

## Bamboo Ware in Japan

Bamboo ware has been made in Japan since ancient times. The oldest preserved example of this craft is lacquered bamboo ware more than 2,000 years old, discovered in Aomori Prefecture in northern Honshu.

Bamboo is a hollow material with multiple advantages for handcrafting: it is strong yet pliant, lightweight, highly workable, resistant to warping when wet and dried, smooth, and aesthetically attractive. It has thus been used for a long time to make a wide range of products, including agricultural and fishing tools, such as baskets; kitchen implements and tableware; tea ceremony utensils and decorative flower containers; musical instruments such as the shakuhachi; weaponry and martial arts training swords; and personal accessories such as bags. Bamboo has also historically been used as a material in architectural and landscape garden design because of its practical and aesthetic properties.

More recently, bamboo ware has been elevated to a fine art by a number of leading craftspeople, and exhibitions held both internationally and in Japan underscore the wide appeal of bamboo ware today.