

# The Arch



A flat bottom, rounded on top with an opening. The moon caught somewhere between waxing and waning. Resembles ancient rock and architectural formations, doors and portals.

Out of the nothing/everything emerged a being resembling a noodle, a slug, a smush, a paint stroke, or a dash<sup>1</sup>. It, like many creatures of the infinite had large thoughts despite being essentially a simple form. Who am I, thought the dash, and what am I made of? Why am I here and how do I improve the situation for myself and for the ones I love? Its journey to answer these questions led it to shape-shift. Looking back, looking forward, swaying, wavering, blowing in the wind. Exploring ideas through bodily shifts and dance moves. It had so much love it wanted to give, but it wasn't sure who to give it to. It reached up to the sky and felt the sun on its face. It breathed deep. It bent backward and stretched its neck. It decided to try to taste itself, bite itself, chew its tail, and loop around and love itself, becoming an ouroboros expressing wholeness, infinity, and the cycle of life and death. In reaching for itself it formed an Arch. In finding the positioning of the arch the dash sensed a solidity that was appealing. In becoming the arch it was able both to protect itself and become a strong protective structure for others.

In this origin story however there is a contradiction afloat. Perhaps the dash formed an arch by connecting with itself. But the arch's structural strength comes from its separate parts coming together to form a whole, which suggests participation from multiple characters joining, interlocking together to form this supportive shape. Evidence for this origin story can be found in the Interlocking Arch formations from 2018<sup>2</sup> and 2019<sup>3</sup>. Both opposing theories are valid and likely.



<sup>1</sup> The Dash- A line dividing or connecting two ideas. A dash connects or separates two thoughts in a sentence. It brings together while keeping ideas distinct. A dash in a name allows for multiple identifiers to be used for one being. It is a movement, a line. It is flexible and always mutating into a form it feels is best to take on that that moment. It embraces change; sees change as a means to survival. Adapts as a necessary survival trait. Adaptation is different from conforming. Adaptation has connotations of flexibility and resilience, rather than assimilation and loss of identity.

When we look to ancient civilizations we see different iterations of the arch. In Ancient Roman civilization, the arch could be frequently spotted as part of the aqueduct, a repeated arch structure that was used to transport water. The Minoans in 2000 BCE were probably the developers of the aqueduct in a form of irrigation systems. Later, in the 7th century BCE the Assyrians built a limestone aqueduct in order to carry water to Nineveh. Arches were also used as dams, supporting hydrostatic pressure, which when applied to dams or large containers of water, measuring gravity on a certain point within the fluid, is generally a lot of pressure. The connection between the arch and water<sup>4</sup> is very significant. The arch is/was often used to transport beings and goods over waterways, as in bridges and roads, but in the case of the aqueduct, actually used to transport water itself.

In a masonry arch, there are separate stones that make up the whole of the arch. Each is structurally important, especially the keystone of the arch at the very top, which locks the structure in place. While the keystone is necessary for the arch to bear any strength, it actually bears the least amount of stress due to its placement.

An arch is held in place by the weight of all of its members. Every part is essential to giving this shape its structural stability.

Building this form can be difficult since all parts need to be specifically in place. A solution is to build a wooden frame to map out or plan the underside of the arch, known as the center. Each voussoir or separate element (usually stone) is laid on the center until the arch is self-supporting.

Rock formations often appear in arch forms through erosion. For instance, Arches in Utah was formed from salt beds thousand of feet thick from a sea that flowed and evaporated in the region, another important connection to and effect of water. Natural arch formations are not symmetrical, sometimes unstable, but always essential.

In the body, the arch of the foot provides support. Standing up puts stress on the arch of the foot. Finding shoes with good arch support helps prevent knee, back, posture and foot problems, such as plantar fasciitis.

In clay, an arch is a good option for building a framing device, a portal, or an opening as its flat base provides structural stability. It is made with coils, hollow from the bottom up in cross sections. First there is the base, then walls, then the middle of the bottom of the arch joins together and two open forms reach up as the legs or arms of the arch, and they then bend around and meet in the middle on the top. In movement terms this can be thought of as arms growing up from either side of the body and joining in the middle clasping hands to form an arch. Many gas fueled kilns have arched interiors. An arched roof can grow upward to relieve most of the effect of thermal expansion, and is the most efficient shape for guiding flames evenly throughout the interior.

In the infinite, the arch can sometimes take the form of a protective outer shield. It breathes in, puffs up its chest with air and becomes a puffy fluffy pink cloud-like arch that then surrounds any form that chooses to go through it, or be in its archway. It is a protective element, protecting against negative forces, bad vibes, or energy sucks. Whatever chooses to be inside of it can remain calm, breathe deep, maintain its full magic and power no matter what is outside of the archway. The pink fluff that the archway becomes is not like pink insulation fiber, nor cotton candy. It is denser, bouncy, has some give. You can press it gently, and it has some give, your finger won't sink in, but can push, like if you push a cheek while someone is smiling. It varies from pink to yellow to lavender. It is weightless, and floats like a cloud, but with actual mass and density that defies gravity in normal earth terms. The Arch's protective abilities, strong structural capabilities yet sometimes irregular and unstable realities make it a key part of the infinite.



<sup>4</sup> Water is a central character in the infinite, and a portal into that world from this one. In mythology and astrology water symbolizes feeling, emotion, intuition and sensitivity, highly valued aspects of perceiving within the infinite. Water possesses further reference of great importance, including its interlocked history of humans and providing a way for life to be possible on the planet, and these references are explored more thoroughly in the separate glossary entry for Water, not included in this document.

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