



About this kite

In some parts of the world, if you say the word kite, the picture that comes to people's mind is of a small flat lozenge-shaped kite (diamond) sporting a long tail and dancing in the sky.

But originally this kite, which came from Asia, could be flown without the aid of a tail and was very stable in the air because it was built large and its spar was bowed – the Malay kite.

In 1894 a New Yorker by the name of William Eddy was looking to make a stable tailless kite to lift meteorological equipment. While he had heard of the Asian tailless kite, he was unable to find any information about how to build it, so he invented his own version – the Eddy kite.

Whatever you call it, this kite is popular everywhere, and many people's first attempt at kite building is to make a small "diamond." There is a simple elegance in its design in that the spar and spine are of equal length and their junction is the towing point. But in the hands of most amateur kite builders the kite is made without the bowed spar, which is a bit easier, so it needs a tail to keep it stable in the air. And being small, it dances a lot, which has its own beauty.

Norman Schmidt

How to build a small “diamond” kite

MATERIALS

- Frame: 2 – 24 x 1/8 inch wooden dowels
 Sail: kraft paper or white paper (75-80 g/sq m) – 24 x 24 inches square
 Fastening: 1-inch-wide masking tape and 1/2-inch-wide clear (scotch) tape
 Bridle line: single legged – cotton kitchen string
 Tail: paper chain, 1-3/4" wide and 20 feet in length
 Flying line: 100 feet or more of cotton kitchen string wound on empty soup can spool with optional fishing-line swivel (to reduce possible line tangle)

METHOD

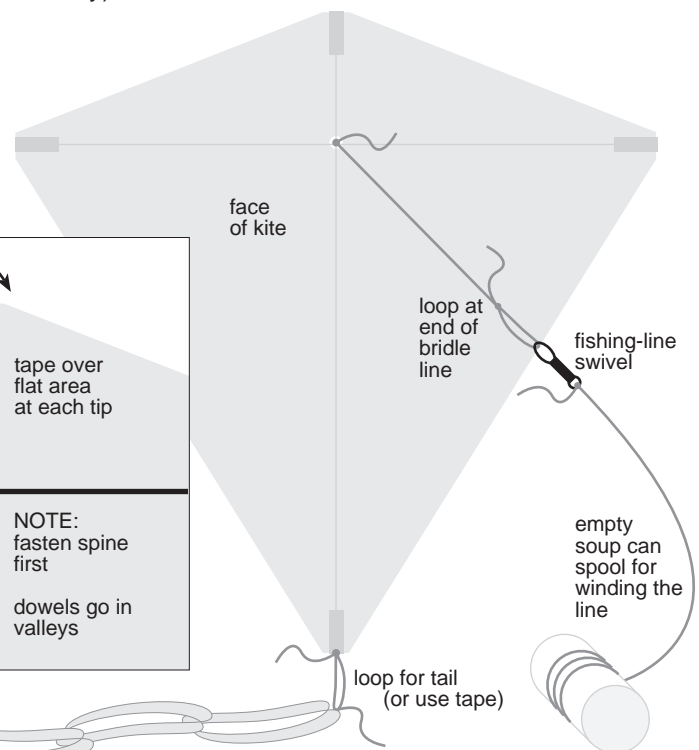
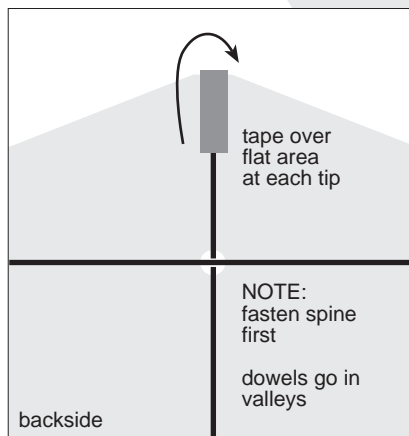
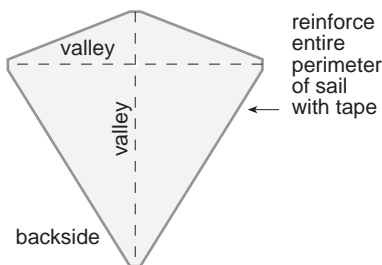
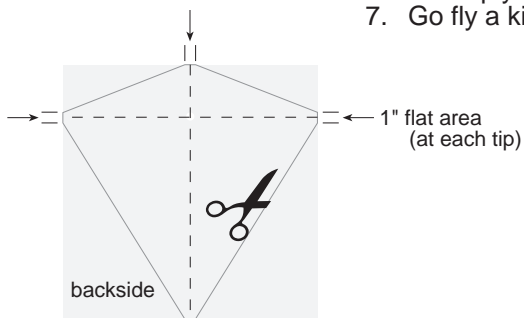
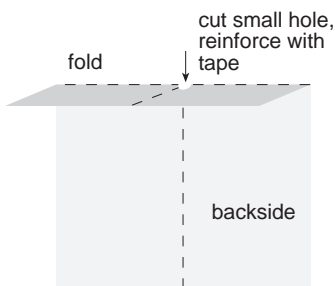
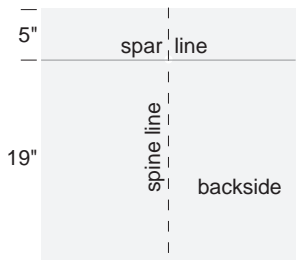
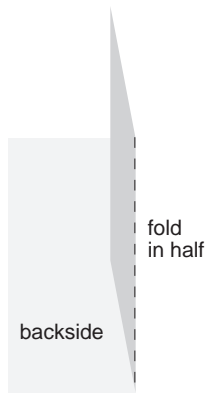
Part One (see left)

1. A kite must be symmetrical. Fold paper in half to find centre line for the spine.
2. Measure and draw line for spar to intersect the spine line.
3. Fold the line. Cut a small hole at the junction of the two lines. Reinforce with tape.
4. To make the sail, measure and mark 1/2 inch on either side of spine and spar lines. From these marks draw the diamond shape for the sail. This will leave a 1-inch-wide flat area for taping at each tip of the diamond.
5. Reinforce entire perimeter of the sail with clear tape (on backside).

Part Two (artwork for the frontside of the sail) – Be creative.

Part Three (see below)

1. Cut two dowels to make a 24-inch spine and a 24-inch spar.
2. Fasten spine to the sail (on backside) with masking tape. Use a 4-inch strip of tape. Fold tape over equally on front and back (over the small flat area at the tips).
3. Fasten spar with tape using the same method. The dowels should cross at the small hole in the sail.
4. Tie the spine and spar together with a piece of string measuring about one foot in length using an anchor hitch. Pass the string through the small hole. Tie a loop at its free end using a bowline knot. This is the bridle line used to attach the flying line.
5. Make a 20-foot paper chain tail. Cut paper strips 1-3/4" wide and 18" in length for each loop. Loop together, fastening each loop with tape.
6. Attach tail to kite at bottom end of spine. Use a short length of string with a loop or simply use masking tape. Attach flying line.
7. Go fly a kite (light to moderate wind only).



tail about 20 feet in length