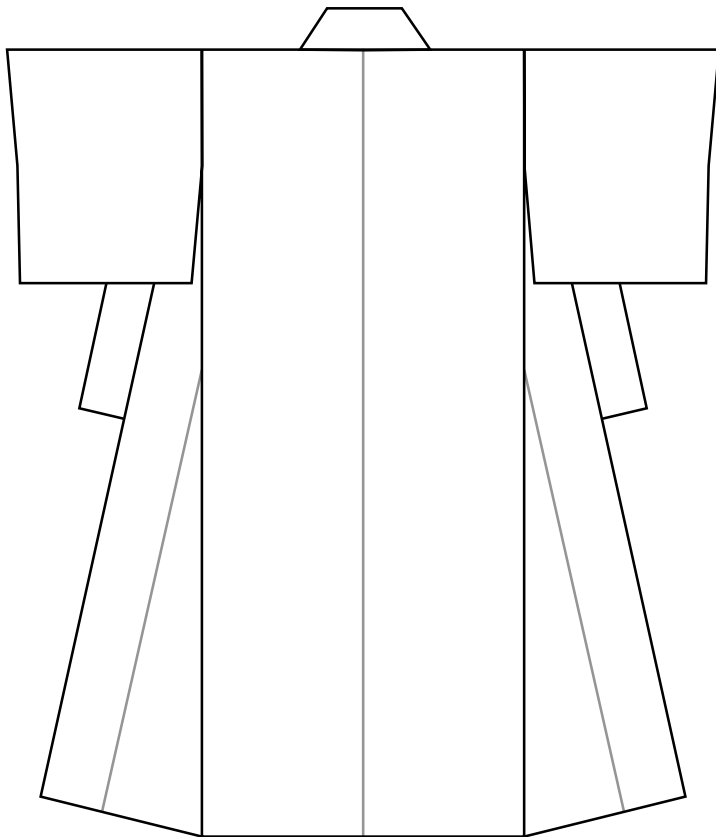


FAMILY GUIDE

Design your own kimono!

What shapes, colors, patterns, and textures will you use?



Kesai Eisen (1790-1848), *Modern-Style Beauties in Snow*, early-mid 1820s, published by Sanoya Kihei, color woodblock print, John Chandler Bancroft Collection, 1901.146

THE KIMONO \approx PRINT

300 YEARS OF JAPANESE DESIGN

What is a Kimono?

In this exhibition, you will see prints created between 1603 and 1912 that showcase kimono. A kimono is a traditional Japanese garment that is made from a single bolt of cloth, called a *tanmono*. This cloth is 40 feet long by 15.75 inches wide. Kimono were worn by men and women as daily clothing. People still wear kimono in Japan today, especially for occasions like weddings and tea ceremonies.

The shape of the kimono has not changed since the 1300s. It is sewn into a T shape from seven panels of cloth: two panels for the body of the kimono, two panels for the sleeves, one panel for the collar and two overlap panels in the front. The kimono is tied with an *obi*, or sash belt, which can be very long. If a person wears a very elaborate kimono, they may need someone to help them dress in it properly. The traditional materials to make a kimono are silk, linen, and hemp.

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WORCESTER ART MUSEUM

As you travel through the exhibition, you will note different kimono designs and materials. Kimono are works of art, and the designs chosen have significant meanings. Shapes can be embroidered, dyed, and hand-painted onto the fabric to add different colors, patterns, and textures. Woodblock prints show us the great artistry of kimono over time. To make these prints, a drawing was carved onto one or more blocks of wood with a separate block carved for each color. All of these blocks were then pressed onto the paper to make the pictures that you see here.

Can you find the four woodblock prints that have these kimono details?



This detail shows a brush painting of a bamboo that was hand-painted onto the kimono. For an actual kimono of this sort, it is quite possible that a noted artist would do the painting.



This kimono detail is a black motif made of circles, which was the symbol of a male Kabuki actor. Kabuki theater is a traditional acting style in Japan. Well-known Kabuki actors often had their own symbols or crests. These were included on their kimono to identify them, as their physical likenesses were not generally shown in prints until the 1760s.



Search for the kimono that has this checkered print called "ichimatsu moyo." This unique design was created for actor Sanogawa Ichimatsu in 1741. It caused a fashion sensation! Today, the pattern is still known in Japan as the "Ichimatsu pattern," used even for the logo of the 2021 Summer Olympics in Tokyo.



This kimono detail shows a striped fabric, introduced to Japan by Portuguese traders who sailed to Japan in the 1500s. Originally a design from South Asia, stripes became popular with the Japanese people for kimono.