

# Make a Mandarin Square

Buzi (補子), also known as Mandarin Squares, are embroidered of fabric that function as badges of rank for government officials in China. They come in pairs, one for the front and back of a coat, and feature animals that denote an official's rank. Buzi were used from the beginning of the Ming dynasty in 1391 until the end of the Qing Dynasty in 1911. Check out [this Digital Daily Dig](#) by Stephen Lang, Lyons Keeper of the Collections in the Asian section, to learn more. Look closely at some of the Buzi from the Asian section, below, and then be inspired to create one of your own design!



A design featuring a dragon typically belonged to the emperor, the highest ranking official. What other animals can you spot on the square to the left?



Fierce animals, like the tiger above, are often worn by military officials. This Buzi belonged to their wife, indicated by the direction the tiger's head is facing.



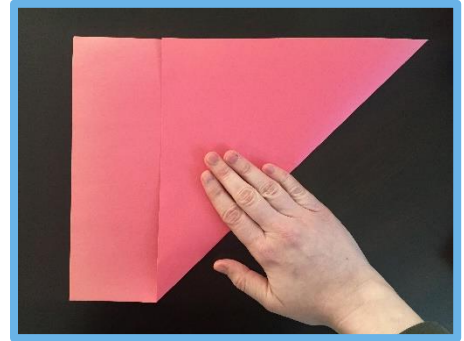
This Buzi shows a wild goose flying towards the sun, which represents the emperor. A bird like this one would symbolize the rank of a civic official.

## MATERIALS:

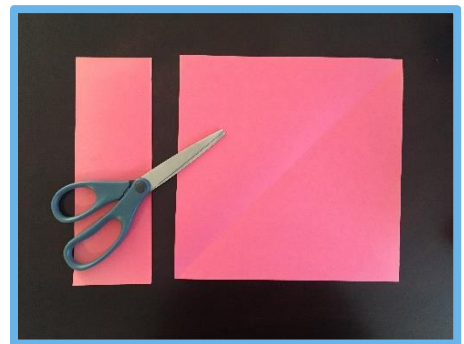
<p>Construction paper</p> 	<p>Safety scissors</p> 	<p>Glue</p> 	<p>Crayons, Markers, Color Pencils</p> 	<p>Other decorations</p> 
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**STEP 1:** Choose a piece of paper for the background of your design. If your paper is rectangular, you will need to cut it into a square shape. Fold your paper diagonally, so that one of your short sides meets the opposite long side. When folded, your paper should look like the photo to the right. Cut off the excess paper.



**STEP 2:** Find the center of your paper. Any easy way to do this is to fold your square diagonally, in the opposite direction of your original fold. Where the two folds cross is the center of your paper! This is where you should draw your animal design.



**STEP 3:** Get creative! In addition to the central animal in your design, add pictures and symbols that have a special meaning to you. You may want to give your animal a background setting, either real or imaginary. Add a border design or use other types of paper to make your design stand out!



**STEP 4:** When you finish, use tape or safety pins to attach your design to a coat or shirt. Make sure to ask an adult for help before pinning the design to clothing! Take your creation one step further and create another exact copy of your design for the back of your outfit.

