

A coat of arms is a design belonging to a particular person (or group of people) and used by him or her in a wide variety of ways. When knights were completely enclosed in suits of armour with their visor's down it was difficult to tell whether other knights were friends or enemies (The riser was the movable front of a helmet which protected the knight's face). The knight therefore had to wear something to show who he was. The designs were worn over the armor, hence the term coat of arms. The designs were also painted on the knight's shield. In the beginning, each knight chose his own symbols and designs. Knights would choose a device which belonged to them alone, this device or Coat of Arms eventually became hereditary in their family. Many strange and fantastic creatures - griffins, dragons, and unicorns - came to be used. Often a device was chosen which had some connection with an important event in the wearer's life, or one suggested by his name. Sometimes a knight would combine the shields of his father and mother to make one shield.

Originally each knight could choose his own design, but eventually this resulted in too much confusion, so a central authority became necessary to register devices and to make rules. This duty fell on officers known as heralds, and the subject to their jurisdiction eventually became known as heraldry.

Shield

The surface of the shield is called the field. It can contain different symbols (called charges), colors (called tinctures), patterns (called furs), or designs. Each is symbolic of something, so be sure to pick things that represent you! You may choose symbols from the middle ages, or you may choose more modern images. Either way, be sure to attach a piece of paper that explains what they mean!

These shields were meant to be seen from a distance and clearly read. Make sure that you use contrasting colors and that you don't overload the shield with shapes and patterns. Some basic rules are:

- 1. Limit the number of tinctures (metals, colors, or furs) to F*UR.**
- 2. Limit the number of charges (elements like birds, animals, etc) to between 1 and 4, with one being larger than the others**
- 3. Use good contrasting colors (example: orange on yellow will not stand out!)**
- 4. Try to balance things out (example: keep the same colors paired or repeat an image)**

Choosing the charges on your shield: A charge is what is shown on the base color of your shield. Animals were frequently used as a main charge. Animals were shown in certain traditional postures, which were not meant to be realistic pictures of the animals. They were not drawn to look three dimensional, but were shown as if they were flat, and with the most characteristic parts of them the most obvious. The pictures were to represent the animal as a symbol. Generally the animals chosen were fierce, and they were often shown in postures of combat. Whatever their main color, fierce animals were often shown with red tongue and claws. Small details on a charge do not have to follow the metal/color rule. A gold griffin can have red claws on a blue field.

There were also names for the positions in which the animals were shown. Here are some of the most common.



RAMPANT



STATANT



COUCHANT



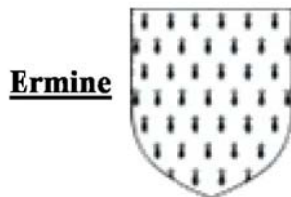
PASSANT

1. Passant—from the Old French word *passer*, to pass. It refers to an animal walking with its more distant forepaw raised.
- 2, Couchant—from the Old French word *coucher*, to couch. It refers to an animal lying down with its head raised.
- 3 Rampant—from an Old French word *ram per*, to climb. It refers to an animal rearing on its hind feet ready to climb.
- 4 Statant—from the Latin *stare*, to stand. It refers to an animal standing.

The dragon and griffin, of course, are mythological animals. They often combine characteristics believed to be found in more than one animal. The griffin was part eagle, part lion. Since the animals were symbols of qualities, such combination animals were meant to indicate a combination of those qualities.

A common design on a shield was a pun on the family (last) name. The coat of arms for "Wheatley" has sheaves of wheat on the shield. Some other shields showed allegiance to one side in a dispute by putting its symbol on their shields. The cross on a coat of arms often meant that the original bearer had been to the Crusades. A cross used on a shield was always taken very seriously. There are many forms of the cross.

FURS or DESIGNS ON A SHIELD



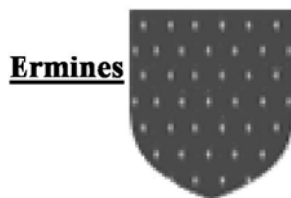
Ermine

White with black spots: *Valor, justice, and dignity*

Erminois



Gold with black spots: *Valor, justice, and dignity*



Ermines

Black with white spots: *Valor, justice, and dignity*

Pean



Black with gold spots: *Valor, justice, and dignity*

Vair



Blue and white bell-shaped objects: *Great wealth*

TINCTURES or COLORS ON A SHIELD

Gold or Yellow (Or)- Generosity and elevation of the mind

Silver or White (Argent)- Peace and sincerity

Red (Gules)- Warrior or martyr; Military strength and magnanimity

Blue (Azure)- Truth and loyalty

Green (Vert)- Hope, joy, and loyalty in love

Black (Sable)- Constancy or grief

Purple (Purpure)- Royal majesty, sovereignty, and justice

*range (Tawny or Tenne)- Worthy ambition

Maroon (Sanguine or Murray)- Patient in battle, and yet victorious

ORDINARIES or SYMBOLIC LINES ON A SHIELD

Nebuly Line  Clouds or air

Wavy Line  Sea or water

Engrailed Line  Earth or land

Invected Line  Earth or land

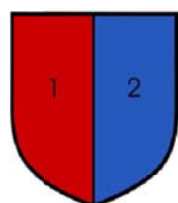
Indented Line  Fire

Dancette Line  Water

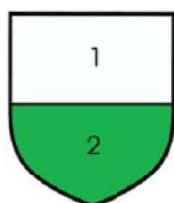
Raguly Line  Difficulties that have been encountered

Embattled Line  Walls of a fortress or town (also, fire)

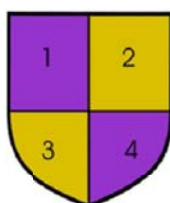
CHARGE PATTERNS or POPULAR WAYS TO DIVIDE A SHEILD



per pale



per fess



quartered



canton



quarterly of six



per saltire



tierced in pale



tierced in pale reversed



gyronny of eight



per bend



per bend sinister



per chevron



bend



pale



bend



paly of six



barry of six



bendy of eight



chequy



chevron



chape-ploye



chief



fess



pall



inescutcheon



bordure



cross



fretty



*fleuretty
semme-de-lis*



fusily

Ordinaries (see examples above)

Chief – Dominion and authority.

Cross – Chevron – Protection.

Fess – Military belt or girdle of honor.

Bar – For "one who sets the bar of conscience, religion and honor against angry passions."

Orle or Tressure – Preservation or protection.

CADENCY IMAGES or SYMBOLS OF BIRTH ORDER

SONS

DAUGHTERS

File / Label



FIRST



Heart

Crescent



SECOND



Ermine Spot

Mullet



THIRD



Snowflake

Martlet



FOURTH



Fir Twig

Annulet (Ring)



FIFTH



Chess Rook

Fleur-de-lis



SIXTH



Scallop Shell

Rose



SEVENTH



Harp

Cross Moline



EIGHTH



Buckle

Double Quatrefoil



NINTH



Clarichord

1. Pick the values that represent your family for each section (a list is provided as a starting point!).

Acceptance	Coolness	Fun	Leadership	Simplicity
Accomplishment	Cooperation	Generosity	Learning	Skillfulness
Achievement	Courage	Giving	Logic	Spirit
Adaptability	Courtesy	Goodness	Love	Spontaneity
Adventure	Creativity	Growth	Loyalty	Strength
Affection	Dependability	Guidance	Maturity	Success
Ambition	Determination	Happiness	Open-mindedness	Support
Appreciation	Dignity	Harmony	Passion	Sympathy
Awareness	Discretion	Health	Patience	Teamwork
Balance	Dreaming	Heart	Preparedness	Thankfulness
Belonging	Education	Helpfulness	Professionalism	Timeliness
Bravery	Efficiency	Honesty	Purity	Tolerance
Care	Encouragement	Honour	Reason	Trust
Clarity	Energy	Hope	Recreation	Truth
Cheerfulness	Enjoyment	Humility	Relaxation	Understanding
Cleanliness	Enthusiasm	Humour	Reliability	Virtue
Comfort	Excitement	Imagination	Resourcefulness	Vitality
Commitment	Fairness	Independence	Respect	Volunteerism
Communication	Flexibility	Inspiration	Responsibility	Warmth
Compassion	Family	Intelligence	Satisfaction	Wisdom
Connectedness	Faith	Joy	Security	Wonder
Consideration	Forgiveness	Justice	Self-control	
Consistency	Freedom	Kindness	Sharing	
Contribution	Friendship	Knowledge	Silliness	

2. Decide your family motto from the list provided. (Or make up your own!)

Heart and Hand	What Will Be Will Be	Love and Be Loved
Honesty and Courage	Love as Found	Brave and Faithful
God Willing	Steady and Faithful	Forward Moving
Family First	Remember Your Promises	Not For Us But For All
Celebrate Life	Kindness and Grace	By Reason Not Force
Live Strong	By the Truth	Govern By Serving
Live and Love	Our Glory to God	Hearts Upwards
Strength and Virtue	While I Breathe I Hope	As In Love
By Skill Not Force	To Be, Rather Than to Seem	Rise to the Challenge
Truth and Diligence	He Prospers Who Labours	