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# TEACHING TUESDAY

## CHOCHIN

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Chochin (提灯) are traditional Japanese lanterns, made by gluing washi paper on a framework of bamboo hoops. A candle illuminates these lanterns inside, and when not in use, they can be folded small by collapsing the hoops upon themselves.

Crafted as far back as 1085, the bamboo hoop chochin was an adaption of the toro lantern design. The shape has not changed much since the original conception, but other shapes and sizes were developed later. Designed to be portable, the brightly colored chochin was meant to be carried by hand or hung from an eave, often during festivals. They are often decorated with names, ukiyo-e images, or family crests, and are made from a variety of colored washi paper.

Even with the advent of electric lights, chochin are still used outside traditional Japanese restaurants, as street decorations, and at summer festivals. They convey a traditional Japanese touch or ambience for festive occasions, but you can also find modern pop culture inspired varieties with characters such as Hello Kitty.