

# Ts'ai Lun Encyclopedia Article

## Ts'ai Lun

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# Ts'ai Lun

**50-121**

Chinese official credited with the invention of paper. In 105 Ts'ai Lun, a eunuch in the court of the Han Dynasty emperor, suggested creating paper out of tree bark, scraps of hemp, rags, and old fishnet. Not only was this far less expensive than the silk that provided the principal writing surface for documents of the time, the new material actually proved better suited to the task. (Furthermore, in a move that was about 1,900 years ahead of its time, Ts'ai Lun had figured out a way to recycle waste materials.) In honor of his achievement, the emperor granted him the title of marquess in 114.