

# *Dragon Boats*

## **Tsung-Tse or Chinese Yarn Winding**

Tsung-Tse is a symbol for the Dragon Boat Festival in China. It is originally the name of a food served during the festival made from rice dumplings wrapped in bamboo leaves. Its attractive shape is later used for decorative purposes by women and children who make colorful silk windings on three-dimensional paper folding. Dragon Boats were fashionable in the ancient courts as elaborate wrappings for important gifts.

Today there are many ways to display Dragon Boats. They can be made into Christmas ornaments, jewelry, pins, paper weights, or strung together in different sizes and colors to make colorful mobiles.

## **MATERIALS**

10 yds Kreinik Silk Mori or Kreinik Medium (#16) Braid for the main color\*\*  
5 yds Kreinik Medium (#16) Braid or Kreinik Silk Mori for the stripe and tassel\*\*  
stiff paper or lightweight cardboard  
4 straight pins scotch tape  
scissors  
exacto knife  
clear drying craft glue  
several medium size beads  
needles to accommodate the threads and beads long doll makers needle

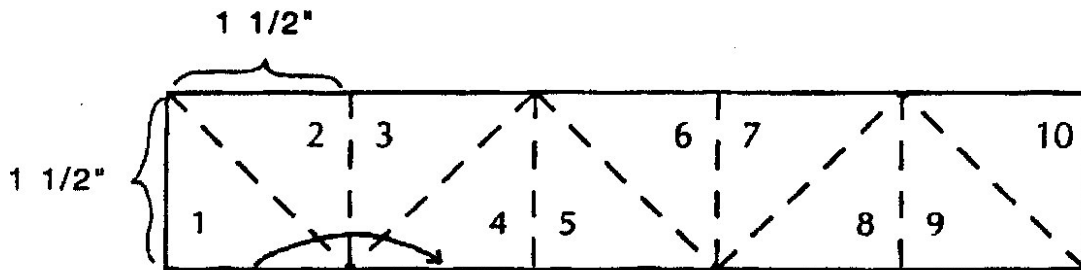
\*\* Yardage necessary for winding the ornaments must be continuous. Do not use short or cut lengths.

Other material such as DMC Embroidery Cotton, Perle Cotton, Marlitt, Ribbon Floss or any other suitable thread may be used.

# INSTRUCTIONS

## 1. MARKING:

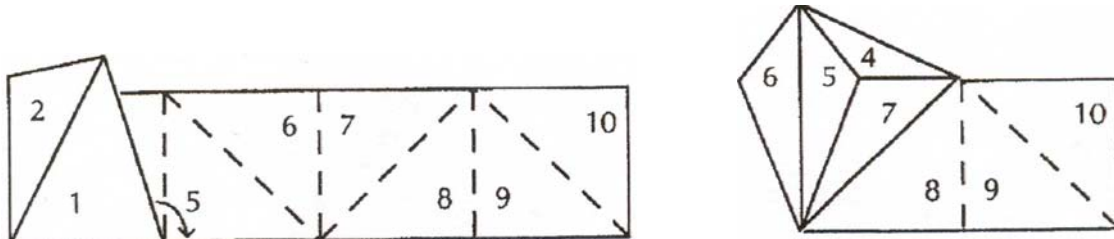
Cut a strip of lightweight cardboard  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " x  $7\frac{3}{4}$ ". Mark out five squares each measuring  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " x  $1\frac{1}{2}$ ", leaving a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " edge to the right of the last square. Mark diagonal lines within each square. Mark diagonal lines within each square following the directions as outlined below.



Use an exacto knife to score along each vertical and diagonal line with the exception of the vertical line on the right side. Score each line approximately half way through the thickness of the card. Do not cut through.

## 2. FOLDING THE FORM:

With the scored lines facing you, gently bend the cardboard back along the scored lines to create the fold lines. Turn the strip over as shown on the following page and, working from the reverse side, begin folding the strip along the scored lines.

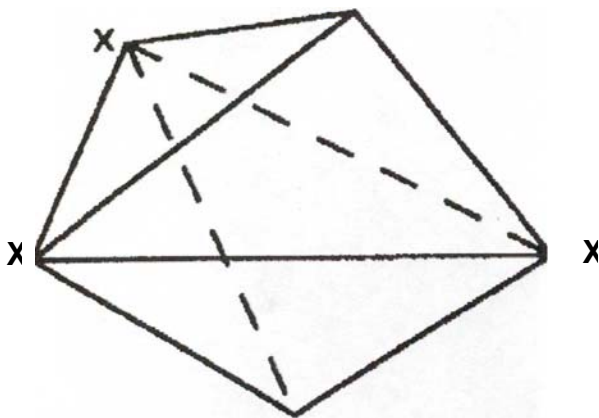




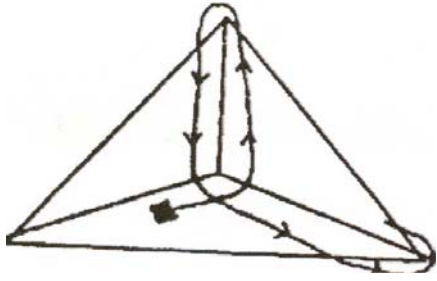
There will be a small amount of cardboard extends from the edge of the triangle form. Mark the excess and remove it so that it is flush with the side of the form. This excess will allow for variances in the thickness of the cardboard used for the form.

Use a small piece of tape to hold the form together after removing the excess cardboard.

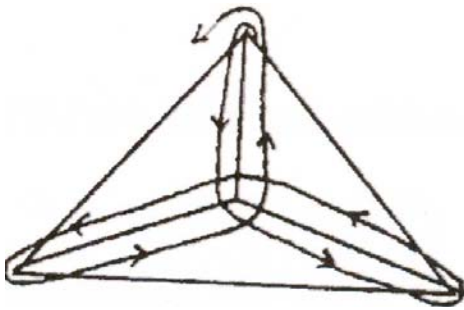
### 3. WINDING THE THREAD



Holding the form between your fingers at the top and bottom points, place straight pins securely into each of the three points that form the corners of the triangle, extending the heads of the pins about  $\frac{1}{4}$ " to  $\frac{1}{2}$ ". With another straight pin, apply a small spot at the base of each pin and spread it down towards the bottom of the triangle about  $\frac{1}{8}$ ".



Using a small piece of tape, tape the end of the main thread color  $\frac{1}{2}$ " from a pin. With your pencil, draw a line from the tape to the point to act as a reference. Because this ornament is geometric, you must start and stop each addition of a new thread on the same face of the triangle so that each face will have the same number of wraps.



Begin winding the form with the main color, making sure that each row of thread touches the next with no spaces between.



As you continue to wind the thread, you will notice that the thread starts to cover the form from the top down in an over-and-under pattern. Continue winding until you decide that you wish to add a stripe. With a small piece of tape, secure your working thread to the form, making sure that it is on the same face as you initially began. Do not cut it as you will be picking it up again.

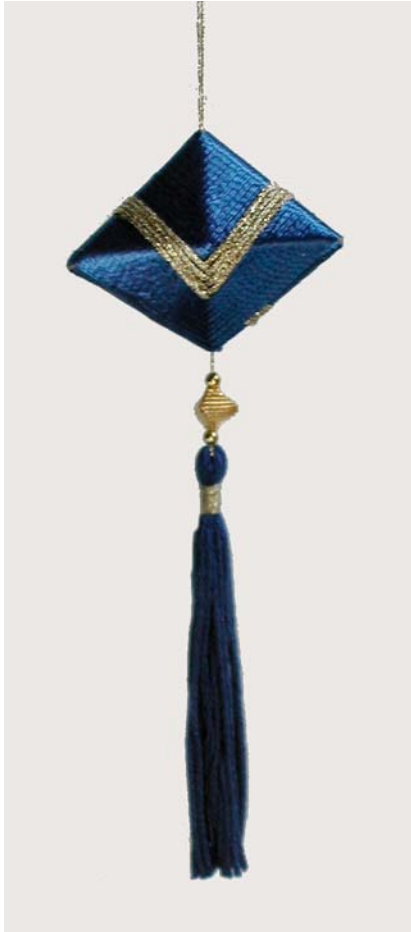
If you wish, you create stripes by securing a thread to the cardboard form with a small piece of tape so that it aligns with the previously wound row of thread. Wind the second thread in the same manner taking care not to tangle the two threads as you work. Continue to wind the form until your stripe reaches its desired width and you are once again at the starting face. Holding the thread in place, cut it to a length long enough to thread onto a needle and run it under the wound portion of the ornament to hide the end.

Pick up original color and continue winding until you reach the points of the triangle. As you wind the last row, apply a small drop of glue with a straight pin to the points above the straight pins. This will hold the thread in place permanently so that it will not slip off or unwind. Once the form has been completely wound, lightly tape the thread to the form to temporarily hold it in place. At this point you will need both hands to end off the working thread and a small amount of tape on top of the wound threads will not hurt. Cut off any excess thread, leaving a length long enough to thread into a needle and tuck away invisibly under the wound threads. Once the end has been secured, cut off the tail as close to the form as possible. Gently remove the tape from the ornament taking care to pull it off in the direction of the winding so that no threads are dislodged. Remove the straight pins and gently manipulate the threads at the points to cover the small pin holes.

#### **4. FINISHING**



To finish the ornament, make a tassel out of the left over threads used to wind the form. Attach the tassel to a long piece of thread that you will use for the hanger, knotting close to the tassel. Attach one or more beads, make a double knot and using a long doll maker's needle, run this thread through to the top of the Dragon Boat. Make a double knot then attach a smaller bead if desired. Determine the length of the hanger and knot the thread securely. Cut off any excess.



Dragon Boats can be made using any size of square to create single ornaments or they can be strung together to form garlands or, as in the image below, a necklace and earrings.

