

Discover...

Knights and Heraldry

Key Facts

- Heraldry emerged in Europe in the 12th century. As knights wore helmets that covered their faces, they needed a symbol so that they could be recognised on the battlefield or in tournaments.
- A coat of arms was made up of a coloured 'field', an 'ordinary' pattern on top of it and symbolic 'charges'.
- Terms about heraldry are in the language of medieval knights, Norman French.
- The first knights were professional cavalry soldiers. The process of becoming a knight became more formal over time.
- The idea of knightly behaviour evolved over time and included respecting the church, protecting the poor and loyalty to your superiors.
- In the 15th and 16th centuries, knighthoods became symbolic honours given out by kings and queens rather than military roles.

Where to find more:

- Find out more about Warwickshire in the Medieval era by visiting the Our Warwickshire website: https://www.ourwarwickshire.org.uk/content/coverage_custom/medieval
- Read the story of Guy of Warwick, a legendary hero who represented knightly behaviour: <https://www.ourwarwickshire.org.uk/content/article/guy-warwick-english-hero>
- The English Heritage website has a guide to heraldry to help you make your own coat of arms: <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/guide-to-heraldry>
- The Hundred Years War featured many knights, the Royal Armouries Museum website has more information: <https://collections.royalarmouries.org/hundred-years-war/people.html>

Warwickshire Castles

Bagot's Castle, Bagington

Believed to have been constructed in the 11th Century at the time of King Henry I. It was rebuilt as the current castle in the late 1300s by Sir William Bagot. The castle subsequently passed through several hands, and eventually became derelict in the 16th Century.



Kenilworth Castle

Kenilworth is perhaps most famous for its links with Elizabeth I, who visited Robert Dudley the Earl of Leicester there. The castle, park, mere and priory were all created in the 1120s by a single man, Geoffrey de Clinton, the king's treasurer and chamberlain. In 1266 Kenilworth successfully held out against a siege by Henry III.



Warwickshire Castles

Astley Castle

There has been a site at Astley Castle since Saxon times . By the early 12th century it was held by Philip de Estlega [Astley] from the Earl of Warwick. By 1420 the manor had passed through marriage to the Grey family. The first Yorkist queen, Elizabeth Woodville, probably lived at Astley in the mid 15th century as Sir John Grey's wife. Once widowed, Elizabeth married Edward IV. Lady Jane Grey was another Astley queen, who was queen of England for just 9 days before being beheaded for treason.



Warwick Castle

Constructed in 914 by Ethelfleda, daughter of Alfred the Great, Warwick Castle was added to by William the Conqueror, before it fell under siege to Simon De Montfort in 1264. It was home of Richard Neville, the Kingmaker, in the 1400s until he is killed on the battlefield. The castle was visited by Queen Elizabeth 1 in 1572. During the Civil War, Warwick Castle withstood a siege by Royalists in 1642.

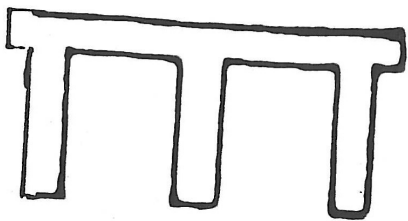


How to Design a Coat of Arms

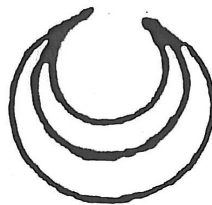
Coats of arms can tell us about the person or people they belong to.

Having a lion in your coat of arms might tell people you were strong and brave or a unicorn said you were pure and innocent. Other symbols meant other things.

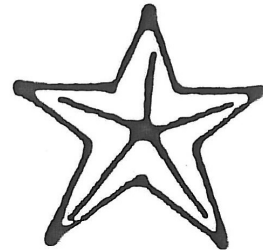
To make your own coat of arms you might want to use some of these symbols, we have listed a few below that might help, or you could make up some new ones.



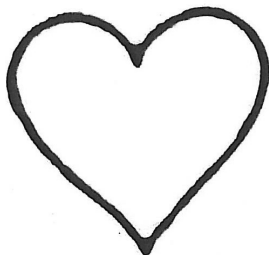
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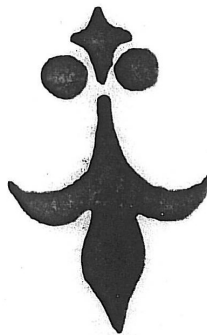
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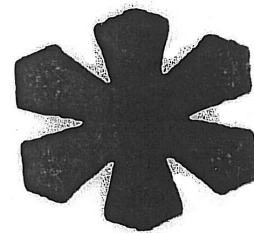
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**ELDEST
DAUGHTER**



**2ND
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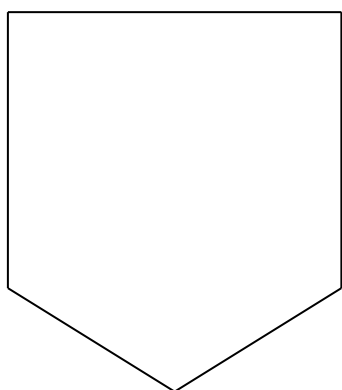


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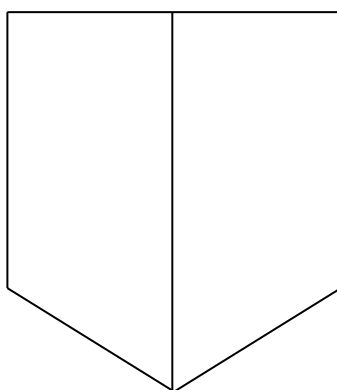
These symbols would tell other people if you were the oldest son or daughter.

Do you have any older brothers or sisters? Their coat of arms would have a different symbol on it to yours.

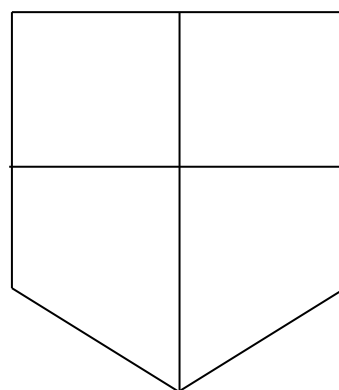
Sometimes people would use the different designs below on their coat of arms, these are just some of them. They all have different names too.



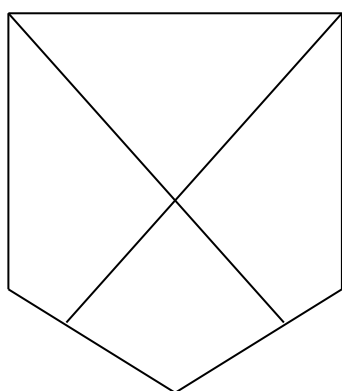
Undivided



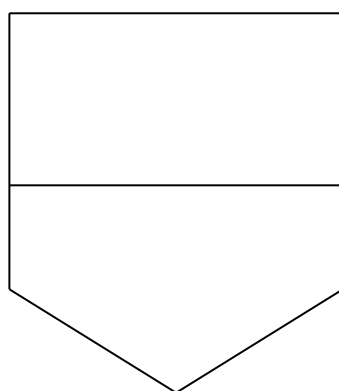
Per pale



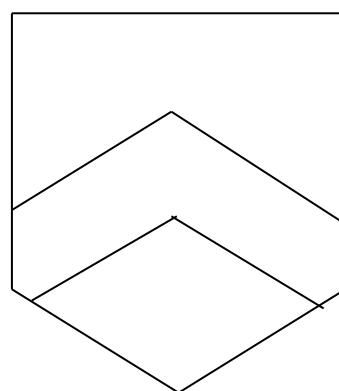
Per cross



Per Saltire



Per fess



Chevron

People only used to be allowed to use certain colours on their coats of arms too. You can use which ever colour you like though. When talking about your coat of arms colours are called by French names.

Sable (black)

Purpure (purple)

Gules (red)

Or (gold)

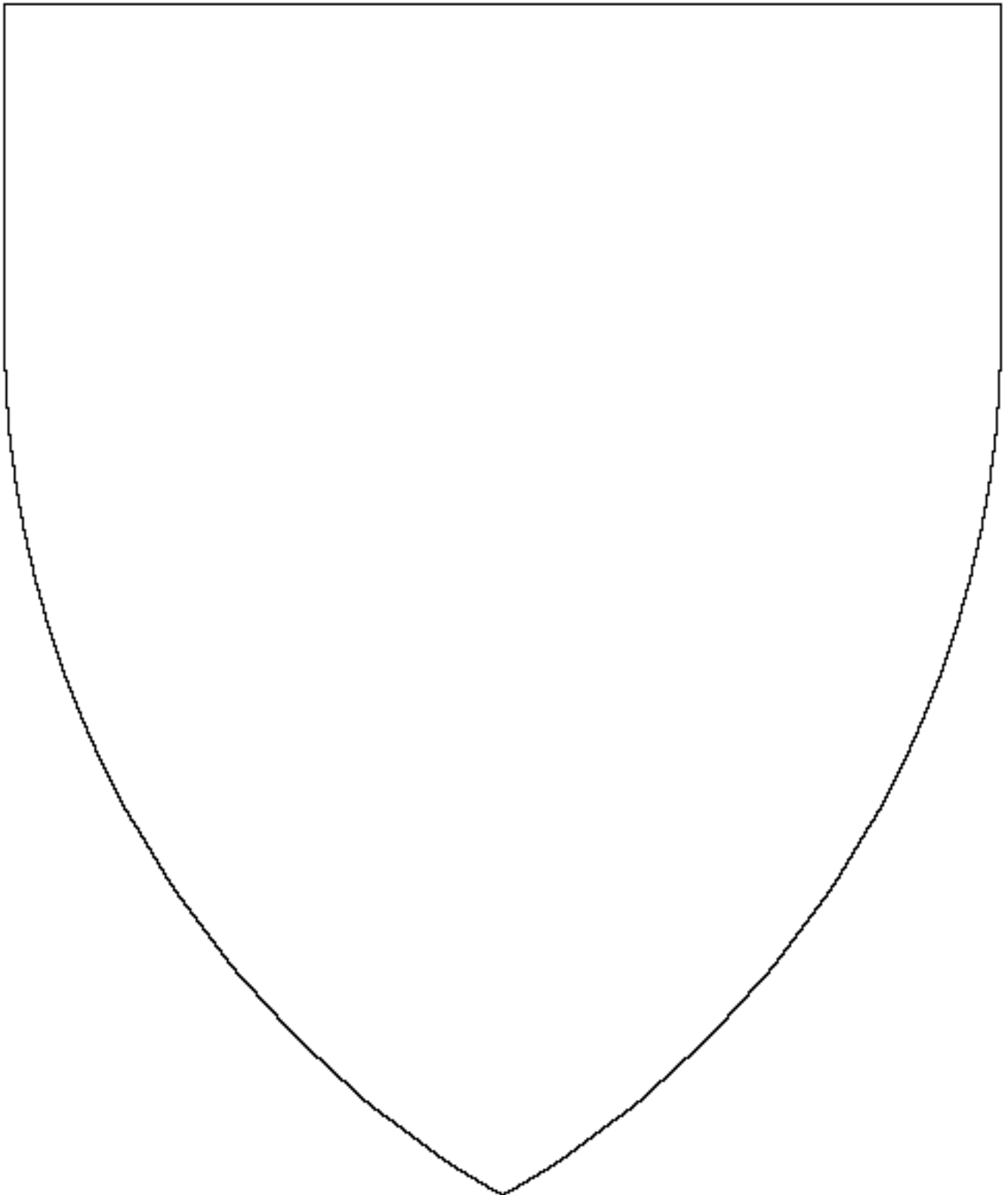
Azure (blue)

Vert (green)

Argent (silver)

Coat of Arms Template

You can cut the shield shape out of strong card. Add your design onto this. Cut another strip of thinner card and stick it to the back to act as a handle.



Knights and Heraldry

Colouring in

The symbol of a Dragon mean your are a valiant defender of treasure. It also stands for valour and protection.

