

Basic Detail Report



Ink Stone

Date

c. 1500 CE

Medium

Stone

Description

Ink stones were used to create ink for writing or painting. Ink was made by pouring water into the well of the ink stone, dipping an ink stick into water to moisten it and

then grinding the stick in an even circular motion around the bed of the ink stone to combine the material with water. The ink would be ready to use when it was thick and oily. In order to effectively grind ink, the stones would need to be abrasive but also delicate so that the tips of calligraphy brushes would not be damaged. Ink stones were also made of non-porous materials so that once made, ink would not dry quickly. While Chinese ink stones were made in a variety of different shapes and sizes and from various different materials, ink stones made of stone are considered to possess a higher quality than those made of materials such as pottery, porcelain, jade, lacquer, wood, bronze, or iron. Ink stones made of actual stone are also found in larger quantities than those made of other materials. The scholar who was searching for an ink stone for his study would select one very carefully. The ink stone was one of the most visible items in the study and would reflect the tastes of its owner.

Dimensions

1 7/8 × 6 × 4 5/8 in. (4.8 × 15.2 × 11.7 cm)