

Bamboo Ware in Daily Life

Bamboo has been used in Japan to make a variety of everyday products because of the material's workability, light weight, durability, and wide range of potential applications.

Bamboo ware is divided into three categories, based on the degree to which the bamboo has been processed. *Aomono* ("green products") are made with unprocessed bamboo that is still green, although this color fades to amber over time. This category includes farming tools, fishing tools, and kitchen implements. *Shiromono* ("white products") are made with processed bamboo that has had its oils extracted and has been dried and bleached in the sun. Kitchen implements, interior decoration items, flower baskets, and bags fall into this category. Finally, *kuromono* ("black products") are *shiromono* that have been further processed through techniques such as lacquering and dyeing. This category includes luxury items such as tea ceremony utensils, flower baskets, and bags with more elaborate weaves.

Aside from these products, bamboo is also used to make baskets (both utilitarian and decorative), dishware, strainers and winnowing tools, vegetable washing tools, household items such as laundry hampers, flower vases for ikebana flower arrangements, children's toys, lanterns, musical instruments, art pieces, bamboo swords for martial arts training, and actual weaponry such as arrows for bows. Bamboo is also used as a building material in traditional architecture and landscape gardens.

This diverse range of applications is testament to bamboo's long-standing importance in the daily lives of people in Japan.