

How To Make An Origami Dragon

How to Make an Origami Dragon: A Step-by-Step Guide to Crafting Your Own Paper Mythical Creature **how to make an origami dragon** is a fascinating question for anyone interested in the ancient Japanese art of paper folding. Origami, which means “folding paper,” transforms a simple square sheet into intricate shapes, and dragons stand out as one of the most captivating and complex forms you can create. Whether you’re a beginner eager to try your hand at origami or an experienced folder looking to challenge yourself, crafting an origami dragon combines creativity, patience, and precision. In this article, we will explore the step-by-step process of making an origami dragon, share useful tips to improve your folding skills, and introduce some variations for different dragon designs. Along the way, you’ll discover how this traditional art form can be both relaxing and rewarding, turning a flat sheet of paper into a mythical creature brimming with personality.

Understanding the Basics Before You Start

Before diving into the folds and creases, it’s helpful to get familiar with some origami fundamentals. Knowing the terminology and basic techniques can make the process smoother and more enjoyable.

Choosing the Right Paper

The type of paper you use significantly affects your origami dragon’s outcome. While any square paper can technically work, origami paper (known as “kami”) is thin yet strong, making it ideal for detailed folds. You often find it in colorful patterns or plain colors, which can add flair to your dragon. If you want a sturdier model, try slightly thicker paper like wrapping paper or lightweight cardstock, but avoid anything too thick as it becomes hard to fold precisely. Also, ensure your paper is perfectly square — a well-measured base is crucial for symmetry in your dragon’s wings, claws, and tail.

Mastering Basic Folds

Origami relies on fundamental folds such as the valley fold, mountain fold, squash fold, and reverse fold. If you’re new, it’s a good idea to practice these on scrap paper first. For example: - **Valley fold:** Folding the paper towards you, creating a valley-shaped crease. - **Mountain fold:** Folding the paper away from you, forming a peak. - **Reverse fold:** Used to make legs, necks, or tails by folding a flap inside out. Understanding these will help you follow dragon folding instructions more easily and anticipate the model’s shape as you progress.

Step-by-Step Instructions on How to Make an Origami Dragon

Now that you’ve got your paper and basics down, let’s embark on making your own origami dragon. This guide focuses on a traditional, moderately complex dragon model that balances detail and accessibility.

Materials Needed

- One square sheet of origami paper (15cm x 15cm is a common size) - A flat surface to fold on -
Optional: a bone folder or similar tool to create sharp creases

Folding Your Origami Dragon

1. **Start with the preliminary base:** Place your square paper color side down. Fold diagonally both ways, then unfold. Fold the paper in half horizontally and vertically, then unfold. Collapse the paper into a smaller square by bringing the diagonal folds together — this is called the preliminary base.
2. **Create the bird base:** From the preliminary base, fold the outer edges to the center line on both sides, then unfold. Perform a petal fold by lifting the bottom corner and folding the sides inward, forming a diamond shape. Repeat on the back side.
3. **Form the dragon's neck and tail:** Identify two flaps on opposite sides. These will become your neck and tail. Fold these flaps upward and shape them using reverse folds to create the head and tail tips.
4. **Shape the wings:** Fold the top flaps outward to resemble wings. Use pleat folds to add dimension and detail, making the wings look more lifelike.
5. **Refine the head and claws:** Make small inside reverse folds to give the head a snout and horns. For claws, narrow down the paper at the ends of the legs using precise folds.
6. **Add final details:** Crease the model carefully so the dragon can stand or display its wings as desired. You may also curve sections gently to give a dynamic look.

Patience is key here. Some folds may require practice, and your first dragon might not be perfect, but every attempt improves your skill.

Tips for Success When Making an Origami Dragon

Origami dragons are intricate, and the process can be challenging. Here are some helpful tips to make your folding experience enjoyable and rewarding: - ****Use crisp, sharp folds:**** Each fold's accuracy affects the final shape. Press down firmly and consider using a bone folder for clean creases. - ****Work slowly and methodically:**** Rushing can lead to mistakes, especially in complex sections like the neck or tail. - ****Keep your hands clean:**** Oils or dirt can damage the paper or make it harder to fold precisely. - ****Practice smaller parts separately:**** For example, practice reverse folds or pleats on scrap paper to build confidence before applying them to your dragon. - ****Watch origami tutorials:**** Visual guides can clarify steps that are tricky to understand from text alone. - ****Experiment with paper sizes and colors:**** Larger paper makes detailed folds easier, while different colors or patterned sheets add personality.

Exploring Variations and Advanced Origami Dragon Models

Once comfortable with a basic dragon, you might want to explore more complex or stylized designs. Origami artists worldwide have created a variety of dragon patterns that range from minimalist silhouettes to elaborate multi-winged beasts.

Multi-Winged and Curled Tail Dragons

These models incorporate additional folds for extra wings or curling tails, increasing realism and aesthetic appeal. They require more precision and time but result in stunning pieces that wow on display.

Modular Origami Dragons

Some designs use multiple folded units assembled together, allowing the creation of larger dragons with articulated parts. This technique introduces a new layer of creativity and engineering to your origami practice.

Using Metallic or Textured Paper

Choosing special papers can enhance your dragon's appearance, mimicking scales or fire-like effects. Metallic origami paper, for example, can give your dragon a shimmering, magical look reminiscent of legendary creatures.

The Artistic and Cultural Significance of Origami Dragons

Origami dragons not only represent a fun craft but also carry rich symbolism. In many East Asian cultures, dragons are revered as powerful, wise, and benevolent creatures. Folding a dragon connects you to this cultural heritage and the meditative practice of origami. The process itself encourages mindfulness and patience, qualities valued both in art and life. Crafting your own paper dragon can be a satisfying way to unwind and express creativity. Whether you're making your first origami dragon or refining a complex design, the journey is as rewarding as the final figure. Each fold tells a story of tradition and imagination, bringing a mythical creature to life through nothing but paper and your hands. So grab your origami paper and start folding—your dragon awaits!

How to make an origami dragon is a journey of creativity, precision, and cultural appreciation. In 2026, as global interest in craftsmanship and mindfulness grows, this elegant art form connects modern creators with centuries-old traditions. Together, we'll explore steps, tips, and resources to master the process. The beauty of origami lies in turning paper into life, and making an origami dragon allows you to do just that.

Understanding the Art of Origami and

Origami, a cornerstone of paper folding traditions, has transformed from ancient Chinese practices into a worldwide phenomenon. Originating in Japan over 400 years ago, origami carries deep symbolism—dragons, revered for power and protection, are a celebrated subject. Today, how to make an origami dragon transcends simple folding; it's about embodying artistic intent while honoring heritage.

In 2026, studies show a 37% increase in origami workshops globally, driven by stress relief trends and educational engagement (Google Arts & Culture, 2025). This surge highlights origami's role in mental wellness and skill-building, making "how to make an origami dragon" essential knowledge.

Historical Context and Modern Popularity

The dragon motif in origami has fascinated enthusiasts for generations. Traditional dragon designs often feature intricate folds to mimic scales, flames, and wings. Modern artists, using digital patterns and tutorials, have popularized simplified yet authentic models. The process reflects patience and attention—traits valued in today's fast-paced world.

Statistics reveal that origami craft sales are projected to reach \$1.28 billion by 2030, showcasing sustained demand. Platforms like YouTube (2.8 billion active users in 2026) and Pinterest (also seeing 69% growth in origami content) are key access points, making learning "how to make an origami dragon" more accessible than ever.

Selecting Materials and Tools for Success

Choosing the right paper is foundational. High-quality, lightweight origami paper (washi or specialized origami sheets) ensures sharp folds without tearing. Avoid generic printer paper; it's prone to creases and fraying.

Invest in precision tools: bone folders (to create crisp creases), scissors, and a ruler for marking folds (though origami often uses visual guides). For beginners, pre-cut templates simplify the process—find free printable versions online.

Best Paper Types and Their Benefits

1. Washi papercraft paper: Durable, flexible, and widely available; ideal for beginners.
2. Origami-specific paper: Engineered for perfect folds, available in eco-friendly brands like Tuttle Paper.
3. Handmade or recycled paper: Adds personalization but may require adjustments in folding techniques.

Each material choice impacts outcome quality, so experimenting early helps refine preferences.

Step-by-Step Guide to Crafting Your Dragon

Creating an origami dragon demands methodical folding. Below's a structured approach, supported by step-by-step tutorials and expert tips.

Preparing the Base: Foundation Matters

Start with a square sheet, centered and flat. Fold diagonally to form a triangle, then unfold. Repeat to create cross creases—this guides your dragon's symmetry.

Next, form the preliminary bird base, a starting point for many dragon designs. This "napkin fold" technique (used in classic models) ensures accurate alignment.

Watch informative channels like OrigamiUSA.org or MasterClass for visual cues—learning from seasoned creators accelerates progress.

Advanced Techniques to Enhance Detail

Dragon wings and scales demand finesse. Use reverse folds to create depth, and slits to simulate flowing fabric. Jelly folds add softness, mimicking dragon scales—a technique gaining traction in 2026's creative circles.

Mastering Scale and Wing Design

1. Utilize a grid approach: Divide the body into segments for proportional wings and scales.
2. Practice controlled pressure; uneven folds distort shape.
3. Add color gradients by layering translucent papers or markers—effective but requires patience.

Consistency in seam placement is key. Even minor deviations can affect the dragon's posture and balance.

Troubleshooting Common Challenges

Papers may buckle or tear—common issues addressed with these solutions:

1. Wrinkle paper gently with a bone folder before folding—prevents crease distortion.
2. Use wet-fold techniques for complex curves: Lightly moisten crease lines with water to maintain shape.
3. For tangled folds, reverse fold sections carefully instead of cutting through.

Watching advanced forums like Reddit's r/origami community provides real-time solutions—learning from peers saves hours.

Practicing and Perfecting Your Dragon

Consistent practice improves muscle memory. Begin with simple models before progressing to dragon complexity. Record attempts to track progress; video reviews highlight areas needing work.

Join online groups or local origami clubs—collaborative practice boosts confidence and technique. Platforms like Meetup connect makers globally, fostering growth.

Resources and Inspiration for Every Skill

Free tutorials abound: Origami.me offers downloadable patterns; YouTube channels like Paper Genius have 5M+ subscribers. For advanced learners, books like "Origami: The Complete Guide" by Robert J. Lang provide in-depth strategies.

In 2026, augmented reality (AR) apps overlay folding instructions on paper, revolutionizing learning accessibility—perfect for visual learners.

Why "How to Make an Origami

This skill promotes creativity and mindfulness, especially during stressful times. According to Psychology Today, crafting improves focus and reduces anxiety. "How to make an origami dragon" thus bridges art and wellness.

Sustainability trends also boost paper crafting—reusing and upcycling paper supports eco-conscious communities while encouraging innovation.

Integrating Origami into Modern Lifestyles

Beyond art, origami aids education—studies show it enhances spatial reasoning in students (Harvard Education Review, 2024). Businesses use origami training for team-building; its meditative nature fosters collaboration.

As a DIY favorite, origami dragons make unique gifts or decorations, appealing to collectors and retailers alike. The International Origami Society predicts 22 million more enthusiasts by 2030.

Final Thoughts

How to make an origami dragon is more than a craft; it's a pathway to creativity, culture, and connection. Your journey begins with paper, guided by tradition and innovation. By following structured steps, selecting quality materials, and learning from communities, you'll produce a dragon that's both stunning and meaningful.

Embrace the process—each fold builds skill and joy. In 2026, origami remains timeless, inviting everyone to unleash their imaginations. As you finish your first dragon, remember: mastery comes through patience and practice. Happy folding!

meta description: Discover expert strategies for "how to make an origami dragon" and elevate your origami artistry with proven techniques, tools, and inspiration in 2026.

How to Make an Origami Dragon: A Detailed Exploration of Technique and Artistry **how to make an origami dragon** is a question that has intrigued paper folding enthusiasts, artists, and hobbyists alike for decades. Origami, the traditional Japanese art of paper folding, transforms a simple square sheet of paper into complex and fascinating three-dimensional figures. Among the myriad designs, the dragon stands out as a symbol of power, mystique, and creativity. This article delves into the process of crafting an origami dragon, examining the techniques, materials, and challenges involved while offering insights into the design's appeal and complexity.

The Art and Complexity of Origami Dragons

Origami dragons are considered an advanced-level folding project due to their intricate details, including wings, tails, claws, and sometimes expressive facial features. Unlike simpler models, such as cranes or boats, making an origami dragon demands patience, precision, and a thorough understanding of various folding techniques. The complexity arises because the dragon's form requires multiple layers, reverse folds, and often wet-folding methods to create curves and angles that mimic the creature's dynamic posture. From a comparative perspective, origami dragons stand apart from other mythical creatures like unicorns or phoenixes for their elaborate structure and symbolic significance. While a phoenix might emphasize graceful flowing folds, dragons incorporate a balance of sharp creases and rounded shapes to convey strength and movement. This complexity not only challenges the folder's skill but also tests the quality and size of the paper used.

Choosing the Right Materials for Your Origami Dragon

The choice of paper significantly influences the final outcome of the origami dragon. Traditional origami paper, often called kami, is thin and crisp, enabling sharp folds but sometimes lacking durability for complex models. For projects like an origami dragon, thicker papers such as washi or even special origami foil paper may be preferable because they hold creases firmly and allow for wet folding techniques, which soften the paper for sculpting curves. Additionally, size matters. Larger

sheets—typically 15 cm x 15 cm (6 in x 6 in) or bigger—are recommended for beginners attempting dragons, as they provide more surface area to execute intricate folds. However, advanced folders may opt for smaller sheets for more challenging work, provided the paper quality supports detailed manipulation.

Step-by-Step Process: How to Make an Origami Dragon

Understanding how to make an origami dragon involves mastering a sequence of folds, each contributing to the model's anatomy. While specific designs vary—from simple dragon silhouettes to complex multi-limbed figures—the following generalized steps provide a foundational approach.

1. Preparing the Base

The process usually begins with establishing a base form, such as the bird base or frog base, which sets the structural framework. These bases involve preliminary folds like valley folds, mountain folds, and squash folds, which are essential in shaping limbs and wings later in the process.

2. Forming the Body and Wings

Once the base is set, the folder manipulates the paper into the dragon's body. This step often includes reverse folds to create the neck and tail, and petal folds to form the wings. Precision is critical here, as asymmetry or misaligned creases can distort the dragon's silhouette.

3. Detailing the Head and Claws

The head is typically the most intricate part, requiring delicate folds to form features like horns, eyes, and mouth. Techniques such as inside reverse folds or crimp folds help achieve the desired shapes. Claws and legs follow, often made from narrow, elongated folds that add realism and balance to the figure.

4. Final Adjustments and Shaping

After the main structure is complete, wet-folding may be applied to soften the paper, allowing smoother curves and a more lifelike appearance. This technique involves lightly moistening the paper and gently molding it, which can enhance the dragon's dynamic posture and facial expression.

Challenges and Tips for Successful Origami Dragon Folding

Creating an origami dragon is not without its challenges. The intricacy of the folds can lead to frustration, especially for beginners. Some common issues include paper tearing, difficulty in executing complex folds, and structural instability in the final model.

1. **Practice Basic Folds:** Mastering fundamental folds such as valley, mountain, reverse, and squash folds is essential before attempting a dragon.
2. **Use Quality Paper:** Investing in durable and flexible origami paper can prevent tears and facilitate shaping.
3. **Follow Step-by-Step Diagrams or Tutorials:** Detailed visual guides reduce errors and help

clarify complicated sequences.

4. **Be Patient:** Complex models require time and multiple attempts to perfect.
5. **Consider Folding in Stages:** Breaking the process into smaller sections, such as focusing separately on the head or wings, can make the task more manageable.

Comparing Popular Origami Dragon Designs

Several well-known origami artists have contributed unique dragon patterns to the origami community. For instance, Satoshi Kamiya's "Ancient Dragon" is renowned for its elaborate details and high difficulty level, often taking hours to fold and requiring large sheets of paper. In contrast, simpler designs like the "Easy Origami Dragon" provide a more accessible entry point for novices, focusing on the general dragon shape without overwhelming detail. Such variation allows folders to select a design that matches their skill level and interest, thereby enhancing the learning experience. Moreover, the diversity in dragon designs highlights the adaptability of origami as an art form, capable of representing everything from mythical grandeur to minimalist elegance.

Origami Dragon in Cultural and Artistic Context

Beyond technique, the origami dragon carries cultural significance, especially within East Asian traditions where dragons symbolize wisdom, strength, and good fortune. Crafting an origami dragon serves not only as an artistic endeavor but also as a means of connecting with these cultural narratives. Artists have also used origami dragons as canvases for creative expression, experimenting with colors, textures, and paper types to evoke different interpretations. For instance, metallic papers can mimic scales, while patterned sheets add depth and visual interest. This artistic flexibility contributes to the dragon's enduring popularity in origami circles. The practice of making an origami dragon thus bridges craftsmanship, cultural heritage, and artistic innovation. It challenges the folder's skills while offering an opportunity to engage with symbolic storytelling through paper. In exploring how to make an origami dragon, the journey encompasses technical mastery, material selection, and artistic interpretation. Whether one approaches it as a hobbyist, an artist, or a cultural enthusiast, the process of folding a dragon offers rich rewards—both in the finished model and in the skills developed along the way. As origami continues to evolve, the dragon remains a compelling subject, embodying the intersection of tradition and creativity within this timeless craft.

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As technology continues to advance, digital books will remain a central component of modern education and information exchange. The ability to download **How To Make An Origami Dragon** reflects an adaptive approach to learning that aligns with current technological trends. Digital literacy is increasingly important in both academic and professional environments.

In conclusion, downloading **How To Make An Origami Dragon** exemplifies the strengths of modern digital learning. It combines accessibility, functionality, affordability, and ethical responsibility into a single, powerful resource. By leveraging reputable platforms and engaging thoughtfully with digital content, users can unlock the full potential of **How To Make An Origami Dragon** and continue their journey of personal and professional growth in the digital era.

How to Make an Origami Dragon: A Masterclass in Precision and Patience How to make an origami dragon transcends simple paper folding; it's an intricate dance of geometry, cultural homage, and artistic expression. This traditional Japanese art form, rooted in centuries of symbolism, has evolved into a global phenomenon blending creativity with meticulous technique. As contemporary designers integrate origami into fashion, architecture, and digital media, mastering the dragon folds stands as both a craft and a statement of dedication. ### The Cultural and Artistic Significance Originating in Edo-period Japan, origami began as a ceremonial practice but has blossomed into a medium for storytelling. The dragon, a revered figure in mythology, embodies power, wisdom, and protection—making its paper manifestation both potent and meaningful. Modern origami communities, from professional artists to amateur hobbyists, celebrate this transformation, using

structured folds to animate creatures with dynamic presence. ### Understanding the Dragon's Anatomy Before folding, one must dissect the dragon's silhouette. Key elements—spiraling wings, coiled tail, muscular limbs, and flowing scales—demand strategic planning. Proportions matter: replicated wings must balance height and breadth, while the tail's curvature should suggest motion. This dissection phase reveals how proportion and balance function as foundational pillars in origami design, influencing both aesthetic appeal and fold feasibility. ### Essential Materials and Tools A high-starch, crisp kami paper enhances crisp folds, though specialty materials like mulberry paper introduce texture. The choice directly impacts results; thin rice paper risks tearing, while thick stock may hinder precision. In professional settings, tools like bone folders streamline crease creation, reducing errors. Comparing beginner and expert setups shows how equipment upgrades correlate with complexity—advanced origami kits often separate intricate dragon works from novice attempts. ### Step-by-Step Folding Techniques The process begins with a precise base: the waterbomb base serves as a template, enabling symmetrical wings and tails. Layer-by-layer, practitioners form the dragon's body through valley and mountain folds, advancing to wing articulation using layering and reverse folds. Core comparisons exist between traditional (hand-folded) and modern (stencil-assisted) methods; while the latter accelerates creation, purists argue handcraft retains superior nuance.

Key Fold Sequences: From Torso to

Step 1: Creating the Head: Folding the top section inward establishes facial features. Step 2: Wing Expansion: Parallel folding generates scale-like ridges, essential for movement illusion. Step 3: Tail Construction: Zig-zag folds simulate natural drapery, reinforcing the dragon's dynamic stance. ### Common Challenges and Solutions Practical obstacles include crease distortion, often from uneven tension, and asymmetry, which undermines visual harmony. Mistakes demand patience; advanced practitioners employ modular origami principles to reconstruct flawed sections. Case studies reveal that practicing intermediate models (e.g., cranes) before tackling dragons reduces errors by 40%, per survey data. ### Stylistic Variations and Modern Adaptations Digital origami, leveraging software like Origami Studio, enables virtual testing—simulating folds without paper. 3D-printed templates offer precision but diverge from traditional craft. Hybrid works, merging origami with sculptural elements, push creative boundaries, appealing to collectors seeking uniqueness. ### The Role of Practice in Mastery Research indicates deliberate practice—systematic repetition with feedback—not only hones technical skill but also cultivates intuition. Novices often struggle with timing; experts synchronize folds to align with breath, minimizing tremors. This mirrors cognitive load theory, where automation emerges through iterative refinement. ### Pros and Cons of Traditional vs. Digital Methods

Aspect	Traditional	Digital
Accessibility	Requires hands-on effort, slower	Instant templates, wide distribution
Accuracy	Demands steady hands; prone to error	Precise, no physical limits
Creativity	Sparks improvisation	Facilitates complex designs

Community and Learning Resources Books like *The Complete Book of Origami* provide structured learning paths, while platforms like OrigamiUSA host workshops. Social media communities enable real-time troubleshooting, fostering collective knowledge. ### Environmental and Ethical Considerations Sourcing sustainably produced paper, particularly from recycled or FSC-certified paper, aligns with eco-conscious trends. Producers increasingly adopt plant-based dyes, minimizing toxicity. Audiences now prioritize ethical craftsmanship, elevating origami as a socially responsible art form. ### Conclusion How to make an origami dragon is a journey of technical mastery, cultural appreciation, and imaginative exploration. The process integrates geometry, patience, and cultural context—an art form where failure is a teacher and success is a revelation. As the craft evolves, its timeless appeal endures, rooted in the balance between discipline and creativity. By embracing structured folding, leveraging modern tools, and engaging with global communities, enthusiasts transform ordinary

paper into legendary beasts. The resulting creations are more than artworks; they are bridges between past and future, human and machine, tradition and innovation.

Finding Your Starting Point

New practitioners should prioritize foundational models, then gradually progress to dragon-specific guides. This phased approach avoids frustration and builds confidence.

Overcoming Common Pitfalls

Distortion and misalignment are frequent issues; using a ruler for crease guides and practicing on scrap paper mitigate these.

The Future of Origami Dragon Art

Integrations with augmented reality (AR) and bio-inspired design promise new dimensions. Imagine dragons animated via light-responsive paper—a fusion of ancient art and cutting-edge tech. This craft, both challenging and rewarding, remains a testament to human ingenuity. Through deliberate effort, anyone can unfold the secrets of the origami dragon. This comprehensive analysis positions origami dragon creation within broader cultural and technological landscapes, offering both novice and expert actionable insights. Data-driven comparisons and observed trends underscore SEO relevance while maintaining journalistic authority.

Questions & Answers About how to make an origami dragon

No	Question	Answer
1	What materials do I need to make an origami dragon?	To make an origami dragon, you need a square sheet of origami paper. It's best to use thin, durable paper that holds creases well. Additionally, having a bone folder or a similar tool can help make sharp folds.
2	Is there a beginner-friendly origami dragon tutorial?	Yes, there are beginner-friendly origami dragon tutorials available online. These usually involve simpler folds and fewer steps, making it easier for first-timers to create a basic dragon shape before moving on to more complex designs.
3	How can I make my origami dragon look more realistic?	To make your origami dragon look more realistic, use paper with a dragon-scale pattern or metallic colors. Also, pay attention to detailed folds such as shaping the wings, head, and tail carefully. You can add small cuts or use colored pencils to enhance details after folding.
4	What are common folding techniques used in making an origami dragon?	Common folding techniques for an origami dragon include valley folds, mountain folds, reverse folds, squash folds, and petal folds. Mastery of these basic folds is essential for constructing the complex shapes required for the dragon's features.
5	How long does it typically take to fold an origami dragon?	The time to fold an origami dragon varies based on complexity and skill level. A simple dragon might take 15-30 minutes, while more intricate designs can take an hour or more. Practice and patience will improve your speed over time.
6	Where can I find reliable origami dragon patterns and instructions?	Reliable origami dragon patterns and instructions can be found on origami websites like Origami Instructions, YouTube tutorial channels, and origami books by renowned authors such as Robert J. Lang and Michael G. LaFosse. Ensure to follow step-by-step guides for best results.

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