



2026 Classes

We are excited about the 2025 conference! The Curriculum Committee has the teacher list and their offered classes set. They include first time Ft. Worden teachers, many favorite instructors, plus our locals and our "long distance" locals, all coming together to offer you several centuries of combined kite building experience! We are offering classes for beginning kite builders as well as those with experience. We have classes from 1/2 to 2(!) days and will offer kites you sew and kites you don't, large kites and small kites.

Our teachers and their projects are varied and exciting. It could be a difficult decision when picking your classes! It would be great to have you with us for classes, camaraderie, and the raffle.

Updated 10/18/25

Briefcase Buka Fighting Kite (1,2)

Ken Conrad

Seattle, Washington

Ken will join us to present his Briefcase Buka Fighter kite. This 15"x10.5" polyester and carbon kite is assembled with a heat-bonded adhesive not degraded by dust, sand or time. Ken will custom print sails from the students' own digital files, and will include a digitally controlled fusing iron.

4 Hour

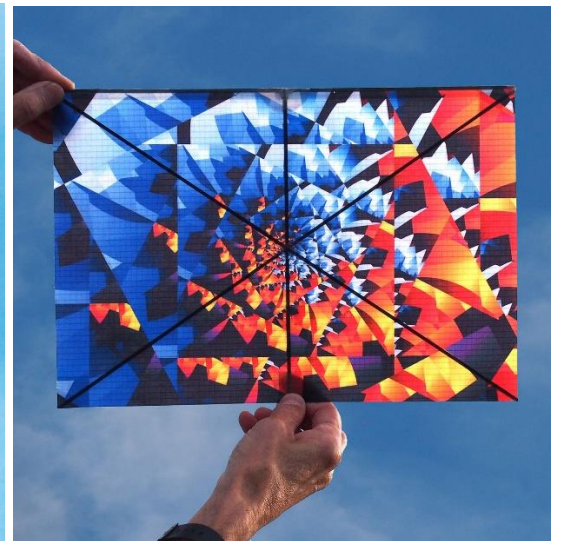
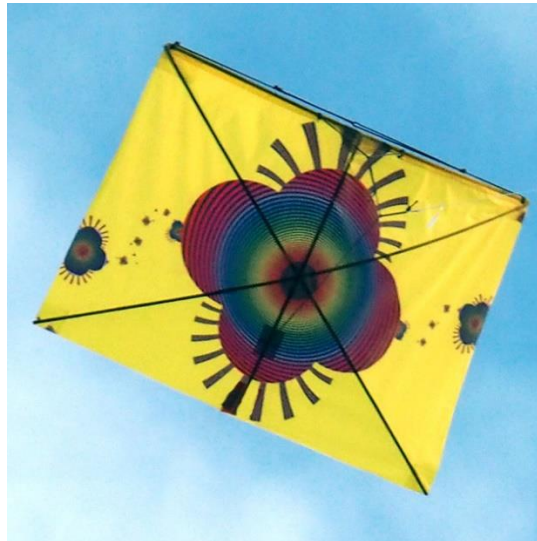
Level: All

Class Size: 20

Fee: \$40

Bring: Digitally controlled fusing iron (supplied).

Note: Extra pre-ordered kits will be available for purchase.



Philform 4-cell Soft Kite (3)

Bary Crites

Olympia, Washington

Bary returns to present his small Flowform kite. This 15 sq ft 4-cell soft kite, based on a Phil Scarfe design and modified by Bary, is a good flying kite with a 53' tapered tube tail. The class will feature tips to "take the scary out of soft kites".

8 Hour

Level: Beginner+

Class Size: 10

Fee: \$75

Bring: Sewing machine and notions, straightedge.

Note: Extra kits may be available for purchase.



Ladybug Ground Display (4)

Glenda Davenport

Gig Harbor, Washington

Glenda will teach her wonderful Ladybug ground display. Learn to create it from the inside, then turn it right-side out.

Recognizable by all, they create an eye-catching display on any beach or field.

8 Hour

Level: All

Class Size: 15

Fee: \$30

Bring: Sewing machine and notions, scissors, fabric pencil, fabric clips.

Note: Extra kits will be available for purchase.



Shield Kite (5)

Sam King

Anacortes, Washington

Sam is taking time from building kites to present his Shield kite. A stable flier, this 4' Shield provides a nice platform for a wide range of graphics, yet breaks down well for easy travel. In class you'll have a choice of two shapes and three layouts, or use the provided options and dimensions to design your own sail in advance.

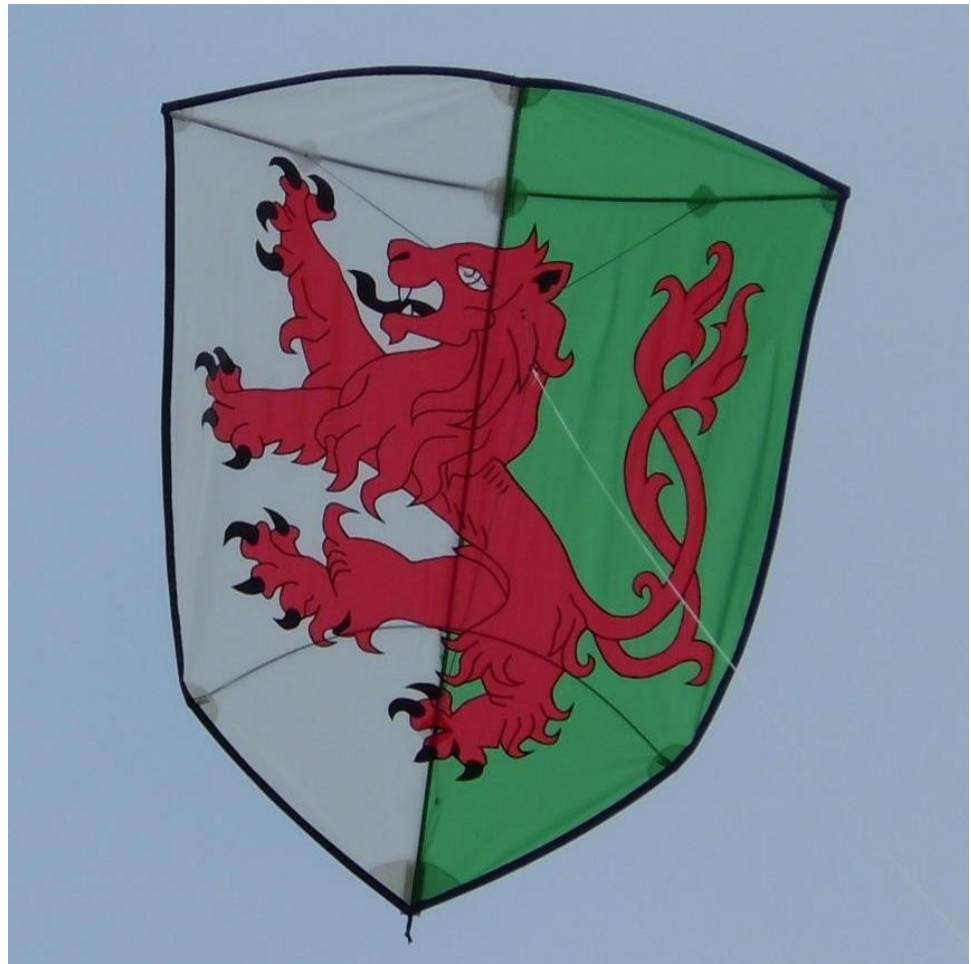
8 Hour

Level: All

Class Size: 12

Fee: \$65

Bring: Sewing machine and notions.



Bamboo Splitting (6)

Dan Kurahashi

Burnaby, BC, Canada

Dan is returning to teach a traditional method of splitting and bending bamboo. The resulting bamboo, some as fine as 1/32" (.7mm), can be used in making miniature kites. This or one of Dan's past splitting classes is a prerequisite for his following Miniature Cody class.

4 Hour

Level: All

Class Size: 25

Fee: \$5-\$10

Bring: Thick blade knife and rubber hammer if available.



Miniature Cody Kites

Dan Kurahashi (7)

Burnaby, BC, Canada

Dan will continue his morning bamboo splitting session with the creation of two Miniature Cody kites. Both are 25mm cells; one pre-cut white sail and one a printed pattern to be cut out. Dan's morning or past splitting class is a prerequisite for this session.

4 Hour

Level: All*

*Pre-requisite: Dan's Bamboo Splitting class (#6) or one of his previous bamboo classes

Class Size: 20

Fee: \$20

Bring: Bamboo knife, Olfa knife, cutting mat, tweezer, white glue, toothpick, caliper, fine scale... a complete list will be provided.



Heat Sealed Cody Kite

Dan Kurahashi (8)

Burnaby, BC, Canada

In this class Dan will teach a heat sealing process for kitemaking, creating a 14" Cody kite with a white plastic sail. Heat sealing is a permanent method of joining plastic panels that will withstand time and beach wind flying.

4 Hour

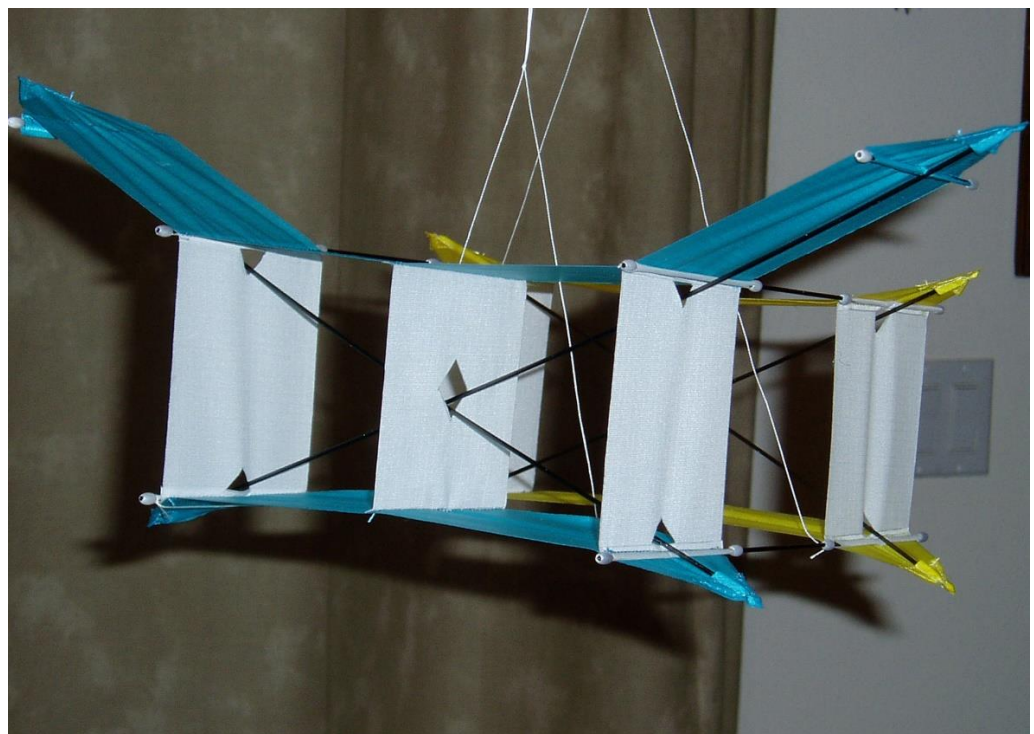
Level: All

Class Size: 15

Fee: \$50

Bring: Heat seal machine if available or adjustable soldering iron/stand, file, fine sand paper, wax paper, old newspaper, metal straight edge, scissors, Olfa knife

Note: Extra kits will be available for purchase.



Fractured Wedge Mandala Kite

(9)

Ron Ortega

Vancouver, Washington

Ron will teach the design and construction of a round, flat Mandala kite with long tails. Learn an easy way to design a multi-sided circular kaleidoscope motif without computers, along with quilting tips on odd-shape alignment.

16 Hour

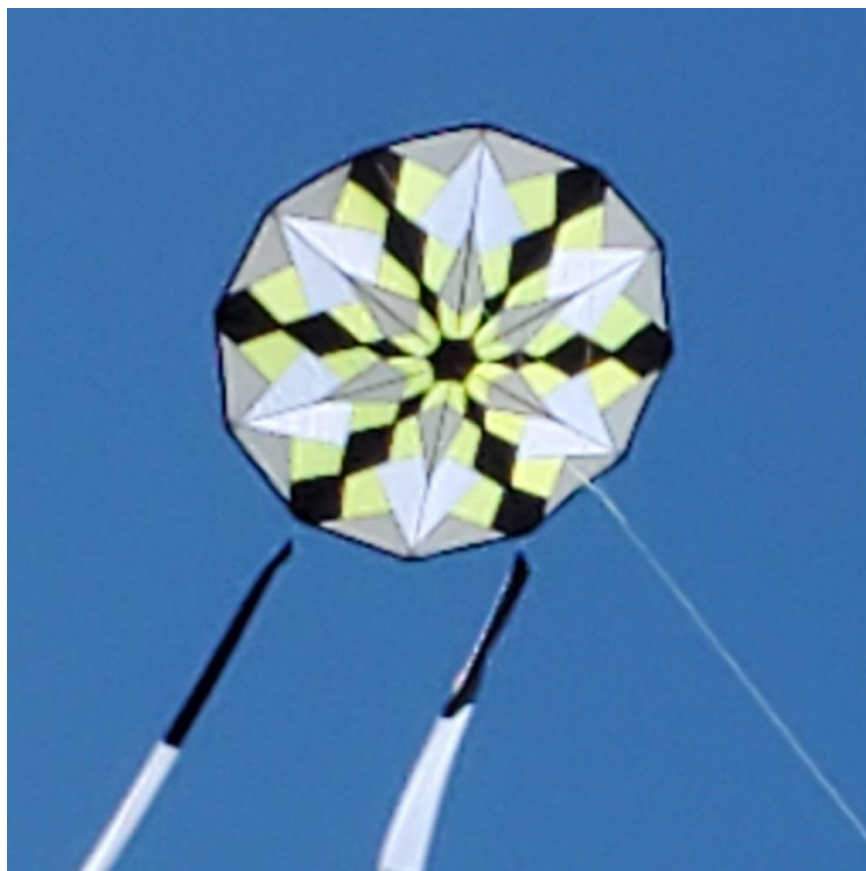
Level: Int

Class Size: 15

Fee: \$95

Bring: Sewing machine and notions, roller cutter or knife, straight edges, large cutting mat, color-coordinated Sharpies, markers or colored pencils.

Note: Extra kits will be available for purchase.



Beginning Kitemaking

Gerry Pennell

(10)

Olympia, WA

Another of our long time teachers (+25 times!) is Gerry, who will be teaching her always popular intro to kitemaking. Learn the basics of sewing kite material and hear invaluable tips and tricks, plus make a wonderful pocket sled kite or a classic windsock.

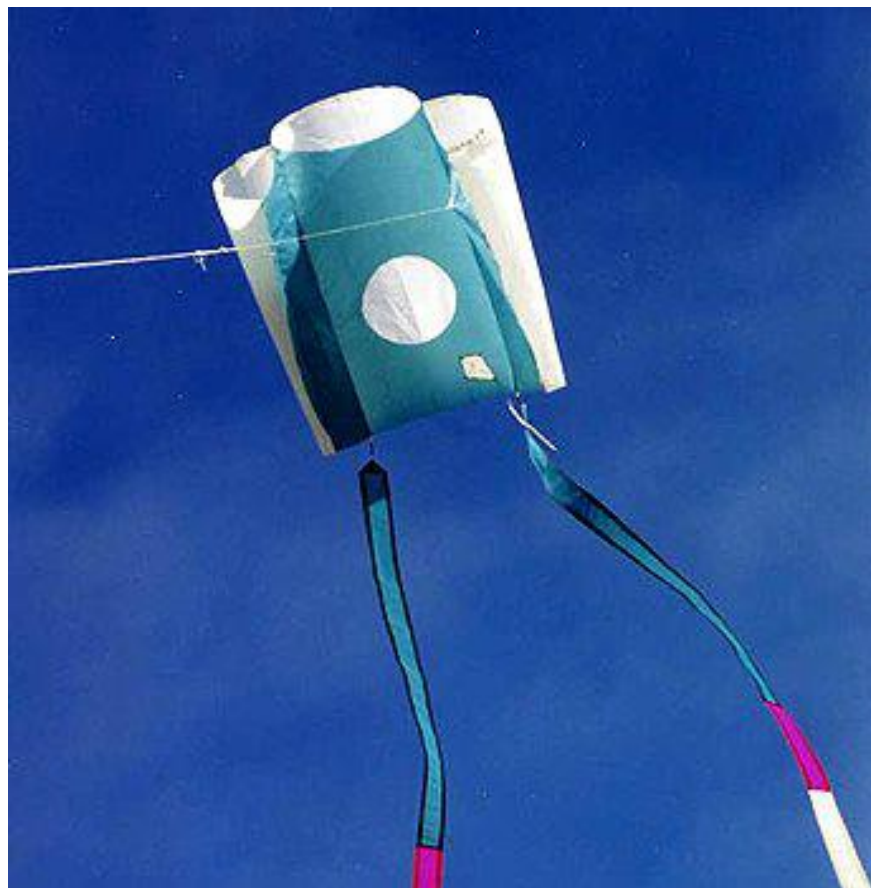
4 Hour

Level: Beginning

Class Size: 10

Fee: Windsock \$15; Kite \$20

Bring: Sewing machine and notions, pencil, ruler.



One-of-a-kind Tower Kite (11)

Suzanne Sadow

Seattle, Washington

Suzanne will inspire students to conceive and create surface designs for the 5-sided Tower kite. This 40"x30" Tyvek and fiberglass kite is the perfect platform on which to then draw, paint, or color your design, and is a steadfast flyer in a variety of winds.

8 Hour

Level: All

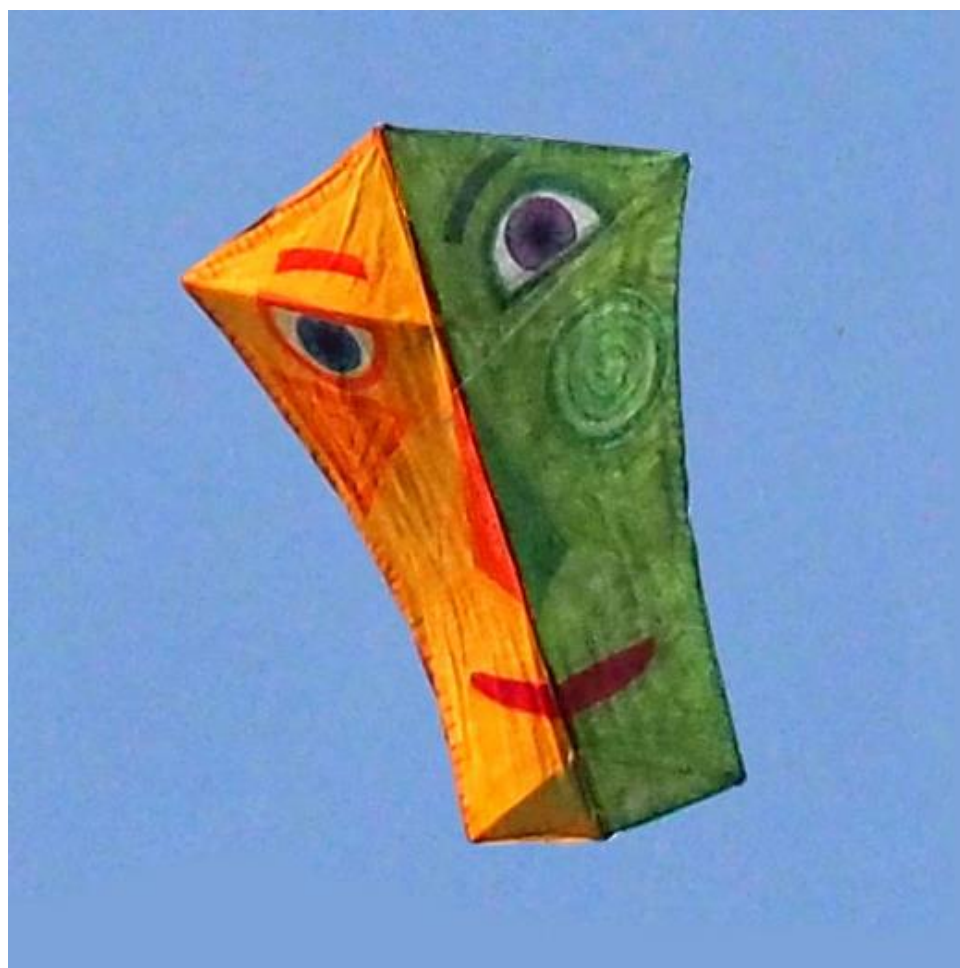
Class Size: 20

Fee: \$20

Bring: Everything is supplied.

Optional: personal colors and/or painting tools.

Note: Extra kits will be available for purchase.



Small Whoosh Quadline Kite (12)

Nigel Spaxman

Richmond, BC, CA

Nigel will present his unique Whoosh quadline kite. This 60" carbon-framed quad is great for stacking but also fun on its own! The smaller sail area has less pull for easier stacking and flies in winds similar to a mid-vent. Of course, it makes a whooshing sound while flying!

Note: For those who might like to make more than one, two or maybe three on Saturday, Nigel will continue with an optional class on Sunday morning.

8 Hour + 4 Hour Optional

Level: Intermediate

Class Size: 12

Fee: \$45 per kite

Bring: Sewing machine and notions

Note: Extra kits may be available for purchase.



Kite Line Marker Flags

Bob Wendt (13,14)

Puyallup, Washington

Bob will be joining us to present an attractive and very colorful 10 ft string of small flags that, when attached to your flying line, mark your anchor point and help prevent people and vehicles from running into your line.

4 Hour

Level: All

Class Size: 12

Fee: \$15

Bring: Sewing machine and standard supplies.

Note: Extra kits will be available for purchase.



Trash Bag Glider Kite

Donna Wendt (15)

Puyallup, Washington

Donna will present the construction of and flying techniques for a Trash Bag Delta kite. An indoor or very low wind kite, this delta is a popular beginner glider and the construction will leave plenty of time for practice flying.

4 Hour

Level: All

Class Size: 12

Fee: \$5

Bring: Optional: special color markers, sparkles, etc.



Kitemakers Roundtable
Rob Pratt (16)

Lacey, Washington

Attendees will have the opportunity ask and find answers to vexing questions, trade techniques with other kite makers, and explore mysteries of the universe (are you paying attention?).

4 Hour

Level: All

Class Size: unlimited

Fee: \$0

Bring: Questions or comments about tools, and other comments, suggestions or techniques to share.





A few important notes:



Look at the photographs of the projects and updates on the web at www.kitemakers.org. Photographs in the document above are not to scale relative to each other.

We want everyone to have a great experience. If you have questions about your ability to handle a class, please read our skill level ratings on the Skill Level Information Sheet.

Once you secure a place on a class list, you've committed to taking that class. In fairness to the instructor, it is expected that you will reimburse him or her for materials purchased and prepared for you, even if you don't participate in the class.

Class materials fees may be paid with cash (exact amount appreciated) directly to the instructors. **Please, no checks.**

Are you wondering what "sewing machine and supplies" refers to? Here is some help...

"Sewing machine" means a working, well-tuned sewing machine complete with foot control, power cord, needles and bobbins and bobbin case. It is, of course, best to be familiar with your machine. If not, try Gerry's class on Friday to help solve that dilemma. Before her class, please know how to wind a bobbin and thread your machine. Whether you sign up for Gerry's class or not, tuck your instruction book in with the machine. Don't leave home without it is always a good rule!

"Supplies" refers to the sewing related supplies we normally use at home when making a kite. Sewing your kite skin? Then these supplies can include extra machine needles, extra bobbins, a seam ripper, Scotch tape, double sided tape, seam ripper, needle threader, seam gauge, scissors for trimming threads, scissors for appliqué, beeswax, assorted colors of good thread plus black & white, etc. When you are done sewing, you may be happy to have brought a straight edge, cutting tools for fabric and rods and appropriate cutting surfaces, hot knife or hot pen, Super Glue and accelerant. **Nearly every teacher has suggested we ask their students to bring high quality thread and a freestanding light.** A pencil and notebook plus a camera are always good to have with you, too. So are an extension cord & multiple outlet strip. Does the description indicate a possibility of making copies of the instructor's templates? If so, bring a roll of wide paper to trace those templates. It is a wonderful opportunity to build another kite at home and not have to draft your own pattern. Is this the whole list; is this everything? NO! Do you have to bring absolutely everything listed here? NO! Bring what you use at home, what you think you may use, maybe even what you think you should leave at home.

A special note for those participants who need to fly into Seattle... We know it is hard to bring all your supplies plus a sewing machine. Think about packing your supplies and *borrowing* a machine for the weekend. Many participants have spare machines. Ask us for help if this is the only reason you are not attending! Or come try us out and take the non-sewing classes we offer.

Skill Level Information

Fort Worden Kitemakers Conference

Using and Understanding our Class Skill Levels

The classes offered at Fort Worden fall into the following three skill level categories: Beginner, Intermediate, and Experienced. There is considerable overlap among all these categories. There is no clear line or simple test that can be used to determine your kitemaking experience level. Even if a class is shown as a “no-sew” class, don’t assume it is a simple beginner kite. Some are and some aren’t. If you have questions about whether or not you should take a particular class, please email the teacher and discuss it or send your question to the [conference registrar](#) and your question will be passed along to the teacher. The teacher who designed the class will know what skills are needed. Above all, be honest with yourself. We wouldn’t want you to go home disappointed, with a project you haven’t finished—and possibly won’t ever finish.

These classifications are for your benefit. To make the best use of them, think of them this way:

Beginner:

I am a beginner if I have never made a cloth kite before. I may have never used a sewing machine either—or at least not enough to be comfortable with it. The first thing I should sign up for is Gerry Pennell’s beginning sewing class. This will give me a big boost on the way to being an accomplished kite sewer. I should look through the list of classes offered for beginners—there will be plenty to choose from. Since Gerry’s class is normally held on Friday morning, I may be ready to take something a bit more advanced the next day or even that afternoon.

Please note: Nobody is going to say “no—you can’t take that class.” However, if you choose a class that is too far beyond your experience level, you probably won’t have a good time. We want you to have a good time!

Intermediate:

I am intermediate if I can sew reasonably well. Have I taken Gerry’s class? You bet! I haven’t made many kites yet, but I have developed some skills and am ready to move on. Most of us may fit into this category. Even if I have never made a kite before, but I am an accomplished sewer and I may be comfortable in one of these classes. I’ll ask the teacher via an email!

Experienced:

I am experienced if I have made lots of kites and my sewing skills are well developed. Now I am looking for a challenge, and to learn different and advanced skills and techniques.