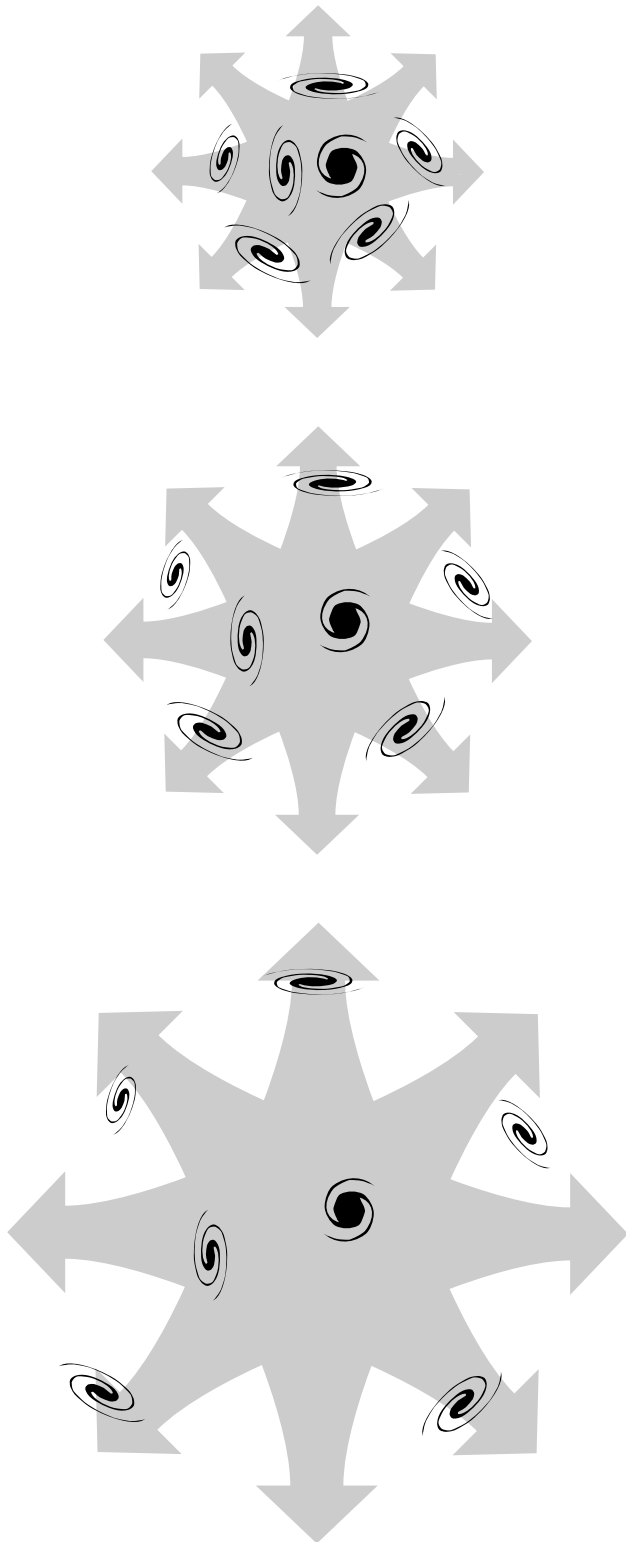
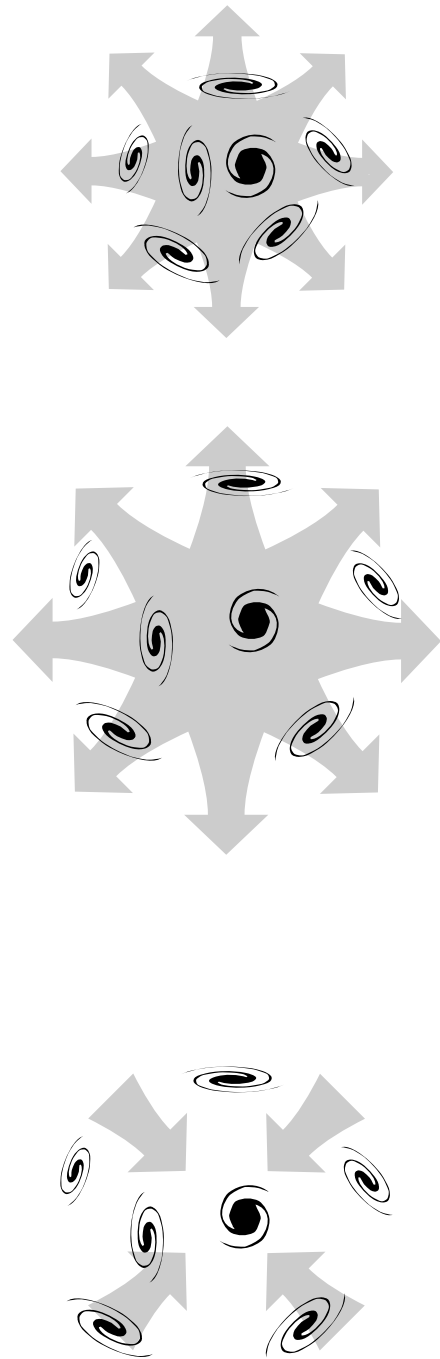


Open Universe



Closed Universe



An open universe expands forever because it does not contain enough mass, and so does not have enough gravity to slow the expansion of space. A closed universe contains enough mass to halt the expansion, and eventually collapses. A universe with a "critical density" of matter in space is exactly balanced between these two alternatives, and expands at an ever-slowing rate.