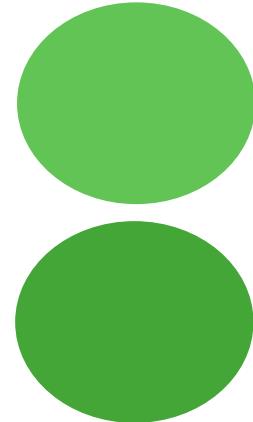
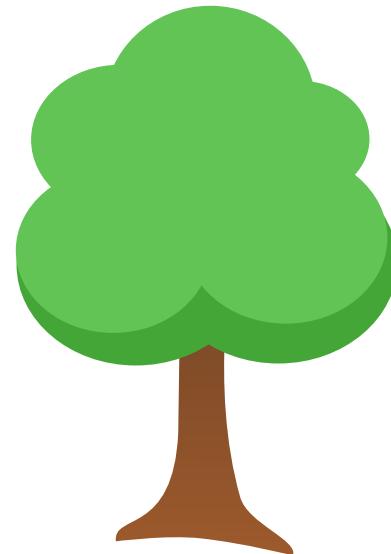




creating background assets using variations of
trees





Let's create a simple tree with just two circles [one slightly darker than the other. The trunk is a shape using the line tool. It's recognizable...



By adding a few more circles the shape becomes more defined. Using a 'cluster' of circles speeds up the process.



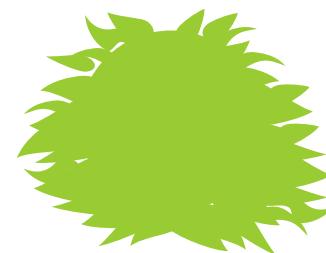
A a 'half moon' shape to show shadows and some circles with gradient transparency for the highlight and the tree has come a long way already.





 One key to a more interesting creations is variation and vectors are ideal for that. A quick mirror and new colours and the tree looks different already.

Different proportions make it easy to create new tree variations.



Start with a circles  and convert it to a path. Pull out the top node to form the leaf / drop shape .

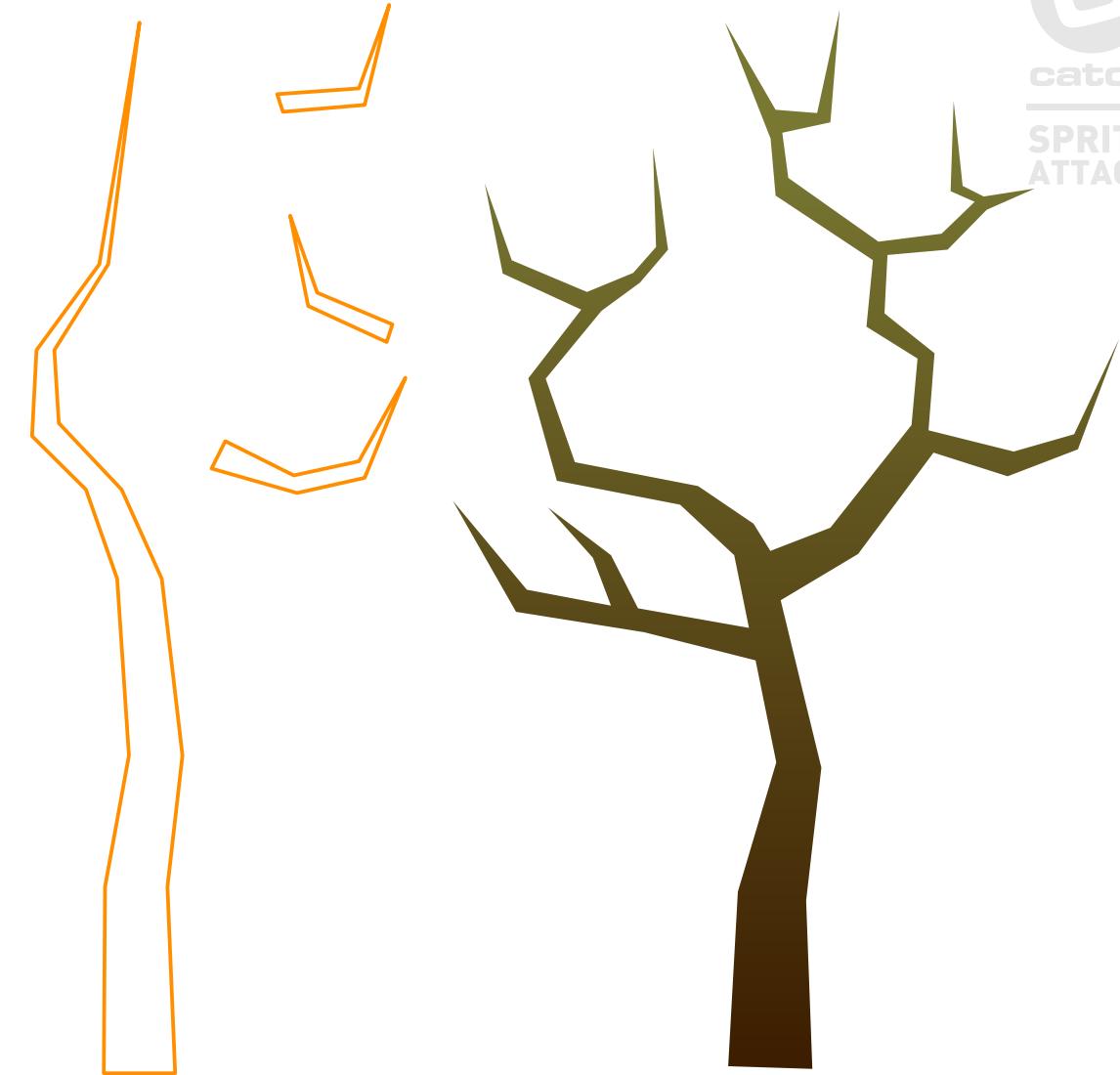
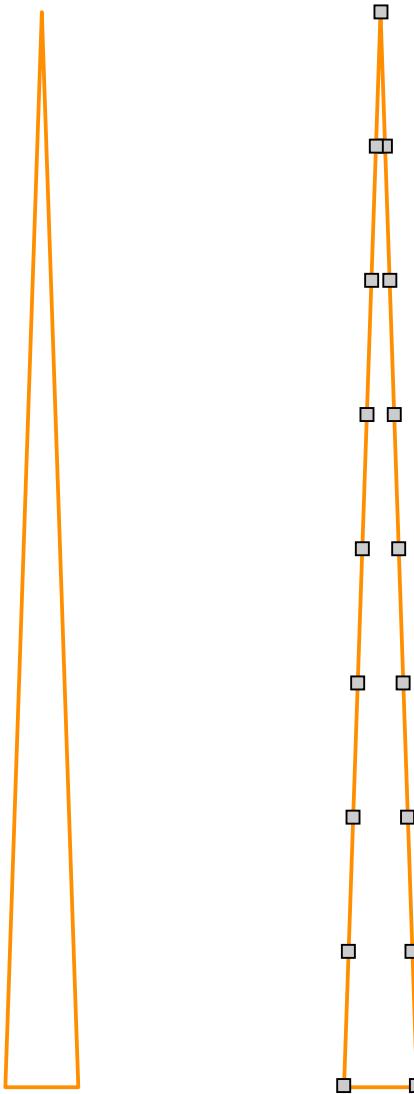
Using another circle  as the base place leaves all around it. Rotate and scale them to create a 'bushy' shape. Add a few lighter leaves on top and group them.

Duplicating the group while scaling, mirroring and rotating it creates a different looking tree.





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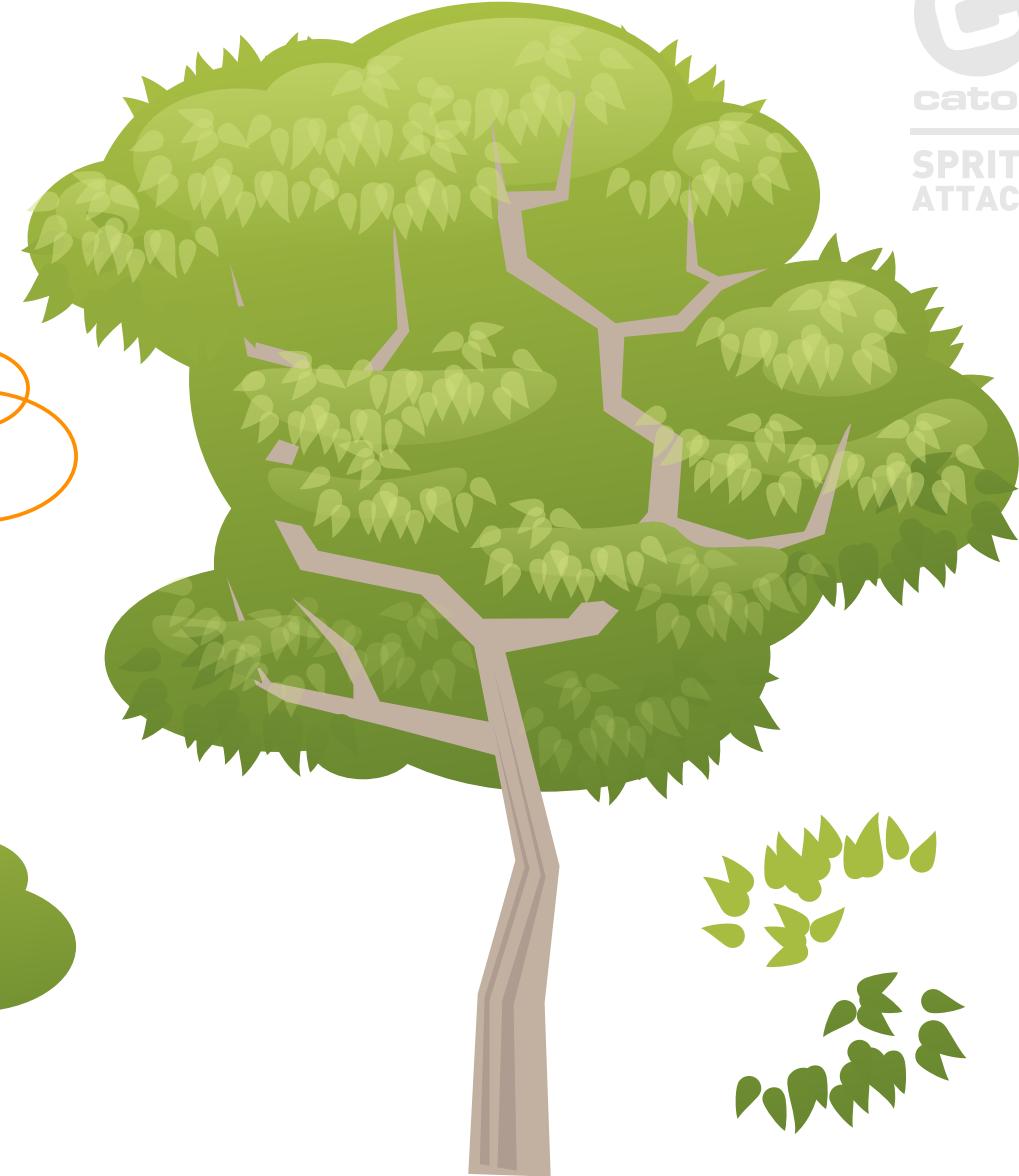
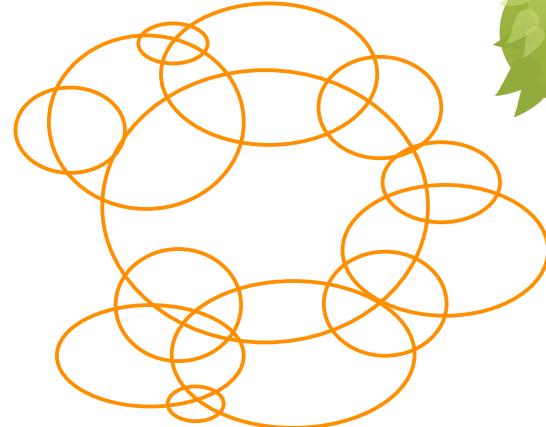
Let's create a more complex trunk. Starting with a triangle using the line tool and adding a few extra nodes.

Move the nodes to shape the tree into something a bit more crooked. Add more triangles for the branches and put them onto the trunk.

Combine the shapes via the *Path/ Union* option [CTRL++].



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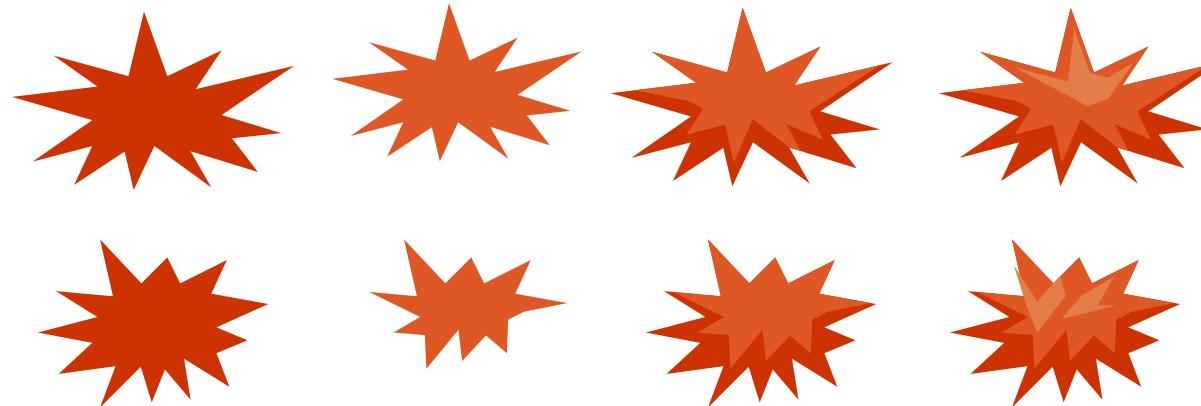
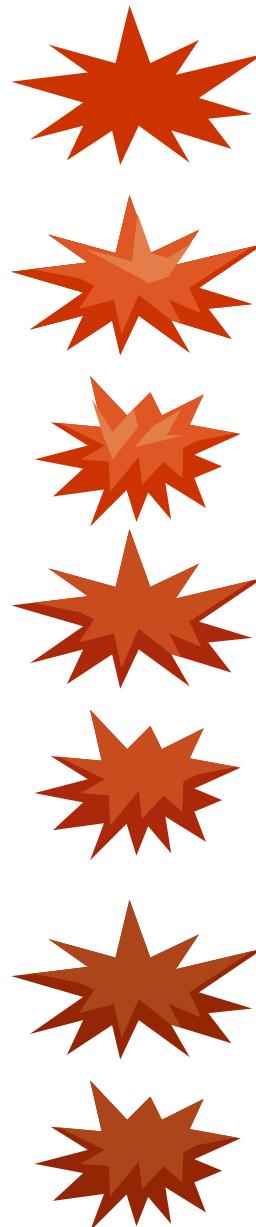
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The leaves for this tree are going to be shaded and are slightly lighter at the tip using the gradient tool.

Use a bunch of circles to create the base of the tree. Combine them and use the gradient tool for a lighter top and darker bottom.

Add the grouped leaves and change the group's transparency. Duplicates of the group around the edge break the shape of the circles.





Use the line tool to create two 'spikey' shapes.



Scaled down a lighter versions of the spikey leaves and use the line tool for added highlights.
Two darkened versions of the spikes along with a...

... 'squashed' version of the trunk complete our 'building blocks' for this tree.





Place some of the darker shapes behind the trunk.
Duplicate, rotate and scale to add some variation.





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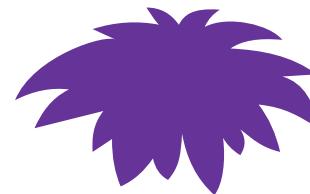
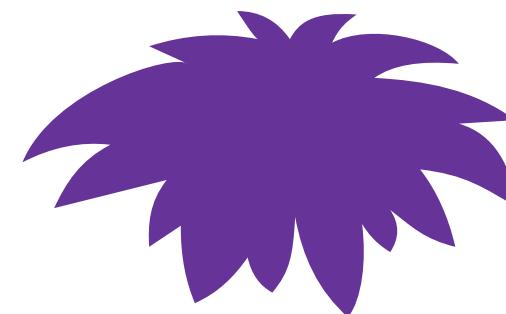
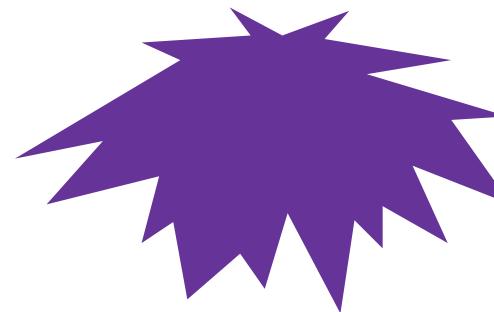
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Place lighter versions on top of the tree with darker versions lower down the trunk.

Scaling the lighter objects at the top smallest and the darker objects at the base bigger.





Use the line tool for another 'spikey' shape. 
 This time around change the lines to curves to form something resembling the top of a palm tree. 

Duplicate the shape and colour those two copies lighter. Place them on the original shape to create the shading.

Make two darker version with some minor variations. Stretch the trunk shape to make a taller, thinner tree.

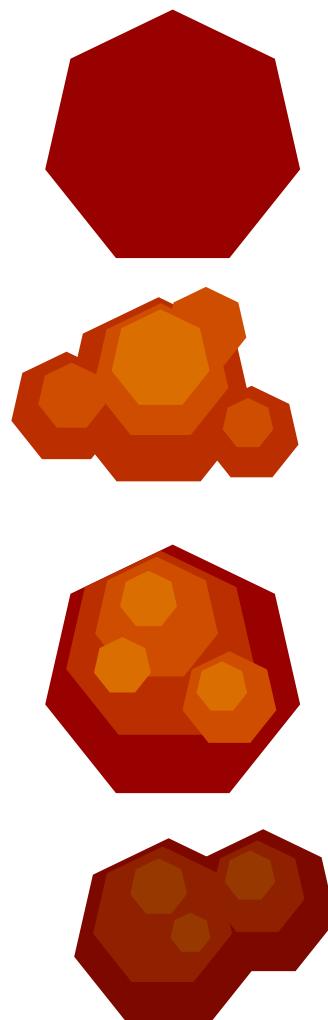


 Following the steps of the previous tree, place some copies of the shapes behind the trunk. Scale and rotate them and keep the lighter version on top of the darker ones.



Place more shapes on top of the trunk to 'flesh out' the tree.

Note:
Inkscape needs a duplicate of the trunk when setting a clip or a mask for the pattern.

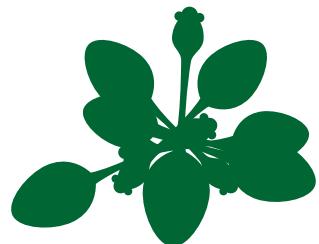
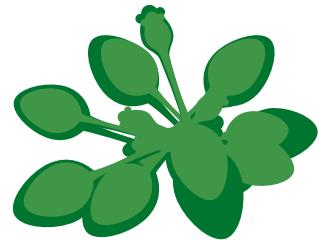


The same principle works with all sorts of shapes and styles.



Use the polygon tool  to create a basic shape [e.g. 7 sided], duplicate and change the colours for darker to lighter. Create a few variations to 'build' your futuristic looking tree.

I used the same trunk as for the previous trees. You might want to adjust it though to match the angles of the 'leave clusters'.



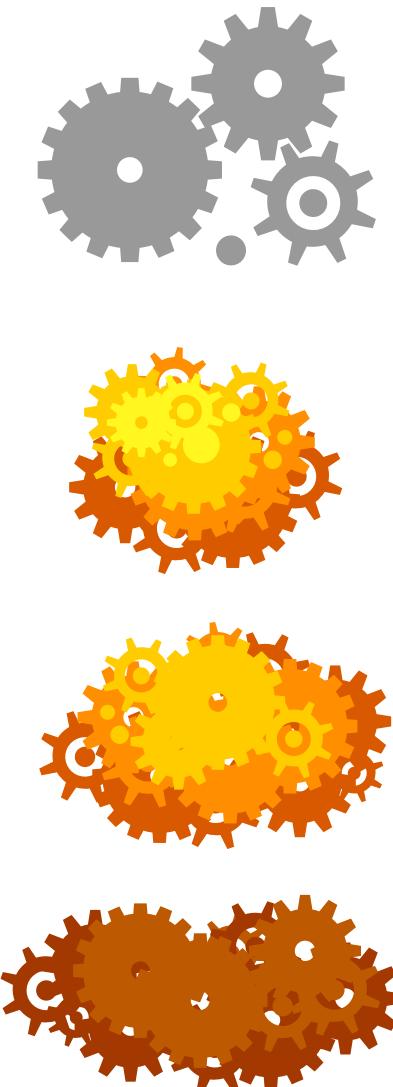
It really doesn't matter what shape you use to create your 'cluster' of leaves.

I tried it with a silhouette of a spoon...



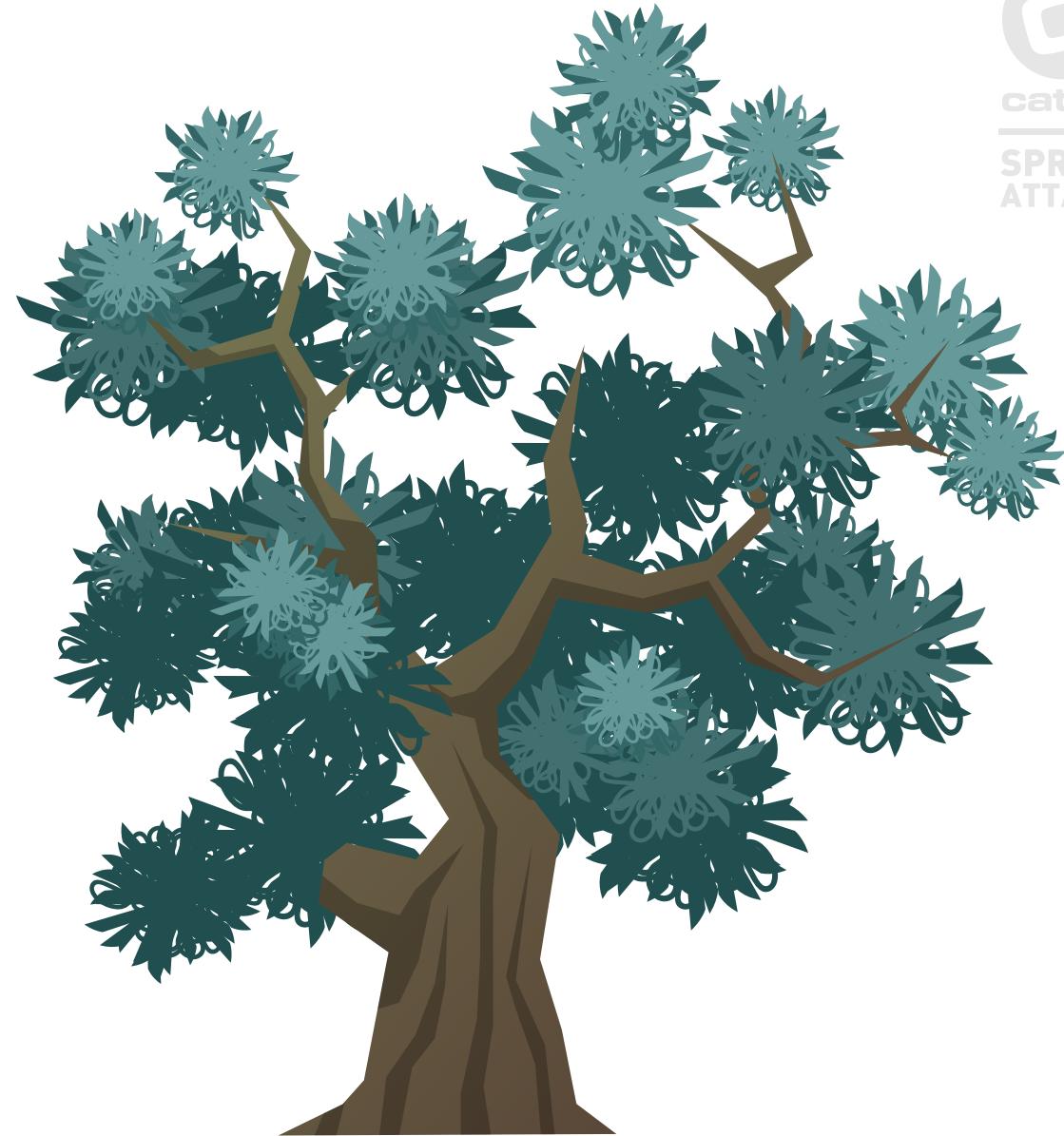
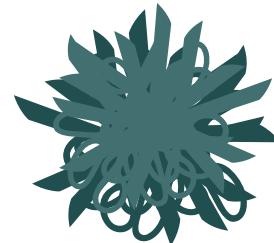
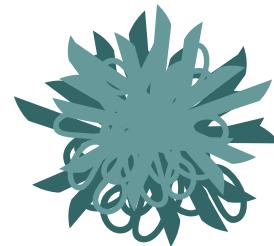
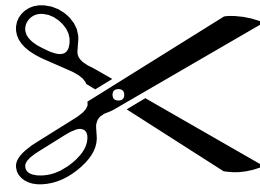


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... some cogs...





... or the clipart of a pair of scissors.





Try your own shapes and go as crazy as you want
to match the needs of your scene or game.



Enjoy!