

## Bringing the Museum Home: Dazzling Dragons

**Dragons** have been an important part of Chinese culture for thousands of years. No one really knows when stories and legends about dragons started to become popular, but in most early stories they are described as long, scaly creatures with four legs. Dragons were said to look like **9** other creatures, all rolled into one;

The **horns** of a deer

The **paws** of a tiger

The **neck** of a snake

The **head** of a camel

The **claws** of an eagle

The **ears** of an ox

The **eyes** of a demon

The **scales** of a carp

The **belly** of a clam



A 5-clawed imperial dragon chasing the flaming pearl

Chinese dragons are said to be able to control the rain, wind and storms. In some legends, dragons are said to be able to disguise themselves as a silk worm, become a cloud and hide in water.

Dragons are also a symbol of power, strength, and good luck. Chinese Emperors often took the dragon to be their symbol and would have their palaces and clothes decorated with pictures of dragons. During the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BCE), a dragon with five claws on each foot dragon represented the Emperor, the four-clawed dragon represented nobles and important people at the Emperors court. A three-clawed dragon represented commoners.

**You can make a paper chain dragon. Here's how:**

1. Print the dragon's head and tail template or try drawing your own. Cut the head and tail out and decorate them any way you like. You could add horns, scales and more.
2. Now make the body by joining strips of paper together into a chain. Make the chain as long as you like!
3. Glue the head to one end of the chain, and the tail to the other.

