



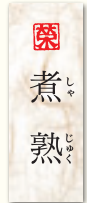
# The process of producing Izumo Mingeishi paper

The art of handmade Izumo Mingeishi papermaking passed down by Eishiro Abe consists of the following steps.

# 1

## The boiling process: shajuku

An amount of soda ash equal to 20% of the weight of the bark is added, and the water boiled in a pot using firewood.



Soda ash softens the bark while also separating any impurities from the fiber.

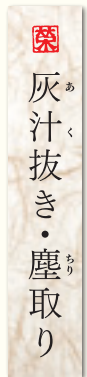


Left : Removing damage from bark before boiling  
Right : The boiling process softens the raw materials

# 2

## Removing impurities: akunuki & chiritori

After the shajuku process is complete, the separated impurities are left clinging to the surface of the softened bark. These impurities are then washed away in a process known as akunuki.



The bark is soaked in running ground water for 24 hours. This ground water is another key point in the Izumo ganpi washi making process.

Once the akunuki process is complete, the bark is immersed in ground water and any remaining impurities are removed by hand in a process known as chiritori.



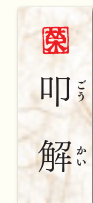
Chiriyori: Removing any remaining impurities by hand under running water

# 3

## The pulping process: gokai

This process separates the fibers so they are ready for use in for papermaking.

First, a foot-operated stamp mill is used to loosen the fibers by pounding them from 150 to 200 times over a period of around 30 minutes.



After that, a machine called a beater uses water pressure to break the fibers up even further.



Relaxing the fibers using a beater

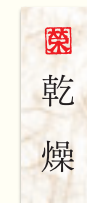


Paper made by Shinichiro Abe. 200 sheets of this thickness are made per day.

# 4

## Drying

Freshly-made sheets of paper are stacked on top of each other one by one while still wet.



This stack of washi is called a shito, or paper bed.

After letting the water drain from the paper bed overnight, the remaining moisture is removed by gradually applying pressure using a jack.

Once the excess moisture is removed, preparation for drying begins.

Sheets are removed from the paper bed one by one and placed on drying boards (hoshiita) to dry in natural sunlight, or placed on steam-heated metal racks to dry.

Finally, the sheets are inspected for uniform distribution of fibers and checked for defects or impurities. The process is now complete.

# 4

## The papermaking process

Japanese washi paper is made using the unique nagashisuki technique.



As the first step, a small amount of solution is spread across the paper mold. After that, the mold is covered relatively deeply with solution, and then shaken forward and backward and side to side.

Finally, any excess solution remaining on the mold is drained off. When making Izumo Mingeishi washi, the proportion of neri to pulp and the way that the deckle is moved is very different than when making ordinary washi.

The amount of neri added to the solution is slightly greater, and scooping is done gradually, allowing the solution to pool in the deckle slightly before draining the excess. This delicate method makes the most of the natural characteristics of the pulp to create Izumo Mingeishi washi.



Bringing out the plant mucus



Attaching to drying board

Paper is dried for a day in natural sunlight

