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[How Paper Making Traveled From Ancient China To Europe And Middle East](#)

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When talking about environment friendly materials, paper is among the most preferable materials. Today, we see different types of paper with different level of thickness and durability. Paper's usage is not limited to writing any more. It now ranges from personal hygiene products to packaging material. [Wax Packaging](#), [Seafood Packaging](#) and even the [Poultry Boxes](#) are all made from it. With its many forms and uses, it would be fun to travel back to the history of this invention.

It is a commonly known fact that paper has been around since ancient times. The term paper itself came from papyrus, which refers to the bark of a plant. It is clear that the bark was the earliest type of material used as a paper. However, the writing on rocks and stones were used even before that. The actual paper making process was introduced in China during the Han dynasty in around 200BC. The very earliest paper is known to be made out of mulberry leaves, fishnets and rags. During the third century, the usage of paper became more common, and it was also used for wrapping things too.

During the Tang dynasty (around 600AD), the domain of paper usage was even more expanded and it was now used in tea bags, napkins, baskets and other pretty decorations. Also during the same era, toilet paper had already taken a place as an essential need in China. It was not until the Song dynasty that paper money was actually printed, thus further signifying the value of paper.

Although kept secret by the Chinese, the art of paper making did reach Japan by the 610AD. However, it was the Arabs who took paper manufacturing to the next level by introducing bulk manufacturing methods during 751 AD. It became a major industry of Baghdad and Samarkand. From this point on, Arabs invented many printing and book making styles as a form of art.

After the first crusades, the art of paper making made its way into the western world. However, historical evidence establishes that the Mayans also developed their own the paper making technique during the 5th century. This technique was same as the Chinese method, but was solely made of tree bark.

During the 1400s, many printing methods were shifting from fabric to paper, and paper making became an industry around the world. Water powered paper mills were seen all around the West and the Middle East. However, paper was still expensive and not as general as it is today.

During the 19th century, the advent of the steam engine gave new power to the paper making technique which was able to make paper out of wood pulp, the latter which soon became a general use. This made way for a faster way of mass-production of paper, which worked and reduced the price. The paper and printing presses was now all over the world. Newspaper and books became common.

However, methods have again taken a turn, and most of the writing is done on computers rather than papers, nothing has been able to completely replace paper. The need for paper is ever increasing, and hardcopies are still much more reliable than their soft counterparts.

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