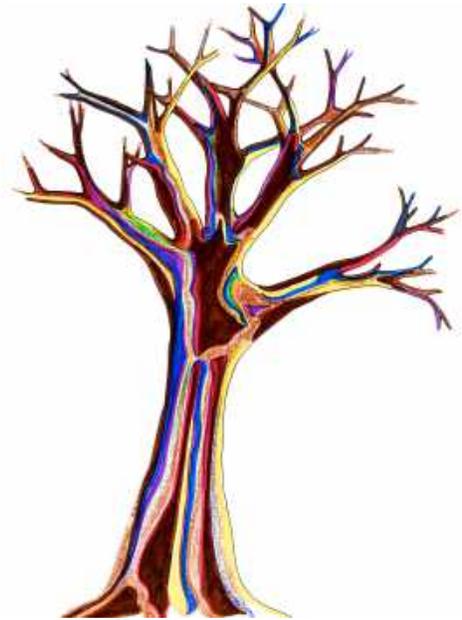


Trace Your Hand to Draw a Tree



(<https://www.greenandvibrant.com/types-of-oak-trees>)



Hands and trees have something in common: they both grow out of a larger base and then branch out. Hands are attached to forearms and then branch into fingers. Trees have a main trunk and then separate into limbs and branches. Today we will begin by tracing our forearms, hands, and fingers; erase a few lines here and there; and add a few new ones in other places to create a tree. You will be surprised by the transformation!

What do you know about trees? Trees have long been prized as both beautiful to look at and necessary for Earth's survival. They have been in existence for about 370 million years. Our human ancestors date back about 6 million years. Modern humans evolved about 200,000 years ago. Civilization is only about 6,000 years old. People are real newcomers in the trees' world!

It is estimated that there are about three trillion(!) mature trees on Earth. Some of these are several thousand years old. Trees play a role in world art and mythologies.

A tree's trunk usually contains woody tissue that gives it strength and vascular tissue that carries nutrition from one part of the tree to another. Most trees are covered by a layer of bark that serves to protect them. Mirroring above-ground growth, a tree's roots continue to grow below the ground, spreading out widely; they anchor the tree and extract moisture and nutrients from the soil.

In the fall deciduous trees shed their leaves as cool weather sets in, leaving bare branches that make beautiful designs against the sky.

Supplies:

12" x 16" White paper (if you don't have large paper, you can use regular printer paper; you just won't have as much room for your tree)

Pencil

Eraser

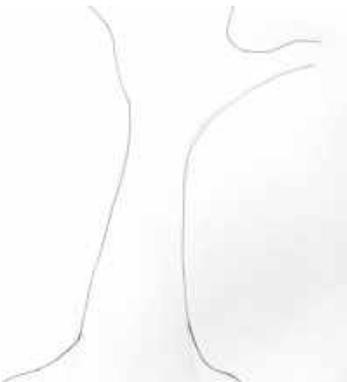
Fine-tipped black pen

Markers and/or crayons

Procedure:



Place your forearm and hand down on the paper. It's fine to have your arm tilted if you like: trees often grow at an angle. Spread your hand so that your fingers branch out. Trace carefully with a pencil, but do **not** trace around the tops of the fingers, as your branches will be "growing" from these spaces. Try not to push too hard with your pencil because you will be erasing a few lines here and there. Don't worry if lines are wobbly: Trees are often gnarly!



Erase the lines at the very bottom of the forearm and create roots on either side.



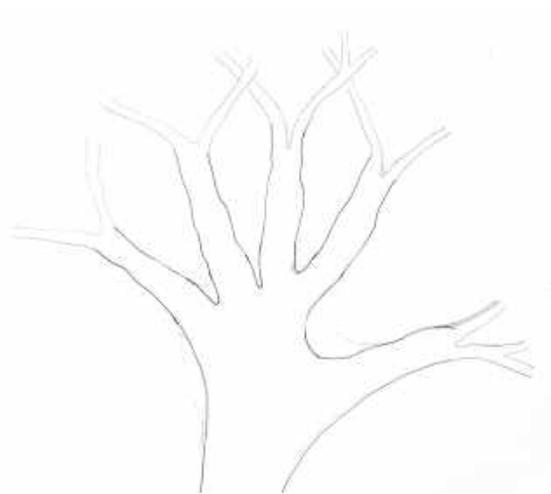
“Slim down” the widest part of the hand to make it look more like a tree trunk:

- Redraw the line from the base of the wrist up to the pinky to slenderize the trunk as it heads into the bottom-most branch on this side
- Do the same with the webbing that connects the thumb to the index finger to make this part of the tree less bulky

(the picture at left shows before and after slimming)



Increase the dips in the webbing between the other fingers to lengthen the base of these “branches.” Erase the old lines.



Grow your branches from the open finger tips. An easy way to do this is to split the spaces into “Y” shaped diagonals. You could also split them into three diagonals if you wish. These new smaller branches will grow out in new directions. You can stop here if you like, or you can continue by creating new “Y” shapes in the open spaces.



Remember that branches get thinner as they reach the outermost part of the tree.

Just like people, no two trees are the same. Let your branches grow as they will. This may include some disappearing behind others or having them corkscrew and spiral a bit.

Go over your lines with a fine line black pen.



You can darken some of the lines around your tree if you like, but don't darken them all or your drawing will look like a coloring book picture.

Start to color in areas. You can use markers, crayons or both. If you want to use both, use the markers first, or the wax in the crayons may clog and ruin the marker tips. You can make your tree as colorful as you like.

