

MAKE YOUR OWN COAT OF ARMS

Our jousting knights at Jackfield Tile Museum are carrying shields which bear their own 'coat of arms' or heraldic symbols – a design which would make them easily recognised in battle. Shields first carried these designs in the late 1100s when helmets covered a knight's face and their shield was the only way to recognise them.



You will need

- Something to draw on such as paper or card to make a shield shape.
You can either print the shield template we have provided or draw your own!
- Something to draw with and add any of the colours below. You can use paints, pens, pencils, crayons. It's up to you!

Follow these rules to design your coat of arms

1. It must be unique and represent you as a person. No one else is allowed to bear your coat of arms, but you might choose one animal or symbol to represent your family.
2. The design needs to be large and simple so that it can be seen at a distance.
3. Use only two or three colours and choose from the following:

Red

Blue

Green

Black

Purple (for very important people)



4. You might choose one animal or symbol to represent your family. Animals have different meanings. Choose the one that represents yourself. Here are some ideas:

Lions - bravery

Dogs - faithfulness and reliability

Stags - wisdom and long life

Eagles - power and nobility

Hares - speed

Badgers - endurance or 'hanging on'



Made up or mythical beasts are often used such as:

Dragon The earliest and most common fabulous beast, also used as a badge by Romans, Anglo-Saxons and Welsh. A brave and cunning defender of treasure.

Griffin A combination of lion and eagle. Symbolises watchfulness and courage - and also guards treasure.

Cockatrice A cross between a cockerel and a dragon, supposedly hatched from a cock's egg by a snake or toad. Could kill by looking at you and symbolised protection.

Manticore or 'man-tiger' A fearsome man-eating creature with a lion's body, man's face, tusks, horns and a deafening trumpet-like voice.

You can use a different animal or beast and make up your own meaning!

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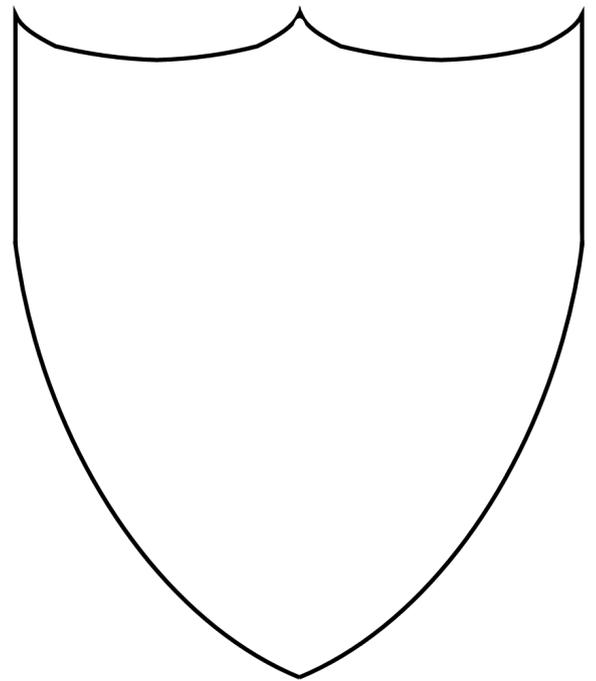
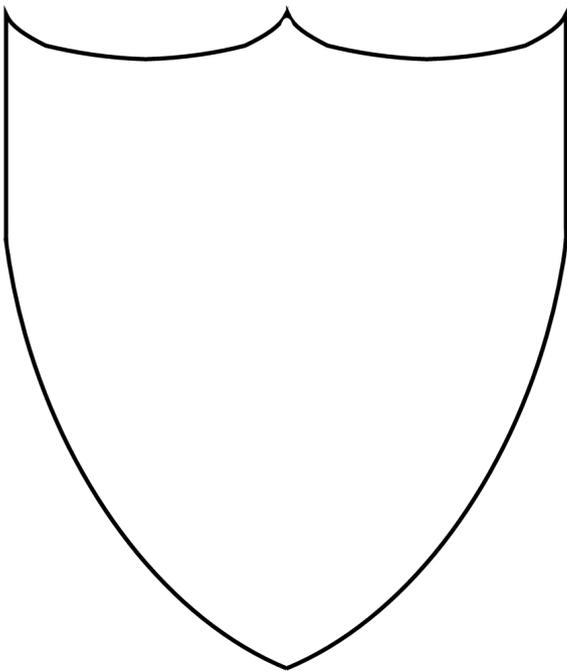
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5. Shields are often divided into sections using different types of lines. These are some of the different lines you could use.

- Fess** - horizontal stripe across the shield
- Pale** - vertical stripe down the shield
- Bend** - diagonal stripe
- Chevron** like a house roof, pointing upwards
- Cross** - a plain cross
- Chief** - bar across top edge of shield
- Bordure** - border round edges of shield
- Pile** - downward-pointing triangle

Practice your coat of arms

Use these empty shield shapes to decide what you would like to include in your coat of arms following the rules and guides!



Share your coat of arms
with us on Facebook, Twitter
and Instagram!