



10: Akira Yoshizawa

Akira Yoshizawa was a Japanese artist who notably revived the Japanese craft of origami. His practice of intricate paper foldings utilized geometric skills, precision, and fine design concepts that yielded a range of animal-inspired figures. Yoshizawa transformed a single sheet of paper into sensational sculptures, and he modified this ancient practice through the development of “wet folding”— the dampening of paper to better mold and fold figures. He became world renowned in the 1950s and later became a cultural ambassador for Japan as well as a recipient of Japan’s Order of the Rising Sun. Hours of practice, patience, and dedication is a testament to Yoshizawa personality, and ultimately the reason for his success in the art of origami.

Examine It:

Various Origami Animals — PDF Book

<http://www.enryo.ro/carti/Origami%20Museum%20Animals.pdf>

Re-create It:

Materials

- perfectly square sheet of paper

Procedure

1. Start by making an origami square base. Begin with your paper color side up.
2. Fold the paper in half diagonally.
3. Unfold. There should now be a crease in the paper from the diagonal fold.
4. Unfold the paper. Your square should now have two diagonal creases, forming an “X.”
5. Now fold the paper in half diagonally in the other direction.
6. Flip the paper over to the other side.
7. Fold the paper in half horizontally.
8. Unfold to reveal the new crease from the previous fold.
9. Fold the paper in half vertically.
10. Unfold to reveal the new crease
11. Bring the top point down to the bottom, while also folding the left and right corners down into the center.

12. You should now have a diamond shape, with a vertical crease running down the center—this is an origami square base.
13. Starting with your square base, make sure the open end is at the bottom. Fold the right lower edge to the central crease.
14. Now follow suit with the left side; fold the left lower edge to the central crease.
15. Fold the top section down
16. Now unfold the previous three folds.
17. Pull one layer up from the bottom, along the creases you just made.
18. Push the left and right edges inwards. This is called a squash fold—you can see the wing is fully "squashed" into place.
19. Flip the model over to the other side.
20. Repeat the same steps of the squash fold on this side, starting with the lower right fold to the central crease.
21. Now fold the left side to the central crease.
22. Fold the top section down (the smaller triangle) to meet the two folds you just made.
23. Unfold the last three folds you just made.
24. Pull one layer up from the bottom, along the creases you just made.
25. Push the left and right edges inwards to complete the second squash fold.
26. Fold the lower right edge to the central crease.
27. Fold the bottom left corner in the same way, to the crease.
28. Flip the model over.
29. Now fold the entire right lower corner to meet the central crease.
30. Fold the left lower corner to meet the central crease.
31. Fold the lower right flap up, under, and out to the right (the crane neck).
32. Do the same with the left side (the tail).
33. Create a head by flattening the flap, and inside reverse folding a little section down at the top.
34. Complete your crane by folding out the wings.
35. There are so many ways you can display your origami cranes! They make great party decor, table decor, or string together a bunch to make a garland.