

## In the beginning

Way back then, on the day I was born, when I was a just a tiny baby, long before I can even remember, 10 years ago to be precise, I went on a long journey. The kind of journey all babies go on the day that they are born – the journey from heaven to earth.



On that fateful day, just like any other day in heaven, all the newborn babies were being allocated new homes. The polar bear cubs were labelled 'North Pole', the tiger cubs 'Indian forest', the baby camels 'The Desert', the baby elephants 'The African Plains' and so on. All the baby animals were being sent to their rightful homes and it was up to the storks to deliver them there. Storks are large, white birds with strong wings and big beaks so they are perfectly suited to carrying baby bundles of joy all over the world.

### Well, usually...

Anyway, as the story goes, my stork was a no brainer. Man, that guy couldn't see much further than beyond his beak. If they had invented glasses for short-sighted birds, this guy shoulda been first in line.

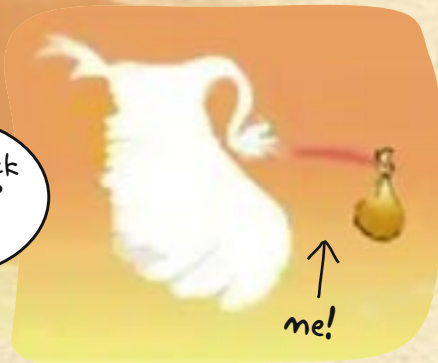
There I was – the cutest little furry ball of black and white fluff, tiny ears, black shiny nose, and brown eyes – man, I was cute! "So, who's this little guy?" said the stork. "Coochy coochy coo!" Naturally, I cooed back. "Coochy, coochy, tickle, tickle!" said the stork, rubbing my furry tummy with his beak. Naturally, I squirmed and giggled

Well, what's a guy to do, huh?

Suddenly the stork whisked me up, wrapped me in a soft, white blanket and whoosh, we were off!



Did he check my label?  
Nope.



Next thing, we're on the terraced hills in China and my wise old master Panda is being presented with his bundle of joy. "There you go, old man," says the stork, "your new baby panda!" before taking to the skies once more.

Panda opened the bundle and, to his surprise, discovered that the little ball of black and white fur inside was no panda, but was, in fact, me – a skunk! Panda read the label around my neck. Beautiful gold letters spelled out 'North American plains'. Scratching his head with his paw, Panda wondered, "Why has heaven sent this young cub here, far away from his rightful home?"

Wrapping up the bundle, he carefully carried me home to his Tree. "It is not up to us to question the laws of heaven. When the sun climbs in the sky and the morning mist rises, we will see clearly."

Panda says everything in the universe happens for a reason and I was a strange but wonderful gift from heaven.

## The stink

Our young friend Skunk has a unique animal defence mechanism. When he is suddenly surprised, Skunk automatically 'pops' and sprays a noxious liquid that smells so powerful, the birds fall from the trees, the wings on the butterflies curl up and the squirrels run and hide. If a skunk sprays in your face, your mouth would go numb and you'd be temporarily blind!

Skunk finds this difficult to control because it's natural for a skunk to make a stink. He is hugely embarrassed by the fact that he has yet to master his strange talent.

If you want to know what Skunk's stink is like, it smells like rotten eggs – only a billion times worse!



# What is Kung Fu?



What is Kung Fu? Yup,  
I asked the same question myself!

Kung Fu is a very ancient form of martial arts.

The origins of Kung Fu (also sometimes written as Gung Fu) are hidden behind many myths of outrageous deeds, heroic tales and folklore. Its beginnings can be traced back more than three thousand years in China, when martial arts were used as a fighting defence. Over the years, different styles of Kung Fu fighting have been developed.

The Chinese words 'Kung Fu' literally mean 'skill developed through much time and effort'. So, someone who has devoted many years to learning and practising any skill can be said to be practising 'Kung Fu'.

The proper term for martial art in Chinese is 'Wu Shu' (fighting art), but in most of the world today, 'Kung Fu' is used to describe all kinds of Chinese martial arts or exercises.

Kung Fu uses four fighting ranges – kicking, punching, trapping and grappling. It also uses 'open' and 'closed' hand techniques such as claws and rips and punches. Fighting involves kicks, strikes, throws, body turns, dodges, holds, crouches and starts, leaps and falls, handsprings and somersaults. These moves take years and years of practice and, boy, have you gotta be fit! Punches, elbows and knees are delivered with an explosive power Panda calls 'ging', which is a result of using the proper breathing and precise body moves.

HEEE YA!

# The horse riding stance

The horse riding stance is so called because it looks as if you're riding a horse when you're doing it. It teaches patience and stamina and develops strong legs which are essential for Kung Fu.

1

Face forward, keeping your back straight and head up. Point your feet straight ahead. Spread your feet in a straight line, about two shoulder widths apart.



2

Gripping the floor with your toes, bend your knees forward over your ankles, keeping your back straight.



3

Bend your elbows, keeping your arms at your sides. Make your hands into upturned fists. Breathe deeply.



Panda say  
don't run  
before walk!

# Kung Fu Styles



Skunk has many Kung Fu styles to learn and many animal friends (and enemies) to learn them from...



Uses big feet to thumping effect, impressive fighter



Silent but deadly, the Kung Fu master has effortless style



Quick and nimble, impressive high kicks and acrobatics



Likes jumping into battle, any time, anywhere...



Graceful moves, very effective and almost unstoppable!



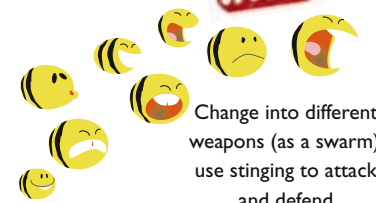
Small but effective, has a wide range of useful hand techniques



Quick and agile, with a sharp edge; excellent defence and diversion strategies



Slow, purposeful Tai Chi style



Change into different weapons (as a swarm), use stinging to attack and defend



Basic Kung Fu moves, but specialise in spying and kidnapping



Big and strong, Tiger is all about attack! If he had the nerve...

## Who is ZEN?

Panda often speaks about Zen. I thought at first that he was a friend of the animals, a mentor, a wise one. Perhaps another Kung Fu master?



Then I realised that Zen isn't a person, it's a state of mind... But Zen can be confusing because it has different meanings. Basically, the word 'Zen' means meditation – closing your eyes to focus on your thoughts.

Sometimes it may refer to a glimpse of cosmic reality. Or even to an experience that is beyond reality itself (this is called 'transcendental'). Often Zen is used to refer to Zen Buddhism which involves living according to certain beliefs.

### What is Zen for?

Practising Zen enables us to attain better results in whatever we do because Zen training improves our mind.

Zen also leads us to spiritual enlightenment, a higher level of awareness, a oneness with the Universe...

### How do I practise Zen?

Add a touch of Zen to your life by being fully aware of whatever you are doing at all times. So, when you are reading a book, be aware that you are reading a book, taking in the full meaning of the words.

If you want to be really serious at Zen, you could meditate every day. Not so much fun this approach.

### What's Zen got to do with Kung Fu?

Every Kung Fu movement involves energy control and mental awareness. It is the mental focus and spiritual enlightenment of Zen that enables Kung Fu masters to develop abilities which other martial artists only dream of.

## The art of Kung Fu

### CHAPTER 2

# Kung Fu Master: Lesson 1



Wise man never approach a bull from front, a horse from rear or a fool from any direction!



Skunk & fu!

# Yin & Yang

Listen well, my young friend. Our first lesson is about two forces that work as one.

Huh?

**Panda:**  
All Kung Fu fighting movements and techniques follow the universal idea of yin and yang.

**Skunk:**  
Who?

**Panda:**  
Yin and Yang are two opposite but complementary forces found in all things in the universe.

Yin is sad, the darker element, is passive, dark, feminine and corresponds to the night.

Yin is symbolized by water.

**Skunk:**  
Got it! Dark, water, feminine, er...?

**Panda:**  
Yang is happy, the brighter element, is active, light, masculine and corresponds to the day. Yang is symbolized by fire.

**Skunk:**  
Fire, yeah! hey doesn't water put out fire?

**Panda:**  
Yes, Skunk, you are right. But these two forces are in perfect balance.

Now, study the symbol that represents yin and yang. This is called the Taijitu. The black area represents yin and the white area represents yang. There is a flowing boundary between the two and each contains a seed of the other; its opposite force, represented by the dots...

**Skunk:**  
Seeds, opposites...gotcha! Huh?  
So why are opposites so important?

**Panda:**  
Because... All Kung Fu fighting movements and techniques follow the universal idea of yin and yang.

Great!  
Now can we learn some cool fighting moves?  
Can we, huh?

All in good time, young Skunk.

Observe...

Both soft, subtle yin-like force and hard, explosive yang-like force is used at all times, both in defending and attacking – just like the yin-yang symbol itself.

A Kung Fu master moves from soft to hard techniques, and hard to soft, never stopping the flow of energy. The aim is to use the opponent's force, redirect it and turn it against himself.



## Opposites Attract

Now, young student, study the yin-yang symbol carefully. Notice the exact position of the dots and the black and the white areas inside the circle. Which of these is a mirror image of the yin-yang symbol?



## CHAPTER 3


## FOX



Skunk & fu!

## Train your brain

Hey, listen up, my warrior friends. Old man Panda tells us time and time again:



The Kung Fu master must first open the door and enter Zen.

What he means is, for all you beginners out there... Kung Fu isn't just about learning the skills, it's also about getting into the right frame of mind.

So, if you wanna do some kickass moves, you gotta train your brain. Got it?

All warriors have excellent observation skills and need to memorise what they see. Test your memory – study the Great Wall of China passages and memorise as many of the important facts as you can. Now turn the book upside down to take the Train Your Brain test..

The Great Wall of China was built over 2,000 years ago by Qin Shi Huangdi, the first emperor of China. It was built during the Qin (Ch'in) Dynasty (221 B.C - 206 B.C.).

After uniting China from seven warring States, the emperor joined up and extended four old fortification walls along the north of China that were built about 700 B.C.

The Great Wall is one of the largest building construction projects ever completed. It is made of masonry, rocks and packed earth. It is 4.5 - 9 metres thick and up to 7.5 metres high.

During the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), the Great Wall was extended to 6,400 km (4,000 miles) and watch towers and cannons were added.

Armies were stationed along the wall as a first line of defence against the invading Hsiung Nu tribes north of China (the Huns). Signal fires from the Wall provided early warning of an attack.

The Great Wall can be seen from space.

Whooa you're kidding!

## Take the Test:

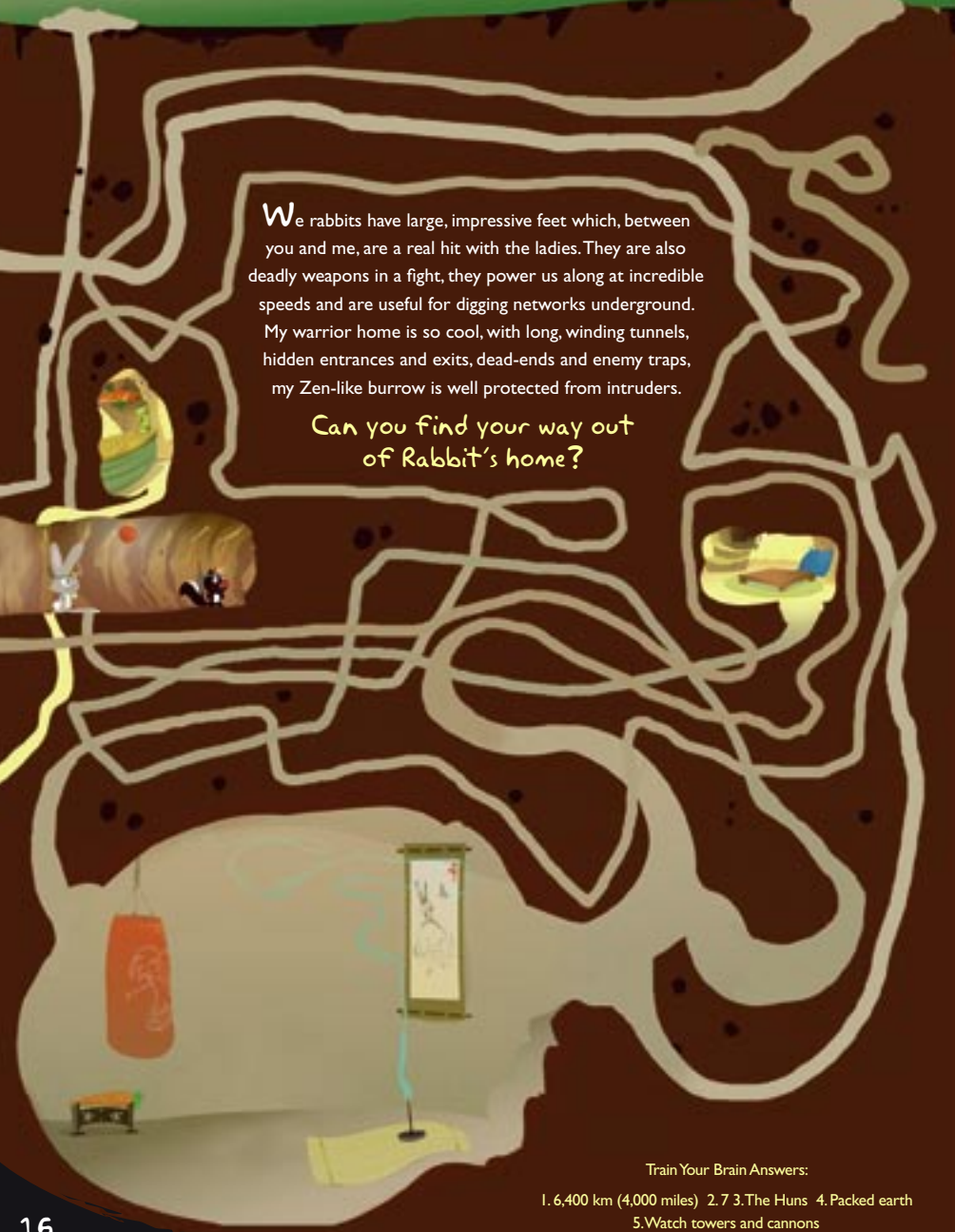
1. How long is the Great Wall?
2. China was united by the first emperor of China from how many warring states?
3. What were the invading Hsiung Nu tribes also known as?
4. The wall is made of masonry, rock and what else?
5. During the Ming Dynasty, the wall was extended but what was added?

Find your way out!



We rabbits have large, impressive feet which, between you and me, are a real hit with the ladies. They are also deadly weapons in a fight, they power us along at incredible speeds and are useful for digging networks underground. My warrior home is so cool, with long, winding tunnels, hidden entrances and exits, dead-ends and enemy traps, my Zen-like burrow is well protected from intruders.

Can you find your way out of Rabbit's home?



Train Your Brain Answers:

1. 6,400 km (4,000 miles)
2. 7.3 The Huns
3. Packed earth
4. Watch towers and cannons
5. Watch towers and cannons

## CHAPTER 4

# OX & BIRD



Skunk & fu!



## The art of doing nothing

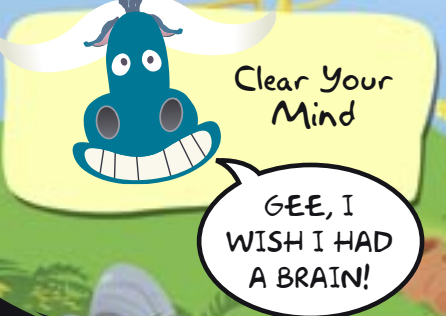
Well, hello there!  
My name is Bird, it's a pleasure to meet you. May I introduce my dear friend, Ox. Say hello, Ox!

Howdy!

Now, some think we have perfected the art of doing nothing. But we like to think that we have achieved Zen-like enlightenment by enjoying the simple pleasures in life.

Yeah, right!

I'll just stay out of this one!

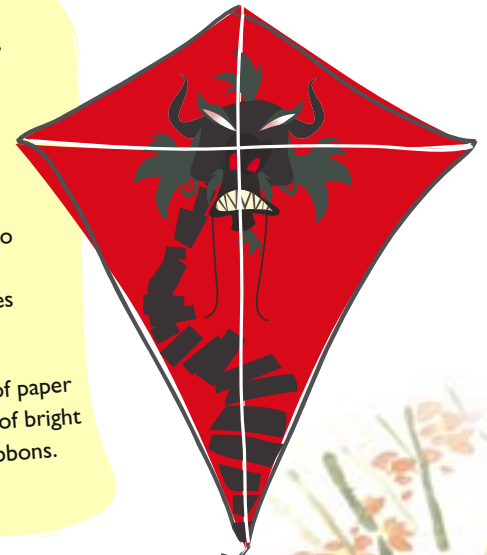


## U KAN DU: How to make a kite

**Kites** are brilliant flying machines that were invented more than two thousand years ago in China. The earliest kites were made of wood and they were used by soldiers in battle. Some kites were powerful enough to carry men up in the air to watch enemy movements but they were mostly used to carry messages

### Cool!

Nowadays, kites are usually made of paper or fabric. They are painted all sort of bright colours and are decorated with ribbons. A kite is made of these parts:



### The spine:

The vertical stick at the centre of the kite.

### The spar:

The support stick(s) placed crossways or at a slant over the spine. Sometimes they are curved or bowed.

### The frame:

The joined spine and spars, usually with a string connecting their ends. The frame forms the shape of the kite.

### The cover:

The paper, plastic, or fabric, that covers the frame to make the kite.

### The bridle:

One or more strings attached to the spine or spars, which help control the kite in the air.

### The flying line:

The string running from the kite's bridle.

### The tail:

A long strip of paper or ribbon that helps to balance the kite in flight. Not all kites have tails.

### The reel:

The object you use to wind your flying line around, to keep it from getting tangled up.



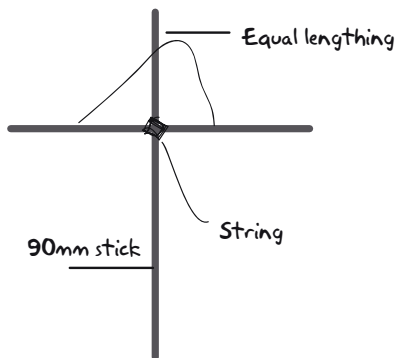
Have you ever wanted to build a kite?

## You will need:

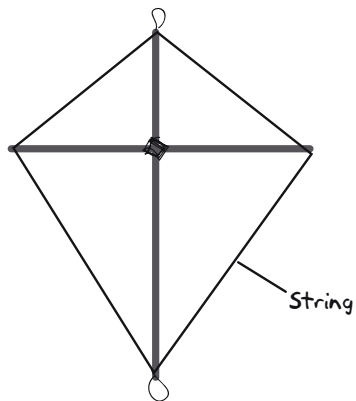
- thick string or garden twine
- scotch tape or glue
- 1 sheet of strong paper (102cm x 102cm) for the sail
- 2 strong, straight wooden sticks, made of bamboo or wooden dowelling, measuring 90cm and 102cm
- markers, paint or crayons to decorate your kite
- scissors
- ribbons for the tail (optional)

This is so easy I can make it myself!

1. Make a cross with the two sticks, with the shorter stick placed horizontally across the longer stick. Make sure that both sides of the cross-piece are equal in width.



2. Using the string, tie the two sticks together. Make sure that they are at right angles to each other. Use a dab of glue where the two sticks meet to make the joint more secure.



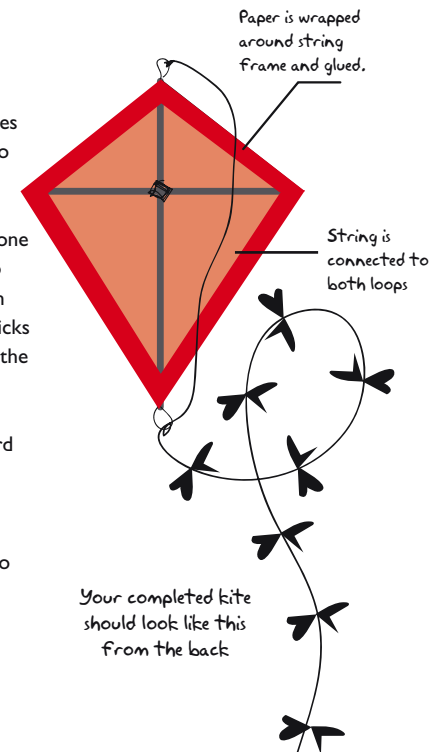
3. Carefully cut a notch at each end of both sticks. Make it deep enough for the type of string you are using to fit in to.
4. Cut a piece of string long enough to stretch all around the kite frame. Make a loop at one end of the string and fasten it around the top notch by wrapping the string around the stick. Stretch the string down the length of the cross-piece, and make another loop at the bottom. Fasten the loop to the bottom by wrapping the string around the notch at the bottom of the stick.
5. Stretch the string around the frame through the notches at ends of the cross-piece. Finish by wrapping the string a few times around the top of the stick and cutting off what you don't need. The string frame must be tied tight, but not so tight as to bend the sticks.

7. Lay the paper for the sail flat and place the stick frame face down on top. Cut around the frame, leaving about 2-3cm for a margin. Fold these edges over the string frame and tape or glue it down so that the paper is tight.

8. Cut a piece of string about 122 cm long and tie one end to the loop at the other end of the string to the loop at the bottom. Tie another small loop in the string just above the point where the two sticks cross. This is the kite's bridle. Attach the rest of the string, the flying line, to the loop in the bridle.

9. Wrap the flying line around a piece of strong card or plastic to keep it from getting tangled.

10. Make a tail by tying a small ribbon roughly every 10cm along the length of string. Attach the tail to the loop at the bottom of the kite.



Now you can decorate your kite! Hey, why not paint dragon's ugly mush, that big long tail is perfect. But I'm much better looking right?



## The art of flying a kite

The safest places to fly a kite are in the park, on the beach or any other wide, open spaces. Be careful not to fly near any trees or overhead power lines and avoid roads, railway lines, airports or cliffs!

### How to Fly a Kite

1. Hold the kite in both hands and throw it gently into the wind until the wind catches it. This works well when the wind is quite strong.
2. If this doesn't work, let out a small length of kite string and, holding the string in your hand, run with the kite behind you until the wind lifts it.
3. Once the kite is in the air, gradually let out the string – the kite should fly higher and higher!
4. Keep an eye on your kite, as it may come crashing down because of sudden changes in wind. If it dips suddenly, run with it or pull in the string slightly to give it more lift.
5. To bring the kite down, slowly wind in the kite string.
6. Reach out and grab the kite before it hits the ground to avoid damaging it.

When flying your kite, remember:

Strong winds break kites  
Be considerate of others,  
don't go alone, Trees are  
the kite's enemy

Bring a pair of sunglasses – even on a cloudy day, it's tough squinting into the sky to see your kite flying high!



## CHAPTER 5

# DRAGON



SkunkFu!