

Isfahan tile design on mosque entrance, Iran

Tiles

Tile work decorates houses, mosques, shrines & palaces throughout the Middle East. Mosaics combine cut tiles of different colors. Painted tiles shimmer with color in intricate geometric & floral designs. Installed tiles repeat patterns to fill walls, roofs & floors. The geometric shapes, repetition & design reflect a view of creation as an interconnected whole



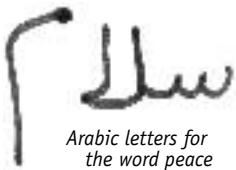
Isfahan tile mosaic, Iran Iznik tile, Turkey Replica of antique Persian tile, Iran

- ◆ Examine Islamic tiles for designs, shapes, colors & spacing. Draw a symmetrical tile design on paper. Use floral or geometric motifs.
- ◆ Next, design a repeating tile pattern. Use 5-7 lines to design a 3" paper tile.
- ◆ Trace or photocopy design onto additional squares.
- ◆ Place "tiles" in radial symmetry to create pattern. Color tiles & glue on base paper.



Calligraphy

From Islam's earliest days, Arabic script has evolved from basic writing to a beautiful art form. Since the Islamic religion discourages images, calligraphy has developed to express the power of words without pictures. Artists write from left to right with a calamus, or reed pen, on smooth paper. Word compositions create fluid designs for religious texts, mosques, tile designs & ceramics.



Arabic letters for the word peace

Notice how calligraphy enhances words. Find characters for "peace" in the calligraphy design on the right.



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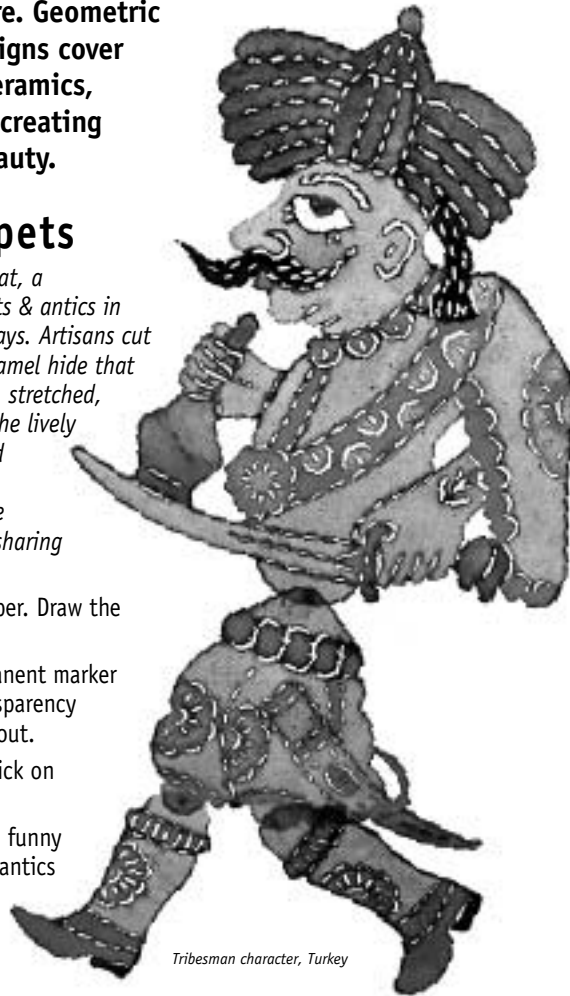
Throughout the Middle East, people of all backgrounds & religions benefit from

Islamic art & culture. Geometric patterns & rich designs cover textiles, carpets, ceramics, buildings & books, creating objects of great beauty.

Karagoz Puppets

Karagoz, a gypsy, & Hacivat, a philosopher, exchange jests & antics in Turkish shadow puppet plays. Artisans cut the puppet figures from camel hide that has been soaked, scraped, stretched, dried, polished & dyed. The lively translucent characters add comic relief to festivals, holidays & Ramadan while entertaining, teaching & sharing cultural values.

- ◆ Outline a figure on paper. Draw the legs separately.
- ◆ Trace with black permanent marker onto clear plastic transparency sheets. Color in & cut out.
- ◆ Attach legs & add a stick on back.
- ◆ Plan a play with jokes, funny stories & entertaining antics for the characters.



Tribesman character, Turkey

- ◆ Experiment with words. Change letter shapes & sizes. Make words fit shapes or show moods.
- ◆ In Arabic zoomorphic designs, letters are drawn in animal shapes.
- ◆ Choose an animal word. Form letters into that animal's shape. Be creative: overlap letters, repeat words, & exaggerate parts of letters.



Antique Persian Serapi, Iran, 10x12'7"

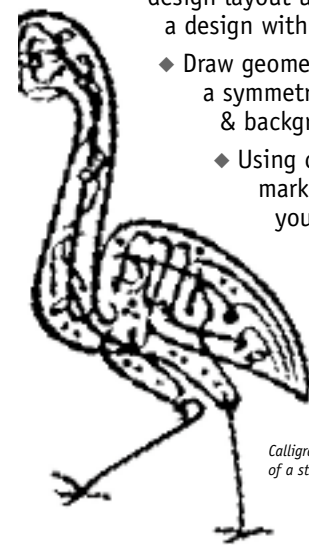
Carpets

Carpetmaking is an ancient Persian craft admired worldwide. Rugs from villages & court workshops established a tradition that continues today. Craftsmen make yarn from wool, silk or cotton & color it with natural dyes. Master artists plan carpets on graph paper to guide weavers. Each square represents a knot. On looms, weavers tie, knot & cut yarn in intricate rug patterns. A four by six foot rug can have a million knots!



Explore link for "Learn About Rugs": www.medallionrug.com

- ◆ Plan a carpet. For design layout use an overall pattern or a design with a center medallion.
- ◆ Draw geometric or curved shapes in a symmetrical design. Pick border & background colors.
- ◆ Using colored pencils or markers, draw & color your rug design.



Calligraphy in the form of a stork, Turkey

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Look in the Mercury News

- ◆ Much of the world's energy resources come from Middle Eastern oil. Search the Business section for oil prices & news.
- ◆ Search for news about goals for peace in the Middle East.

