

TAKE A CLOSER LOOK

Patterns In Nature

What Patterns Can You See In Nature?

Pattern is a line, color, shape or form that repeats. Many patterns are found in nature. Plants and animals often have patterns in their structure and markings. What patterns can you see?

	<p>Branching (Fractal) Lines branch off from a central axis. They get smaller and thinner as they move away from the center.</p>	Seen as veins in leaves, stems and petals. Can also be seen in the wings of dragonflies and bees.
	<p>Repeating (Spots & Stripes) Lines, shapes and colors often repeat in nature. Repeating patterns can attract pollinators or deter predators.</p>	Seen on many pollinators including butterflies, bees and moths. Repeating colors and markings can also be seen on many flowers.
	<p>Radiating (Explosion) Shapes and forms originate from a single point. They are often circular or spherical.</p>	Radiating patterns are seen in many flowers and seeds. A dandelion and allium (onion flower) are great examples.
	<p>Concentric Lines or shapes go around a central point. They get increasingly larger from the center like rings.</p>	Tree rings are fascinating concentric shapes that relate to the tree's annual growth pattern.
	<p>Spiral Spiral patterns wind around a central point. They get larger as they move away from the center.</p>	Many plants and succulents like aloe have spiral shapes and forms. So do snail shells. Rose petals also form a spiral shape.
	<p>Symmetrical Patterns and shapes look the same on both side of a center line, or axis. A mirror image.</p>	Many orchids, leaves and flowers are symmetrical. So are the bodies of many pollinators and pests.
	<p>Tessellations (Tiles) Tessellation are similar shapes that repeat. In nature, they often fit together on a flat surface like tiles. They can also look like scales.</p>	Acorn caps have tessellation or tile-like patterns. The scales seen on butterfly or moth wings are also tessellations.
	<p>Waves Wave patterns are lines that curve back and forth across surfaces. They often create parallel grooves.</p>	We see them on water and sand dunes, but we also see them on plant seeds and in some bark patterns.
	<p>Bubbles (Packing) Bubble patterns have many rounded shapes packed close together.</p>	Bubble patterns can be seen in the centers of flowers where seeds are produced. Great examples include sunflower seeds and corn kernels.