

History of Origami

By: Nadinne M.

The name *Origami* is derived from the Japanese words *Oru* (to fold) and *kami* (paper). Around 105 A.D, paper was invented in China and was then brought to Japan by monks in the 6th Century. This handmade paper was a luxury item only a few could afford, and in Japan, paper folding was strictly for ceremonial purposes, often religious in nature. By the Edo Period (from 1603-1868), paper folding in Japan had become more recreational than ceremonial, and it often featured various cuts and folds. It was initially known as *orikata* (folded shapes). It became regarded as a new form of art, and enabled by new developments in the mass production of paper, it became more affordable to the everyday person.

Written instructions first appeared in 1797, with Akisato Rito's *Sembazuru Orikata*, called "Thousand Crane Folding". More instructions were created, and by the late 1800s, the term changed from *orikata* (folded shapes) to the now known *Origami*. There is a traditional story in Japan that says if a person folds 1,000 paper cranes, they will be granted one special wish. Akira Yoshizawa is often known as the "grandmaster of origami", who popularized origami and brought attention to it. In 1954, Yoshizawa published *Atarashi Origami Geijutsu* (New Origami Art). His work made for the basis of the symbols and notations now used today when describing how to fold particular models. This book also turned Yoshizawa into an origami superstar, as he spent the rest of his life serving as kind of a "Cultural Ambassador" for Japan, and he brought a greater awareness of *Origami* and its techniques to the wider world.

Today, *Origami* doesn't just fold paper, now it involves cutting and gluing, which provide greater stability to the shape being made. It has also evolved to incorporate mathematical theories. *Origami* doesn't also have to be made exclusively with paper, but with anything you want. As long as you have a shape in the end and folds were required to make it, the shape is considered to be *Origami*.

Websites Used:

<https://www.pbs.org/independentlens/between-the-folds/history.html>

<https://www.thesprucecrafts.com/brief-history-of-origami-2540653>