A brief history of the paper airplane

It is unknown when the first paper airplane was made. However, many scholars suspect that the Japanese art of paper folding, also known as origami, which closely followed the invention of paper in China in 500 BCE, inspired some of the first paper airplane designs.

Many of the early aviation pioneers utilized paper models in their pursuit of flight, including Leonardo da Vinci, Sir George Cayley (the first person to recognize and identify the four forces of flight), and the Wright Brothers.

The first modern paper airplane as we would recognize it was designed by Jack Northrop (co-founder of the Lockheed Corporation), who used paper planes as test models for larger aircraft.

World’s Greatest Paper Airplane

Numbers on template correspond to the instructions below!

1. Start by folding the paper vertically creating a valley that hides the AMA logo. Unfold and flatten the paper.
2. Fold down the top two corners to the center of the paper so it resembles a house.
3. Turn the paper over and fold down the pointed top at the horizontal dotted line.
4. Fold along the original “valley” fold so the AMA logo is hidden.
5. Fold down the first set of dotted lines.
6. Fold down the wings on the dotted lines so you can see the logo.
7. Place a small piece of tape near the nose to keep the airplane all together. You can also attach a paperclip to the nose to add weight.
8. To fly, hold the airplane underneath the wings by pinching where the triangle is folded. Hold it roughly at shoulder height and toss gently forward.

SUPPLIES
Standard 8.5”x11” paper
Markers, colored pencils, or crayons
Printer (if you would like to use template)

STEP-BY-STEP
See a step-by-step photo build at www.pinterest.com/pin/195906652517628029/

CHALLENGE
Create a target on the floor using painter’s tape and try to land your airplane within the “landing zone”!
Trace different sized plates on a poster board and cut out the circles to create different sized targets to fly through! Hang your board from the ceiling or have somebody hold it up for you.
Fly your planes down a long hallway or corridor in your house. Using a measuring tape, determine who flew the furthest!

JOHN COLLINS
See even more paper airplane designs and learn from the best by visiting ThePaperAirplaneGuy.com!

BE CREATIVE
Decorate your airplane using markers, crayons, colored pencils, stickers and more! Not sure how you want your airplane to look? Check out the National Model Aviation Museum’s Digital Collections to get inspired by visiting collections.modelaircraft.org!

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HISTORY OF THE ACADEMY OF MODEL AERONAUTICS AND THE NATIONAL MODEL AVIATION MUSEUM

The idea for the AMA began in 1935 (perhaps even before that) at the National Championships in Detroit, Michigan. Leaders and contestants were interested in a self-governing body of aeromodeling experts, the thought being that there should be expert guidance of, for, and by model builders. Modelers wanted a single voice to develop national rules for aeromodeling contests, as well as one voice to speak to the government.

First known as the American Academy for Model Aeronautics (AAMA), the organization dropped ‘American’ from its official title and changed “for” with “of” within a few years.

WE ARE

... the AMA is world’s largest model aviation association, representing a membership of more than 195,000 from every walk of life, income level and age group.

... a self-supporting, non-profit organization whose purpose is to promote development of model aviation as a recognized sport and worthwhile recreation activity.

... open to anyone interested in model aviation.

... the official national body for model aviation in the United States. AMA sanctions more than 2,000 model competitions throughout the country each year, and certifies official model flying records on a national and international level.

... the organizer of the annual National Aeromodeling Championships, the world’s largest model airplane competition.

... the chartering organization for more than 2,500 model airplane clubs across the country. AMA offers its chartered clubs official contest sanction, insurance, and assistance in getting and keeping flying sites.

... the voice of its membership, providing liaison with the Federal Aviation Administration, the Federal Communications Commission, and other government agencies through our national headquarters in Muncie, Indiana. AMA also works with local governments, zoning boards, and parks departments to promote the interests of local chartered clubs.

... an associate member of the National Aeronautic Association. Through NAA, AMA is recognized by the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI), the world governing body of all aviation activity, as the only organization which may direct U.S. participation in international aeromodeling activities.