

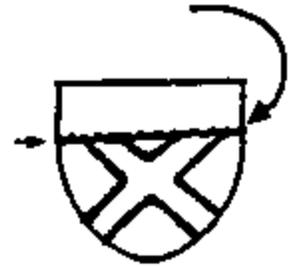
## Summary

### Of Heraldic Conventions and Drafting Style

The language of blazon does not specify some things that should be understood by the herald-painter. Some of these “unwritten laws” are written below. Many of the details of a charge are left to the imagination of the scribe or specific instructions from the armiger.

### The Field

- Treat the bottom edge of a chief as the top of the shield when emblazoning the body of the shield.
- Partition lines should be large enough to be distinguished from a distance.
- A line of partition faces the more “honorable” position: the chief portion of the field “owns” the partition (refer to “The Field” for more information).



### Placement of Charges

- A single charge is placed in the center of its area of the shield, large enough to fill it comfortably, covering about half of the total area allotted.
- If there is an ordinary dividing the field, two charges are placed one on either side: otherwise, their placement must be specified.
- Unless blazoned otherwise three charges are arranged two in chief, one in base. The one in base may be drawn somewhat larger. The recipient of the scroll may want all the charges to be the same size: ask that person if possible.
- Without an ordinary, six charges are arranged three, two, and one: otherwise, they are evenly distributed on either side of the ordinary.
- When there are several of the same charge, old carvings and manuscripts showed no two exactly alike. Renaissance and modern style has them close to identical.



### Orientation of Charges

- Charges on an ordinary (*usually*) follow the orientation of that ordinary. For example, a charge on a pale is vertical, while a charge on a bend is bendwise (315°).
- Charges oriented as if they were on an ordinary are termed “Ordinary-wise”. For example, a charge oriented vertically is “pale-wise”.

- Charges arranged on the shield in the place of an ordinary are in their normal aspect. Three trees in bend are each palewise, three dragons passant in bend are each fesswise.
- All charges face dexter, unless stated otherwise.
- Inanimate objects default to business end up. Exceptions are those that are generally used with the business end down: arrows, pheons, quills, spoons, Mjollnir hammers, anchors, plows, and so on.
- The default orientation for all geometric figures (mullet, lozenge, hexagon, and so on) is with a point to chief. The exception is charges based on rectangles.
- When two charges are in saltire, the first one mentioned is the one in bend, and then the other is the one in bend sinister.

### Drawing Style for Charges

- All charges are drawn in their most recognizable aspect, either front-on or in profile, almost never trian aspect or three-quarter view. Dice are among the few charges normally drawn in perspective.
- Objects that have medieval forms and modern forms should be represented in the medieval form (SCA ruling).
- In pre-Tudor heraldry, charges were generally shown flat, without shading or modeling. It is a good model for modern style, as well. As Balfour-Paul puts it, “All confusing shadows, all dim and doubtful lines should be rejected.”
- Charges have a distinctive silhouette. This means they are often highly stylized, and conventionalized in outline. Thus, a lion is large-maned and narrow-waisted, with paws spread to show the claws to best advantage.
- A tree or plant should display its characteristics in a conventional form. A few oak leaves and acorns drawn boldly within the outline of the tree is more clearly “oak” than a naturalistic tree.

### Coloring Charges

- One of the most common conventions is calling a roundel or goutte by a special name denoting its color. Table 1 lists these conventions.
- Minor details of animals and inanimate objects may be done in a more “lifelike” tincture. Details are more likely to be done in contrasting colors if the charges are few in number (generally three or less). The more charges, the less detail.
- In British heraldry, a lion (and by extension, any animal) is langued and armed gules, even when this violates the Rule of Tincture. If either the lion or the field is gules, he is armed and langued azure. In Continental

heraldry, tongue and claws are generally the same color as the beast.

- Details in charges may be delineated in a contrasting tincture. Commonly the contrasting tincture used is either black or the tincture of the field. Period arms rolls seem about evenly divided in style. Some scrolls show everything outlined in ink, others have only the underside of the charges inked, and still others use only the field color for delineation. This outlining should not be confused with **fimbriation**, which is a much wider line of contrasting tincture around the edge of a simple charge when otherwise that charge would violate the Rule of Tincture. Fimbriation is always mentioned in the blazon if it is to be done.

## Conventions for the Achievement

- Heraldic painters showed the shield helm and crest proportioned with the shield just over 2/5 of the total height. Proportions can also be done such that the bearer of the shield could reasonably wear the helm and crest depicted.
- When doing a scroll for a peerage or Royal peerage make every effort to consult with the recipient. There are many elements that may be used or left out, at the discretion of the recipient. For example, does the person want supporters or not? Do they want a helm, and if they do, what kind? The achievements associated with particular ranks are outlined elsewhere in this manual, but they are an upper limit. The recipient may choose to leave some out. Please ask.



## The Shield

- Use a heater shaped shield for most SCA achievements. The exact proportions can be varied to best display the arms. In the SCA, women have the *option* of using a lozenge shaped shield, but this is not required and mediievally they were not restricted to such. St. John Hope notes that “the form of a shield is in itself entirely arbitrary and void of meaning.”
- Franklyn advises against displaying the shield *couche*, that is, tilted to dexter, when the arms have any ordinary in them. This style distorts the design: a pale looks like a fess, a cross looks like a saltire, and so on. Arms in the British style tend to have ordinaries, and are normally shown straight up and down. Continental style tends not to use ordinaries and arms are often shown *couche* without bad effect.



## Crowns and Coronets

- The crown should rest firmly on the shield, not float above it.
- A crown alone was generally drawn in period as if it were as wide as the shield. A crown sized in proportion to the shield would be about a third of its width.
- A crown on a lozenge may be large, and balanced on the top of the lozenge, or smaller and rest around the top.

- A crown of four points has only three showing.
- A classic ducal coronet is chased as jeweled (that is, raised metal work in the shape of jewels), but not colored as if it were jeweled. It also does not imply ducal rank in mundane achievements, as it does in the SCA. SCA ducal coronets tend to look like the coronets people actually wear, and thus are not chased as jeweled.
- Crowns can be done in a flat style, which does not show the back of the crown, or a rounded style, which has pieces of the back part showing through. Flat style often shows the bottom of the crown curved up.
- Some people prefer that their own coronets be used.

### Helm and Mantling

- Keep the size of the helm reasonable with respect to that of the shield. Look at actual shields and helms for reasonable proportions. Artistic style in period ranged from tiny to reasonable to enormous helms.



- A pot helm or quest helm was used on period achievements, current mundane practice is to use an armet or bascinet. Most SCA people wanting helms used on their scrolls prefer either their own helms or an idealized version of their helms. Ask.

- Drawn the mantling in a style in keeping with the rest of the scroll.

- Mantling should enhance the visibility of the shield, not obscure it. A good rule of thumb is to twist the mantling so that dark mantling is against light edges of the shield, and light mantling is against dark edges of the shield.



- When drawing mantling, keep the proportions of metal (lining) and color (outer surfaces) approximately equal.

- Mantling goes over the top of the helm: it does not hang from the torse.

- Mantling is used on scrolls for Grants, Peerages and Royal Peerages only.

- Renaissance (and later) convention is that the torse is six twists of cloth alternately metal and color. The first twist on the dexter side is metal. Anciently it varied from four to as many as eleven twists.

- The torse is generally the same tinctures as the mantling. However, if the arms have a strong secondary color and metal, they could be used for the torse colors.

- The torse holds the mantling on, or hides the joining of the crest to the helm. Thus, it should show a gentle curve, not a rigid bar. This is more of a mundane herald painter problem than an SCA one.
- If the coronet is being drawn on a helm leave off the torse.

### Crests and Supporters



- Animal crests face the same direction the person in the helm is facing. Move the helm to best display the crest.

- Supporters should have something solid and appropriate to stand upon. For example, the sea is appropriate for a dolphin, but not for a lion: a strip of twisted paper or a banner edge is not solid enough for either.



- Human supporters generally face the spectator, beasts are generally upright and respectant.
- Supporters should be vigorous and forcibly occupy the space allotted, actively upholding the shield with their limbs, not leaning or sprawling.
- Supporters should not dwarf the shield, but should be large enough to see each other across the top without standing on tip-toe.