

Draw dotty blooms inspired by Yayoi Kusama

You will need:

- A sheet of white paper
- A pencil
- A ruler
- A fine black pen or felt tip
- An eraser
- Felt tip pens, colouring pencils or fine tip crayons

Who is Yayoi Kusama?



Yayoi Kusama is often described as the world's most famous living female artist. Kusama was born in Japan in 1929. She began painting and drawing at an early age and was determined to become an artist, despite her parents' objections.

Kusama with Pumpkin, 2010
Image Credit: Yayoi Kusama/Ota Fine Arts/Victoria Miro



Kusama started drawing dots as a child and has continued to be obsessed with this form of mark making throughout her career, covering pumpkins, portraits, flowers, entire rooms, and even herself with dots! She has described the earth as being just one dot amongst all the stars in the universe. At the age of 91, Yayoi Kusama is still working and has been nicknamed 'The Princess of Polka Dots'.

Yayoi Kusama, *Flowers*, 1996

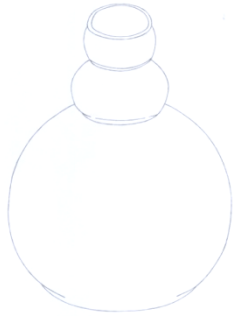
Image Credit: Yayoi Kusama/Ota Fine Arts/Victoria Miro

Draw dotty blooms inspired by Yayoi Kusama



If you want to get a head start, you can download and print out this line drawing from Golden Thread Gallery's website. This will allow you to skip ahead to Step 5 to start decorating your drawing with dots immediately. Otherwise, grab your piece of paper and a pencil and let's get started!

Step 1



Draw the outline of a vase using your pencil. I chose to draw a simple rounded shape, but you might prefer to draw a rectangular or square vase. Alternatively, you can draw a jug or flower pot. Kusama often adds handles to her vases, so consider if you would like to do the same.

Step 2



Using your pencil and ruler, draw a straight horizontal line approximately 5 – 6 cm above the bottom of the page. This line will represent the surface that the vase is resting on (e.g., a tabletop or a window sill) and anchors it in space. The line should go through the vase. I know this looks strange, but it will all make sense when we start to add colour.

Step 3



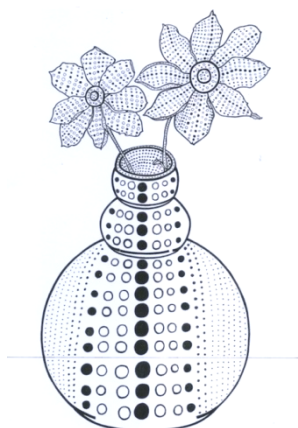
Draw the outlines of two or three flowers in your vase, again using a pencil. Keep the shapes simple. Each bloom should be separate; try to avoid any overlapping. The flowers I've drawn are inspired by a plant in my garden; I loved the intense, multicoloured petals and simple shape. If you can't find any flowers nearby that interest you, search magazines, books, and the internet for inspiration. You can also draw the flowers entirely from your imagination if you prefer.

Step 4



Draw over the pencil outline with a black pen or fine felt tip. We want a clear, graphic image, so make your lines quite thick to stand out. Leave the ink to dry for a few minutes and then erase any visible pencil lines with your rubber.

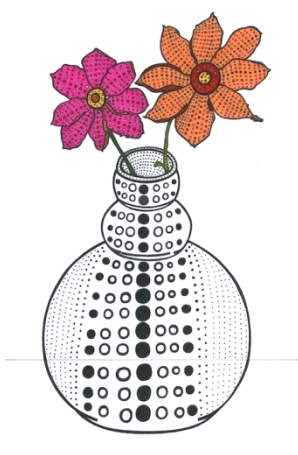
Step 5



Now for the fun bit! Begin to cover your flowers and vase with dots. Think about how you want your dots to appear:

- Are you going to use a combination of black and white? Or will they all be black?
- Will they be small or big and bold? Or a mixture?

Step 6



Colour in your flowers using felt tips, coloured pencils or fine crayons. If some of the dots are white, decide if you want to add colour or leave them as they are. I decided to colour some in while keeping others white.

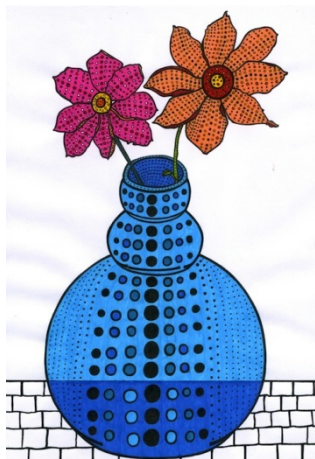
Step 7



Now for the vase! Yayoi Kusama often reverses the colour scheme she has used in the top half of her vase when painting the bottom half.

Remember the line you drew in pencil through your vase at the start? Try Kusama's technique of reversing the colour scheme you use in the top half of your vase when colouring in the lower section.

Step 8



Yayoi Kusama often uses a square or rectangular pattern to describe the tabletop or window sill beneath her vase. Your pattern should be irregular and a bit wobbly, so don't use a ruler to draw it. Mark out the lines in pencil first and then go over them with a black pen. Again, make these lines quite thick. Then add colour to your square or rectangular pattern.

Step 9



Finally, the background! Cover the rest of the page with dots:

- Leave these dots white.
- Consider using a mixture of small, medium, and large dots to add interest.
- Then add colour to the dots using as many shades as you like.
- To finish, select a new colour and fill in all the remaining white space between your dots.



**Congratulations, you did it! You've
created dotted blooms worthy of Yayoi
Kusama!**