

Design Resource

Kites

A kite is a cultural symbol

by

Madhuri Menon

IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:

<https://dsource.in/resource/kites>



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History

Introduction

Kites fly high up in the clouds. Kite flying is pastime, a sporting activity and canvas for artistic expression. For thousands of years kites have graced the skies of many nations of the world. A kite is a cultural symbol and global device that brings joy to its fliers be it a child or an adult.

Kite flying has a fascinating history as man had the desire to fly since time immemorial. Flying an object high in the clouds, controlling it with a string held on earth, and playing in the wind has stimulated men's imagination in ages. No one knows when men started flying kites. But one has to credit man, his imagination and the wind that ultimately brought about the invention of kites.



(Images source)

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The history of kite flying goes back over 3000 years. There is a mention of kite flying in Greek literature way back in 14th century BC. Later it seems, kites moved out of Greece and traveled to, China, Mongolia, and Europe. It is thought that the Buddhist missionaries from China started the spread of kites into Korea and Japan. The silk route was also thought to be responsible for spreading kites into Arabia and North Africa. Portuguese traders and the Dutch were thought to be responsible for introducing kite flying into Europe, other theories suggest that the great Invader Ghengis Khan and his Mongolian warriors brought kites with them when they invaded Asia.

Throughout history, each country has developed its own specific and distinctive style and cultural purpose for flying them.

There are many legends related to the origin of kites. One legend believes it was the Malaysians or the Indonesians who first made kites from leaves, and another suggests that it was the Chinese because it is believed that a Chinese farmer tied a string to his hat to keep it from blowing away in strong winds; it was from this that the concept the first kite was born. Kite was initially made from common paper.

Images of Chinese kite flying



(Image source)

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(Image source)

Despite all these legends, it is clear from history that kites had many roles to play in the lives of the people. They were used for multiple purposes some useful and some not.

Kites were used by army generals to send signals and to measure the distance of enemy camps and also by the military to spy on the enemy in war and surveillance. Sometimes the kites had a wind harp, which vibrated the wind and produced a sound that terrified the enemy!

In the early years after its invention, it is believed that Buddhist monks used kites to enrich harvests and to avert evil spirits in the sky; there is also a story of one man who went as far as using a large kite to carry himself to the top of a castle to steal a golden statue on the roof!

In 1295, European explorer Marco Polo was among the first people to document the construction of kites and

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how to fly them. By the 16th century, the popularity of kites grew enormously because books and other literature publicized kites as children's toys. As the 18th century approached and the initial novelty of kites was wearing off, kites entered a new arena: the field of science, where the kites were used as vehicles for scientific research.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, kites were used as vehicles and tools for scientific research. A Scottish meteorologist named Alexander Wilson used a kite with a thermometer attached to measure air temperatures at 3000 feet to learn more about the wind and weather. This marked the beginning of kites aiding in the study of weather forecasting.

A few years after this scientist Benjamin Franklin and his son William conducted their famous experiment using a kite flown in stormy weather to prove that lightning was indeed electricity. Kites were also instrumental in the research and development of the Wright brothers when building the first aeroplane in the late 1800s. Sir George Caley, Samuel Langley, Lawrence Hargrave, and Alexander Graham Bell, all experimented with kites and contributed to the development of the aeroplane.

Somewhere along the timeline, kites journeyed to India too and have had a colourful history.

Kite history in India

Kites always had a special place in the history of India and date back to the times when the Mongols invaded India. Although kites existed in India, for a long time, there are no records of their presence until the thirteenth century, when a number of prominent Indian poets began to praise kites in their verse.

The word 'Patang' and 'Guddi' find mentioned in Indian literature- kites in India are known by these names. In 'Madhumalti', by Manzan, there is a mention of Patang, the flight of a kite is associated with the loved one by the poet. Marathi poets Eknath and Tukaram also described kites in their verses where the word 'Vavdi' has been used. There are mentions of paper kites attached to a thread held in the hand and mention of Guddi flying in other literary works as well, which indicate that the kites enjoyed an important role in India.

The kites rose to prominence within the Indian culture, during the Mughal period 1526-1857, during the times of the Mughal emperors- Babar, Akbar and Shah Jahan. The Mughal emperors were patrons of kite competitions as well as chess, rewarding the best players with handsome monetary awards. They viewed kite flying from the delicate windows of their private quarters, rather than flying them themselves, as they believed that the monarchs did not tread the ground for such sports!

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Indian kites were used more to convey messages than for the pleasure of flying them outdoors and this aspect of kite flying has been captured in the Rajput and Mughal miniature paintings from the 16th century-18th century. A list of the number of paintings of this period featuring kites is in the archives of the Ahmedabad Kite Museum; most of these are now in the collection of the British Museum, London.

These miniatures are like photographs, which recorded the information of that era.

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In these paintings, three styles of kites were usually depicted: a rectangular kite, a shield like kite, known as 'Tukkal' and somewhat rarely the diamond shaped fighter kite or the 'Patang', which is the most familiar kite throughout in India today. The rectangular kite in these paintings is depicted with little paper pennants at each top corner, and long triangular slips of paper like legs at each bottom corner. The 'Tukkal' kite is the most commonly depicted kite in the miniature paintings, which indicates that, it was very popular in that era. Today, the 'Tukkal' is found only in the Punjab region and in Pakistan. The rectangular kite is no longer seen any where in India and it is only the 'Tukkal', and more so the 'Patang' type of kites that are flown in India now.

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The passion for kite flying in India reached a zenith during the 18th century in Lucknow, the capital of Uttar Pradesh, which was also prominent for kite flying activities. It was known as Oudh, and the rulers of this region were the Nawabs. They were of Persian origin and they came to India in the 16th century during the reign of Akbar and participated in the consolidation of the Mughal Empire. By 18th century they become nearly autonomous.

History depicts Nawabs as good-natured, colourful, fun loving, impulsive, and extravagant rulers. They were patrons of music, arts, and builders of richly ornamented architecture. They also continued the enthusiasm for kites

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that began under the Mughals, their former overlords.

The sport of kite flying was considered as one of the things that gave pleasure in life, so it flourished in the luxurious days of the Nawabs of Oudh. The kites were a symbol of the Nawabs spirit; an appreciation of aesthetic and sensual pleasures, but along with this they maintained their concern for the poor and the needy. The kites that the Nawabs flew were magnificent works of art beyond description. The most renowned kite makers created them and no expense was spared for the materials or workmanship. These kite makers spent many weeks, coming up with such exclusive kite creations.

There is a story about the kites and a generous Nawab, which is presented below:

There was a Nawab who flew kites from his compound during the kite season. His kites were magnificently made by the best kite makers. Many friends and relatives would come to enjoy kite flying with him. He would also have kite fights with them, and whenever these exquisite kites were cut they were awarded to the competitors as a reward for their kite flying skills.

Amongst the Nawab's many exquisite kites, two kites were extraordinary. He would fly these two, towards the evening, when the sky was full of kites and would take special precautions to fly them very high in the sky. It was impossible to trace the flying lines of these kites back to the Nawab's hands.

The townspeople dreamed of capturing these kites; there was a special reason behind this. The Nawab had instructed his kite makers to carefully secure silk purses to each kite of these two kites, in a manner as to not hinder the kite's flight. Each purse had a certain amount of precious metal. One kite had a purse carrying an ounce of pure gold, another an ounce of pure silver. Since these kites were flown very high, when they were cut, they were meant to be captured by the common man of the land, to ensure that the victor had enough money to cover the needs of an average household. The amount of gold would support a family for a year and the amount of silver would support a family for a half year. The kites would invariably get cut each kite season!

This story indicates the excellent flying skills of the Nawab and his inspired and generous ways of helping people.

From the days of the Nawab, Oudh or Uttar Pradesh has been well known for kite making and kite flying, in fact, considered the kite capital of India! The popularity of kites here caused them to travel to Punjab, West Bengal, Delhi, Gujarat, Rajasthan, and even to the South in Karnataka.

Uttar Pradesh to this day is a renowned center for making kites in India with millions of kites being produced each year in the cities of Rampur, Bareilly, and Lucknow. These kites continue to be known as Patang or Guddi, in India and are still made of thin, tissue-like paper and bamboo sticks for the central support framework. Regardless of the unique colour, design and size, almost all the Indian kites nowadays have a similar shape.

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Along with Uttar Pradesh, the kite flying passion has spread to Maharashtra, Karnataka, Gujarat, and Tamil Nadu; in fact, the whole country has taken to kite flying in a big way. Kite flying in India is characterized by a variety of local customs and is influenced also by the regional geography, history, and cultures. But despite the diversity of India, kite flying is popular throughout, though some regions are more active than others.



(Images source)

Kites rule the skies on January 14th, the festival of Makara Sankranti, which can be called the Kite Day in India. The weather is pleasant the skies are clear and perfect for kite flying! Kite flying happens till April when summer makes it impossible to fly them in the scorching heat. After the monsoons, the real enthusiasts take up kite-flying again.

Thus the cycle of flight and the dance of the kites in the sky continues in India!

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Cultural Significance

India is a land of many festivals, which play an integral part in the lives of its people. Since it's a vast country, each region has contributed to this list of important festivals. Due to the vast geography and diversity of culture in India, the significance of the festivals remains the same throughout the country, but the method of celebration, duration, and special culinary, differs from state to state.

Each Indian festival also has unique elements, symbols, and rituals connected to the celebrations, which define it. For example, Holi is synonymous with coloured powders and coloured water that is sprayed on one another during the festival. Diwali is identifiable by the usage of earthen lamps, strings of electric bulbs to decorate homes and the firecrackers that are burnt during this festival.

Similarly, in the case of Makara Sankranti, kites and kite flying is what lend the identity to this festival. People look forward to buying, flying colorful kites while celebrating this festival. Kite flying is an integral part of Makara Sankranti celebrations across India.



Makara Sankranti

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Makara Sankranti

Preparation for Makara Sankranti

The arrival of Makara Sankranti is heralded by the coming up of several makeshift kite shops, shops selling sugarcane, freshly harvested groundnuts, stalks of grain, till laddoos, specially crafted earthen ware pots etc. All these items are the symbols of the festival. Though the kites jostle for space with many other items, they are the colourful symbols that engage and enchant the vision.

The kite shops are the most colourful in such a market place. Each shop displays its wares - the latest varieties of kites of all sizes and shapes, spindles, colourful threads and they beckon the kite flying enthusiasts, first timers, to purchase them.

Some shops temporarily stock kites and their accessories prior to the festival, so they have a crammed appearance. The shops offer the latest varieties of kites and spindles. Apart from the traditional materials of paper and wood, plastic is extensively used as can be seen from the different sized, multi coloured spindles.

The following images from a market place in Mumbai convey this spirit of Makara Sankranti.



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Social Significance

The kite season commences with the Makara Sankranti or the Uttarayan celebrations on January 14th every year in India. This day can be truly called as the “Kite day” as numerous kites in many towns and cities compete with each other for a spot in the sky nearly blotting out the sun! The weather is clear on this day, spring like and is perfect for kite flying.

On this single day, so many kites take to the skies, with families participating by being together on rooftops, open lands, flying the kites that traditional kite-makers of India spend the entire year making them.



On days other than kite festivals, it is only the true enthusiasts who fly kites as a hobby, with similar passion. Today there are kite festivals, kite clubs, kite museums all over India, which indicate the vast interest in this unique sport.

One does not find new and young kite flyers in urban areas taking to this sport, a major reason being, lack of open spaces; also this sport has to compete with television, computers, and now mobile phones, which are major distractions for the younger generation. For many urban youngsters, kite flying doesn't even enter their field of perception as a worthwhile hobby.

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Kite flying during the festival:

Makara Sankranti has both children and adults flying kites with equal enthusiasm. This is a day when everyone spends time together, with family and friends and has a fun filled day.

(Makar Sankranti is celebrated every year on January 14th. Makar Sankranti marks the end of a long winter with the return of the Sun to the Northern Hemisphere. Makara Sankranti is celebrated in the month of Magha when the sun passes through the winter solstice, from the Tropic of Cancer to the Tropic of Capricorn.

Makara literally means 'Capricorn' and Sankranti is the day when the sun passes from one sign of the zodiac to the next, is also considered auspicious as it signifies a fresh start.

This tradition of celebrating this festival has been around for thousands of years. Initially, this was probably a festival celebrated in the cold climate, when people prayed for the warmth of the sun, but today, Makara Sankranti is celebrated throughout India as a harvest festival.

Most of the houses in India have a flat terrace, and that is where people fly their kites. The other most popular space to fly kites is on large open grounds, near riverbanks and beaches. A game people play is to cut others' kites and see how many they can cut by the end of the day.

The festival is celebrated with great joy and enthusiasm in all parts of the country. The following images portray this spirit and the celebrations in Gujarat and Amritsar.

In Gujarat:

Makara Sankranti or Uttarayan is the kite-flying day in Gujarat. Kite flying during this festival is a way in which people offer their respect and worship to the Sun God. This is the highlight of the festival, as it is a time of thanksgiving and also it is a time to be happy. Letting the kite fly high, up to heaven is to signal the Gods to wake up, up and to open the portals of heaven, as it is believed that they have slumbered for the past six months.

Gujaratis look forward to this festival the whole year. The family members, friends go to the terrace of their homes and fly kites. Loud music is played in background to boost the energy. They cut each other, neighbours kites and shout "kaade, kai po che" in enthusiasm.

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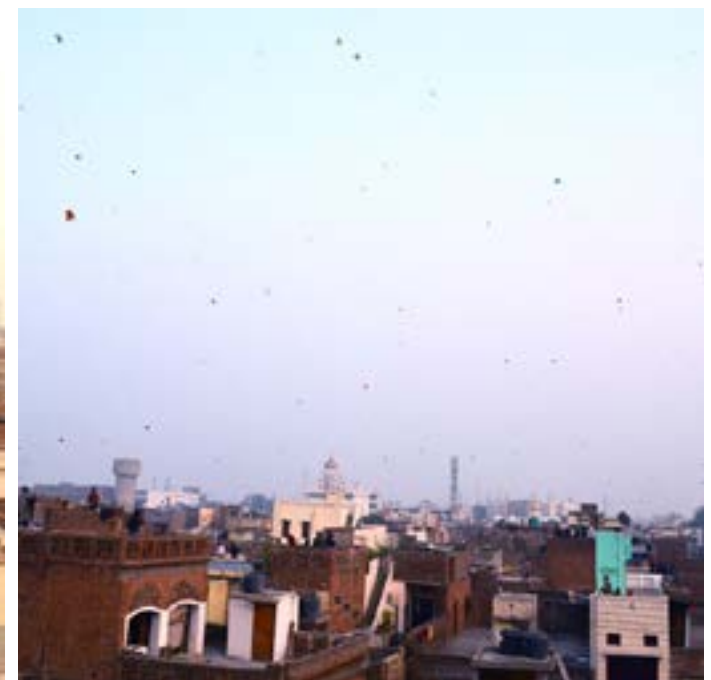
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The city of Amritsar gets gripped in a festive mood. Colourful kites take over the skyline of the city as people fly kites from terraces and elsewhere to keep the tradition alive.



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The following images show the team's effort to fly this extra large sized kite. This is the festival that brings in participation of families, friends, and people.



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The market is scoured before and the different types of kites are bought and tried each year. This is a festival that kite flyers look forward to and also plan in advance with their families.



Kite Flying



Kite Festivals

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Kite Clubs



Kite Museums

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Kite Flying

As a colourful kite soars, darts, dives and dips in the sky buffeting the wind with its colourful tail fluttering behind it, it has always construed symbolic images for everyone. For the person flying it, it's an ethereal connection between sky and land, lending a sense of soaring freedom, of unbridled joy. To many, it's the coming of spring, of rain, of festivals, a coming of age of sorts.

There are enjoyable and relaxing aspects of flying a kite at any time and not just during the festive season. Many just enjoy watching it fly in the sky, the subtle artistry of color and movement. For some kite flying feels like controlling an almost-living creature at the end of the line as it swoops, darts and jumps about!

For many, kite flying is a memory of childhood. For some, it was part of the family culture. Many made their own paper kites to fly every year at festival times, as they simply could not afford to buy one. For some, this childhood obsession has continued to be a lifelong passion. Only those who truly have flown kites all their lives understand this connection with these messengers of the wind.

Many feel kite flying is something you are born with and that you have to train at an early age to sharpen your skills. There are some for who kite flying is an obsession, and some love to fly kites occasionally.

The following kite flying video captures this free spirit and shows what a great hobby, pastime it can be.

For people in Ahmedabad, kite flying is a serious sport during the Makara Sankranti time. People here do not fly kites in open grounds but on rooftops of their homes. The kite flying enthusiasts stay on the rooftops from early morning till night. Meals and snacks are sent up in trays and are had in between flying the kites.



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by

Madhuri Menon

IDC, IIT Bombay

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<https://dsource.in/resource/kites/social-significance/kite-flying>

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Young, old, all rooftop fliers have a reasonable degree of kite flying skills; they all simply gather on rooftops to enjoy the holiday spirit. Many make it a point to return home for this festival just to be a part of these celebrations. There are kite fights too, where novice kite fliers give up soon when their kites get cut. But the experienced fliers skillfully continue, till their sport till only the champion kite fliers remain. Along with kite flying, there is warmth, light-hearted banter, chatter, everyone is relaxed and enjoying the sport.



The process of flying a kite is so simple, the line or the thread is pulled to get the kite in the air, and then it is allowed to climb to a great height by getting more of the line out around 500ft from the fukri and then trying to keep it airborne by tugging the line with the fingers!

On this day the youngest children in the family are given a special shaped kite called the 'Babla kite'. This kite has a human shape, and it has the appearance of a small child. These kites are not flown, but are for mere decoration.

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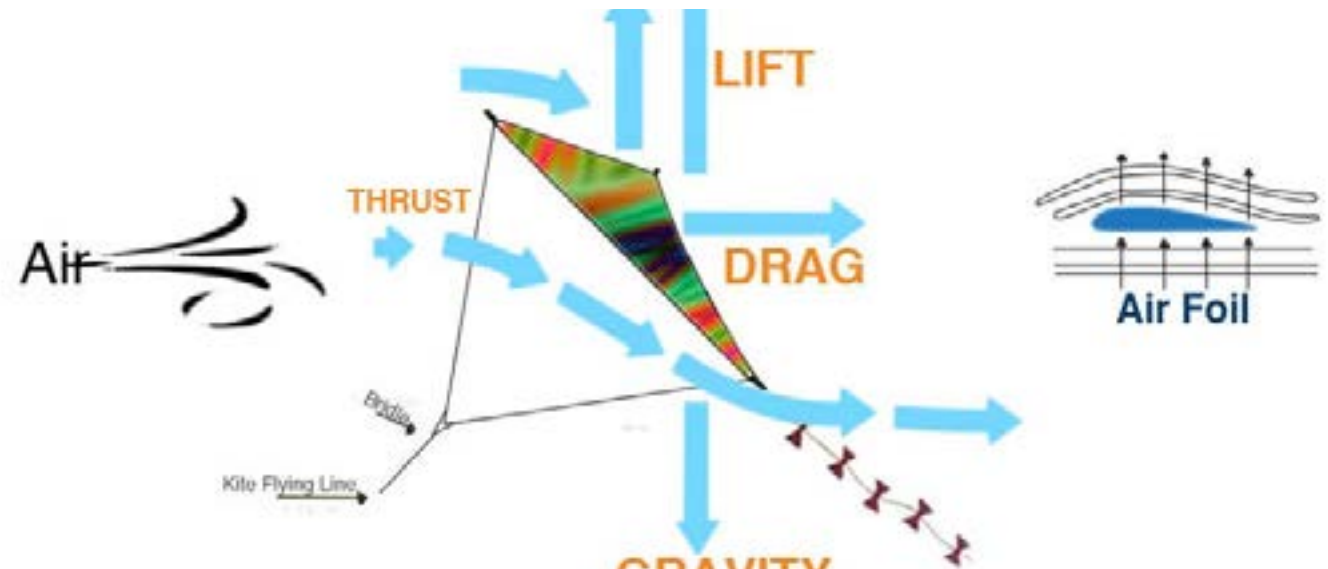
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Special Babla Kites.

The science behind kite flying is explained simply and clearly in the diagram below.



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Kite Fights:

An interesting aspect of kite flying is the 'paitch' or 'patang baazi'. This is a mid air dual of two kites, in which both the kite flyers vie to cut the kite string of the other. The Indian fighter kites are of medium size, 1ft to 4ft across. Kite fight is no ordinary sport and certainly not for the fainthearted. Paitchs are a matter of skill, honor. Many times the seasoned kite flyer would stick a 10, 20 or 50 rupee note to his kite, which in a way talks about the person's confidence in his skill!

Ahmedabad is well known for kite fights or kite matches - 'pench' as it is called in Gujarati. Here as much as kites are flown for pleasure, people showcase their skills in cutting the opponent's kite during these matches.

The kites are bought shrewdly tested for balance, before the kite fights. The experts engage in this kind of 'patang baazi' with lot of competence. The age of the contestants, the kite flying experience, the tactics that they employ, the patience, the cunning, the ingenuity in employing surprise moves, the deftness of the wrists all plays a major role in the kite combats.

Apart from the smart play that the kite flyers employ, other elements like the wind factor, the aspect of luck, the weather, all play an important role.

During the festive season of Makara Sankranti, when all the kite fights take place, there are many points to consider. One of them is using the coloured manjha; the purpose of using bright colours in the manjha is to be able to identify one's own kite line where a large number of kites are flying in the sky. Manjha threads are more expensive than plain cotton threads. The kite flyers can sense on the forefingers their hands, the variations in pressure of the kite line. An experienced kite flyer can tell if the kite has come in contact with another line if the contact is passive or aggressive and also identify the precise position and direction of the opponent's kite.

Another aspect that the kite flyers take care of before a fight is to protect their fingers with layers of band-aids, or even necks of bottles. This is important as the fight involves vigorous maneuvering of the manjha coated line, and this sharp glass coating can easily cut the fingers while flying the kite.

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Cuts on fingers by the glass coated 'manjha' flying thread despite being wrapped in Band-aid

The kite fights take place mostly on the day of Makara Sankranti, when there are a large number of kites in the sky. Since on this day it is a free for all kind of flying, one cannot know the level of the opponent!

The best matches happen when the contestants are equally matched. When the two kites are not matched in-competence, the fight is over in a matter of seconds. When the fliers are equally proficient, a closely paired match lasts about 10 minutes, sometimes up to 20 minutes. The strongest flier always looks for a challenging game.

During a kite fight the flier sees to it that the kite doesn't stay still, like a target or a sitting duck, but makes it jump, swoop about in the vast sky, avoiding getting cut and also like a predator, searching to cut other kites. In a kite fight the flyer uses the kite in a combative and restless mode, similar to fighting a battle, to find victory, and a place of pride in the sky.

Since most of the fliers are on the rooftops, there is intense concentration on the faces of the kite fliers. Sometimes there is wordless communication, co-operation, and teamwork which brings in excellent flying experiences. One person could be holding the reel, while the other lets out the string, launching the kite skyward and expertly controlling the kite's flight.

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The following two images indicate this teamwork.



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There are so many kites flying overhead, the mass of lines crisscrossing every which way, that it is impossible to trace a kite back to the owner. Many kites fly at the end of 300 to 400 feet of kite line, some fly as much as 1000 feet when there is so much density of kites in the air. The kites dance rhythmically back and forth in their customary movement, and even if there is no wind, the kites are coaxed into the sky with short, crisp jerks to the flying line.

The experts know how to deftly move the wrists which cuts a kite mercilessly. The wounded kite slowly spirals and flops to the ground. Each time a kite is cut a cheer, 'Kaade ,kai po che' is yelled by the victor. (This loosely translates as ' a kite is cut' in Gujrati. In North India 'Bo kata' is the term used). The cut kites are not just left lying on the ground, they usually get grabbed by children who follow the kite fights and keep a lookout for them, and they grab their booty as soon as they fall to the ground!

Such is the enthusiasm of kite fliers on the day of Makara Sankranthi that the kites are like wrestlers, fighting to cut the opponent's kite thus proving the superiority of the kite flying skills. Some hardcore kite fliers, when they meet exchange notes about grips, holds, some devious techniques, to navigate their kites in the sky, all gathered from years of experience.

Like all sports kite fights too have unwritten codes of conduct when they happen on rooftops, which are followed by all fliers.

They are 1. When two kites tangle each other in a fight for supremacy, a third kite will not enter the contest, and everyone waits their turn. 2. It is not considered fair to cut the kite's cotton flying line; the cut must be made on the opponent's 'manjha' part of the line only, 'glass on glass'.

There are 3 different ways of kite fighting

1. Fighting on a one-to-one basis: This is usually fought between kite flying experts in professional or regulation matches. In such matches, the same configuration of kite-light, medium or high wind kites are launched at the same time from the same area, with 100 to 1000 feet of flying line released into the sky before one or the other attacks. Kites at that great distance may or may not even be visible, but the game rule is that the fight continues despite non-visibility and relies on expertise till one or the other kite is cut.

2. Team fighting: The fight is between two teams of eleven members each, mostly at designated areas free of electric wires. The duration of the fight is also decided and can vary from an hour to all day long. During this time, both the teams fly the kites simultaneously so there are 22 kites minus one or two, flying in the sky. When a kite gets cut, one is allowed to launch another one. At the end of the designated time, the number of kites that got cut is counted to determine which team won.

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3. Open fighting: This type of fight happens during the height of the kite-flying season when the sky is filled with a large number of kites. The angle and position of the flying line are the main criteria for entering the contest. Since these conditions are dependent on the direction of the wind currents, people do not fight with the kites that are flying ahead or behind. The two persons signal each other for the contest to start and no third party enters this duel.

Kite flying hazards:

Also when the kite gets cut, it could be anywhere along the fling line, and the line left attached to the cut kite is lost. The cut kite along with the line could get tangled over trees, telephone lines electricity wires, or could land neatly on land, which is claimed by young boys and girls who roam around the streets, trying to capture cut kites.



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A number of cut kites tangled in a tree

Kite flying with the manjha can be dangerous too. When the kite line swoops towards the ground, it could injure persons standing on the rooftops, or streets and more so cyclists and people on motorbikes. Every flying season, there are incidents about people's throats getting cut, which is the most dangerous aspect of this sport.

Sometimes the manjha and also the nylon thread that is used to fly the kites are dangerous for birds and there are scores of incidents when birds get entangled in these threads and are injured and even killed. Hence sometimes, prohibitory orders are issued banning the use of nylon thread and manjha, during the kite-flying season, in January, by local administrators.

Passion for kite flying:

The really serious kite flyers in India feel that the kites are an extension of themselves; they feel spiritually connected to them. Only the truly dedicated enjoy the intricate manipulation with their fingers and the coordination between the eyes and the fingers. They feel one with the entire process of flying a kite for hours together. To be glued to the sky and the supple movement of the fingers is a part of life for some of the kite fliers. Their hearts leap in delight and are thrilled no end to be just flying kites. They rely on the sensations that reach their fingers, the subtle, to the tension of a tangle. Through the fingers they experience the wind, and also the instinct to survive in the kite fights. Some feel that words cannot express these feelings and that though feel the excitement, they cannot put it into proper words.

The serious kite fliers are attuned to the fliers around. In a sky with hundreds of kites flying, only the truly involved can sense the difference between an experienced kite flier and a novice one.

Once the kite flier develops a taste for it, they spend a lot of time flying kites for 8, to 10 hours without getting bored or tired. Kite flying in fact becomes a passion and many have carried this forward for 10, or 20 years!

Night flying:

The really hardcore kite flyers have tried flying kites at night times too when nothing is visible! To aid the flying, they attach objects like a piece of fabric, or slips of paper at regular intervals on the string so that when the kite line is pulled, a distinctive buzzing sound is made.

The following two images show the paper lanterns that are sometimes used to fly at dusk on the day of Makara Sankranti. There is a provision at the base of the paper lantern to hold a tea light candle, which when light brings a warm glow to the lantern.

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Also on the festive days of Makara Sankranti, after the whole day of flying kites and kite fights, once the night sets in the mood mellow. The kite lines now carry colourful candlelit paper lanterns, which are suspended at intervals along the flying line. The sky as it darkens is filled with these coloured flickering lights at various heights giving a very festive look. Some flyers now let the lantern bearing kites lose, and they continue to fly upward thus bringing the day of kite frenzy to a beautiful end, till the next year.

These lanterns too are of different types. The following images show how everyone gathers around to bid adieu to the lighted paper lanterns, and how they slowly rise up into the sky.

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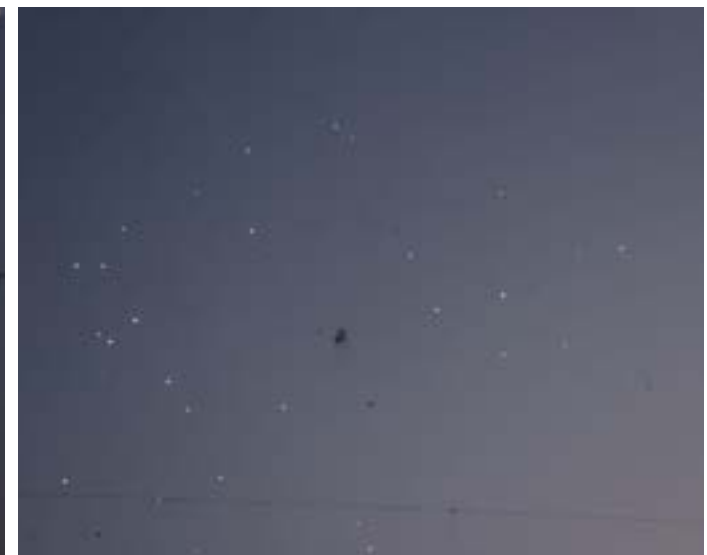
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Source:

<https://dsource.in/resource/kites/social-significance/kite-flying>

As the day turns to dusk, these lighted paper lanterns raise up and up dotting the darkening sky like stars. The sky turns into a magical space; there is silence and the people gathered on the rooftops gaze admiringly at this sparkling scenario and thus silently bade goodbye to the Makara Sankranthi festivities.

The following images present these magical moments.



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Sometimes fire-crackers too are burst around this time of the evening which adds more glitter to the skies, as seen in the image below!



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The kite flying passion and the festivities of this day are captured in the following video.



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Kite Festivals

There are different celebrations that involve kite flying apart from the Makara Sankranti festival. These occasions are specially organized by people to gather many kiting enthusiasts at a single venue. They are known as kite festivals and are held at many places across India. They are usually single-day events, starting in the morning and going on to the afternoon or till a little beyond sunset.

The kite festivals are of two kinds. One in which there is only local participation, and the other, in which people from other countries are invited to take part, bringing in international participation.

Regional kite festivals:

These are held in various places all over India and are open to all age groups. They are usually held on large open grounds, near a beach or a riverbank, so there are no obstructions for flying kites and also a large number of people can comfortably move around. There are a number of tourists who come to especially to take part in the festivities. This festival attracts international kite flyers and local champions as well, who demonstrate their skills in flying exotic kites.

A few examples of the posters announcing the event and inviting the public to such festivals are presented below.



(Image source)



(Image source)

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(Image source)



(Image source)

The atmosphere at these festivals is more of a 'mela' (a carnival) where people gather to enjoy the sport of kite flying along with kite flying competitions, demonstrations by master kite makers, etc.

Along with the emphasis on kites, the organizers of these festivals sometimes hold ramp shows, quizzes, games, various talent competitions, and musical and dance performances to entertain the visitors. Since these are day-long festivals organizers arrange for refreshments and food to be served, to all who visit them, if the number of visitors is limited. In larger gatherings, a number of food stalls offering the local, ethnic fare are arranged so the visitors can choose and buy from a wide variety.

These festivals bring together both the uninitiated as well as veteran kite flyers. Some kite festivals are conducted for children and youth by youth clubs, as kite flying is perceived as an excellent outdoor activity for children. Their aim is to inculcate in children, through kite flying the lessons of aiming high, achieving goals despite hardships in life. The kite is used as a metaphor for one's life, to learn to soar, and fly upwards, despite many falls that may occur. In this way, many young people get initiated into this traditional sport.

The following images are of a kite festival held at Powai, Mumbai in India, where people of all age groups are flying colorful kites.

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Usually, participants bring their own colourful kites; for those without their own kites, the organizers provide them. Along with the children, the parents too participate, helping and cheering, thus both enjoy such festivals thoroughly.

With the help of the right winds and weather conditions, the sky is filled up with many kites of different shapes, and sizes. Some are made of paper, some are made of newspapers, and some are extremely colourful! Some children pick up the art of kite flying easily, while some struggle, but all are cheered and encouraged by parents, organizers, and the spectators, thus making it an unforgettable experience. Kite flying skills and techniques are also shared and picked up at such events. In the evening as the daylight starts to fade, illuminated night kites are flown in tune to live music, thus bringing an end to the fun-filled kite festival.

Kite festivals are sometimes held to promote and spread the message of peace; especially near India –Pakistan border as a pre-Independence day celebration. Kites in the sky spread the message of peace to the other side of the border, which is very important and significant especially when there is tension between the two countries, despite diplomatic efforts to ease it.



(Image Source)

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The army organizes it with the help of kite clubs, or even schools themselves do it. These usually are one-day activities with kite flying competitions, kite fighting amongst participating school children. The kites carry the message of 'fly for peace' and the concept of "Sadbhavana" gets ingrained in children and youth through such events.

These festivals are also the venues for showcasing the various types of skills related to kites. At a festival held in Mysore, in the southern state of Karnataka, India, a kite maker Ashok Shah, was a special invitee to share his excellent kite making skills and his deep passion for kites.

He has researched many kite making techniques and has made kites from all kinds of unusual materials, like thermocole, leaves, paper dishes, paper napkins, plastic etc. He makes all types of kites parafoil, Flexifoil, modern-day box kites, kites that resemble superheroes like Spiderman, and Superman, to name a few. He has created kites as small as 1 inch in size to large ones as big as 200ft.



(Image source)

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<https://dsource.in/resource/kites/social-significance/kite-festivals>

He has won 14 international prizes, and also travels far and wide teaching children and holding kite-making workshops to revive this once popular sport in India. Two of his unusual kite creations- an artificial diamond studded Ganesha kite are in a kite museum in Turkey, and another with Radha and Krishna, studded with artificial diamonds is in Washington's International kite museum.

Some participants try to create records of sorts, like flying 110 tricolour kites (representing the Indian flag colours), on a single line, or flying a really large kite, like Gulabchand R. Jangid, did in Nagpur, Maharashtra. He flew an Indian fighter kite sized 197.34 feet x 67.42 feet (13304.662 sq. feet) long weighing 150 kg, on the occasion of Makar Sankranti Festival at Resham Bagh Ground, Nagpur on January 13, 2012. The kite was made of plastic cloth supported by 15 bamboo sticks, and 5 ft long SS pipes of 2.5-inch diameter, and was flown using 600 feet of nylon rope that was 19 mm thick.



The largest Indian fighter kite. (Image source)

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Design Resource

Kites

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by

Madhuri Menon

IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:

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In Kolkotta, West Bengal, India, a group of more than 1200 people including children have created a record for flying the maximum number of kites at a single gathering by a group, recorded in the Limca book of records.

International kite festivals:

Some states in India conduct International kite festivals, where kite flyers from all over the world are invited to fly kites.

Gujarat Tourism promotes the International Kite Festival festival, during Makara Sankranti in different parts of the state in a big way. This festival draws crowds to witness the show of eminent kite flyers from other states and countries displaying their exotic kites of various designs. There is a spectacular show of colourful kites in the sky throughout that day. More than 150 kite flyers gather here. Kite making workshops, a pavilion that showcases the history and significance of kites, and demonstrations by master kite makers are some of the activities that happen during this festival. The night kite flying at the International kite festival in Gujarat is very famous; the highlight is kite flyers from all over the world flying kites with lamps tied to kite strings called 'Tukkals' in the night sky near the Sabarmati river. The International Kite Festival in Gujarat has become a major tourist attraction. Kite flyers are also taken on city tours as a part of the festival.

The posters of a few of these festivals are presented here.



A poster of the 27th International Kite Flying Festival 2014 in Ahmedabad. (Image source)

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RAJKOT Kite Festival 2014 at ISHWARIYA Park Rajkot Gujarat India. (Image source)



Kerala's India International Kite festival -2010. (Image source)

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Participants from various countries like the UK, France, and Indonesia, bring in their unique artwork as well as kite flying traditions. A few kite flyers that visited the International kite festivals in Gujarat in recent years are mentioned below.

Michele Gressier from Toulouse, France, is one such passionate kite maker, who is a painter by profession and his hand painted kites are unique and original. When these works of art are flown in the sky, they are a memorable sight. He has participated in a number of kite festivals across Europe, Japan, and Ahmedabad-India. His kites are admired and collected by art connoisseurs. The cost of his kite designs varies from 500 to 30,000 euros, and his work is displayed at kite museums in Japan.

Derek Kuhn, from the UK, creates kites that are symbolic of the community's relationship with nature. He conducts workshops for children and through them makes them appreciate aspects of nature and wilderness. According to him, kite flying is a beautiful experience, which connects one to the trees, and nature.

Graham Lockwood also from the UK has been flying kites for the past 15 years. He can do extraordinary things related to kite flying, the recent achievement being able to fly 3 kites at a time, one with each of his hands, and another tied to his waist and he synchronizes his movements to music.

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Kite Clubs

Though kites were first made in China, over the past hundreds of years, they have become a significant part of the Indian culture. In different parts of the country, kites are flown on different religious occasions. Kite flying has become a tremendously popular sport both in India and abroad.

In its modern context, kites are often considered a child's sport, flown on Makara Sankranti, but this is not true as kites are used for a number of other purposes. Kite flying, Kite racing, and Kite fighting are popular forms of sport all over the world and people of all ages indulge in kite flying on special occasions in India and across the world.

It is this passion for kite flying that has propelled people to form kite clubs in many parts of India.

Aim:

Their aim being able to share the common interest of flying kites with kite enthusiasts in India and from all over the world and also to provide kite lovers with a chance to fly kites in many different parts of the world by participating in international kite festivals and competitions.

Their sole purpose is to keep the rich heritage of kite flying alive in India by arranging kite exhibitions, festivals, kite making and kite painting competitions and also conduct kite flying events, all across the country.

These clubs are also places where people share their experience and expertise on different aspects of kite flying and explore the art of flying kites. These are also organizations that are considered to be authentic sources of any kite related information.

Their aim is to raise the awareness of people on kites all around the country and also provide training in kite flying and encourage kite making and kite painting as an art form through specially arranged exhibitions.

They also encourage both kite flyers and kite manufacturers to share their knowledge, expertise and enthusiasm with the public and make more people discover the fun of kite flying.

Most of these kite clubs are nonprofit organizations for kite flyers.

Activities:

Kite clubs bring together kite makers and flyers from all over the country. They interact and participate in a number of kite related activities.

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Source:

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These clubs also organize a number of kite related events to increase awareness in children and to encourage them in the art of kite making and kite flying.

Gujarat is one of the most colorful states in India and every year Makar Sankranti, is celebrated as the Kite Festival of India. Since kite flying is a popular sport in this state, there are many kite clubs here.

On this festival day, kite clubs arrange kite festivals and kite flying competitions in Ahmedabad, which are extremely popular. People from all over the country come to Gujarat on this day to take part in this festival. This has established itself, as one of the major annual events in the calendar of Gujarat tourism and has become a unique selling proposition for the travel and tourism department of the state.

Kite clubs also organize kite workshops and exhibitions in any part of India. The workshops are unique in nature, with experienced kite makers and kite flyers present at each venue. There are also exhibitions with great collections of kites from other countries on display. There are kite experts present at these exhibitions who extend help to those who want to learn to fly these kites.

Kite clubs also participate in kite related activities organized by the government, department of tourism, corporate and nonprofit organizations and also for educational institutions.

Kite clubs willingly help and share their knowledge and expertise. They also help in arranging/conducting a number of activities, some of which are listed below:

- * National and international kite festivals
- * Kite fighting competitions
- * LED kite flying shows at night for weddings, corporate events
- * Promoting brands, products and advertising services with kite flying shows
- * Kite workshops for children to keep the awareness alive
- * Kite flying events in collaboration with international kite clubs
- * Kite exhibitions and kite making competitions and many more.
- * Kite flying competitions
- * Kite making workshops for schools, groups
- * Kite painting and kite flying shows

Safety Rules

Kites come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes, and each kite flies differently from another. Kite flying can be fun but it can also prove to be dangerous at times if certain safety aspects are not followed.

So kite clubs also provide certain guidelines/safety rules and regulations when followed, making the kite flying

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experience a pleasure and not a problem.

- * Kites are best flown in open fields, river banks or beaches where there are no obstacles.
- * It is best not to fly kites near trees as they can easily get tangled in them.
- * It is important never to fly kites near roads or highways. One can easily get hurt by chasing kites in these areas. The kites can also create accidents by distracting the drivers and motorists. The manjha or the glass-coated thread used for flying the kites has many times caused deep cuts in cyclists and motorists, some of them fatal when the gash is near the throat.
- * It's important to never fly kites near high tension wires, and overhead power lines as the kite line can conduct electricity. If the kite touches these lines the kite flyer can be killed.
- * The 3 C's of kite safety are Caution, Courtesy, and Common Sense irrespective of where ever a kite is flown, in a park or playground, or on a beach. These areas can be crowded with many activities happening and competing for space.
- * It is best to avoid kite flying in noisy and crowded places.
- * It is important to be careful not to scare animals, particularly horses with riders while flying a kite
- * It is important not to litter any place after the kite flying activity is done and cleaned up.
- * It is best not to fly kites where there are many birds as these too could get hurt or die if they get tangled in the manjha kite flying line.
- * It is advised not to fly kites in storms as well.
- * While flying larger kites it is better to wear gloves to protect the hands from cuts.
- * It is important to be aware of who or what is behind, as well as in front while flying a kite.

Along with the cautions, it is important to be aware of the limitations of one's skills and strength and to take care not to fly anything too large for the conditions, or try anything too complicated near other people. It is best to be aware of the power and limitations of the kite being flown.

International kite clubs: The concept of kite clubs is even more apparent and evident in other countries. A few famous ones are: American Kite Fliers Association is the largest association of kite fliers in the world with over 4,000 members in 35 countries. Toronto Kite Fliers is another association, involved with a range of kite activities and works closely with regional kite clubs as well as clubs in British Columbia, Quebec and the Northern United States. The Niagara Wind Riders Kite Fliers' Association founded in 1992, on the other hand, dedicates to the enjoyment and promotion of kite flying as an artistic, scientific and sporting activity for people of all ages.

Thus the magic of the skies and the thrill of kite flying are universal. This is one sport that has kept people engaged for many centuries, and with the help of such dedicated kite clubs, it will continue to flourish.

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Kites

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by

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IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:

<https://dsource.in/resource/kites/social-significance/kite-museums>

Kite Museums

Traditional Indian kites were made of colourful paper and were akin to art treasures, with their beautiful patterned designs, and rich colours. But these are rarely found in the market nowadays. Like many other craft objects, India's elaborate kites have disappeared from popular usage. But nowadays, with increasing inflation and labour costs, kite makers only produce complex, elaborately designed kites on special orders and these are quite exorbitant. It is the simple fighter kites that rule the Indian kite market.

On man, Mr. Bhanubhai Shah from Ahmedabad, an artist, painter, a man with a passion for photography, and design, has been collecting kites since he was a young man. Though he flew kites as a young boy, it was only later when he was a young man that he started to realize that the Indian kites were remarkably beautiful; like exquisite works of art created in the hands of master craftsmen of India. He observed that the kites had complex, exclusive designs, though they were mass-produced. His love for the kites caused him to collect a large number of them. His collection has kites from all over the country.

Over the years Mr. Bhanubai Shah started to realize that the Indian kite was no longer viewed as a piece of art, but as a disposable object, to be thrown away after the kite festival. The requirement of it to fly well had overtaken the necessity of good looks. This was evident from the way in which the kite makers started to produce kites with simplified designs and in large numbers to make more money. In order to succeed in the competitive markets, kite makers have been forced to simplify the designs and are churning out more kites in the same amount of time that it took to make one elaborate kite, thus making their money and making the kite affordable to the average Indian kite flying enthusiast. Inflation and increasing labour costs led to this changing trend, which made Mr. Bhanubai Shah wonder if there could be a way to safeguard the traditional Indian kite designs.

He realized that unless there was a way of showcasing his collection, rather than just keeping them carefully packed and stored at his home, that part of the Indian kite journey would be lost to the generations to come. His vision to ensure that Indian kites would not disappear from the country's history led to the creation of a dedicated museum for kites in Ahmedabad in Gujarat, India.

He approached the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation, asking its members to accept the donation of his kite collection and make a wing of Sanskar Kendra into a kite museum. His tenacity and enthusiasm led to the safeguarding of the Indian kite, through this museum. The Ahmedabad kite museum is the first of its kind in India to be open to the public in the year 1985. It is the first municipally sponsored museum of its kind anywhere in the world. It has a permanent collection of Mr. Bhanubai Shah's collection of kites along with regular exhibitions and the promotion of research relating to Indian kites.

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(Image source)



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This museum has since its inception received a lot of public enthusiasm and worldwide critical acclaim. The collection has large kites to some small kites along with kites crafted from 400 pieces of paper to kites in unique colours in its collection. The kites are crafted from different materials including polythene, nylon, cotton and paper in its collection. There are kites with miniature paintings of Radha Krishna, kites displaying intricately crafted sequences of Garba – a dance form unique to the state of Gujarat – performed in the reverence of Goddess Durga during the Navratras, (which means nine nights) a popular festival of Gujarat. The kites also display the unique mirror work and block prints - Gujarat's famous crafts.

In addition to all the kites displayed at the museum, information and pictures related to the history of kite flying as practiced throughout the world also shares space of equal importance.

This museum has been attracting thousands of visitors every year; not only kite enthusiasts from all over the world but also the general public, who come to view the extraordinary kite collection.

This museum has become one of the major tourist attractions of Ahmedabad. A visit to this museum is a must for an enriching experience of the kite flying scenario in India.

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Availability

Types of Indian kites

India is a land of immense diversity, with many different traditions and customs followed by its people throughout. In the matter of kites, there are several regions where kiting or kite flying is a passion.

From Ahmedabad and Mumbai in the west to Lucknow, Amritsar in the north, to Hyderabad, Bengaluru in the south one finds a faithful following. Kite flying in India is characterized by a variety of local customs, based on regional history, geography, and culture. But the part that is surprising is that the kites throughout the country are more or less similar in shape with a few exceptions, and the popularity is uniform!

Another interesting fact about the Indian kite is that it is popularly known as the “fighter kite”! This name stems from the large-scale practice of competitive flying of the Indian kite to cut down as many opponents during its flight. This is one of the reasons why kites are sold in extremely large numbers in areas where kite flying is a serious pastime.

Types of kites

The most common shape of the Indian kite is the “diamond” shape or shaped like a rhombus. Though kites are made in different shapes, the diamond-shaped ones are sold in larger numbers. Also, kites in other shapes are made only for specific purposes.



Simple diamond shaped kite.

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Some kites, though have the basic diamond shape, can have some fancy cutwork on the bottom two sides, or have two tails with two vertical supports instead of one. Many such variations to the basic shape are created in the case of fancy kites, which are more expensive than the basic diamond shaped kite.



A fancy, green foil kite with extra bamboo stick supports and tassels.

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In Hyderabad, there are many types of kites available. The kites that are bordered with a thread are called Doredaars. The Doredaar kite is designed to protect the paper from tearing.

Sometimes based on the patterns or the designs used on the kites, kites are called as Jibia, Dukkan, and Sada etc.



Kite Shop



Sizes



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Kite Shop

Indian streets and marketplaces are always bustling with shops and people. The shops are congested and their offerings are overwhelming to a newcomer. Kite shops are no different!

In most places the kite shops are temporary and shops selling vegetables and fruits often sell them along with their regular wares, for a few days before the festival of Makara Sankranti and then they go back to selling their regular wares.

Dedicated kite shops selling different types of kites do exist in most of the cities in India where kite flying is a passion. In these cities, there are certain areas or market places where small clusters of kite shops sell them throughout the year. Kite flying enthusiasts are well aware of these places and visit them regularly, even if they are far-flung.

The following presentation is of one such dedicated kite shop, which sells only kites and its related accessories in the city of Mumbai, India.

King Kite Centre

King Kite Centre is a landmark shop in Bandra (a bustling suburb in Mumbai, India), which sells multitudes of kites, both wholesale and retail.



King Kite Centre – the shop.

Design Resource

Kites

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Source:

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The vibrant shop front

This kite shop was established 40 years ago. Mr. Qureshi Md. Salim's is the present owner.



Mr. Qureshi Md. Salim

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His father who came from Muradabad in Uttar Pradesh, India was the one to set up this kite shop. He had with him two trained workers from UP and thus began the business of making and selling kites. The tradition has been continuing and now the grandson Mr. Qureshi Md. Masood has joined his father to continue the business of making and selling a wide variety of colourful kites and kiting accessories. Kites have been a passion with the three generations of Qureshi.



Mr. Qureshi Md. Masood.



The father and son duo, who run the shop.

There are very few shops that are dedicated to kite sellers, and King Kite Centre happens to be one of them. It is commendable that this shop has kept up with the changing trends too. Kites are sold all year long here and the maximum sale happens during the festival of Makara Sankranti, in January. The other time in the year when kite sales are high is at the end of August when the festivals of Dassera and Diwali begin. The kite sale is low during the summer and monsoon months.

The shop though is in a prime business location is very small and is crammed with a variety of kites. There is barely any free space to walk inside.

Kites in bundles are stored on shelves from floor to ceiling, some in front of the store and some are hung from the shop front creating a colourful and vibrant exterior.

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Stacks of kites stored inside the shop.



A cloth kite with a graphic print.



A kite lit with LED's.

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A kite for promoting a TV serial.

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Shop front with a variety of kites.

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They have sold kites, which are as cheap as Rs.2 to extravagantly expensive ones that cost Rs.600 per piece. They also specialize in custom-made kites in sizes of 1ft, 2ft, 5ft, and 10ft, in size. These special kites are made in either cloth or plastic materials. The costs for custom-made kites vary according to the choice of the material - cloth ones cost Rs.250/sq ft, and the plastic ones cost Rs. 175/sq ft.

Along with the routine paper and plastic kites in traditional shapes that these kite makers create and sell, nowadays they are importing from China readymade cloth kites in plain colours. These are customized by them, by printing on them interesting patterns, graphic animals, butterflies, superheroes like Spiderman, Superman, Batman etc, and sometimes company logos as per the buyer's requirements.



Bird shaped cloth kite along with a kite with a TV channel logo.

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Bird shaped kite with a prominent beak.

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They have not only been selling kites to shops all over Mumbai, but have been exporting kites to countries like Australia, Canada; especially bought by Indians living abroad. These are sent in large quantities, packed carefully in discarded large, flat LCD TV cartons to kite enthusiasts who want to fly these kites specifically!

This is a one-stop-shop for all kiting accessories too. Along with a variety of kites, they also sell many types of firki (the kite reels on which the thread is wound), different types of kite flying thread in cotton, nylon or glass-coated manja, in many attractive, bright colours. Not all kite flyers buy all these accessories, as the firkis are reusable with some new thread wound on them.



Stacks of firkis.



Colourful firkis hung on the shop front.



A close up of firkis hung in the shop.



More firkis of a different design.

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Kites

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by

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IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:

<https://dsource.in/resource/kites/availability/kite-shop>



Plastic firki

Occasions for kites:

1. Kites are being sold for another purpose entirely, namely- advertising! Whenever there is an event to promote a brand or a product launch, kites have a new role to play. These kites are specially designed for such occasions and are sold in bulk to the promoters. The kites on which the brand or the product name is printed are displayed or arranged in ways to advertise, make them visible and catch attention.

2. Another user of kites is the corporate world which also orders specially created kites in bulk to distribute them amongst clients and workers as gifts.

3. Kites have been specially created for the film premiers of many Bollywood movies like Ravan, The Dirty Picture, Bol Bacchan, Ek Tha Tiger, Chennai Express etc. .by these kite makers.

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A kite with a popular Bollywood movie design- promotional material.



Posters of Bollywood movies amongst kites.

4. In the recent past, there has been a great demand for kites as return gifts for children's birthday parties. They are a unique proposition for such occasions, they delight a child and are not very expensive too! Such kites are specially designed and bought in large numbers to celebrate the occasion.

5. Kites have been made by this team for election campaigning as well, carrying the different party symbols. A unique role indeed for kites!

Buyers:

This shop has been selling kites for many purposes other than just kite flying enthusiasts, both young and the old.

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It is indeed a sight to see the steady stream of young boys who come into the shop to buy kites! One sees all classes of people coming into this shop. But it is the young boys who are not financially well off trying to bargain for a few rupees during their purchases, that is really touching. These boys do have not many options for entertainment and it is these kites that bring a sense of freedom and enjoyment.

The Qureshi father and son duo also help first time buyers, and young boys when they come into the shop. They patiently listen to their customer's requirements and try to guide them to buy the right kite for the right price. Once the purchase is complete they also help in tying the thread to the kite for first-time flyers as this along with the kite's craftsmanship lies the ease with which a kite could soar high into the sky.



Young boys buying kites and firakis.



A young customer checking out the kites in the shop.

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More boys buying kites.



Bargaining and convincing in the process, before the purchase.

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Customers being shown kite varieties.



A young boy buying a firki and getting the thread rolled on to it.

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Achievements:

Since King Kite Centre has been around for a long time and has shared the passion of kite flying with the kite flying enthusiasts, by creating new shapes using new materials, this dedication has been recognized by many journalists who have written numerous articles about them, and their collections in magazines like Outlook, Woman etc. Many a time while talking about kites, their shop and the members themselves have been interviewed on television and radio shows, like TV9, Zee News, Radio Mirchi etc.

They have been interviewed by journalists from other countries as well and articles about their craft and the people involved have been published in The Sun from London, and also in New York Times!

Many documentary films have also been created on them by students and kite enthusiasts, both from local areas and from other countries.

A feather in their cap is that they were featured as an iconic symbol of the small businesses in Mumbai in a calendar created by a foreign advertising agency. The calendar showcases this colourful shop along with its wares and the enthusiastic owner. This is proudly displayed in their shop and is shared with people who are curious about their business and dedication to this kite craft.



Newspaper articles made into a poster- behind the son.



The calendar featuring the father and their kite collection.

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A close up of the calendar.

All these news articles about them and their shop are proudly displayed on a wall in this tiny shop. This only goes to show that this is a shop that not only cherishes the craft of making kites but also understands and encourages people who are passionate about kites and kite flying.

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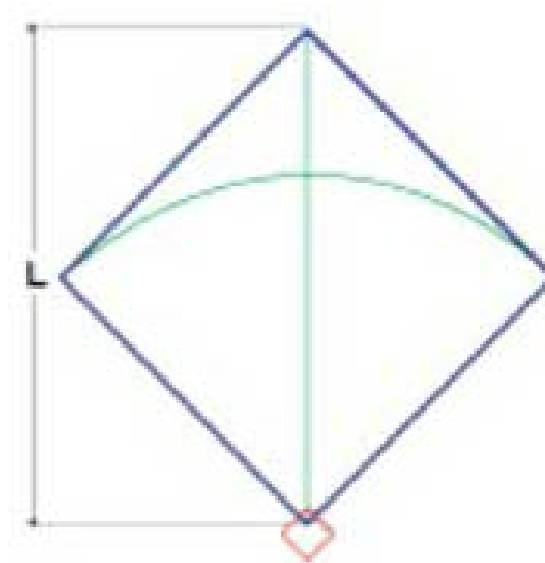
<https://dsource.in/resource/kites/availability/sizes>

Sizes

Sizes of kites

There is no exact standard for the sizes of these diamond shaped kites. It varies from state to state and depends on the manufacturer, as kites are made as well as used locally.

In Mumbai, the kite sizes depend on the length of the vertical diagonal. The medium and large size kites are known as Ponthai, Manjul, Aadha, Pouna, and Tava.. The smaller size kites are known as Bara and Dhai.



If L is the length of the vertical diagonal in a diamond shaped kite, the kite types are:

Ponthai: In this type of kite $L = 12''$

Manjul: In this type of kite $L = 15''$ to $16''$

Aadha: In this type of kite $L = 24''$

Pouna: In this type of kite $L = 30''$

Tava: In this type of kite $L = 36''$

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The following images of these kite types

There are a number of even smaller kites too where $L = 3\text{cm}, 5\text{cm}$. These are difficult to make as the sticks are very thin and only skilled workers can make them. These kites are usually made with brightly coloured papers, papers with ethnic Indian prints, and are decorated with gold, silver coloured highlights. They make a very pretty picture. They are not sold singly but as a pack of 4, or 5 differently coloured ones forming a set.

The following images are some examples of these very small or tiny kites.



These may be used to fly but are more used as decorative elements, or souvenirs or even handouts for a brand, movie, and product advertisements.



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Sometimes in order to introduce variety in small kites to make them attractive to the very young kite enthusiasts the currently popular Indian cartoon characters are printed on them. Chotta Bheem is a cartoon series that is popular with young children and the kite below has this character printed on it.



Another popular cartoon character Doremon is printed on the kite shown in the image below.



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Sometimes these small kites may be cut in different shapes too, other than the regular diamond shape. The bird-shaped kites shown below illustrate this point.



In Hyderabad, the kite sizes are known differently. They are available in different sizes. These are known as – number 5, number 6, half-pound (aada-pound), one-pound (ek-pound), and two-pounds (do-pound).

There are kites smaller than number 5 too. But, generally they are not Doredaars.

The image below shows these in the descending order of the size – do-pound , which is the biggest to No.5, which is the smallest .

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Kites

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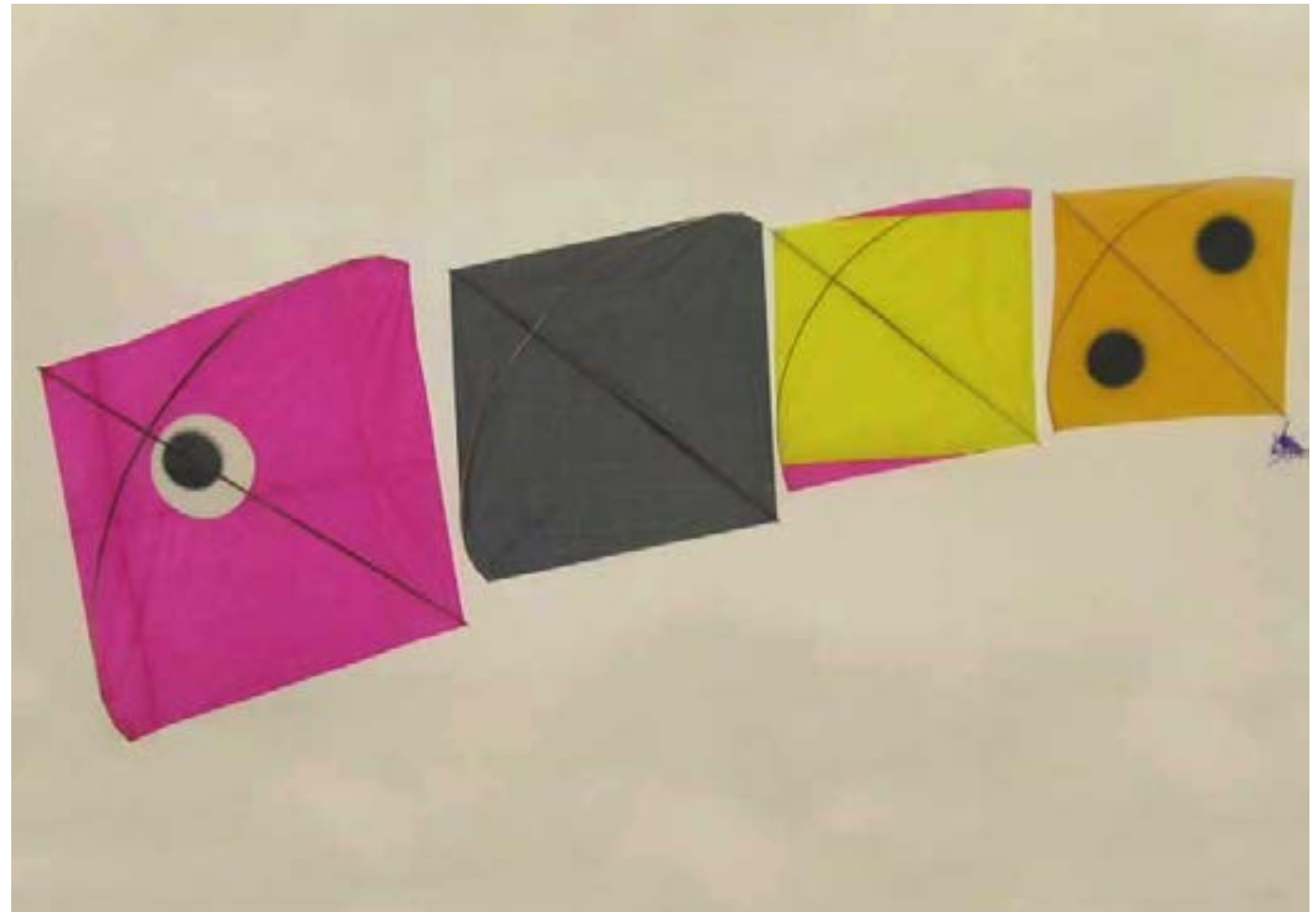
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Source:

<https://dsource.in/resource/kites/availability/sizes>



(Image source)

Thus the kite sizes may vary and also their names and types, but it is this basic diamond shape that is manufactured in large numbers all over the country with touches of the local flavor and seasonal trends.

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Materials

Indian kites soar up into the clouds with the winds. This is possible because the material that is used for the body of the kite, usually known as the sail or the skin is light in weight and strong at the same time.

Indian fighter kites (as they are usually known) are traditionally made from very thin paper in a variety of bright colours. The paper type used for kites is very thin but fibrous, which both reduces weight and ensures strength.



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Source:

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Along with paper, modern materials like Mylar/cellophane/foil and sometimes gift-wrapping material, printed plastic sheets are being fashioned into kites, which are equally popular. The principle being as long as the material is extremely thin, light in weight and can stretch a little without being fragile and tear easily, it is fine to use.

Most of the large-scale kite manufacturers have a regular source that supplies a consistent quality of paper or Mylar/cellophane/foil. Some of the brands of paper that are used to make good quality paper kites are Triveni, and Ajanta. Sometimes tissue paper is also used but this does not make for a good kite as it can tear easily.

Modern plastic kites

Of the modern plastic paper that is used for kite making, the gift-wrapping material and the waste printed packaging material make for cheap kites.

The printed packaging material is available in rolls at low prices and this translates into creating kites that are low in cost. Since they come in bright colours they are used as a material option.

The images shown below are examples of such kites.



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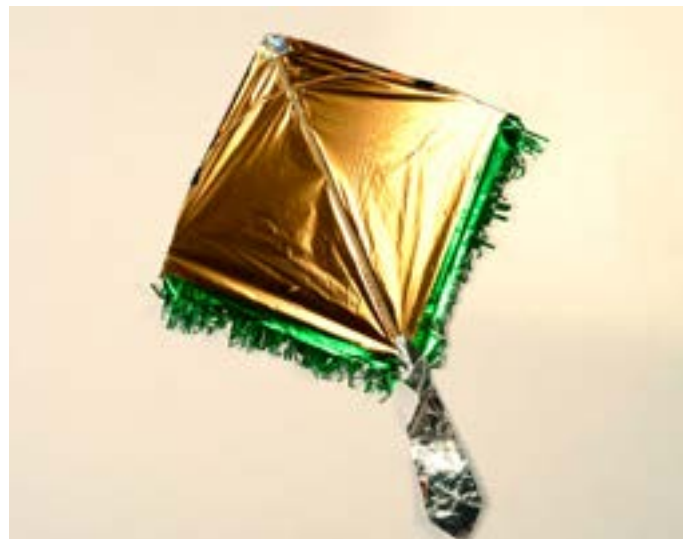
Source:

<https://dsource.in/resource/kites/availability/materials>



The Mylar/cellophane/foil material kites make for better quality kites. This material comes in many bright colours and has a metallic sheen to it, which makes it an attractive option.

The bright colours of this material along with the gold, and silver colour options, make the kites stand out and outshine the paper kites. This is why Mylar/cellophane/foil kites are costlier than paper kites.



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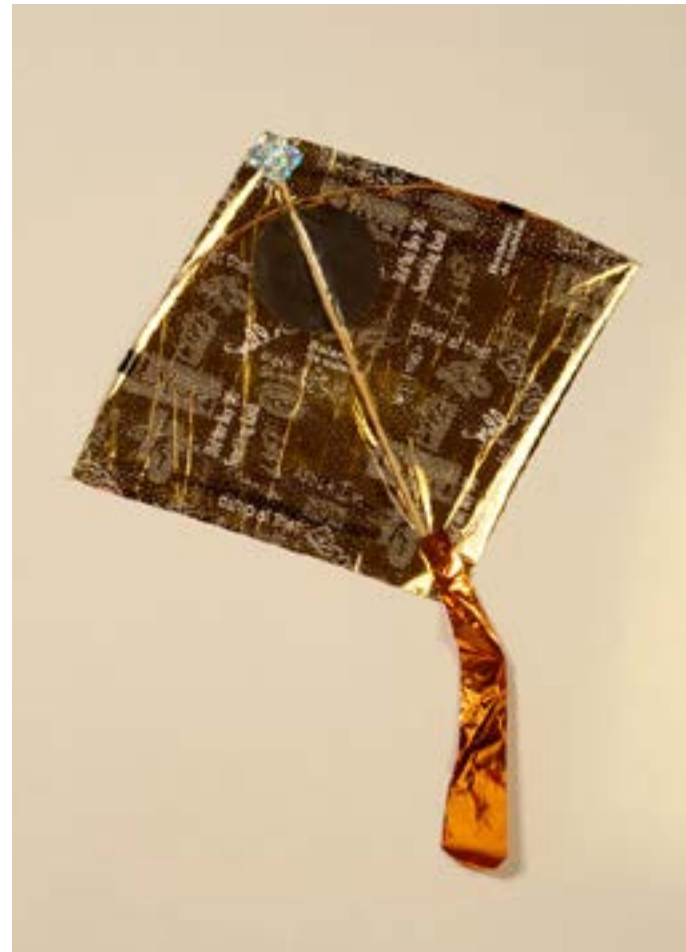
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Also, the kite makers attempt to create different designs in the shapes of the Mylar/cellophane/foil material kites. The bird-shaped kite shown below is one such example.

The Mylar/cellophane/foil material also lends itself very well to kites that are made for the purpose of advertising products, companies, movies, etc.

Sometimes the images of the currently popular film actress or actor too grace the kite bodies. Such kites may be created as promotional material for films or products or for corporate advertising.

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The image below shows (amongst many kites in a kite shop) a kite with the brand name of a popular television channel that is used as promotional material.



The kites in the images shown below are examples of kites created for the promotion of Indian films and Indian television serials.

Such kites are usually created only in limited numbers and are distributed more for advertising the category rather than to promote the spirit of flying kites. Nevertheless, such kites do get flown occasionally, but are not the primary choice for hardcore kite enthusiasts.

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Instead of just patterns and designs, some kite makers create kites with prominent film personalities, cartoon characters gracing the body of the kite.

The kite shown below carries the image of a popular Indian actress.



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The kite shown below has the image of a popular cartoon character.



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Decorated kites

Kites are not only made in single colours, but are sometimes decorated too. Paper as a material is both cheap and practical to work with, and it lends itself admirably to decoration. Creative kite makers have experimented with other modern materials too to create kites that are visual delights.

Many designs are created on the body of the kite. Some are geometrical like stripes of varying thicknesses and colours, coloured triangles of different sizes, circles, etc. Symbols such as the stars, the moon, animals, and birds, are also used to create a decorated kite.

These decorative elements are either printed on the body of the kite or are layered on it.

The tail is also a decorative element in the kite. Some have a short tail, some have fringes or coloured tassels all around the bottom two sides of the kite as can be seen from the kite images shown.

Some kites have patches of paper in different colours, silver, or gold to make them look attractive.

A few decorated kite images are shown below.



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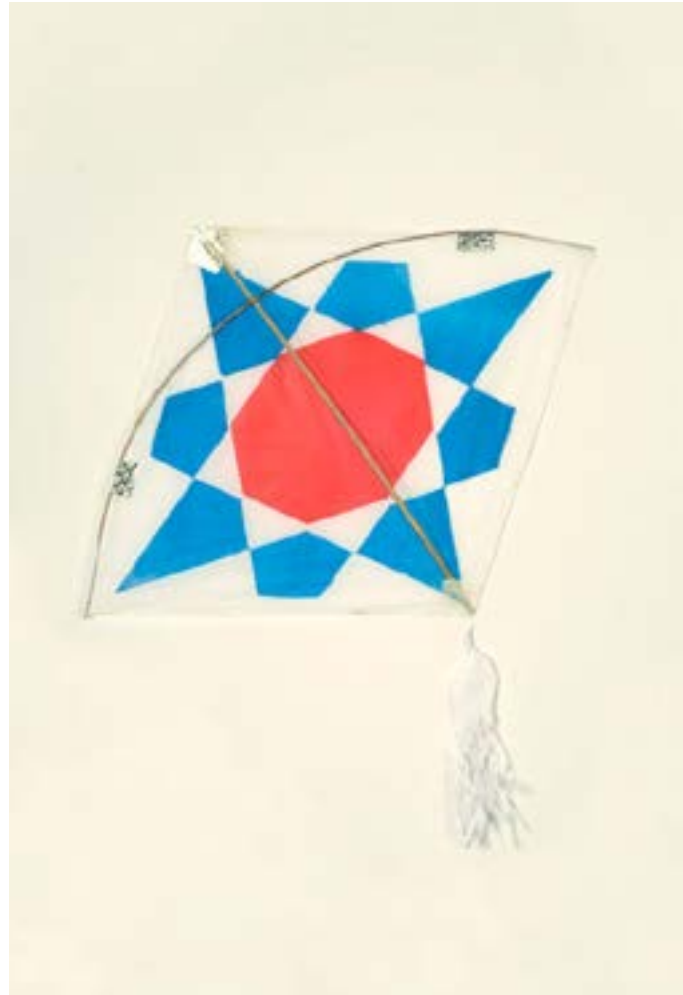
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The image shown below is of a paper kite made of printed gift-wrapping material.



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The Indian flag is also an inspiration for creating kites. These kites may be sold in larger numbers just before Independence Day or Republic day.

In the images shown below, one kite is made of paper and the other is a plastic kite with the Indian flag colours and the Asoka chakra printed on it in a graphic representation.



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Kite Making

The Indian kite or “patang” as it is popularly known as is made in several places in India. The art of making kites in India has sustained through the years, till these modern times. It is still a viable source of income for many families who have passed on this tradition down the generations.

The nature of the demand for locally made kites has changed over the years. In the present day, large-scale manufacturers of kites exist in Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Uttarpradesh.

The purchase of kites, spurts just before Indian festivals like Makara Sankranti, and Basant Panchami where kite flying is done on a mass scale as a part of the celebrations. Kite flying as a pastime for children and youth has dipped in the urban areas where kites cannot match up to the attractiveness of television programmes, toys and gadgets.

Kites have also found new identities as promotional vehicles for brands, products, canvass vehicles for political parties, and sometimes as decor tools. Some kites have silkscreened logos and advertising messages, which are used as promotional elements for many Indian businesses. With these varied demands for kites, kite manufacturing has been producing both traditional kites as well as modern creations.

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Elements of Kites



Assembly of a Kite



Threading the Kite



Kite Making Videos

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Elements of Kites

Whatever may be the avatar of the kite, its basic elements have remained more or less the same.

The kite body is usually made of a special quality of very thin paper, foil, or packaging paper. It is essential that the kite paper be thin as it is more responsive to maneuvering. The support framework on the kite is made from thin bamboo sticks.

The types of materials used for the kite body are presented in the previous section, 4c. Materials.

The Indian kite-“patang” needs either the “saada” or “manjha”- a special type of string, and a wooden or plastic spindle or thread holder- “fukri,” or “chakri” to make it soar in the skies.

Support framework: Two bamboo sticks, placed perpendicular to each other give simple, but effective support to a basic Indian kite body. Large kites, fancy kites, and special kites use more sticks as per the kite design.



Basic support framework of two perpendicular bamboo sticks

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A fancy kite with more bamboo sticks forming the framework

Bamboo is the preferred support material, for its lightness and easy availability. Usually, pre-shaped, straight, bamboo sticks of desired sizes are sourced by large-scale kite makers. This ensures uniformity and eases while making the kites.

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Kites

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by

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Trimming of a bamboo stick during the actual making of a kite

Sticks are thick for large kites and thin for smaller kites. Large quantities of sticks in the numbers of 10,000 to 15,000 are sourced from Assam or Jharkand, where bamboo is available in plenty. These sticks are then trimmed a little bit while the kite is actually being made.

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Bundles of pre-sized, bamboo sticks at a kite maker's shop.

Fikri /reel/chakri The basic Indian reel also known as “chakri” or “firki” is a lathe-turned wooden spool with handles projecting from either end, with a large central core. This central cylinder could be made of wood or can be made of bamboo strips set at regular intervals between the plates at either end.

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Along with the kites, each kite shop displays a large number of kite reels, known as some hung in clusters, some hung from ceilings and some at the shop front as can be seen in the images below.



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Reels come in various sizes. A small reel is about 6 inches long and 2 ½ inches in diameter. The standard size is approximately 14 inches long and 4 ½ inches in diameter. There could be reels in between these two sizes as there really is no standard size for reels.

The reels are usually made of softwood like jackwood, punkhi, and hale. Reels made of hardwoods like walnut, teak, and rosewood are more expensive and are generally not available in regular kite shops.

The handles of the reels are turned on wooden lathes and are first coated with bright watercolour pigments, followed by a thin coat of clear varnish, or lacquer which not only protects the bright undercoat colour, gives a smooth finish, and also makes the reel more durable, keeping it resistant to insects.

Different regions across India use different types of reels. Some regions may have rim holes along the top and bottom plates, metal inserts, decorative elements, finer craftsmanship and finish too.

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The reels above have metal inserts in the top and bottom plates in an attractive pattern as a decorative element

But some may be plain, undecorated, with just a coat of varnish. In all these types of reels, the functional excellence of the reel remains the sole purpose.

Along with traditional wooden reels, modern-day has brought in moulded plastic reels, which are mass-manufactured easily. These cannot match the look and feel of wooden reels, rarely have any decorative element, but serve as functional companions and have a large-scale acceptance with the kite flyers.

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Different types of thread, firakis/reels

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Small, plastic moulded firkis/reels

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A bunch of plastic and wooden firakis/reel

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Some of these plastic reels imitate the traditional reel design completely and may have aluminium spindles too, thus making the reels more light in weight.

There are several regions in India, especially in Tamil Nadu, where the kite flyers do not use a reel. Kites are flown directly off balls of glass-coated line or large loops of thread around 3 ft in diameter.

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Though reel makers are scattered throughout India, Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh is a major centre for the manufacturing of and exporting of reels.

Kite flying thread

The thread is the other important element for flying a kite. The quality of the thread ensures the airworthiness of a kite and also the maneuverability in the sky. The two types of threads used for kite flying are saadi and manjha.

Saadi: Plain thread that is used to fly the kites, is known as “saadi”. This is made of cotton. This could be plain white in colour or could come in colours like orange, blue, pink, green. The coloured cotton saadi, is usually preferred by young boys.

Manjha: This is a material that is used to coat the first portion of the kite flying line, just below the kite or even the entire line, which helps in the Indian kite fighting or “pench”.

The manjha allows the kite to be cut off effortlessly from the sky. It is a paste made from sticky rice and powdered ground glass.

In India, where kite flying is synonymous with kite fighting, the kite is always flown with a cutting line. The use of manjha distinguishes the Indian kite string from the kite string of other countries. It also distinguishes the notion of kite flying from the rest of the world.

Manjha threads are more expensive than plain cotton thread.

Manjha making procedure:

The rice is cooked to a soft consistency and mashed into a fine paste. To this is added powdered glass, colouring pigments in certain proportions to get a smooth coloured lump. The most popular colours for the manjha are vivid and brilliant- turquoise blue, vivid orange, dark green, royal blue, dark violet, dark green, and lemony yellow. These colors look extremely attractive on the reel. The purpose of using bright colours in the manjha is to be able to identify one's own kite line, when a large number of kites are flying in the sky.

Long lengths of cotton thread are tied between two or more wooden posts fixed into the ground, 20 to 30 feet apart. The coloured manjha paste is applied to this long length by a person who walks the distance back and forth along the thread applying a fine and even coat, on 4 lines at a time, each line separated with his fingers. This hand technique is a well-practised art.

The manjha application on the thread can be light, medium or heavy. The light coating is called “bareek manjha”.

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A lightly coated line increases the maneuverability of a kite and offers less wind resistance. More than cutting other kites, flying is improved. This type of manjha is cheaper than jhaada manjha. A reel of this thread can cost Rs.170- 200 per reel.

A thick coating of manjha is called “jhaada” or “panda” manjha. A heavily coated line can swiftly cut the opponent’s line, but drags the kite down and offers more wind resistance and less maneuverability. A reel of this thread can cost Rs.250 – 300 per reel.

Sometimes, manufacturers have secret formulas to create a special quality of manjha. They add items like milk cream or malai, isabgol, tej leaves, eggs, and several other unique elements in proportions that are closely guarded secrets, along with the rice paste and powdered glass.

Dangers of using Manjha thread:

The manjha thread has to be handled with care while flying a kite. People sometimes wrap their fingers in Bandaid, or adhesive tape, to protect their fingers from the glass powder.

Manjha thread can be dangerous to people standing on rooftops, or streets, to cyclists and to people driving two-wheelers. During a kite fight, as the cut kite swoops down, the line when falling to the ground can cut the body parts of people coming in its way. There have been many incidents where the manjha thread has slit the throats of two-wheeler drivers. In fact every year during the festival of Makara Sankranti, people are warned to be careful of the kite’s lines.

The manjha is wound on firki from a large spool fixed to an electric motor. Large quantities of thread – around 900metres is available in reels, this is wound on the firki.

The images below, show the process of winding the firki.

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Nylon thread:

Nowadays some kite flyers are using nylon thread to fly the kites. This is lighter in weight than the cotton thread and is available in a large number of colours as can be seen below.



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A length of nylon thread being bought for flying a kite by some boys

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Assembly of a Kite

Kite flying is a popular hobby and an exciting sport in India. The peak season for flying kites in India is during the festivals of Makara Sankranti and Basant Panchami.

From the early times when kite flying began in India, the art of kite making has been transferred from one generation to the next. The kite making process is quite simple, and over the years many kite variations have been created. To earn a living by being a kite maker, making a large number of kites and different kinds of kites in a day requires a lot of expertise. Though, hobbyists can make basic types of kites.

The kite's craftsmanship is of utmost importance. This simple little paper and bamboo object mass-produced is made by hand- a product of the keen eyes and talented fingers of an expert.

Kite making: The following images show the step-by-step procedure to make a simple kite. This kite has been made by an expert kite maker, in his small, but popular shop in Bandra, Mumbai, India

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1. The basic material - roll of foil paper.



2. Paper being folded to the required size.

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3. Paper is cut using a special knife.



4. The cut paper is folded into half.



5. Scissors are used to cut the paper.



6. A folded triangle emerges.

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7. The folded triangular paper, opened up looks like a rhombus, with extra material at two opposite ends.



8. A bamboo stick is placed like a diagonal and the size is checked.



9. The stick is sized using a knife.



10. The sized and shaped bamboo stick.

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11. Special glue is used for pasting the stick to the foil paper.



12. The foil paper is turned and the stick pressed in firmly.



13. A longer bamboo stick is taken.



14. This is bent into a smooth semicircle, placed as shown like the other diagonal in the rhombus.

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15. Special glue is applied to the ends of this bent stick.

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The ends of this semi circular stick are stuck to the rhombus shaped paper as seen in 16,16a and 16b.



16. The ends of this semi circular stick are stuck to the rhombus shaped paper as seen.



16a. The ends of this semi circular stick are stuck to the rhombus shaped paper as seen.



16b. The ends of this semi circular stick are stuck to the rhombus shaped paper as seen.



17. Extra bits of foil are cut into small rectangles.

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These bits are pasted to provide extra adhesion- between the paper and the semicircular bamboo stick, and at the top of the rhombus, between the vertical bamboo stick and the paper. This can be seen clearly in 18, 18a and 18b.



18. These bits are pasted to provide extra adhesion- between the paper and the semicircular bamboo stick, and at the top of the rhombus, between the vertical bamboo stick and the paper. This can be seen clearly.



18a. These bits are pasted to provide extra adhesion- between the paper and the semicircular bamboo stick, and at the top of the rhombus, between the vertical bamboo stick and the paper. This can be seen clearly.



18b. These bits are pasted to provide extra adhesion- between the paper and the semicircular bamboo stick, and at the top of the rhombus, between the vertical bamboo stick and the paper. This can be seen clearly.



19. More foil paper is cut into a long strip.

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This long strip is rolled as can be seen here and in 20 & 20a.



20. This long strip is rolled as can be seen here and in 20a.

20a. This long strip is rolled as can be seen here.

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21. The rolled paper is flattened using the blunt edge of the knife as can be seen.

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Scissors are used to make vertical, parallel cuts as can be seen in 22 and 22a.



22. Scissors are used to make vertical, parallel cuts as can be seen in 22a.



22a. Scissors are used to make vertical, parallel cuts as can be seen.



23. Once the cutting is complete, the rolled paper is opened up to resemble a long fringe.

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24. Glue is applied to the top part of the fringe.



25. The fringe is pasted on to the bottom of the rhombus, to form the tail. This provides balance to the kite while it is in the air.



26. The finished foil paper kite.

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Thus the whole assembly time for making this delicate little flying machine is a few minutes. In places where these kites are made in large numbers, two or three people sit together and share the processes explained above thus making a faster assembly where a kite is completed in a minute or two!

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Threading the Kite

Flying on a kite is easy and pleasurable. One can quickly learn to maneuver it in the sky, but this is possible only if the threading of the kite is done correctly. This tying the thread to the kite is called “Kanne dalna” in Hindi or “Kannalu kattadam” in Telugu. Usually, only plain cotton thread is used for this purpose and not the “manjha” (the glass-coated thread).

This next step is crucial before the kite can be airborne, as if this is not done correctly the kite may either not take off at all or will be uncontrollable during flight.

Usually, after the kite has been purchased the seller himself does this kite threading. But some kite enthusiasts also learn it and do it themselves.

The following images show the process of threading a kite correctly. A total of four holes are made in the kite to tie the thread – two at the upper end and two at the other end. These can be done using a needle or an agarbatti or a matchstick, basically using a sharp object. This needs to be done gently or there is the danger of tearing the fragile kite material.



1. A long needle is taken, and threaded with about one metre of ordinary cotton thread.



2. This is used to make a hole on one side of the vertical stick, where both the horizontal and vertical sticks intersect at the top of the kite, as can be seen in the image below. Another hole is made on the other side of this intersection. Thus the needle and thread is brought out to the back side of the kite, where the sticks are not visible.

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3. The next two holes are made on either sides of the vertical stick at the other end of the kite approximately eight fingers (width) starting from the holes at the intersection of the sticks, as can be seen.



4. A large loop of thread is thus formed between the top and bottom set of holes, as can be seen in the image below.



5. At one end of the kite the ends of these threads are tied neatly and carefully into a knot.



6. Another knot is made tightly so the threads do not unravel.

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Kites

A kite is a cultural symbol

by

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Source:

<https://dsource.in/resource/kites/kite-making/threading-kite>

The threads at the other end of the kite are tied similarly with a double knot, as can be seen below and in the images 7, 7a. and 7b.



7. The threads at the other end of the kite are tied similarly with a double knot, as can be seen above.



7a. The threads at the other end of the kite are tied similarly with a double knot, as can be seen above.



7b. The threads at the other end of the kite are tied similarly with a double knot, as can be seen above.



8. The large loop of thread is held up in the centre as seen in the image below.

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9. The loop is held at a point, approximately midway and its measure is checked.



10. This length of the loop must measure equal to the distance till the end of the kite, as can be seen in the image above.



11. The same is checked towards the other end of the kite.



12. When the length of the loop is satisfactory a knot is made at that position.

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13. A double knot is made to ensure the length of the thread does not change.



15. A spindle or firki / chakri with coloured thread is taken.



14. The suspension of the kite is checked.

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One end of the coloured thread is tied to the top of the loop of thread as can be seen in the image below and in 16 and 16a.



16. One end of the coloured thread is tied to the top of the loop of thread as can be seen in the image above.



16a. One end of the coloured thread is tied to the top of the loop of thread as can be seen in the image above.



17. The kite assembly is ready to be flown in the vast blue sky.

Tips to follow while threading the kite

- * Only plain cotton thread is to be used for this process.
- * The entire threading should be done on the side where the sticks are not visible.
- * The knots must be firmly tied so they do not unravel and tear the kite.
- * The position of the knot that is tied in the middle of the loop of thread at the end of the process of threading the kite is very important, as this is what decides the balance and smoothness of the kite's flight.
- * If the kite is not flying smoothly even after many attempts, it is better to remove the knots and tie them again.

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Source:

<https://dsource.in/resource/kites/kite-making/kite-making-videos>

Kite Making Videos

The deft kite making process has been captured on video.

The two video presentations below present the art of kite making and also explore the idea of simple changes in kite making giving rise to different variations. These variations come by when kite makers explore the simple elements, paper and bamboo sticks, kite tails, decorations, etc to bring in novelty while keeping the principle of flight intact.

The kites in these video presentations have been created by the kite expert, Mr. Qureshi Md. Masood of King Kite Centre, Bandra, Mumbai, India.

Video1: Making of a paper kite - A simple paper kite is created using paper, and bamboo sticks using Fevicol as the glue. ([vimeo link](#))



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Video2: Making of a fancy kite - A foil paper kite in a fancy shape is created using foil, bamboo sticks, using a different kind of glue. ([vimeo link](#))



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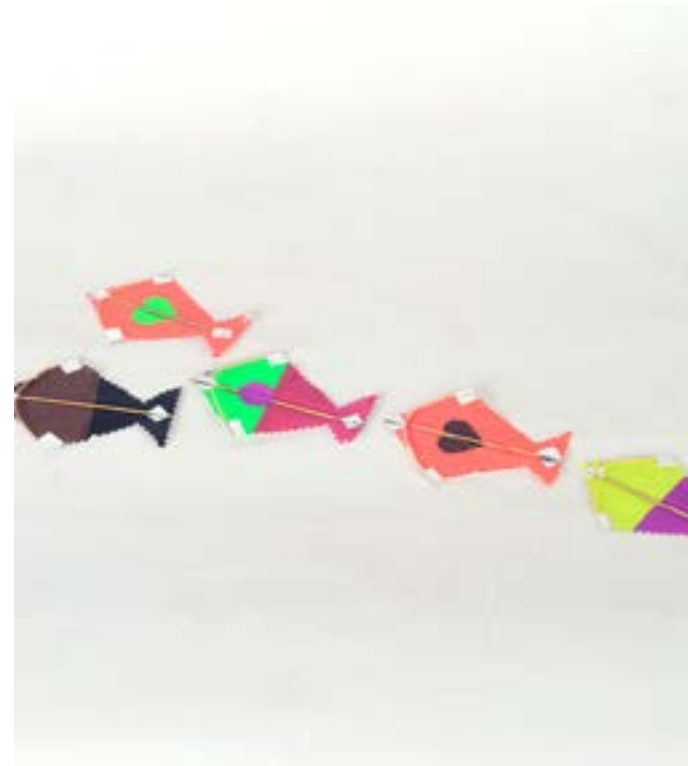
Source:

<https://dsource.in/resource/kites/special-kites>

Special Kites

The Indian kites have come a long way, from the time they were introduced into this country. The shape of the Indian fighter kite has not changed since, shaped like a rhombus or the diamond shape. Only different types of materials, sizes and decorations on the kites had led to different varieties in kites. But now apart from the kites made specifically for the purpose of flying, kites are also being used for many other promotional purposes. These new forms are special kites, which have a lesser following, but nonetheless, their presence is becoming noticeable.

Tiny kites, small kites, like miniature versions of the regular sized kites are being sold just before the kite festival of Makara Sankranthi, along with the usual fighter kites in the shops. The images below show some of the varieties available. These cannot be flown; they are used as badges or pin-ups, and adorn many a soft board, reminding one of the festivals and the sport of kite flying long after it is over.



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Apart from these small kites, and decorative kites, the reigning movie celebrities have been inspiring kite makers to create uniquely shaped kites as dedications to them! The following images are such novel kite examples.



International influence

The traditional Indian kites are quite different from the kites that are flown in other countries. Compared to the standard Indian kite made of tissue paper and bamboo, these are extremely different. The international styles of kites are more stunt kites, with multiple flying lines, with unique constructions compared to the Indian kites. These modern kites are fabricated out of hi-tech materials like Dacron, ripstop nylon, carbon filament and fiber-glass spars, and Kevlar flying lines. All these materials make the kites stronger, lighter, durable and more colourful.

With International kite festivals happening in many places in the country, the Indian kiting enthusiasts have been exposed to a whole new variety of kites; some are even attempting to fly such kites in India. There has been an

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international influence on the types and materials of the kites. Some of the local kite makers are also trying to create innovative forms based on the popular characters of the present day, using these modern materials. The following two images are examples of this culture.



Some differently shaped kite samples are as seen below; they are in the shape of a fish, a flying bat, an aeroplane, or with a lot of graphic images. There is no limit to the imagination and exploration of forms and lightweight modern materials by kite makers! This unique innovativeness becomes very visible in the kites that are flown in the national and international kite festivals.

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These kites are definitely more expensive than the traditional Indian fighter kites; they are also slowly becoming visible in the traditional kite shops as the kite makers are allowing such kites to share retail space as demand for such kites is also slowly increasing!

The following images are of a kite shop, which sells both the traditional Indian kites as well as the newly popular, colourful large sized kites of different shapes and materials.



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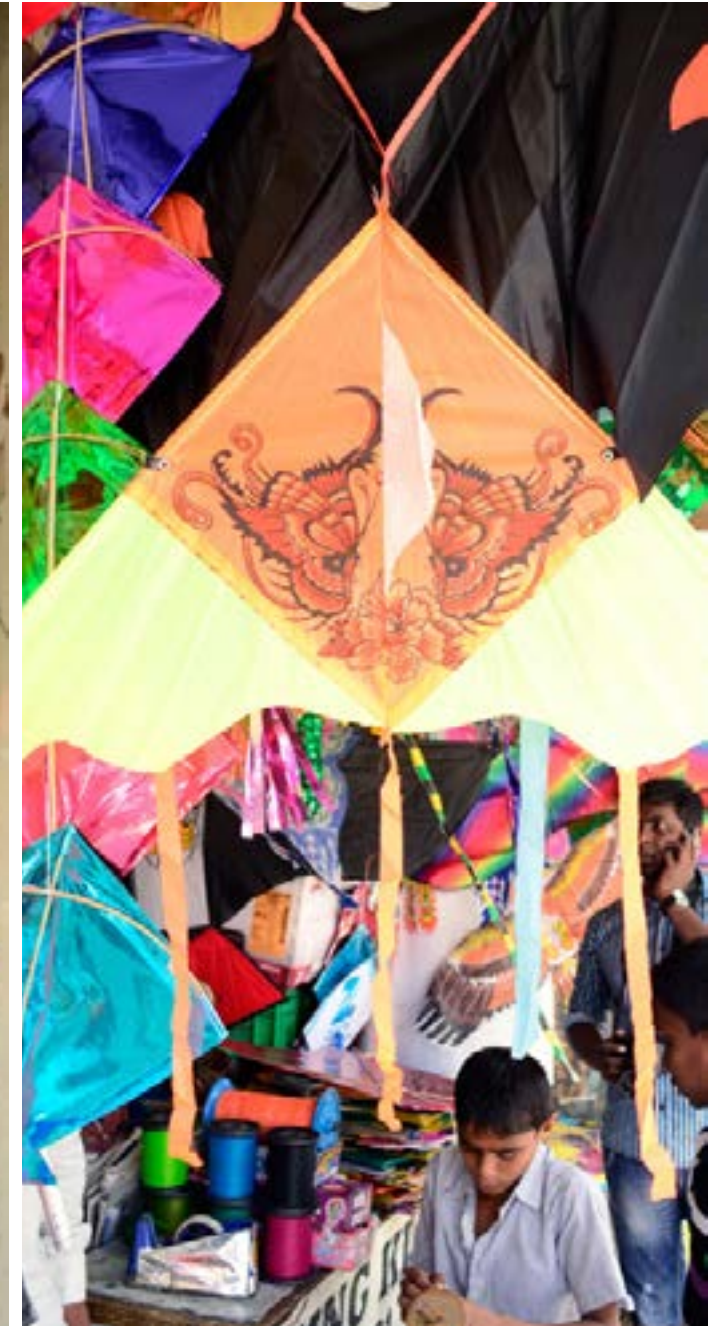
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The following images are of a few examples of such kites, which are in no way similar to the traditional kites but are still gaining popularity with the serious Indian kite flyers.



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In the international arena, kite shapes are very different like the parafoil kite, tail-less diamond kite, tetrahedral kite, flexible kite, sled kite, to name a few. With many new patents, new kite designs and innovations continuing to develop, the kite industry has taken leaps and bounds with the creation of stunt and power kites designed to go faster and perform more intricate tricks than ever before.

Compared to these developments, majority of the Indian kites have remained largely unchanged. With the increasing exposure to a number of International kite festivals in different parts of India throughout the year, and in other countries as well, one is slowly seeing an influence in the designs of Indian kites. New ways, new materials, and new designs are the new promise on the horizon of innovation in kites; Whether the traditional kites will remain the same or will they get transformed with the new developments is something to wait and watch out for!

Source:

<https://dsource.in/resource/kites/special-kites>

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Videos



Making of a Paper Kite



Making of a Fancy Kite



Kite Flying



Rooftop Kite Flying

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Source:

<https://dsource.in/resource/kites/further-links>

Further Links

- A Kite Journey Through India--- text and photographs by Tal Streeter
- Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Services:
<http://www.drachen.org/sites/default/files/pdf/About%20Kites%20Panels%20for%20WEB.pdf>
- <https://drachen.org/>
- <http://www.ahmedabadkiteflyers.org/>
- <http://www.kiteclubindia.in/>
- Kite Making Gujarat:
<https://dsource.in/resource/kite-making-gujarat>
- Paper Kite Making:
<https://dsource.in/gallery/paper-kite-making>
- Plastic Kite Making:
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Source:

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Acknowledgement

1. Special thanks to the father and son duo -- Mr.Qureshi Md. Salim, and Mr.Qureshi Md. Massod of King Kite Centre, Bandra, Mumbai for the inputs related to kites, kite sales, and changing trends in India related to kite designs. Their willingness to share knowledge and expertise related to kites is sincerely appreciated. The kite making videos were possible largely because of Mr.Qureshi Md. Massod's enthusiasm to share the crafting process.
2. Special thanks to Prof. Ravi Pooviah for granting permission to document the kite making process at IDC and to also document the various kite samples.
3. Special thanks to Sri. V.P.V.Varadarajulu and Smt. Lakshmi, Hyderabad for providing the kite samples from South India.
4. Special thanks to Mr. Neel Patel and Ms. Mitali Patel, Mumbai for providing the kites samples, images of kite flying and videos of kite flying in Baroda and Ahmedabad.
5. Special thanks to Mr. Palash Vaswani for providing images of kite flying in Amritsar, and 'Powai kite flying festival' in Hiranandani Gardens, Powai, Mumbai.
6. Special thanks to Mr. Palash Vaswani for filming and creating the kite making and kite flying videos.
7. Special thanks to Mr. Anmol Dharmadhikari, Mr.Palash Vaswani, and Mr.Sumedh Garud for documenting the different kite samples.

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