

Paper Snowflakes

Join us in making a classic paper snowflake this winter! You will need a **blank paper** or **snowflake template** (see attached), **scissors**, and **string** to hang up your snowflake.

The Science of Snowflakes

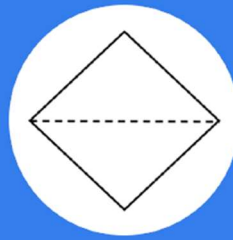
Snowflakes are ice crystals! Each snowflake starts as a small dust particle; this particle attracts water droplets, which freeze around it in a crystal form. The shape of the crystal is created by different freezing patterns around the dust particle, as snowflakes move through different temperatures and humidity levels in the atmosphere. Because of the molecular structure of ice, snowflakes often have 6 branches, and have a radial symmetry – this means that they are symmetrical when rotated about their centre point!

Did You Know?

The earliest attempts to study and document snowflakes were made by American meteorologist Wilson Alwyn Bentley (1865-1931), who would catch snowflakes on black velvet and photograph them through a microscope before they melted.

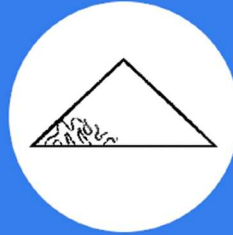
Snowflake-Making as a Craft

This craft is a form of kirigami, which consists of folding a single piece of paper and strategically cutting it, so that it creates a design, such as a snowflake, when unfolded. This practice is centuries old! The use of coloured paper to make cut-out decorations began in 6th-century China; by the 14th century, this had become a leisure activity that children would often partake in! Kirigami, a Japanese art, evolved from this practice, incorporating paper-folding to create complex designs.



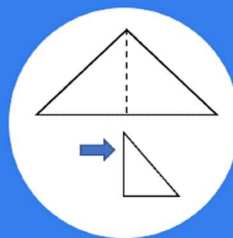
Step 1

Cut out the square or circle of the template. Fold it along the lines, keeping the design visible from the front.



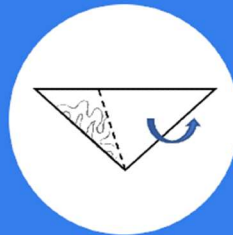
Step 2

If your paper makes circle, keep folding along the lines, then skip to step 6. If it makes a triangle, flip the triangle over.



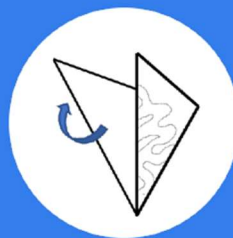
Step 3

Fold the triangle in half to make a smaller triangle.



Step 4

Fold the larger section behind the design.



Step 5

Fold the back section behind again.



Step 6

Cut out the design, then unfold the snowflake. Congratulations!

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