

Create Your Own Kite



Andō Hiroshige (Japanese, 1797–1858), *Kakegawa* from the series *The Fifty-Three Stations of the Tōkaidō Road*, 1833-34, woodblock print.
Gift of Kate Fowler Merle-Smith, 1976. (1976.20.118.27)

The artwork, *Kakegawa* from the series *The Fifty-Three Stations of the Tōkaidō Road*, shows several people outdoors flying kites. Kites were first flown in China over two thousand years ago, but they are flown across the world in many different cultures. Kites were first created to share messages, but over time became a way to have fun and pass time with others. Pass time creating a kite and enjoying nature with friends and family.

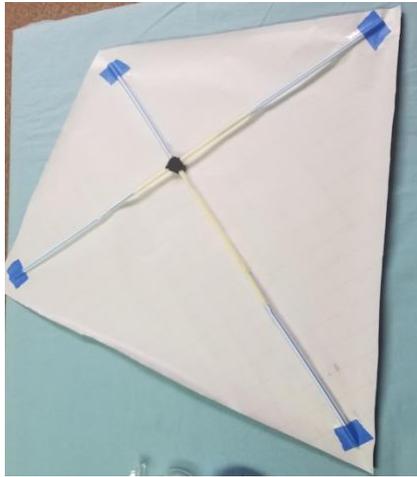
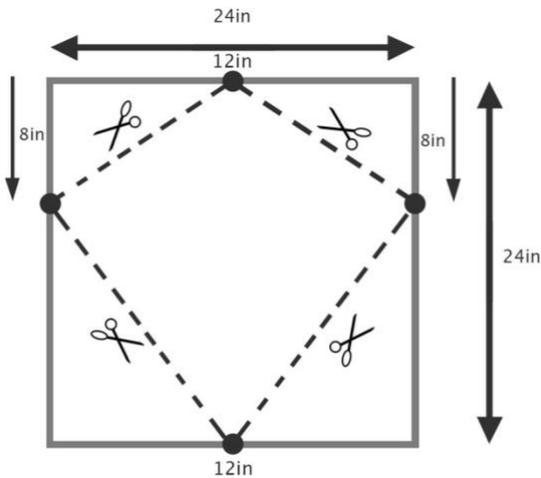
For this project, you will need:

- Straws or sticks
- 24" Wrapping paper (Or other paper glued together)
- Scissors
- A ruler
- Glue (Hot glue or liquid glue)
- Tape
- Yarn or string
- A pen or pencil
- Art supplies for decoration (Optional)
- Ribbon (Optional)

Kites harness the environment to fly. Using simple math and science, you can learn while you create. The *Sail* of the kite, or the diamond shape cloth or paper, catches the air and provides lift. The *Spar and Spine* form the X-shaped support of the kite that keeps its shape. The kite *Line* attaches the kite from the air to the ground- keeping it from flying away. The *Bridle* of the kite attaches the line from the spar and spine to stabilize and strengthen the kite. The *Tail* of the kite is decorative, but helps the kite balance in the air. Tails are optional- a kite can fly just fine without it.

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To create your kite, follow these instructions.

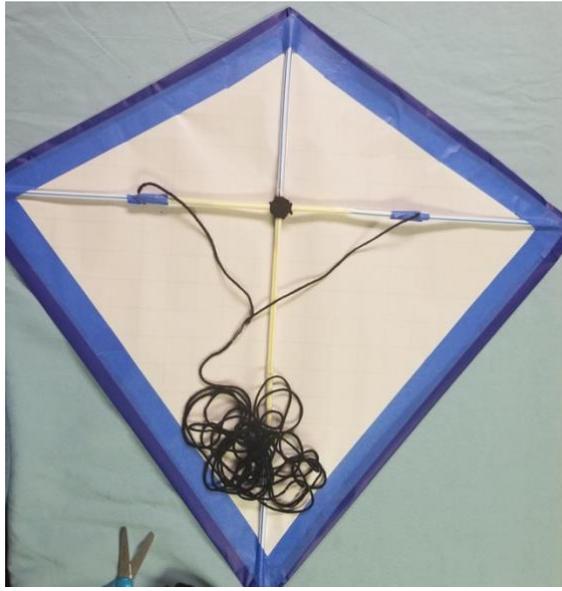


Step 1: Slide straws together and tape up the ends. Measure out two 20 inch sticks. You can always cut a longer stick down to size. These are the Spar and Spine of the kite.

Step 2. Measure out your kite sail. Start with a 24 inch by 24 inch square of paper. You can use wrapping paper or a few sheets of paper measured out to make a larger size. On the bottom of your paper, measure and dot 12 inches in (the halfway mark) with a pen or pencil. Repeat with the top of your paper. On the left and right edge, measure and mark eight inches from the top edge on each side. Connect the dots with your ruler, and then cut out the lines. This should make the diamond shaped kite sail. Make sure to decorate and customize both sides of your sail.

Step 3: Place your two sticks across your kite sail. You should have about an inch of extra space at each side. Align them in an X shape. Use a piece of string to tie the spar and spine together. Tie a tight knot. Tape down the edges of the spar and spine and fold excess paper overtop to cover the edges of your spar and spine.

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Step 4: Tape or glue down the folded edges of your kite. This keeps the wind from pulling your kite apart.

Step 5: Attach the bridle of your kite. Cut a piece of string about the length of your horizontal stick. Tie both ends of the string on each side of the stick. There should be a loop of string. Tape down the edges of your knots to prevent them from falling off.

Step 6: Attach the line of your kite. Measure out a very long piece of string for your kite line. Tie the line of your kite to the bridle. Make sure to tie it tightly.

Step 7: Add the tail of your kite (Optional). Tie yarn, string, or ribbon to the stick at the bottom of your kite. Tape the knot down for safety. Add bows, pom-poms, or tassels to your tail for extra decoration.