

# What do I need?

Printed copy of page 3

Dark green card

Light green card

Paper plate

Scissors

Glue



## ginkgo olympic wreath

# What do I do?

Look at page 2 to find out about the ginkgo leaf and its symbolism for the Japanese city of Tokyo, where the 2020 Olympic Games were held.

To make the template for your wreath, cut a gap of 15cm in the rim of your paper plate, then cut away the inner circle so you are left with a u-shape.

Cut out the ginkgo leaf templates on page 3 and trace them onto your dark green card 10 to 15 times, then do the same with your light green card. Now cut the ginkgo leaf shapes from each piece of card and place them in two piles.

Starting from one end, begin to stick your ginkgo leaves onto your u-shaped plate with the leaf stalks facing downwards.

Mixing the two leaf shades together, layer your leaves on top of each other until all of the white of the plate is covered.

If you run out of leaves you can trace and cut more out. You can stick some leaves so that they are slightly hanging over the edge of the plate to make it look like a natural wreath.

Once you've covered your entire wreath in leaves, you can either display it on a wall or wear it on your head like the athletes would have done in the early Olympic Games!

# Ginkgo biloba

Commonly known as the maidenhair tree, *Ginkgo biloba* is native to China. Around 1,000 years ago it was introduced in Japan, where it now holds symbolic importance.

Faith groups in Japan, China and Korea see the ginkgo as a sacred tree, using it as a symbol of resilience, health and longevity. In some East Asian cultures, it also has associations with hope and fertility.

In Tokyo, the ginkgo has gained even more significance. Here, it is used as the symbol of the city (see image, middle, and middle right) because the metropolitan prefecture of Tokyo is similar in shape to that of a ginkgo leaf, as well as resembling the 'T' of Tokyo.

In 2021, Tokyo hosted the summer Olympic Games for the second time in history. *Ginkgo biloba* is an excellent symbol for the Tokyo games due to the plant's ability to endure in different environments. For example, Tokyo suffered a devastating earthquake in 1923 that destroyed many trees. Yet, many ginkgo trees survived the earthquake and stand tall, strong and healthy today. Olympic athletes share with the ginkgo the ability to endure, which you can see in their faculty for extreme athletic training and competing in different world climates.



Tokyo prefecture



Image by Behrouz Mehri | <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/01/14/tokyo-olympics-2020-japan-public-opinion/>

