



Medieval Shields

Let's create our own!

https://www.ducksters.com/history/middle_ages/knight_coat_of_arms.php

<https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/guide-to-heraldry>





Knights and nobles in the Middle Ages often had a coat of arms. This was a special symbol that represented their family. Having a special symbol or coat of arms is often called "heraldry".

How did having a coat of arms get started?

The first coat of arms was used to distinguish one knight from another. When a knight had on his full armor, including plate mail and helmet, even his friends couldn't recognize him. Because of this, knights began to paint symbols on their shields. They eventually began to put the symbol on their banner and the coat they wore over their armor. This is how it got the name "coat of arms".



Royal Arms of England
by Sodacan of Wikimedia Commons

The Herald

Each coat of arms needed to be unique. However, there were so many knights that it was tough to keep track of who had what symbol. It became the job of people called heralds to keep track of the different coats of arms. They made sure that new coats of arms were unique. They also kept track of who each coat of arms belonged to.

Laws

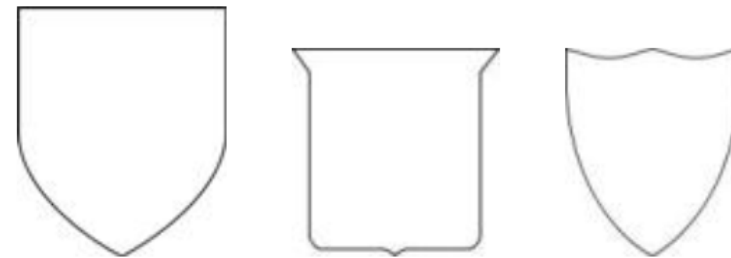
Over time, there became strict laws in applying for a new coat of arms. Each new coat of arms needed to be registered with the government. A coat of arms belonged to the family of the knight. He would pass the coat of arms down to his eldest son.



Designing a Coat of Arms

The original coats of arms had fairly simple designs. As there became more and more coats of arms, the designs became more complicated in order for each one to be unique. All coats of arms have certain elements, however.

- Escutcheon - The escutcheon is the main shape of the coat of arms. It was in the shape of a shield, but the exact shape could vary (see picture below).
- Field - The field was the background colour. At first the field was a solid colour, but later patterns began to be used for the field.
- Charge - The charge is the main picture in the centre of the coat of arms. It was usually an animal, but could be other things such as a sword or a ship.
- Ordinaries - Ordinaries were designs that appeared on the field. They added additional colour and uniqueness to the coat of arms.



Different shapes used for the escutcheon or shield

What did the colour mean?

Different background colours came to have different meanings. Red was the colour of a warrior and nobility. Other colours included blue for truth and sincerity, black for piety and knowledge, and green for hope and joy. The colours in heraldry are called tinctures.

What did different charges mean?

The charges used as the main figure in the coat of arms had different meanings as well. For example, the lion stood for majesty and strength, the elephant for wit and ambition, the boar for courage and ferocity, and the sun for power and glory.



COAT-OF-ARMS

Color Meaning

Pink

sweet, romantic,
feminine, calm,
harmony, healing

Orange

warm, adventurous,
optimistic, flair,
gregarious

Yellow

cheerful, joy,
optimism, sunny,
happiness, hope

Red

passion, courage,
strength, danger,
fearlessness, sexy

Green

healing, growth,
harmony, growth
freshness, luck

Brown

down-to-earth,
wholesome, stable,
protective, warm

TURQUOISE

creativity, dream
independence,
truth, refreshing

GOLD

success, quality,
elegance, radiance
abundance, virtue

PURPLE

intrigue, pride,
richness, mystery,
wisdom, wealth

SILVER

dignity, insight
reflection, sleek
feminine power

Blue

confidence, faith,
understanding,
calm, dignity

Black

strong, protection,
mysterious, formal
sophisticated



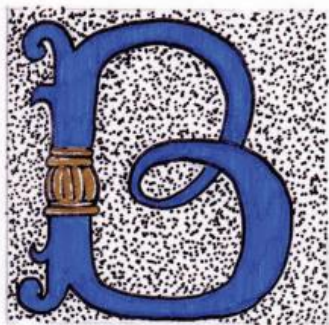
Medieval Calligraphy

Let's create our own illuminated letter banner!

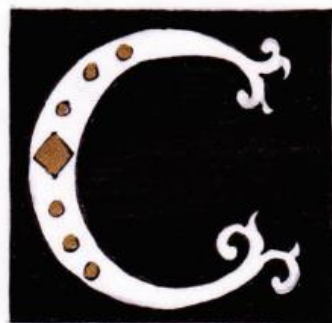
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TMi5g3OPO-Q>



fleur-de-lis



open bowl



geometric accents



drop shadow



vines



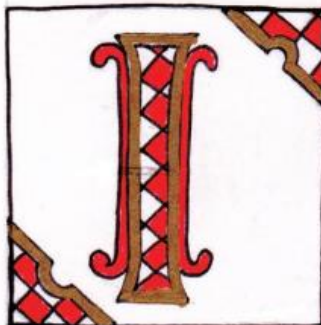
feathers



cuffs



Biblical theme



patterned stem



spurs



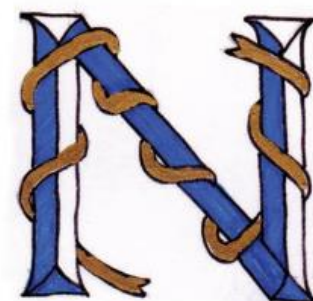
splayed serif



stippled background



intercepting illustration



Roman-inspired



notches



Celtic-inspired



illustrated counter



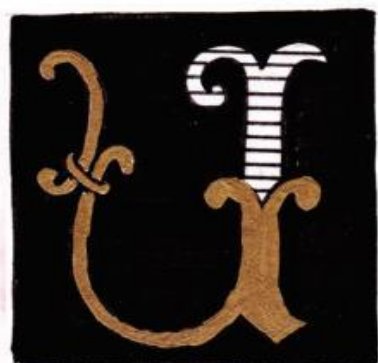
intertwined



animals



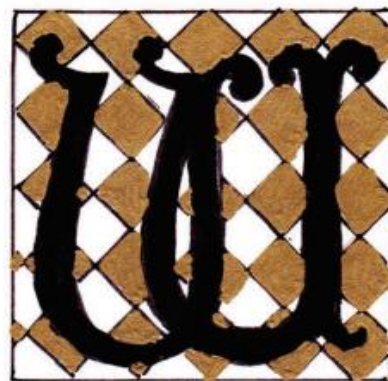
colored background



hook



Gothic-inspired



patterned background



floral accents



flourish tail



Secretary-inspired