

Meanders in the Teece

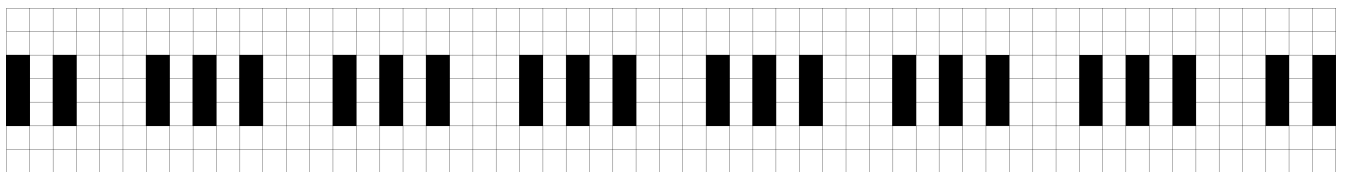


A *meander* is a repeated pattern or motif, usually constructed from a continuous line. Meanders are common decorative elements in ancient Greek and Roman art and often appear in mosaics and on pottery. Over the centuries, many different types of meanders have evolved. In this handout, we focus on “broken” or “hook” meanders. Unlike other meanders, they are not formed from one continuous line but instead contain a series of gaps or breaks. The resulting motif is reminiscent of intertwined spirals. There are many lovely examples of this meander on objects displayed in the Teece Museum.

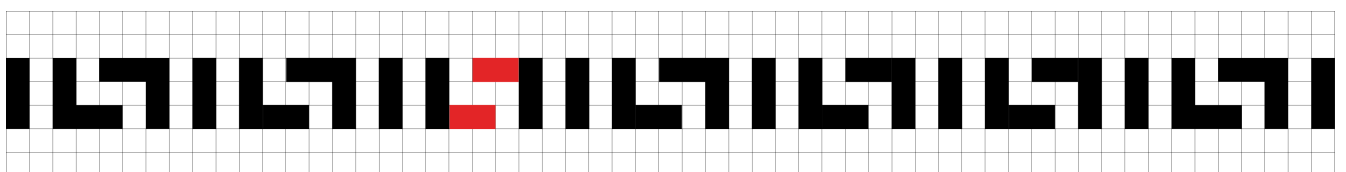
Drawing Meanders

Meanders can be drawn in a very systematic way. The beauty of this technique is that it can be used to create bigger meanders or other kinds of meanders. We’ll start by drawing the simple meander shown at the top of the page. On the template provided or a piece of grid paper, colour in squares following the steps below. The red squares illustrate the new squares to be added to the motifs at each step.

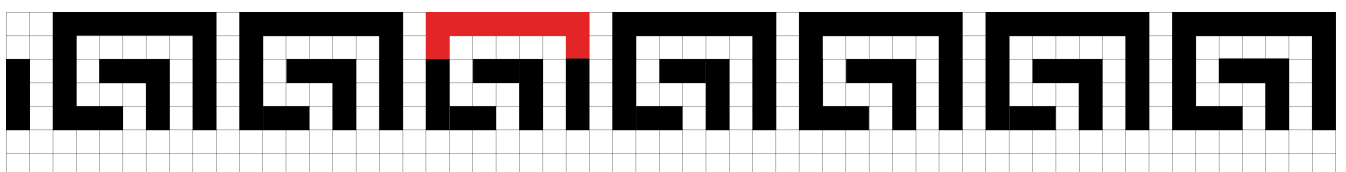
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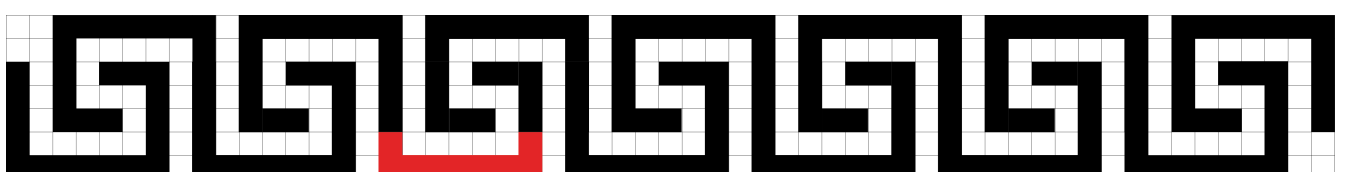
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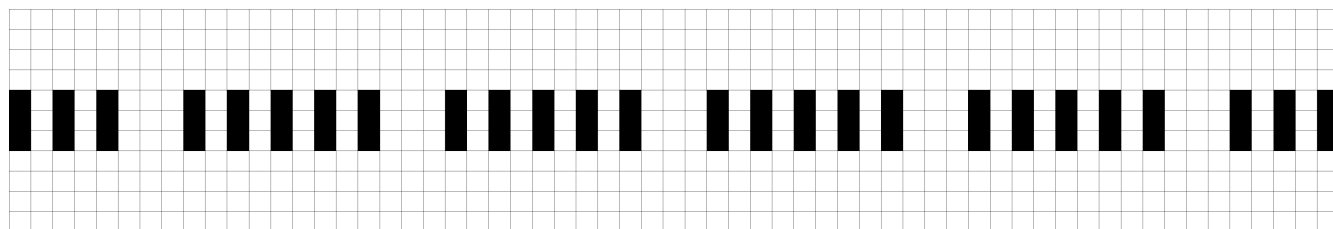


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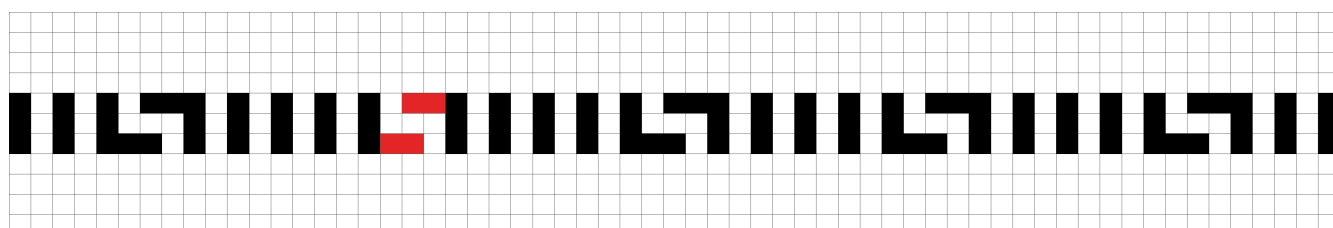


Now we're ready to create a more complex meander. We'll create larger spirals by starting off with more vertical lines, and then we'll repeatedly apply the technique above until all of the lines are joined.

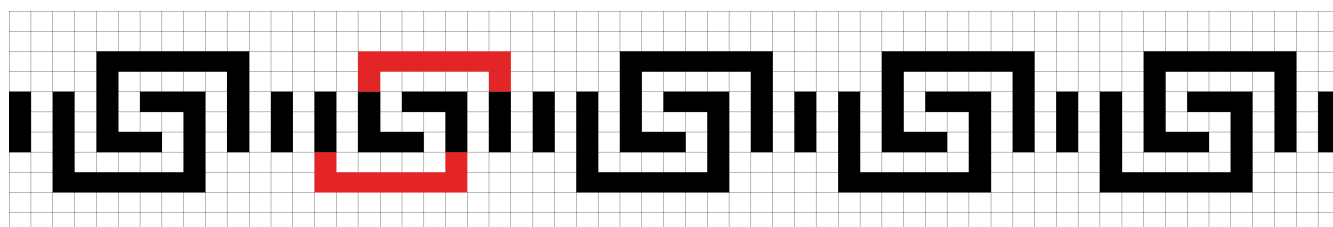
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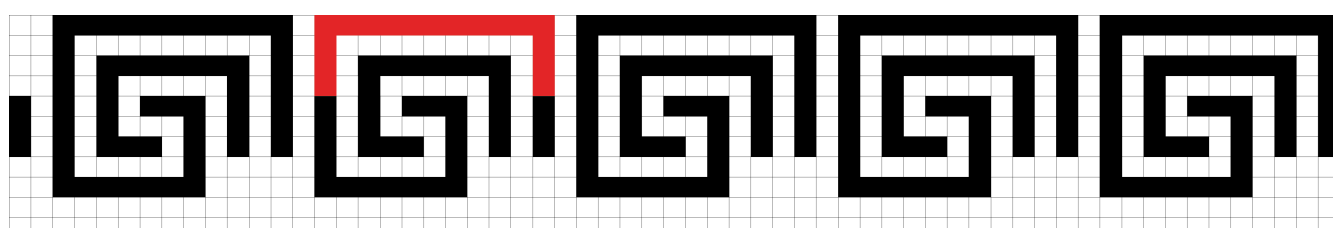
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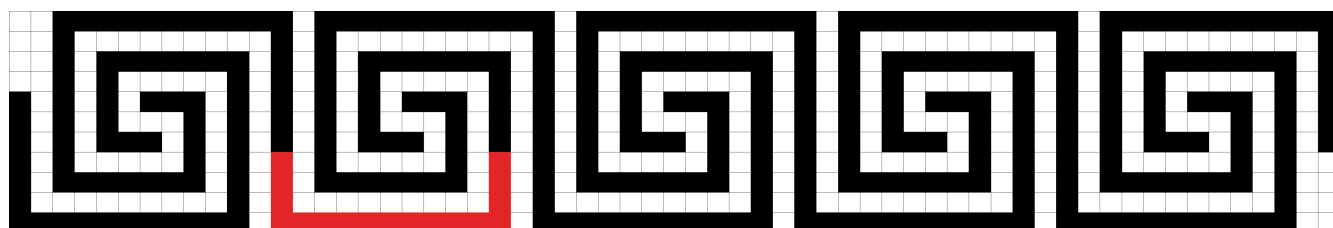
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4.



5.



Making More Meanders

Do you notice a pattern emerging? If so, can you use it to make your own meanders? For instance, what happens if you use groups of 7 vertical lines in step 1 (and how many lines will you need at each end in this case)? What about using an even number of vertical lines instead? Can you vary the number of vertical lines in each grouping and still produce a meander? Could the technique be changed slightly to produce an unbroken meander? Is there a way to make the lines spiral in the other direction? And, if you want to use your meander as a border around your page, how do you 'turn the corner'?

