Chapter One



Introduction

Introduction

Welcome to the 4-H Heritage Arts project. Without interested individuals, such as yourself, many historic arts and crafts would be lost with the passing of generations.

You will be given the opportunity through the Heritage Arts project to choose from a variety of fiber, fabric, yarn arts, and crafts. The projects and activities you experience depend upon your enthusiasm and the availability of resources within your home and community.

Heritage Arts is defined as the practical skills passed down from preceding generations that were developed to provide basic family needs, such as apparel, home furnishings, or decorations. It also is defined as a traditional craft and the methods that have been maintained throughout history and passed on to others, often by observation and example.

Classes on traditional crafts are available in many communities, taught by skilled local artisans. The techniques taught often incorporate new techniques and materials with the old, traditional methods to enhance the craft.









Project Objectives

The Heritage Arts project is designed to help you:

- Learn about a variety of historic arts and crafts.
- Create a craft that connects you to the past.
- Learn about historic influences on arts and crafts.
- Have fun learning.
- Gain skills that might lead to a home-based business.

Project Expectations

Members are encouraged to learn about and try a variety of different historic crafts. Think of fun places in your community where you can learn more. Ask about interesting, creative artisans who are willing to share their skills with you. Take a field trip to local museums that feature historic fabric and yarn displays. Take a trip to the library and look up interesting facts about a craft that is of particular interest to you. Evaluate or judge fabric and yarn crafts and do a demonstration to share your skills with others. The more activities you do, the more you learn.

To complete your project, respond to all questions on the Heritage Arts e-Record. Check with your Extension office for county fair requirements if you want to exhibit your project.



Textile Crafts

What is a textile craft? It is defined as any method of creating a unique design with fiber, fabric or yarn. Patchwork and applique quilting are examples of textile crafts that use fabric as the main design ingredient. Macrame, needlepoint, embroidery, crochet and weaving are textile crafts that use yarns. All textile crafts have one thing in common--they use fibers, fabric or yarn to create a design.

Some textile crafts focus on making fabric, such as weaving, crochet or needlepoint. Other textile crafts change an already existing fabric into something different. Quilting and embroidery create a design that changes the appearance of fabric.

Creating a Design

Once you decide on a heritage craft, it's time to think about the design. Many books show how to create a pleasing design. There also are many printed patterns that can be purchased. There's no better way to enjoy and understand design than to try it. Designing, like most activities, can come naturally once you understand what you are doing.

A design is really a plan - a plan for using all materials so they look good together. To begin planning the design, examine your materials - yams or fabrics or some other material - in a special way. For example, regardless of what materials are used, these basic components of · design are:

- Line
- Shape
- Space
- Texture
- Color

These components are called the elements of design. They are important to your plan because they are the visible details of a design. Without a design plan, these elements may seem haphazard or clash. Let's take a closer look at each of these elements of design.

Line

Line is an element that's found everywhere around us. In a garment, lines are created by a seamline, a hem, a dart, a row of trim, a plaid or stripe. A row of embroidery stitches creates a line, as does a row of crochet stitches or the pattern in a quilt square. Some lines are straight and angular, others are curved. Some are thick and sturdy, others fine and delicate. The kind of lines used in a design will affect the character of that design.



Shape

When lines are connected and overlapped, they create shapes: squares, circles, triangles, any shape imaginable. The outline of an applique is a shape, the pieces in a patchwork quilt are shapes, the outline of a garment is a shape, and so on. Just as lines create feelings, so can shapes.



Space

When we talk of space, we mean the actual space an objector a design occupies. When we design, we work within a specific space; so not only must the design itself be well thought out but so must the space around it. That space might be an individual quilt square or entire quilt.



Texture

Texture is the surface characteristic of an object; it may be smooth, fuzzy, soft, pebbly, scratchy, or one of many other textures. Sometimes we don't have to touch an object to know its texture - we can see the texture. In planning a design, texture adds character or feeling, just as lines and shapes do.

Color

When we think of colors, we usually think of color names (or hues) such as red, green, yellow or blue. We can create different feelings in a design by the colors we use. For instance, a design in yellow and green will give you a different feeling from the same design in purple and blue.

But, there are other ways we use colors to give a design the feeling we want. The way we use color values also can affect a design. Value is the lightness or darkness of a hue. The same hue can have many different values. For example, think about the different kinds of blue–baby blue, light-blue, sky blue, peacock blue, navy blue and royal blue. Visualize a design in all light colors, such as lime green, pink, light-blue and lemon-yellow. Now visualize that same design in dark green, navy blue, dark red and gold. Does it seem different? How about the same design in lime green and navy blue? Does it seem different in style? The intensity of the hues we use in a design also affects the feeling we get from it. Intensity refers to the brightness or dullness of a color.

Imagine a design in all bright colors. Usually, a design made of bright colors is more than our eyes can take. So, use bright colors sparingly.



Evaluate Your Plan - Pattern to Follow

Take a look at the fibers, yarns, fabrics or threads you plan to work with. What kind of feeling do you want to create with your design? Do the materials create that feeling in their textures and colors? Can you create the kinds of lines and shapes you want with your materials? Are the materials suitable for the space in which you've chosen to create? If you can say yes to these questions, you're on your way to a well-designed piece. But it doesn't stop there. Because even with all the right materials together, designers still need some guidelines on how to use them together. You can think of these guidelines as a recipe for deciding just how much of each ingredient (colors, textures, lines, and other elements) to use and where to add them. These guidelines are called the principles of design.

Principles of Design

Proportion:
Proportion is the relationship of all the parts of a design to each other and to the whole garment or article. Each part needs to be in proportion to the rest of the design. No part should overpower the others. If a garment does not have proportion:

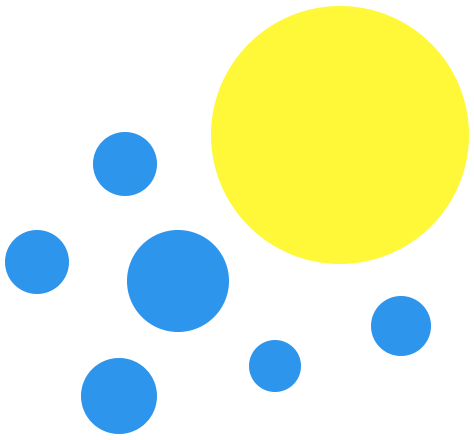


- One part of the design might be too big for the rest of the design
- The design may be too big or too small to look good on the garment
- There may be too much bright, shiny color that overpowers the other colors
- The design is too overpowering for the person wearing it or the decor in which it will be used.

Balance:
Balance is a feeling of steadiness, of everything in the design looking like it belongs. Balance can be formal when each side of the center is identical, or informal when the sides are different, but weigh the same.

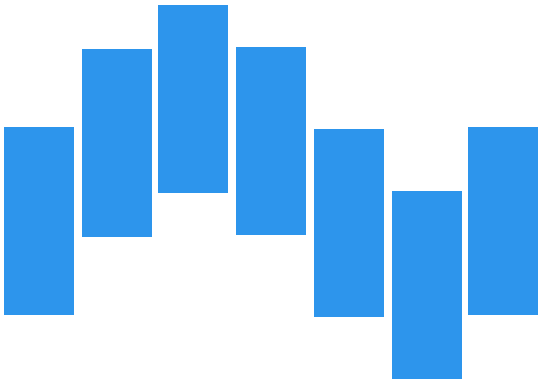


Emphasis:
Emphasis is the creation of a center of interest. Without the center of interest, a design may seem cluttered and busy, or boring and uninteresting. If a design is not well planned and is missing emphasis, it may be cluttered with too many colors, different textures, different lines, shapes or sizes. Or there may not be sufficient contrast to attract attention. The center of interest doesn't have to be centered in the design.



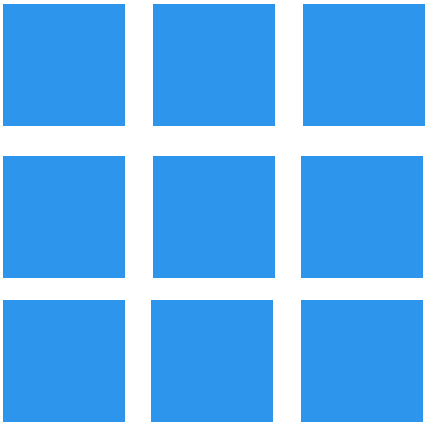
Rhythm:

When we look at a design, the eye follows a certain route around the design. It notices differences in lines, shapes, textures, colors and spaces. The route the eye follows is known as rhythm. In a well-planned design, the eye is led from one to another to the point of emphasis. That rhythm is created in a design by repeating something throughout the designcolor, texture, shape or size. If an item misses rhythm, it may have too many unrelated colors, textures, shapes, lines or sizes. Or the design may be placed so that it is spotty or scattered and doesn't seem to fit together.



Unity:

When we say that a design has unity, we mean that it is complete. Unity means all the materials together in a pleasing combination. If unity is missing, the colors, textures, lines. shapes and spaces are not compatible, or there may not be a central theme.



Sources of Inspiration

Now that you have learned something about a well-planned design, it's time to begin thinking about developing your own designs. How do you start? Actually, there are several ways to begin. One of them is to become aware of the design of the objects around us. Take a good look; there are examples everywhere! Look at the grain of the wood on a tabletop. What kind of lines or shapes are created? How does the rhythm in the grain move your eye over the design? Can you create a similar design-perhaps with weaving or needlepoint or with embroidery?

There are many places to get ideas. Look outside at the patches of grass for ideas on shapes and colors. Look at the sunsets and clouds for shapes and colors, or the cracks in sidewalks, the frost on windows, the bark on trees. Everywhere you look, there are ideas for color and textures, shapes and lines. Design examples aren't limited to nature. Look at designs in things around the house like baskets or pictures. Perhaps there's a design on pottery that you'd like to try in embroidery, or the shape of an old bottle gives you an idea for an applique. You can find ideas in magazines, wallpaper and comic books. There are ideas everywhere if you'll just use a little imagination!

Doodle on paper to develop and crystallize a design or try arranging yarns or scraps of fabric. Try cutting out shapes from construction paper to experiment with a design. It does not matter how, but it is important to plan a design first!

The designer whose work shows fine quality adapts and stylizes a design to suit the materials used. A designer does not attempt to imitate real objects, such as flowers using thread. Instead, if a flower idea is chosen as a theme for the design, the designer alters it to suit the shape of the article, its purpose and the limitations of materials and tools.



Resources

There are many good sources to help you with the "How-to's" of textile crafts. Your Extension specialist can help you locate information available for 4-H members on specific textile crafts. Beyond this manual, the Internet contains a wealth of information on a variety of arts. Be sure to have an adult assist you with any online search to be sure you can find the items needed to replicate or adapt what you learn from those sharing ideas or projects on their websites or in YouTube videos. Heritage Crafts, a charity for traditional heritage crafts based out of the United Kingdom, has a craft inventory that may be a helpful starting place for your research.

Your talents are an excellent resource for your 4-H club. Share your know-how and special interests to help others. Bring the tools and let everyone experiment. Bring in others from the community to share their craft knowledge. A local craft or fabric store may work with you or help you contact someone with an interest in a specific textile craft. Members may decide to make a sampler, shawl, handkerchiefs, or monograms utilizing the various techniques.

Libraries can be an excellent source of information. You can broaden your knowledge of why and how heritage crafts began by reading through historic publications. Magazines are also a terrific source of ideas.

As mentioned, Internet web pages provide interesting information as well. Perhaps you will want to clip or save and file ideas to share and talk about. There also are many craft magazines and pattern books that can be good sources too. Craft organizations and councils often provide specific information that may be helpful. Check with your county Extension office, library or craft store for contact information.

https://heritagecrafts.org.uk/skills/crafts/



Caution on using Artificial Intelligence-generated patterns!

4-H Heritage Arts project members should be cautious when using AI-generated information or patterns because these tools may produce designs or instructions that are inaccurate, unsafe, or disconnected from the cultural and historical traditions that give heritage crafts their meaning.

Generative AI systems can make up steps, materials, or techniques that do not work in real practice, which may lead to wasted materials, structural failure, or even injury when using tools or fibers. In ethnic and heritage arts, AI-generated patterns may unintentionally misrepresent, oversimplify, or appropriate culturally significant designs, undermining respect for the communities and traditions behind them. Additionally, AI will reuse copyrighted or proprietary patterns without disclosure, raising ethical and fair-use concerns for 4-H members.



Because 4-H emphasizes learning, skill-building, and authentic craftsmanship, members should rely on trusted instructors, primary sources, and hands-on experience, using AI only as a limited supplement rather than a replacement for traditional knowledge and careful practice.

Sharing What You Have Learned

Now that you have learned many new things about a heritage craft, why not share? This helps you learn more about the topic and become more comfortable teaching others. Making an exhibit to show at the county fair is another way to share with others. You also may share your knowledge by giving a demonstration and showing how to do something.

Demonstrations

Select a topic that relates to something you learned about your project and plan a demonstration. Some ideas include:

- Use of design principles and elements
- Selecting fabric or yarn for a project
- Sharing the history of a craft
- Purchasing supplies
- Steps to complete a craft item
- Can you think of others?



Evaluation of Judging

Learn the standards of quality for your craft. The exhibit item will be compared to these standards at a fair or during craft competitions. Standards are printed in the 4-H judging guidelines or judging score sheets available through your county Extension office. Some craft organizations also publish judging standards. When you apply the standards to a craft item, you judge or evaluate that item against the standard of quality. Evaluating your project yourself will enable you to see how well you applied the skills you learned. How well did your item compare to the standards? What did you do well? Where can you improve? Answers to these questions will help you do a better job next time.

Community Service

You can learn a great deal about your community when you get involved to help others. You can:

- Make lap robes for elderly people.
- Make quilts for a homeless shelter.
- Work on a fund raiser for a local cause.
- Go to a local nursing home and visit residents.
- Help an elderly or lonely neighbor with household chores.
- Help younger members with their projects.
- Can you think of others?

Fair Exhibit

Remember to record all of your activities during this year. It's easier to write them down as soon as you do them rather than wait until the end of the year and try to remember them. Be sure to include in your story not only the things you made, but the experiences you had, special things you learned and how you felt about them.

You must complete the History of the Heritage Art Selected section of the 4-H Heritage Arts Page of the record book. Plan early to begin your search for historic information. You have several options as to what you can learn about and share.

You can find historic information on:

- The craft itself
- What tools are used to make it
- New techniques that have been developed
- Special uses of the finished items
- Influences of wars on trade
- Interesting artisans within the community
- Or any other related topic

The key is providing information directly related to the craft you are exhibiting.

A minimum of four pictures with a descriptive caption are required in your record book. It is suggested to include at least one photo of the finished product. However, photos of Heritage Arts exhibits enable judges to see progress you made during construction of the exhibit and how well the items fit your intended use.

If you used a pattern, please securely attach a clear copy to your record, to help judges evaluate the project.

Projects will be divided into three age categories for exhibit based on the age of the exhibitor as of December 31 of the current 4-H year.

Age categories are:
Junior - 8 to 10 years old
Intermediate -11 to 13 years old
Senior - 14 to 18 years old

When researching your project for the Heritage Arts Page in the e-Record, list references used:
a. Juniors list one or two references
b. Intermediates list two or three
c. Seniors list three or more

Most Heritage Arts projects discussed in this manual are fiber-, fabric- or yarn-based arts and crafts, which should be shown in Miscellaneous Heritage Arts - Fiber classes. Non-fiber arts and crafts (silver smithing, wood carvings, paper scrolling, beading, etc.) should be shown in Miscellaneous Heritage Arts Non-Fiber classes. Crafts exhibited must be those traditional crafts which have been passed down through generations.