

Make a Thanksgiving Thank You Apron

Every Thanksgiving, we all look forward to that special moment when the last dish is finally laid out on the table and family and friends are all gathered around in anticipation of the coming feast. Each year some major preparation and a lot of hard work goes into making this special moment possible. Since Thanksgiving is a time for giving thanks, this year help your child give a heartfelt "thank you" to your family's chef with a colorful hand-print apron and teach him the importance of giving thanks to those he loves. All you need is some simple craft paint, a canvas apron, and a little hand. Encourage other kids to participate for a little collaborative fun.

A word of caution: this activity, adorable though it is, has the potential to create a very large mess. It's best to do it in a room that can get a little dirty, like the garage or the backyard. Even then, make sure you spread a drop cloth or plastic sheet over your work surface and have a bucket of soapy water and a pile of rags handy for washing paint from little hands.

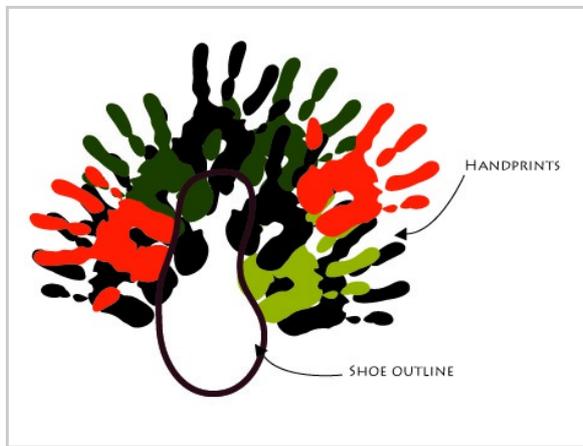


What You Need:

- Plastic surface cover, drop cloth, or mess-proof work surface
- Plain white canvas apron (available at your local craft store)
- Fabric paint in harvest colors like brown, red, orange, yellow, and deep green
- Smallest kid's shoe you own (an infant shoe works best)
- Black fabric marker or squeeze-on paint
- One bucket of warm, soapy water
- One bucket of plain warm water
- Clean rags
- Blow dryer

What You Do:

1. Lay out the apron on your work surface so that the bib can be reached easily.
2. Have your child and any other children who want to participate create a "handmade" turkey on the bib of the canvas apron: starting with the largest child, paint one of his hands (palm and fingers) with one color of paint, then have him press his hand firmly onto the center of the apron bib.
3. Invite the next child to place a handprint on the bib in a different color. Have him place his palm over the first handprint with his fingers turned slightly to the side so that the fingers of the handprints do not overlap.
4. Have each child take a turn placing a handprint on the apron until the turkey's feathers are complete. If only one child is participating in the activity, have him make all of the prints, making sure to rinse his hand between each one.
5. Have all participating children clean their hands by washing them in the soapy water and then rinsing them in the plain warm water.
6. Use your blow dryer to dry the paint.
7. To make the turkey's head, place the small kid's shoe on the body of the painted turkey so that the heel of the shoe sticks out over the turkey's body like a head. Use a pencil or chalk to trace around



it, like this:

8. Invite the kids to help you paint in the traced head with brown paint. Paint in a beak and waddle with red paint, and draw eyes and feet with the black fabric marker.
9. Use a pencil to write out "THANKSGIVING 2009" below the turkey and invite one of the children to help you trace over it with the marker. If you like, you can also add a special message such as "Thanks, Grandma!"

Give your apron plenty of time to finish drying—we recommend at least 12-24 hours—and then wrap it up for the big day. To include a little writing practice, have your child write a quick thank-you note to go in the package. This Thanksgiving is sure to bring not only full tummies, but warm and happy hearts as well!

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