# BTB PRESENTS

THE

# DESIGN BOOK

VOLUME I

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## **A Brief History**

Source: Christopher McFadden (2019)

Tattoos are an art form that involves inserted pigment into the skin to change its color permanently. This practice is actually very ancient and might just be the very embodiment of self-expression.

In the following article, we will take a very brief tour of the history of tattoos and discover who invented the first tattoo machine or gun.

## How long have they existed?

According to historical records and archaeological sites, tattooing has been practiced by humans for a very long time. Tools that appear to have been crafted specifically for creating tattoos have been found in prehistoric sites around France, Portugal, and Scandinavia.

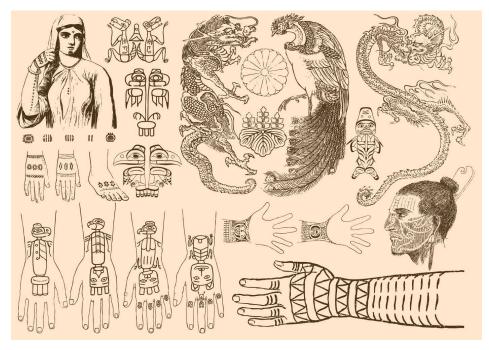
These tools, it turns out, are no less than 12,000 years old!

The oldest physical proof of tattoos has been found on an ancient mummy from the Alps, called Ötzi. This prehistoric human has been dated to around the **5th to 4th millennium** BC.

It is also widely known that ancient Germanic and Celtic tribes widely practiced tattooing as a culture. Various ancient Egyptian mummies have also been found to have tattoos on them.



It is also believed that many ancient cultures, like in Egypt and India, used tattoos as a form of healing and religious worship. But it has also been speculated that tattoos were also used to denote social status or mark someone for punishment.



In ancient Egypt tattoos appear to have been used to relieve painful health problems like chronic pelvic peritonitis (inflammation of the peritoneum).

In the Philippines, tattoos were also used as marks of rank and accomplishment and were also believed to endow the wearer with magical properties.

Ancient Greeks and Romans are also known to have tattooed their slaves and criminals so they could be easier to identify if they escape.

But all that changed in Europe at least, with the rise and mass adoption of Christianity under the Roman Empire. Tattoos were suddenly considered a barbaric practice and it slowly died out across the empire.

During the Age of Discovery and as transoceanic trade routes began to develop, the taboo around tattoos began to fade, albeit it very slowly, at first. Travelers like Sir Martin Frobisher, William Dampier, and Captain James Cook often brought home with them indigenous people from places they visited and they were often tattooed.

Tattoos began to become adopted by sailors and other members of the so-called "lower classes" but become more widely socially acceptable. As the art developed in Europe again, tattooing became a hobby of the aristocracy who had the means to pay for talented professionals.



But again this didn't last. As tattooing prices started to fall, it was once again seen as the sole practice of the lower classes. It would retain this social stigma for many decades until the 1960s.

After this period, tattoos once again began to gain wider social acceptance and came to be seen as a form of self-expression.

Today, it has become so mainstream that even Mattel started selling Barbie dolls with tattoos. People of both sexes, of all economic classes, and of all ages wear tattoos if they want to.

## How are they created?

Tattoos are created by depositing ink, or pigment, in the second layer of your skin called the dermis. This layer of your skin is never shed, like the epidermis, and so the tattoo remains in place and is not lost.

In order to do this, the tattoo artists need to use a variety of ink-laden needles to puncture the skin and inject a small amount of ink at that point.

This is done many thousands of times in order to complete an image, or text, on your skin. Whilst traditionally this would have been done by hand, modern-day tattoo artists use a special tool called a tattoo machine or gun.

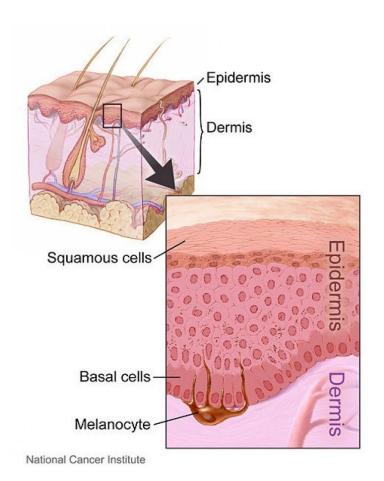
As the needles penetrate the skin, ink is dragged down into the dermis and is left in place as the needle retracts. Modern-day needles tend to come in three forms, but tattoo artists can use up to 25 different tipped needles for their work.

Those needles with fewer points tend to be used for outlining, whilst many-headed needles tend to be used for shading and coloring.

Whilst tattoos were labor-intensive processes in the past, today they relatively quicker (depending on design). Modern-day tattoo machines are able to pierce the skin at between 50 and 3,000 times a minute.

## Why do they last forever?

The human dermis is composed of collagen fibers, nerves, glands, blood vessels, and other tissue. Some large ink particles are dispersed in the "gel-like matrix of the dermis," and others will be gobbled up by fibroblasts, a type of dermal cell that plays an important part in healing wounds.



Once injected, your immune system inevitably responds to the many thousands of tiny wounds that the machine has created. Macrophages rush to the site and attempt to remove the pigment.

Some are successful but yet others are not and remain trapped in the dermis with the ink. Other cells in your dermis, called fibroblasts, also absorb the ink at the injection site.

These cells are not shed when the epidermis regenerates and will remain in the dermis until they die. Once they do die, the fibroblasts are absorbed (including the ink) into new fibroblasts which also helps tattoos last for a very long time.

Every new tattoo needs about two to four weeks to heal. As your immune system will constantly perceive the tattoo's ink as a foreign body, it will continue to attack it for the rest of the owner's life. It is for this reason that whilst tattoos will last forever, they tend to fade gradually over time. Exposure to the sign will also do its part to fade the tattoo too.

As an aside, this is how laser tattoo removal works too. Lasers penetrate deep into your skin and break up the ink particles into smaller bits. This helps macrophages engulf and remove them more easily.

#### Who invented the machine?

The very first tattoo machine appeared in 1891. It was invented and patented by one Samuel O-Reilly, who was a highly accomplished tattoo-artist in his own right.

But the design of his machine was not all his own work. Samuel was inspired by an invention by none other than Thomas Edison from 1876.

Edison had attempted to popularise his "Electric Pen" to help businesses with document duplication. The pen used a high-speed reciprocating motor to drive a single needle to perforate a master form.

As the user wrote with the pen, the needle would extend and retract multiple times a second to trace the writers handwriting.

This form would then be used to make copies by rolling ink over the holes. Via this process, an exact copy could be made in short order, instead of the more laborious task of manually copying documents by hand.

Despite its ingenuity, the pen was never a hit and was destinated to be forgotten. That was until Samuel discovered the device and realized its potential for his industry.

He took the invention, added multiple needles and an ink reservoir. For his modifications, he was awarded his own U.S. patent for the world's first tattoo machine.

Later in 1929, another inventor, Percy Waters, patented an improved version that closely resembles modern machines. His device user two electromagnetic coils that were set parallel with the frame, a spark shield and an on/off switch.

Waters, also a tattoo artist, went on to run a tattoo supply company for over thirty years. He produced classically noted flash sets and tattooed many well-known tattoo collectors during his time.

He was initiated into the Tattoo Hall of Fame on January 15, 1987.



# **Ancient Symbols**

Source: ancient-symbols.com







The Latin Cross Tattoo Symbol





Also known as the Latin cross. It is the most common symbol of Christianity that represents the redeeming martyrdom of Jesus when he was crucified.



African Tattoo Symbol

DUAFE is the "wooden comb" used by women to lock their hair (a quite similar version exists in Polynesian culture as well) and symbolizes femininity and beauty.





The Egyptian Ankh

The Ankh was, for the ancient Egyptians, the symbol (the actual Hieroglyphic sign) of life but it is an enduring icon that remains with us even today as a Christian cross. It is one of the most potent symbols represented in Egyptian art, often forming a part of decorative motifs.



Buddha Eyes Tattoo Symbol







#### Anchor Tattoo

The anchor tattoo has been quite a favorite of seafaring people who got it inked on themselves to proclaim their love for the deep and open waters. However, now it has become very popular with the others too, and a lot of men, as well as women, can be seen sporting it. The anchor tattoo is seen as symbolic of stability, security, safety, strength, resilience, steadfastness, fidelity, hope, and salvation.





Egyptian Scarab Tattoo Symbol





Scarab Tattoo Symbol



Hindu Tattoo Symbol



Horned God Druid Tattoo Symbol











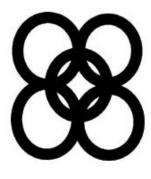
Eye of Horus Tattoo Symbol



Eternal Hindu Tattoo Symbol

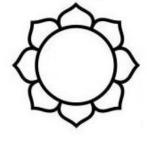


Native American Symbol

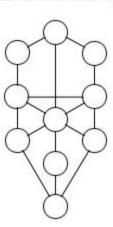


Kintinkantan

This African tattoo symbol means (puffed up extravagance) This symbol expresses arrogance



**Hindu Lotus Tattoo Symbol** 



**Buddhist Tattoo Symbol** 





Tao and om tattoo





The Tree of Life Tattoo Symbol



Celtic Tattoo Symbol



Yinyang Tattoo Symbol



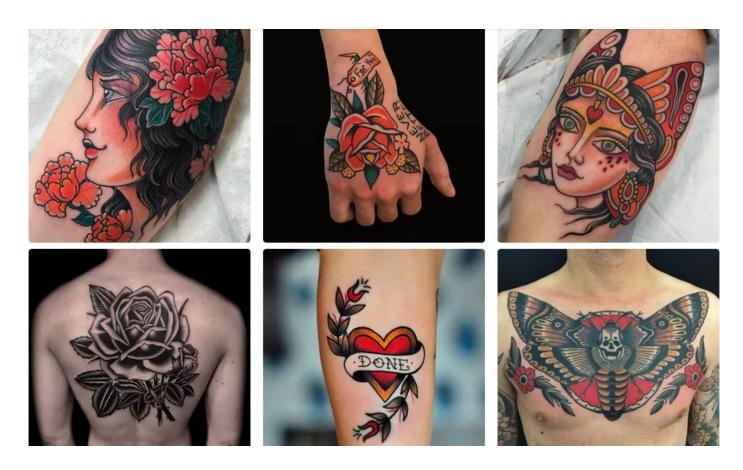
**Druid Celtic Tattoo Symbol** 

# **Different Styles**

Source: Justine Morrow (2016)

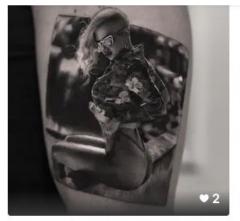
## **Traditional Style**

The traditional style, also called old school tattoo style, American traditional tattoo style, classic tattoo style or Western traditional tattoo style, is known for its bold lines, bright colors, and iconic designs like roses, anchors, and gorgeous lady heads.

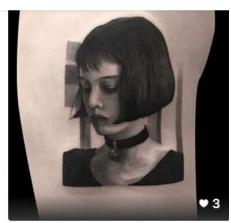


## Realism or Realistic Style

Though classic realism has been a part of the fine art since as far back as the Renaissance, it only found its way to the world of tattoos recently, cropping up around the latter half of the 20th century. Since then, this new tattoo style has become increasingly refined and extremely popular.

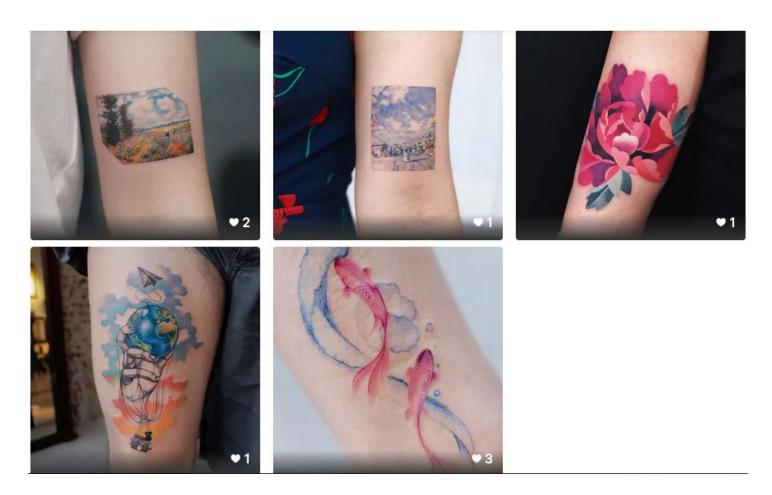






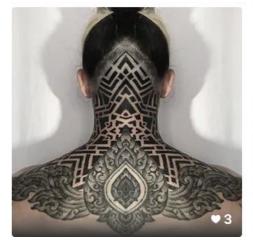
## Watercolor Style

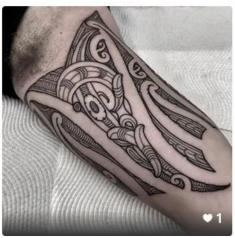
The watercolor style is currently in vogue. It's in extremely high demand by the most recent generation of tattoo enthusiasts, who seem to be looking for modern tattoo types to match the new millennium. It looks like what it sounds like, as if rendered with a brush dabbled in watery pastels.



## **Tribal Style**

Tribal tattoos — i.e. indigenous body art — are the oldest in the world, dating back thousands of years. This style should actually be thought of as multiple styles or more so different traditions of tattooing from aboriginal communities all around the globe.

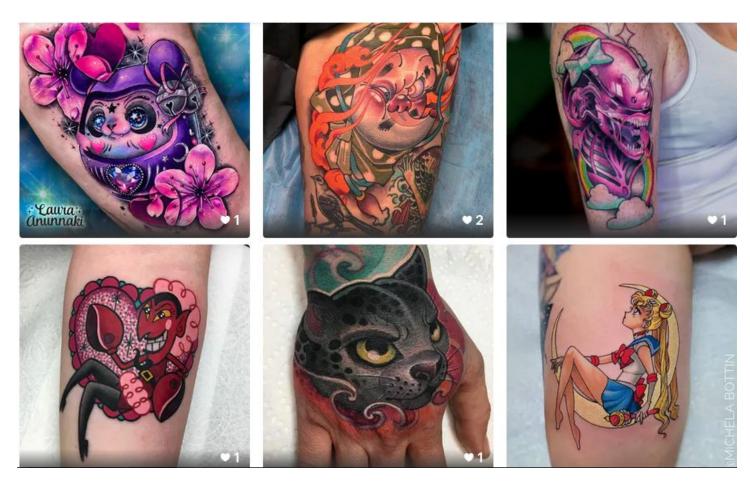






## **New School Style**

Don't let the name fool you, new school isn't really all that new anymore. It rose to prominence in the weirdness that was the late '80s and early '90s, but lately it has waned in popularity. The style is cartoonish and wacky, featuring caricatures and other exaggerated figures. If you're the sort of person who likes their body art injected with the spirit of Ren and Stimpy, then this comic style is for you.



## Japanese Style

The traditional Japanese style, aka Irezumi, originated during the Edo period (1603-1868) alongside ukiyo-e — woodblock prints that were hugely popular among the merchant class at the time. Because of this, the icons found in this time-tested genre of body art come from the country's age-old folklore, featuring tattooed heroes from the *Suikoden* and mythological creatures like dragons, kirins, and phoenixes.

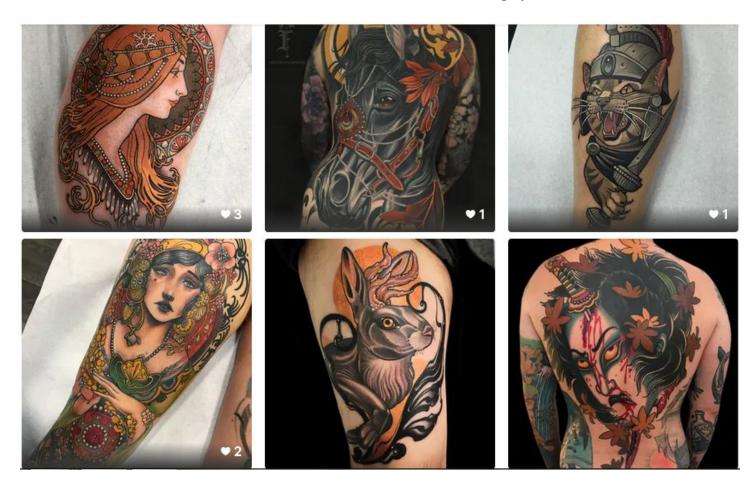






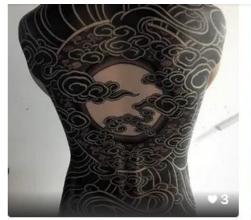
## **Neo Traditional Style**

Neo traditional, as the name implies, is an evolution of the traditional style. It features the core properties of its predecessor, like pronounced linework and extremely vibrant colors but it also has an illustrative quality to it. Neo traditional artists are highly influenced by Art Nouveau and Art Deco aesthetics. Pieces done in this style are known for their lush, decorative details as well as the use of natural imagery such as florals and animals.



## **Blackwork Style**

Stylistically speaking, blackwork is a very broad categorical term. It applies almost any body art that's created using solely black ink, but as you can imagine, a lot can be done with this versatile and striking color. Looking through blackwork artists portfolios, you'll see all kinds of tattoo types from ancient sacred geometry to modern abstract ornamental designs to extremely detailed illustrative pieces.



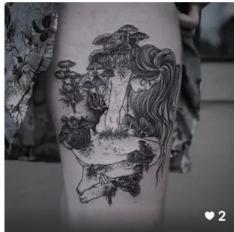


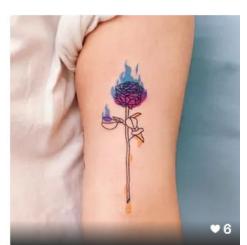


## **Illustrative Style**

A large variety of work can be called Illustrative, and that is because there are so many techniques and art movements that inspired it! From etching and engraving, to abstract expressionism, and even fine line calligraphy, this tattoo style is extremely versatile.

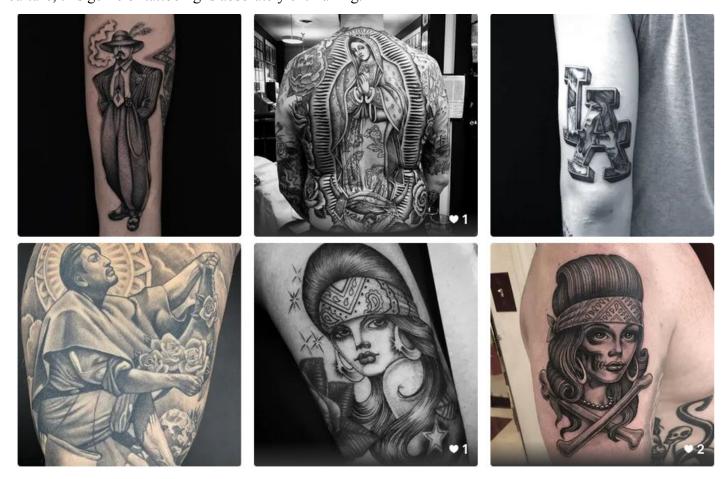






## **Chicano Style**

The Chicano style has so much cultural influence that it has gone on to influence other styles as well. Steeped in the history of things such as the Mexican Revolution, Los Angeles low-riders and Pachuco culture. Born behind bars, the aesthetic evolved from artists in prison who used what few materials they had to beautifully capture what they loved and missed on the outside. Usually fine line, black and grey, and wrapped up in the Chicano culture, this genre of tattooing is absolutely enthralling.



## **Animals**

Source: Jhaiho (2019), Pranshi (2020), Brian Cornwell (2020)

#### Lions

Lions represent raw power and aggression, but there's another side to them — they're also playful, and sometimes quite lazy. Lions are all about self-control. They emphasize our ability to master our emotions and know when to get serious — and when to have a little fun!





## **Tigers**

With a roar that can shake the earth, the tiger is an impressive creature that makes its presence known — and heard! Tigers can mean anything from danger and vengeance to power and strength to being a

free spirit.









#### Cheetahs

The fastest animal on the planet, cheetahs are a reminder to remain focused — know your goals, keep your eye on the prize, and charge — full speed ahead!











## Apes

The most common image of apes is that they're aggressive — no doubt the image of a silverback charging at you is bound to scare anyone! But there's another side to them — they are extremely caring and compassionate and display amazing selflessness, both towards their fellow apes as well as to outsiders they don't view as a threat. Chimps are especially known for being playful — and they are quite mischievous too!

In South Asian cultures, the immortal being Hanuman is depicted as being half-man, half-ape,



and symbolizes resistance to persecution. Hanuman features prominently in many other Asian styles of tattooing as well. Beyond their aggressiveness, the majestic apes also stand for leadership, dignity, and loyalty.

#### Deer

The deer is a symbol of power to Native American tribes, signifying intuition combined with sensitivity and gentleness. The deer teaches us to be calm but determined, and reminds us that there is great power in peace, and great healing in compassion — especially when we show some to ourselves!

#### **Bears**

Bears are a symbol of strength and confidence, as well as of solitude, quiet, and rest. Known to be fiercely protective, they are not unlike elephants in their ability to be just as ferocious as they are loving.

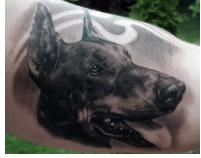






## Dogs

Dogs are the best companions and friends — loyal, trustworthy, brave, protective, devoted. They teach us to be non-judgemental. With dogs, each breed has its own meaning and symbolism. For instance, Labradors symbolize unconditional acceptance, Corgis symbolize being protective and loyal to one's 'herd', and Great Danes symbolize being easy-going and strong-willed — and to never let anyone walk all over you!



#### Cats

Cats — as their nine lives tell us — are a symbol of rebirth. They are associated with night, darkness, and magic. In ancient Egypt, cats were revered as deities and would receive a royal burial. Many ancient gods were also depicted as cats. Cats are curious and playful, but they can be quite terrifying if they're crossed. Overall, cats have a very clear message — live proud and free!











#### **Pandas**

In China, the panda is an auspicious symbol said to bring luck and prosperity. Even though they are actually quite strong, it is difficult to imagine being attacked by a panda! They symbolize gentle strength — the ability to be wise in how one uses their power. These adorable fluffy bears live in peace and harmony, enjoying a quiet life among friends and family.





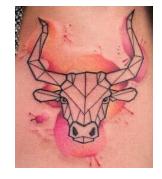
#### Rams

As the symbol of Aries, rams denote strength, pride, drive, and determination. Rams also symbolize initiative and leadership. In some cultures, they are a symbol of protection. Rams are also considered a symbol of divinity. Mythological horned gods are always depicted as warriors, as ram horns are a sign of strength and aggressiveness — or put another way, passion!

#### **Bulls**

Known for their great strength and power, bulls are protectors and associated with the wealth of the land. They're a sign to be assertive and stand

your ground — especially when in doubt! Bulls teach us to never let others question what we believe in. Bulls are the symbol of Taurus, the zodiac that thrives on being practical and grounded. Bulls thus also represent being realistic and committed — which can sometimes mean being quite stubborn! Put another way, however, bulls are also a symbol of being reliable and consistent.







#### Horses

Horses symbolize true freedom as they live unrestrained, free to move as they please. In Native American symbolism, horses represent power, likely owing to the sheer strength of a mustang from the wild. But horses also symbolize a different kind of power — personal power. After all, a true free spirit has no one to hold them back. Learning to master oneself is the greatest struggle — and the greatest triumph!

## **Elephants**

Gentle, wise, nurturing — elephants are emotional and loving animals who care deeply for their herd. Never get in between a mother and her baby elephant though — elephants also symbolize power and strength, and this gentle and majestic creature will charge at you with a vengeance if she views you as a threat! In Eastern and

Native American tribes, elephants also represent luck. Elephant tattoos can thus have a variety of meanings.



#### Wolves

Wolves are intelligent creatures with amazing intuition. A wolf's howl is one of the most haunting sounds of the night. The howl of a wolf is how it calls to its pack. The howl of a lone wolf, however, is as a warning to all — wolf or human — that dares to trespass on its territory! Wolves are a reminder to stay true to who you are — whether you're in a pack or riding solo.



#### **Foxes**

While the Chinese thought of foxes as a sign from departed loved ones, Celtic lore views foxes as a symbol of guidance and wisdom. Modern symbolism views the

fox as cunning. In reality, foxes are actually extremely clever and resourceful. They are also curious and playful! Known for their quick thinking, foxes teach us to always be alert!







## **Dragonflies**

Dragonflies are known for being resplendent and absolutely stunning. And why wouldn't they — they are all about being a free spirit! They symbolize change — from mental and emotional to physical — and are a sign that things are about to shift. A dragonfly tattoo is a great way to remind yourself that life is a wild ride! These beautiful creatures teach us to always be open to change.







## **Butterflies**

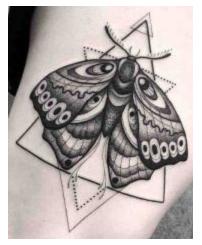
Butterflies come in so many colours, it's hard not to smile when we see one gently flit past! Butterflies represent change and joy. Many associate the butterfly with transformation — nothing says a new you quite like a

caterpillar that can go into a cocoon and emerge as an

entirely new creature! In addition to change, butterflies also represent luck, which makes them perfect for a tattoo that is meant to represent a new phase of your life.







#### Moths

Moths are known to be nocturnal, yet for some

unexplained reason, they are drawn to light. These ancient little creatures are thought to be in tune with nature and use the moonlight to navigate their flight. Moths symbolize determination and faith, but more than anything, they are a reminder to never stop searching for the light in the dark. They also, however, remind us to

know our path. Follow the light, but make sure you don't get burned!



#### Crabs

Crabs are the symbol of the Cancer zodiac sign. They represent emotion and intuitiveness, as well as loyalty and deep attachments. Chinese symbolism links crabs to success and high status because of the Chinese word for crab shell 'jia' which means 'first' and is associated with first place. They also serve as a reminder that sometimes you need to loosen your grip and change your path — so listen to your heart when making a choice.



## **Scorpions**

Scorpions are often thought to symbolize danger due to the painful sting they inflict on anyone they view as a threat. As the symbol of Scorpios, these little crustaceans represent passion and assertiveness. They also represent resourcefulness and a quest for truth. Ancient Egyptians, however, revered the scorpion as a protector of souls that are crossing over into the afterlife. Scorpions are also associated with spiritual change and growth, as many ancient societies believed the scorr





spiritual change and growth, as many ancient societies believed the scorpion's sting had the power to heal and cause a person to transcend reality and receive prophetic visions.

## Lizards





Lizards symbolize regeneration and are a message that you can overcome anything. A fun fact about lizards is that they shed their tails when distressed and are capable of regrowing it later on. Lizards, thus, are a symbol of growth — of shedding extra baggage when it does not serve you and becoming a better version of yourself!



## **Spiders**

Spiders are often scary to most people — there's even a whole section of phobias dedicated to it! This is probably why they feature prominently in horror and blackwork tattoos. But spiders are more than just scary! They are master weavers. The webs they weave are very difficult to break or remove, indicating this is a creature that has mastered its craft. Spiders therefore represent finding your purpose and mastering the skills you need to accomplish it.



#### **Snakes**

Snakes are thought of as earthy creatures due to their nature of slithering along the ground. Historically thought of as a creative force, snakes also symbolize transformation and immortality because they routinely shed their skin and emerge, almost as good as new! Snakes are also important to many religions and ancient cultures, who viewed them as both terrifying, destructive forces and deities that bestowed blessings. Ancient

snakes were, after all, what modern tales of dragons are based on.

#### Cobras

Cobras are seen as deadly, but they have historically been associated with deep spirituality and royalty. Ancient Egyptians saw them as magical creatures full of wisdom, often using cobra imagery in the Pharaoh's crown. In South Asia, the cobra is often associated with Lord Shiva. While many tales are told about this association, some point out that the serpent is



highly sensitive to human emotion — particularly fear — and if a serpent is calm around you, it indicates you are totally at ease and are thus able to perceive everything with a clear mind.

## **Dragons**

Prior to more modern depictions, dragons were depicted as serpents and revered and feared in equal measure as deities and ferocious beasts. They were thought to be forces of protection as well as monsters that caused destruction. In current folklore and fantasy, dragons are often associated with East Asian mythology. The dragon is an important symbol in Feng Shui, representing fortune and growth as well as authority and the ability to rise above one's circumstances.



#### **Dinosaurs**

The dinosaurs may be extinct, but they live on in our minds — and in ink! They symbolize strength and nobility, as well as change and the ability to let go and move on from the past. The mighty dinosaurs teach us to focus on here and now — because it's all we have.



## Koi Fish

Hailing from Japanese culture, the koi fish symbolizes overcoming adversity — which might be why it's such a popular choice for cover up tattoos! The koi fish is a reminder to have courage as you strive to reach your goals. It is symbolic of patience, determination, ambition, and success.



Native Americans believed the lunar eclipse was caused by a codfish trying to swallow the moon. Due to its importance to trade the codfish is seen as a symbol of wealth and prosperity. While it is sometimes associated with sainthood, the cod is at other times seen as a symbol of lust and evil. At its core, however, the codfish represents something very important — mindful independence.



#### **Turtles**

Turtles tell us that patience, dedication, and perseverance can help you achieve anything. Turtles stand for longevity and endurance, with some species of turtles being known to live for hundreds of years! Tribal animal tattoos often feature turtles because of the depth of meaning these animals represent.





#### Sharks



Celtic symbolism views the shark as a symbol of prosperity due to the association of its dorsal fin with the sacred sickle of the Druids, and it was thought to bring a good harvest and a successful hunt. The shark is often viewed with fear due to the false notion that they are dangerous predators, but sharks are actually a sign to let go of fear and go after what you really want.





#### **Seahorses**

Seahorses symbolize patience and contentment. They are considered to be symbols of strength and power — even though they are so tiny! Sailors viewed them as good luck charms, which might be why seahorses have a prominent place on most charm bracelets.





## **Tortoises**

The tortoise is an ancient animal. Ancient societies believed the world was flat and sat on the back of a tortoise, which is why they are often linked with creation and bearing the weight of the whole world. Tortoises symbolize wisdom and ancient knowledge as well as immortality, time, water, and the moon.



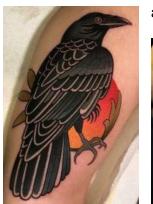
#### **Finches**

The finch symbolizes colourful and happy times ahead and is often associated with high energy and bright days on the horizon. It reminds you that life is a celebration — so let your colours shine!



Greek mythology associates the raven with Apollo, the god of prophecy, and many think of them as a symbol of bad luck. In Native American symbolism, the raven is a symbol of

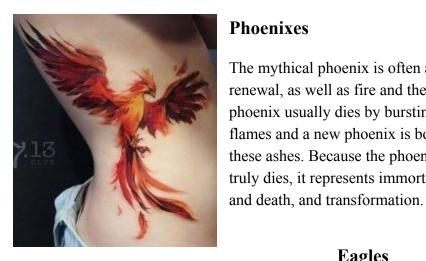
metamorphosis, as well as of mischief due to its association with changing attributes. Ravens are also associated with melancholy, possibly owing to





Edgar Allen Poe's 'The Raven' which made it a symbol of pain and darkness. In actuality, ravens teach us to overcome the fear we have been holding on to for a long time.





#### **Phoenixes**

The mythical phoenix is often associated with rebirth and renewal, as well as fire and the sun. This is because this a phoenix usually dies by bursting into flames and a new phoenix is born from these ashes. Because the phoenix never truly dies, it represents immortality, life





## **Eagles**

Soaring higher than any other bird, the eagle is thought to be a connection to the divine. It sees everything from above, symbolizing freedom, honesty, and living true to your principles. Eagles also teach us to stay focused — it's pretty difficult to miss anything when you have a bird's-eye view!



#### Crows

Associated with war and death, crows have been dealt a bad hand in modern symbolism. In reality, crows are a sign of health and wealth and are bringers of good luck and fortune. They also symbolize magic and mystery.



## Owls

A very intelligent creature of the night, owls tell us to trust our inner knowledge and have the foresight to make wise decisions. Owls are a reminder that the secrets of ancient wisdom are meant for those who have earned the right to know!



## Little Black Birds

Most commonly associated with Bob Marley's 'every little thing will be alright', the three little birds also represent being free of worry, trusting yourself and not being afraid to fall, and knowing when it's time to soar. With little black birds, it's all about hopes and dreams!



#### **Doves**

A symbol of peace, doves remind us to live calmly and with purpose. Thought to be a messenger that brings messages from the afterlife, doves are often believed to be holy and a connection to the divine.



#### **Peacocks**

Peacocks are a symbol of beauty and elegance, nobility and grace, prestige and success. Peacock feathers are thought to have magical and hypnotizing powers. In South Asian mythology, the peacock feather was used by Lord Krishna to cleanse the feet of the goddess Radha, and is thus also associated with beauty and knowledge. On a deeper level, peacocks teach us that we are most beautiful when we reveal our true colours.

## Varied Animals

















