

What Are The Raw Materials Used In Japanese Paper?

Kozo pulp, Mino Kozo, Nasu Kozo / Japanese Washi paper raw materials

Mulberry Family

Scientific Name: *Broussonetia kazinoki* × *B. papyrifera*

Flowering Time: April to May

Distribution: Southern Honshu

- Grows in mountainous areas.
- Around June, bud-like fruits resembling wood strawberries appear.
- Sweet.

Mino and Nasu kozo are classified according to the region in which they are grown.

There are differences in the quality of mulberry trees that can be harvested depending on the place of cultivation, and the Nasu region is said to offer the best quality in Japan.



Kozo



flower

Mitsumata, Oriental Paper Bush / Japanese Washi paper raw materials

Jinchoge, Winter Daphne genus

Scientific Name: *Edgeworthia chrysantha*

Flowering Time: Around March 10 to April 10.

Distribution: Chinese origin. Cultivated as a textile plant in the warmer areas of Japan.

- ▶ These originated in the Himalayan regions of southern central China and were introduced to Japan in the early Edo period (1603-1868).
- ▶ The bark has strong fibers and is an ideal raw material for high-grade Japanese Washi paper. Because of its smooth, wrinkle free properties and high resistance to insect damage, this paper is used for important documents including certification stamps, 10,000 Yen and other denomination bills.



Mitsumata



Red Mitsumata

Ganpi / Japanese Washi paper raw materials

Jinchoge, Winter Daphne genus

Scientific Name: *Diplomorpha sikokiana*

Flowering Time: May to June

Distribution: Honshu (Ogasayama, Shizuoka Prefecture, and southwestern Ishikawa Prefecture), Shikoku, Kyushu (Mt. Kurogamizan, Saga Prefecture)

- ▶ Grows in relatively sunny areas in sandy soil or serpentine rock as a deciduous shrub about 2m high.
- ▶ The young branches, alternate leaves, and blossoms feature dense cotton wool-like tufts.
- ▶ The leaf backs are particularly silky and grayish white in color, 1.5 to 8cm long and 1 to 4mm wide. The flower petals average 2-3cm.
- ▶ There are from 7 to 20 flower heads per bloom of light-yellow flowers. The fine Washi used to make Mizu Uchiwa Water Fans is made from the pulp of the ganpi.



flower



leaf

Tororo Aoi / Japanese Washi paper raw materials

Aoi Genus

Scientific Name: *Abelmoschus manihot*

- ▶ Features large yellow flowers that bloom late summer. The flowers open daily, but close early evening.
- ▶ The roots produce a sticky substance that has long been used as a lotion.

Although it is not a raw ingredient, neri is an essential material for the production of hand-made Japanese Washi paper. Neri helps to disperse and entangle the fibers evenly in the water and aids in keeping these fibers afloat instead of settling. Neri also dissolves over time, leaving no impurities. The effect of this neri is such that this technology produces not just the best Japanese paper, but the world's best paper.



flower



root



neri