

Sammamish Animal Sanctuary Mosaic Wall

Project Summary and Guide for Contributing Artists

Draft in progress

Background

Sammamish Animal Sanctuary (SAS) is a non-profit animal sanctuary where neglected, abused, or homeless animals are cared for and loved for the rest of their lives. The sanctuary was founded by Diane and Don Gockel over twenty years ago, originally located in Sammamish on a six-acre farm. In 2021, the sanctuary was moved to a 5.35 acre farm on May Valley Road in Renton.

The sanctuary is the home to over sixty rescues, over 150 volunteers, and is living testimony of what can happen when a community comes together for the love of animals. SAS remains free to visitors to offer equal access to the rescues. Most visitors are very generous with the sanctuary, which allows others to come at no charge. (Read the [full history](#).)

SAS Volunteer Area Improvement Project

Volunteers and community donations are vital to the sanctuary. As one can imagine, the volunteers work hard. Currently, there is an area where volunteers may take a break or hold meetings, but it's in dire need of improvement. Visitors pass through this area when walking from the main entrance to the various animal barns and shelters.



To repair and improve this area, SAS is embarking on an improvement project that addresses a roof leak and structure issue, uneven ground, plantings, and peeling paint. In this area is also a long brick wall. The project also includes cleaning the brick wall and decorating it with mosaic art.

Donations are necessary and welcome to complete this project. If you'd like to support this effort, please contact Diane Gockel at diane@sammamishanimalsanctuary.com.

SAS Mosaic Art Project

This long brick wall will soon be displaying some amazing mosaic art! Laura Galbato, a mosaic artist in Issaquah, is leading the project and teaming with other mosaic artists in the PNW to create colorful mosaic art. The wall will display SAS's logo at the center top and animal mosaics will surround the logo. The target is to complete 20 mosaic animals from contributing artists. The logo will be created in mosaics by Laura and she will also be creating several of the animals.

SAS's animals will be represented on the wall and include: alpaca, llama, goat, horse, donkey, cow, pig, sheep, duck, chicken, rabbit, guinea pig, and chinchilla. The size of each animal mosaic will range from 5" x 5" to 14" x 16". The logo will be 20" x 44".



The wall will also feature a framed description of the project, with a list of each contributing mosaic artist - artist name, website (if applicable), and Instagram handle.

Project Steps and Timeline

The mosaic wall project will run from April through September 2024. Specifically:

April: Design animal backers and work with Skeew to create custom backers

April - May: Select contributing mosaic artists and assign animals

Late May: Backers created and shipped to Laura

Early June: Prep backers and install hangers

Mid June: Distribute backers to contributing mosaic artists

August 28: Deadline for artists to deliver completed mosaics to Laura

September: Touchups and layout

Late September: Final installation

Backers

Custom backers (substrates) are being created by Skeew.biz, consistent with their Skeewbacker quality. Backers will be 1/4" thick, and are waterproof and ultra lightweight. To create a finished look, Laura will prep each backer by applying white exterior primer to the back and sides. Laura will also install the hangers prior to distributing the backers to contributing artists.

Adhesives

Although there is an overhang over the brick wall, the mosaics will be outside and exposed to PNW weather and temperatures. As such, only **use thinset mortar** to adhere tesserae. Quality brands are Laticrete 254 Platinum, Mapei Mosaic and Glass Tile Mortar, and Mapei Ultraflex 1 Tile Mortar.

To ensure adhesion, it's best to apply a thin scratch coat of thinset to the backer surface and sides, and to allow 24 hours for it to dry prior to adhering tesserae. Use the thinset to “butter” each tesserae to the backer to create your design. Small batches are ideal when working.

Do not use Wellbond or other PVA glues, which are intended for interior mosaics. Also, do not use any adhesives with “ethyl” in the ingredients (like DAP adhesive caulk), as these compounds can break down the backer over time.

Tip: Work clean and remove thinset between the tesserae that may seep too high and prevent grout from being properly applied.

Design and Tesserae

Animal designs can be realistic, representational, whimsical or whatever you would like to design. The only requirement is that your design include some sort of eye so we can tell it's an animal! Photos of the backers and sample drawings with flow lines are provided at the end of this project summary. Google Images is another good source. Actual photos of SAS's animals are on SAS's website.

The logo will be made entirely of stained glass. Animals can be made with tesserae appropriate for outdoor applications, including stained glass, vitreous glass tiles, glass gems, high-fired ceramic, millefiori, slate/stone, and smalti.

Grout

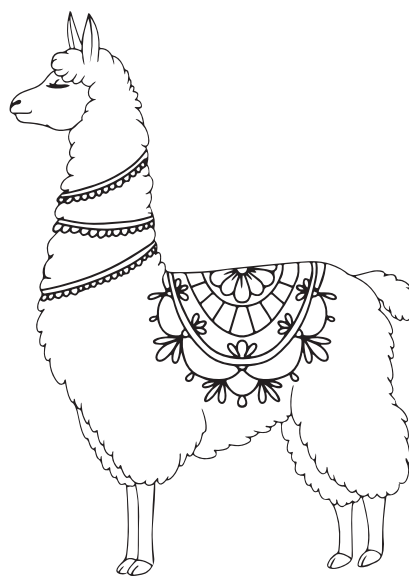
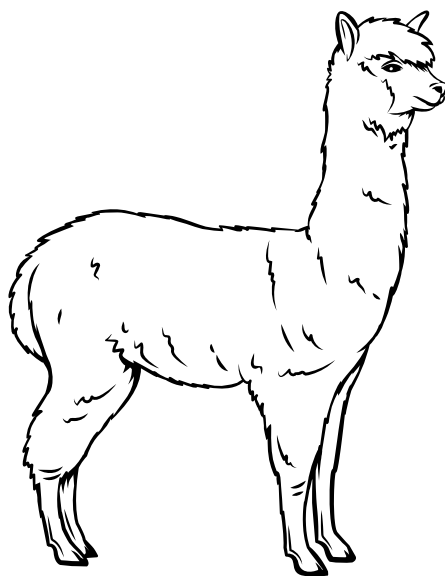
Use sanded grout on your animal mosaic. Use the color(s) that work with your piece, but please do not use white. If in doubt, a neutral grey is a good choice. Make sure to fill all tiny areas and gaps, and grout over the edges of the backer.

Finishing

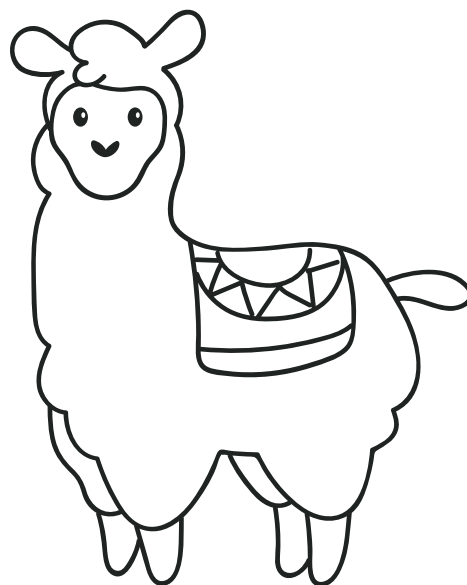
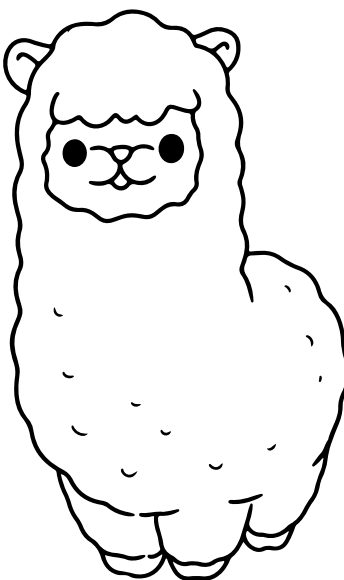
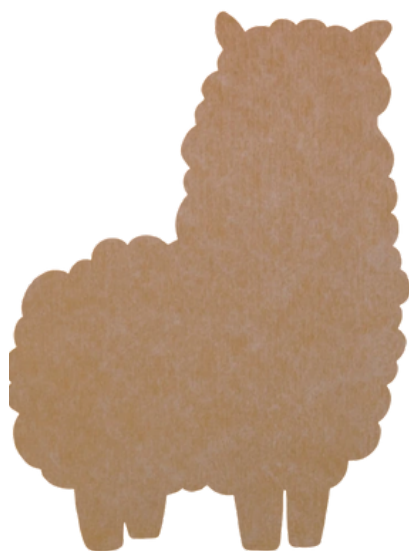
Clean your mosaic and write your name, website (if applicable), and 2024 on the back of your mosaic art with a black Sharpie fine permanent marker.

Animal Backers and Sample Drawings

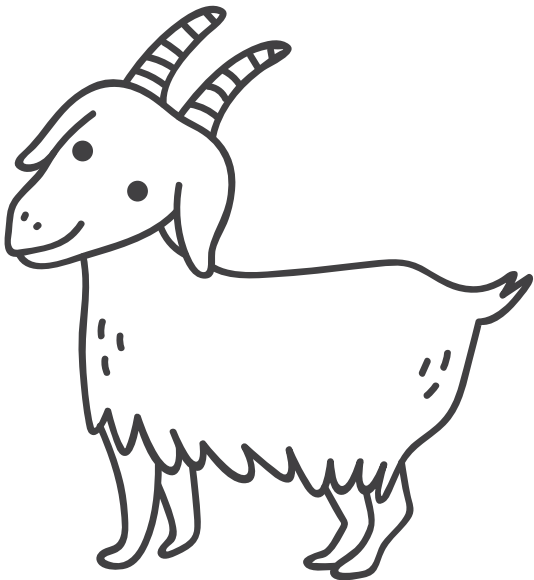
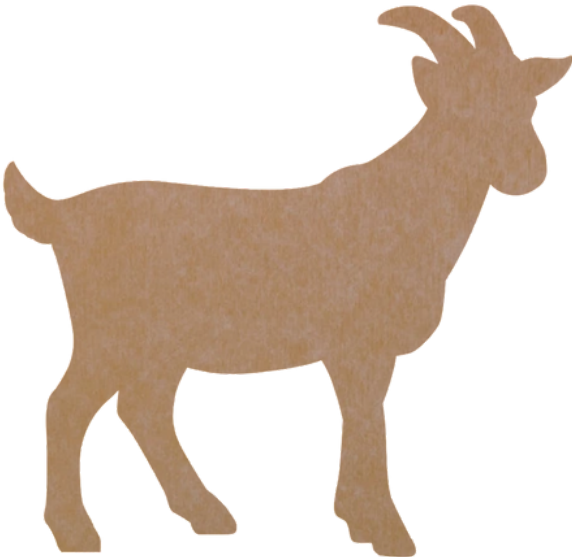
Llama - 14" x 16"



Alpaca - 12.5" x 14.5"



Goat - 12.5" x 11.5"



Horse - 12.5" x 12.5"

