

Heraldry: Designing your own Coat of Arms

Parts of a Coat of Arms:

Charge: The central symbol, sometimes an animal but often a specific shape, design, flower, etc.

Motto: Usually placed on a scroll design at the bottom of the shield, the motto is a very simplified statement of the value/s most important to you. (ex: "God, Family, Country" or "Death before Dishonor")

Supporter/s: One or two animals placed above the motto and to the sides of the charge

Fields: A coat of arms was often divided into sections, called "fields. Even the type of line used to separate the fields had meaning (see the back of this page for examples.) Each field might then represent a different family, time period, or event.

Here are some basic animals, colors, shapes and objects and their symbolism:

white—purity blue—loyalty red—courage
yellow—wisdom black—strength green—charity
purple—royalty gold—royalty, riches silver—nobility

chevron—achievement horizontal bar—honor
flower—beauty or gentleness heart—sincerity, charity, or love
cross—Christianity tower, castle—solid, unchanging
feather—willing obedience shell—protection of the future
hand—justice, faith, sincerity arm—hard-working
leg/shoe/foot—strength, stability human head—honor
eye—wisdom in government crown—royal authority
pen—writing skills harp—thoughtfulness
anchor—hope chains—reward for good service
wheel—fortune

lion—deathless courage tiger—great fierceness
bear—ferocious in protection of family horse—ready for any job
wolf—valiant captain, sticks to task bull or ox—bravery
rhinoceros—ferocious when provoked boar—fierce fighter when pursued
lamb—gentleness, patience in suffering ram—authority
elephant—courage and strength rabbit—enjoys peaceful, retired life
fox—uses wisdom for defense cat—liberty, independence
bee—hard worker ant—great and wise laborer
eagle—person of action owl—wisdom
grasshopper—wisdom and nobility peacock—pride, beauty
pelican—devoted and self-sacrificing stork—gratefulness
swan—lover of poetry and harmony rooster—always ready for battle
crow—enjoys a quiet, settled life dolphin—affectionate towards children
unicorn—extreme courage dragon—defender of treasure
deer—peace and harmony snake—wisdom