



## Shield

**Date**

early to mid 20th Century

**Primary Maker**

Ngombe

**Medium**

Split rattan cane and wood

**Description**

As is true for many of the peoples of the Congo, warfare, hunting, and supernatural callings all give use to shields. Made from cross-woven from cane with a braided frame, these shields are surprisingly hardy. Simple geometric designs are painted on after creation with black pigment, a common decoration for shields throughout the Congo, but particularly among the Ngombe who most likely created this particular shield. The hourglass shape of the wooden handle on the reverse further indicates this. By the late 19th Century, warfare had been outlawed in the

Belgian colony, so Ngombe society transitioned from celebrating great warriors to those who generally lived with great respect for community and ancestors. Proper care of one's shield was an important marker of this.

**Dimensions**

56 1/4 × 18 1/8 × 3 5/8 in. (142.9 × 46 × 9.2 cm)