

Make Leaf Pattern Prints

Looking for a fun fall craft to do with your child? Make leaf pattern imprints! This art activity will help your child develop an understanding of important math concepts like patterning and spatial awareness. Not to mention, she'll make some beautiful leaf art while she's at it and learn about the artistic process of imprinting.

What You Need:

- Cardboard
- Freshly fallen leaves
- Craft glue
- Tempera paint in any color your child would like
- Cookie sheet (one that you won't mind getting paint on!)
- Brayer, print roller, child's rolling pin or dowel (one that you won't mind getting paint on!)
- Paper (in any color, but white or off-white works best)
- Spoon



What to Do:

1. Take your collection of freshly fallen leaves and help your child arrange the leaves in a design of her choosing on the cardboard.
2. Help your child glue the leaves onto the cardboard following her design and set it aside to let dry. (Note: You should let your print template dry for at least an hour, but preferably more.)
3. Place a spoonful of paint on a cookie sheet. Help your child move the print roller or brayer through the paint until the roller is evenly coated.
4. Have your child roll the paint onto the leaves. You can apply as much or as little paint as you like depending on how you want your prints to look.
5. Carefully place a piece of paper on top of your leaf template.
6. Help your child smooth the paper over the leaves, pressing down evenly throughout, with clean, dry hands. If you like, you can use a (paint-free) rolling pin or dowel to press the paper onto the leaves.
7. Peel off the paper to reveal the beautiful raised veins and edges of the leaves imprinted on the paper.
8. You can make several prints from the same painting. You can re-apply the paint, or make a batch of prints that are consecutively lighter as the paint gets used up, or you can even apply an entirely different color paint on top of the first color to create a layered effect.
9. When you're done, you can display your child's beautiful works of art in your home with pride! They make especially great decorations for the Fall.

Variations: The same technique can be used with wire mesh, lace or netting instead of leaves. Different colors of paint can be mixed on the cookie sheet for a swirl of colors on the leaves. Experiment with different combinations of paper color, paint color, and textures that you think might make interesting prints. You can't really go wrong with this activity!

Note: Moist fresh leaves work well for this activity as well, but use freshly fallen leaves for a more eco-friendly spin. Brayers are art rollers and are widely available at art supply stores and school supply stores.

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