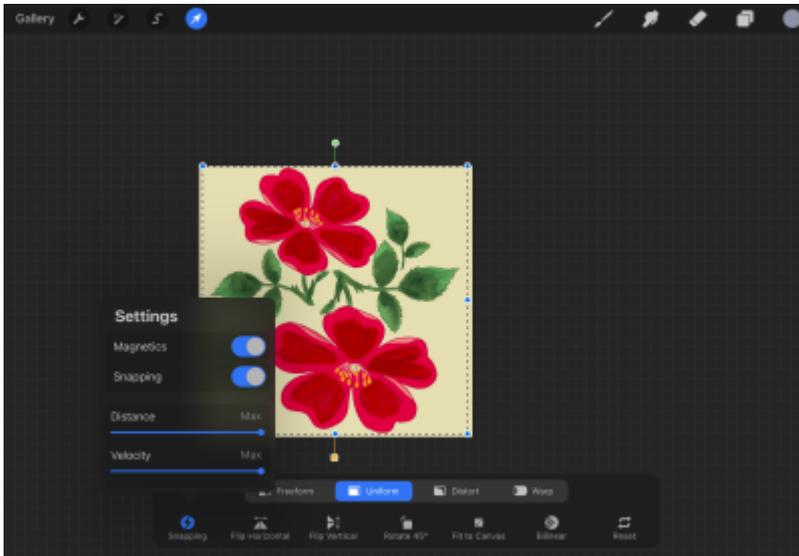
Duplicate your backup layer, then hide and lock it by swiping left on the layer. Then, go to the new layer you just duplicated.

Duplicate the new layer again so there are two copies, and hide the first copied layer.



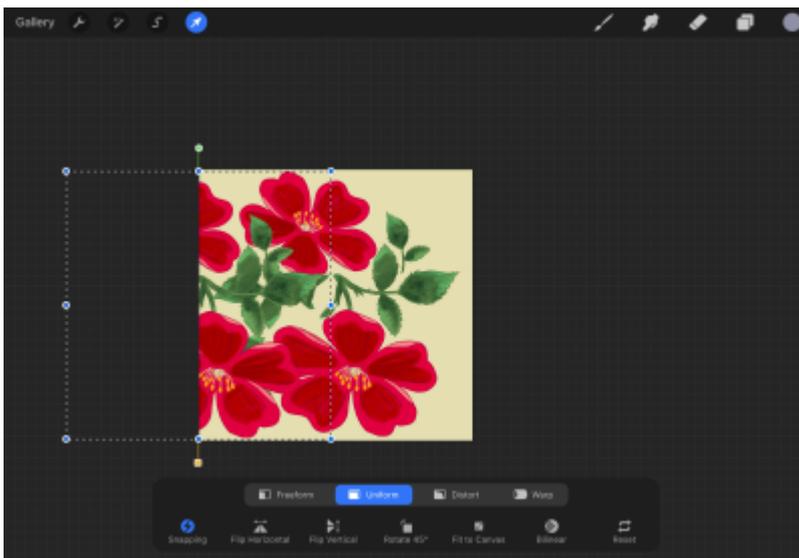
Step 5

With this new layer selected, go to the Selection Transform tool, click on Snapping in the left-hand corner of the menu, and make sure that magnetics and snapping are turned on and that the distance and velocity are set to max.

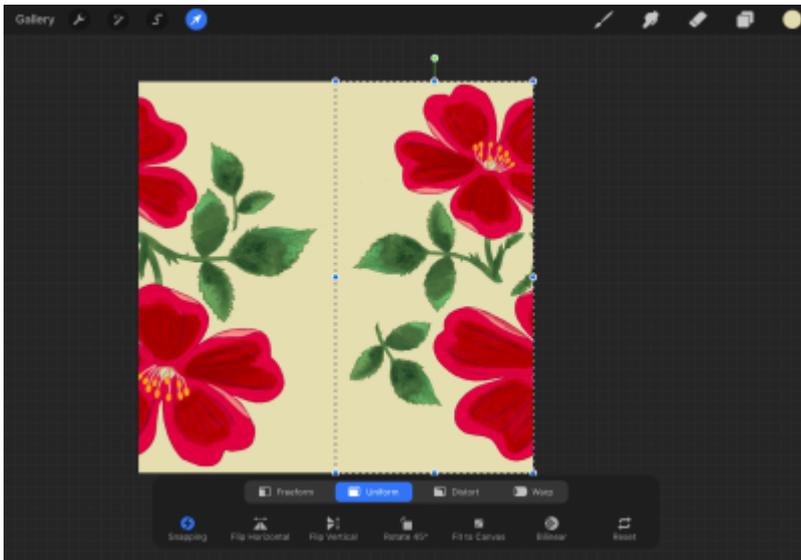


Step 6

Now click and drag the whole layer to the left until it is halfway off the canvas. It should snap into place, and some orange guidelines will appear.



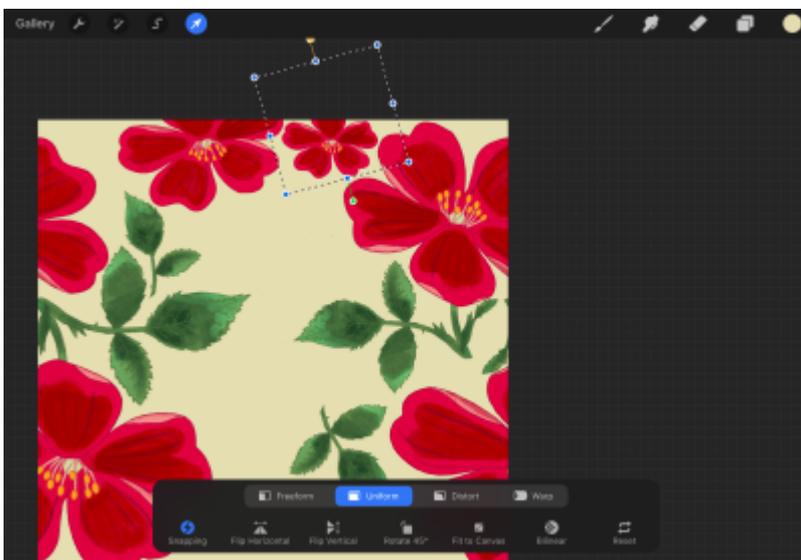
Now select another layer and unhide it. You want to move it to the right-hand side of the canvas until it is halfway off and snaps into place like the first layer we did.



You can check to see if it is snapped correctly by zooming in and seeing if there is a gap in the centre of the canvas. If there is a line, and you haven't moved the layer far enough, you can select it again and tap the right side of the screen (off the canvas) to move it one pixel at a time. Or you can click undo and move the layer until it snaps.

Step 7

Now, you can add additional elements to the pattern. Fill in any gaps with your original design elements from the backup base layer; just remember to stay within the canvas border.



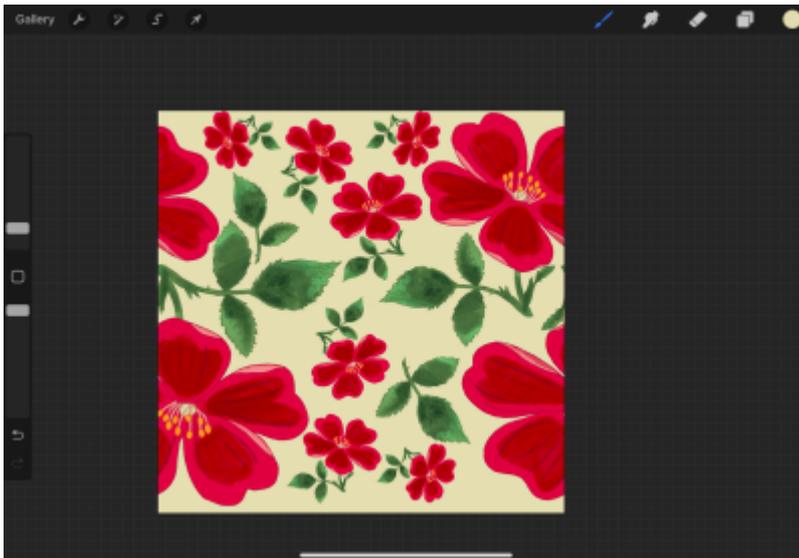
Repeat steps Four to Six with these filled gaps, but this time duplicate this new layer twice and drag it to the top and bottom of the canvas, ensuring it snaps into place. Again, check your work to ensure there aren't any lines in the centre of the canvas.

Step 8

All canvas sides (top, bottom, left and right) will be repeatable. If you want to add any extra details, you can add them here (remembering not to draw off-canvas) and continue Steps Four-Six again!

You can also set the background colour to whatever colour you like.

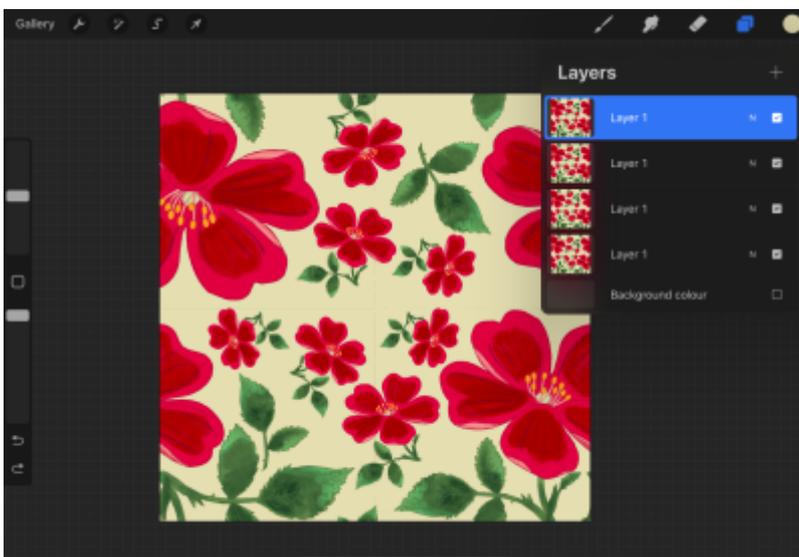
After doing this, you will create a repeatable pattern tile!



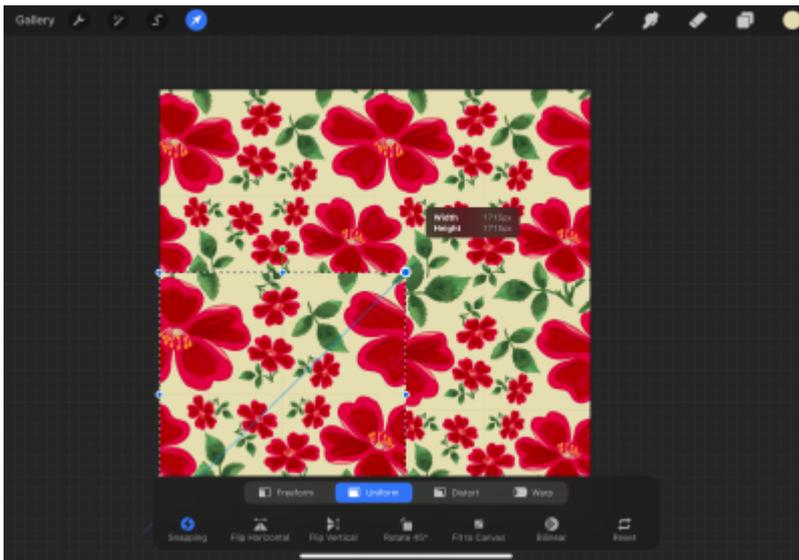
Step 9

You can export this file as a JPEG, and you should now have a repeatable pattern.

You can double-check that the tile repeats by duplicating the final layer four times.



Select one layer and click the transform arrow to resize the image to the bottom left-hand corner (ensure snapping is on); continue dragging until it snaps (ensure the orange guides lines also appear).

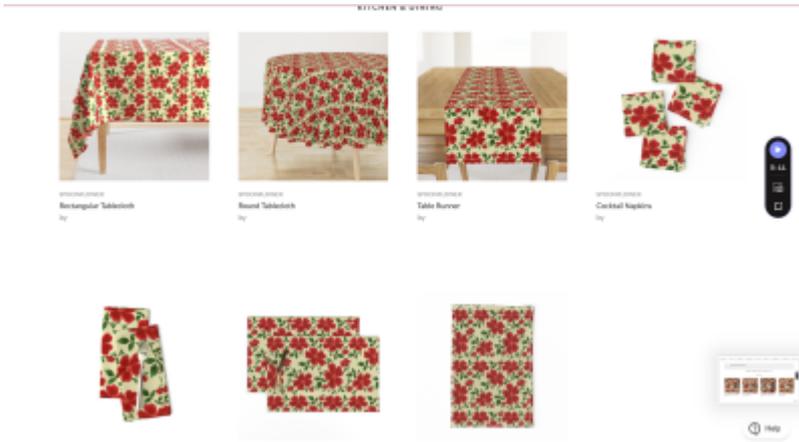


Now do this with layer two and resize it to the top left-hand corner until it snaps.

Repeat this with the third and fourth layers (snapping them to the right top/bottom). After you have done this, you can zoom in and click to see how seamlessly the pattern appears.



Fabric printing sources

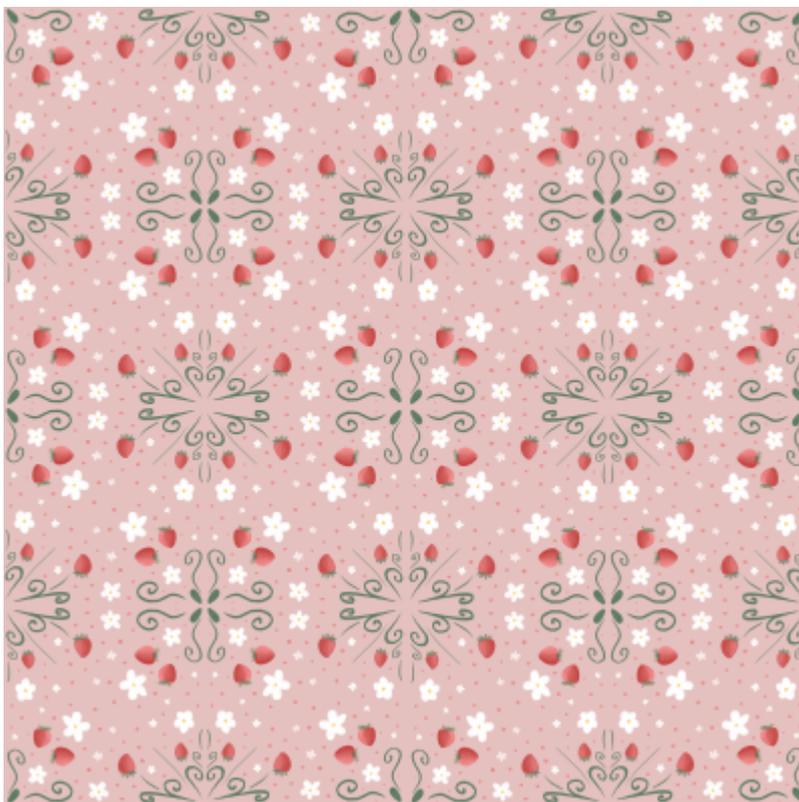


Another way to check is to upload it to a custom fabric website! We recommend - ([Digital Fabrics](#))

But you could also use ([Spoon Flower](#))

You can even pay to print your artwork on fabric, wallpaper, or clothing! (Or support a local business with Emerald Dreams ([Emerald Dreams Link](#)))

Seamless pattern way two



In this way, we will create a seamless repeated pattern using the symmetry tool.

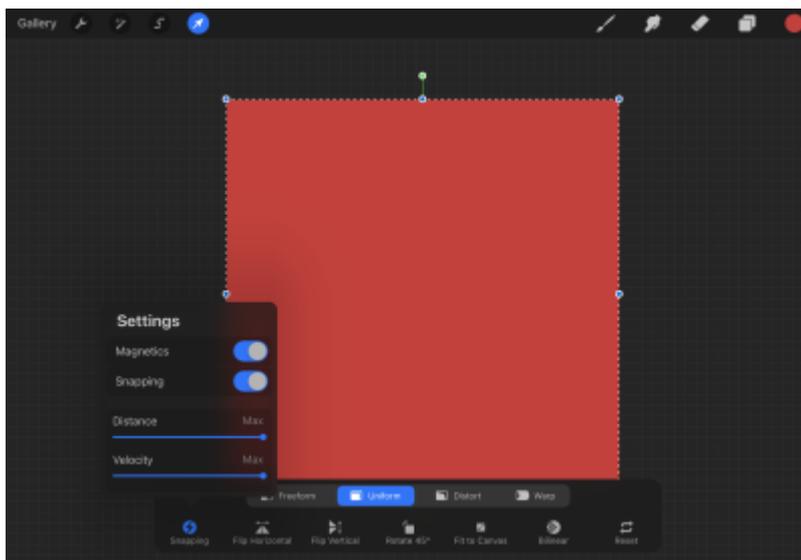
The pattern was inspired by this SLQ collection item - ([Collection Link](#))

Step 1

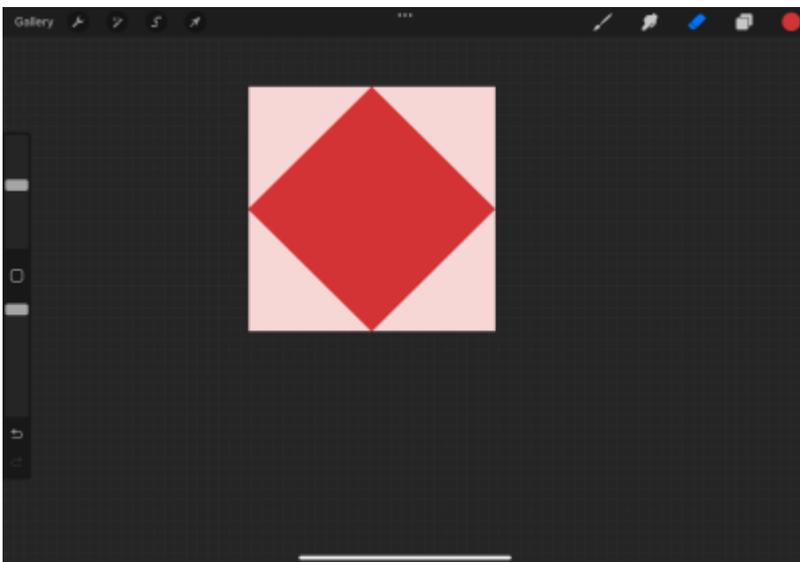
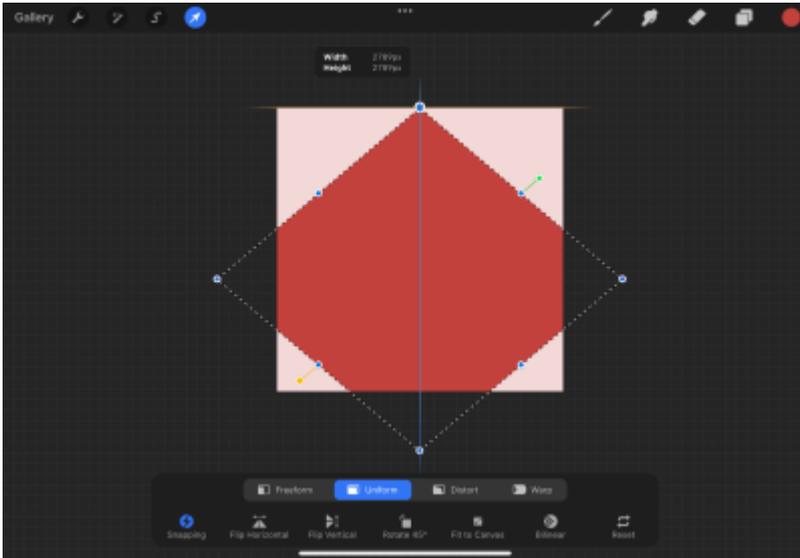
Create a new canvas, ensuring it is a perfect square. For this example, we will be using a 3000×3000 pixel canvas with a DPI of 300. It is recommended that the canvas be square and that it have a high DPI for better resolution.

Step 2

Select a background colour. Let's create a guide for our pattern to draw in. We are going to develop this using a diamond shape.

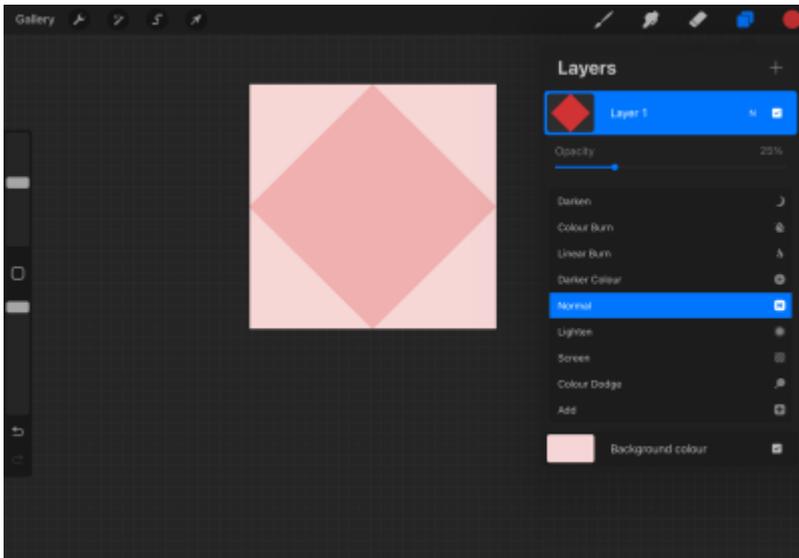


- Create a new layer, set the colour darker than your background, and drag the colour to fill the whole layer.
- Go to the Select tool, then the uniform button option, and then the snapping settings; ensure magnetics and snapping are on and distance and velocity is set to max.
- Click on the green dot at the top of the selected layer (rotate tool) and rotate the layer to 45 degrees.
- Then, you want to grab the blue dots to resize the shape till it snaps on either side of the background square.
- Resize the diamond shape to fit the background and release the selection by hitting the arrow tool again.

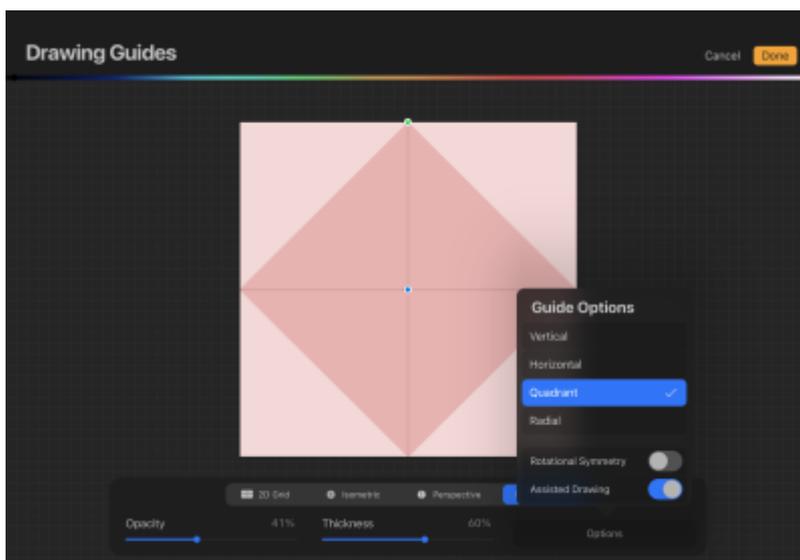


Step 3

Next, we are going to change the diamond layer to multiply and lower the opacity down to under 20%. The diamond layer is going to be a guide, and everything will be drawn within this diamond shape. Lock the diamond shape by swiping to the right (on the layer) and clicking the lock button.



- Turn on symmetry by going to the actions (wrench tool), clicking the canvas button, and turning on the Drawing Guide.
- Then go to Edit Drawing Guide, click the symmetry button, click on options, select the Quadrant option, and click Done in the top right-hand corner.
- This option will ensure that what you draw in one quadrant will repeat in the other ones, helping you create a repeating pattern.



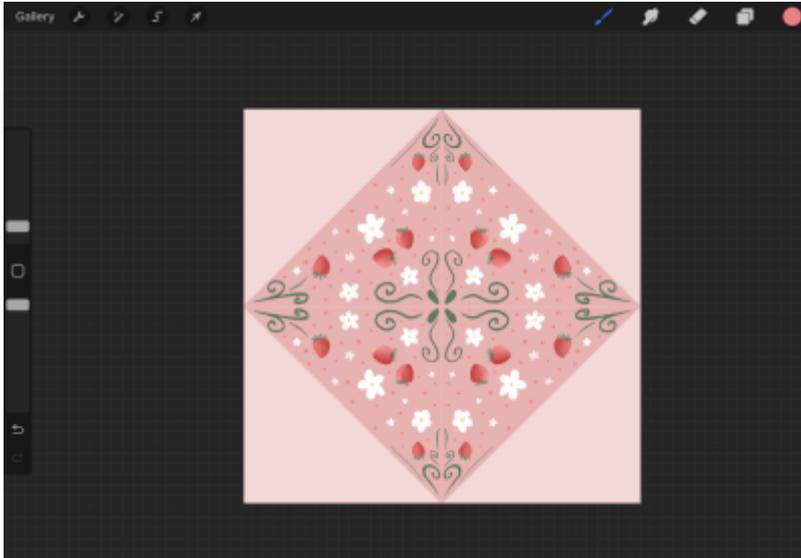
Step 4

Create a new layer by selecting the plus tool in Layers and click on the layer to open the options tab and select the Drawing Assist button. This will apply the drawing guide symmetry settings to this new layer.

Step 5

Begin drawing whatever illustration you want for your pattern, but ensure you stay within the shape.

If you want to add more layers and depth to your pattern, ensure you turn on drawing assist for each layer. If you do not turn this assist on, whatever you draw will not be repeated in the other quadrants.



Step 6 - Creating a repeating pattern tile

Once you have finished creating an illustration you are happy with, we can turn this into a repeating tile to make our seamless pattern. Turn off the drawing guide for a moment, go to Actions and toggle it off under the canvas option.

Group all of your drawings together into a new group. If you created multiple groups while drawing, ensure these are all grouped to create one large group that holds all the drawings on the tile.

- Turn off the background colour and diamond guide shape.
- Take three fingers, swipe down on the screen, and then select and copy all.
- Then swipe down three fingers again and hit paste.

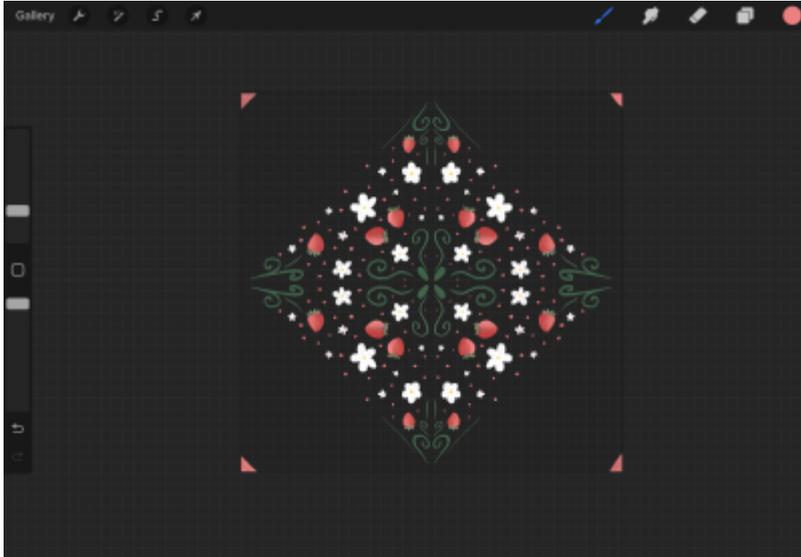
Step 7

After hitting paste, a merged copy of the group, known as an inserted image, will appear in the layers tab.

Turn off (hide) the original group.

Step 8

Hit the selection tool, but you will see that the outside square does not fill the whole canvas. This would cause errors in repeating. To solve this, we are going to pop some colour in the top left-hand corner and the bottom right-hand corner. Now, when we select the layer, it will select the whole canvas and ensure it repeats correctly.



Now, duplicate the merged layer (inserted image) until you have five copies. You can easily duplicate by swiping to the left and selecting duplicate.

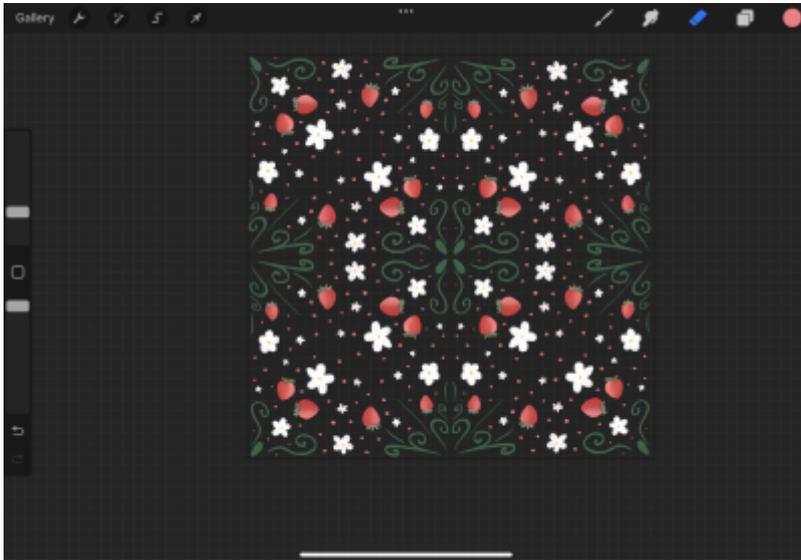
Select one of the layers with the select tool and ensure snapping is on (magnetic and snapping are on as well). Then, move the pattern to the top of the canvas until it snaps and an orange guideline appears. Then, move it over to the left, ensuring it snaps.



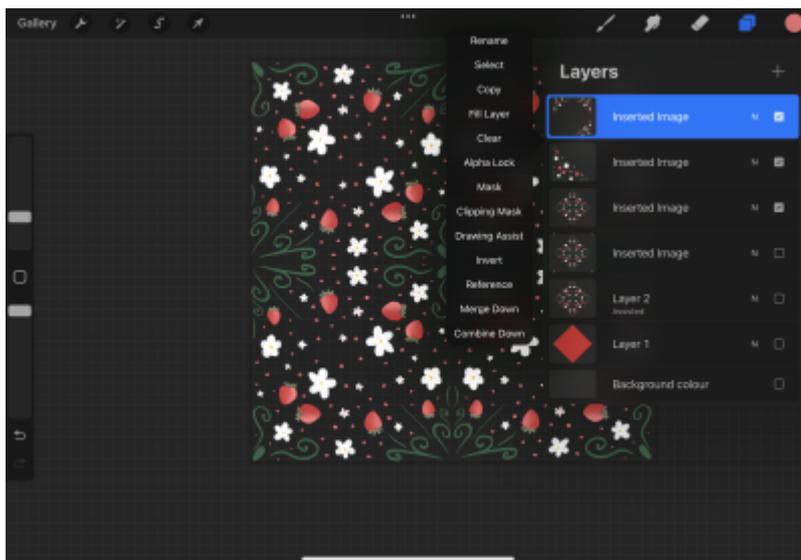
Move another layer to the top and ensure the orange guideline appears. Then, move it over to the right till it snaps.

Repeat this with the other two layers. Move the layer to the bottom until the guidelines appear, then to the bottom left until it snaps. Repeat this with the other layer until it snaps to the bottom right.

After you have moved all these images, you will have a repeating tile, but ensure you remove the little marks made in the corners.



Merge all of these layers into one final merged layer.



You now have a repeated tile that you can use as a seamless pattern ☐

Extra Step - Smaller pattern

If you want to resize the pattern and make it even smaller, you can duplicate the merged layer and resize it into each quadrant (ensuring it snaps) to create a smaller pattern. You can merge all these duplicates and have a small repeat tile.

