

Gardiner instructor Audrey Mah shows you how to recreate this beautiful 16th-century Ming box decorated with two dragons. Dragons, particularly five-clawed dragons like these, represented the emperor.



This particular box exemplifies the artistic and culture exchange that existed between eastern and western Asia as far back as the 8th century. White porcelain clay was discovered in China, while the recipe for cobalt blue was a long-held secret of the Ottoman Empire.

Follow these step-by-step instructions to make your own blue-and-white box at home...

Materials:

- Pencil
- Blue and white paint
- Paint tray
- Paint brush
- Water
- Small cardboard box

Instructions:

Use the white paint to cover the entire box.

Using the image you see on Gardiner’s blue-and-white box or another image of a dragon (remember that it should have 5 claws), sketch out your dragon on the white box using your pencil.



Add waves and clouds around the dragon. While the Chinese dragons didn’t have wings, they could still fly! In fact, the emperor was often associated with the gods—and a god-like dragon could fly through the air alongside the clouds.

On the sides of the box, draw a geometric pattern.



Start filling in your design with blue paint.

Paint the border of your box blue to help frame your design.



Paint the geometric designs on the sides of your box.



Take a photo of your work and share it using **#GardinerFromHome**.