

Coffee Filter Butterflies

Craft butterflies from coffee filters in this sweet spring art project! In this activity, children will transform unused coffee filters into butterflies using watercolors, scissors, and pipe cleaners. The finished paper butterflies make beautiful home (and balcony!) decorations for spring.

What You Need:

- Coffee filters (white)
- Watercolor paints
- Pipe cleaners
- Scissors
- Paintbrushes
- Water
- Spray bottles (optional)
- Markers (optional)

What You Do:

1. Help your child spread out the coffee filters on newspaper or paper plates. You'll be using water and paints (or markers) that will leak through the filters a little, so make sure your activity area is well covered. If you can, try to use "basket filters," as they are already circular in shape with a flat bottom, which makes them easy to flatten out.
2. Let your child experiment with different color and pattern ideas for their butterflies. If possible, read your child a book about butterflies, or show them a picture and encourage them to look carefully at their beautiful wings. What kinds of shapes and lines do they see? Do they see dots? Spirals? Then, let your child go crazy painting the filters with the watercolors.
3. If you want to give this project an extra twist, have your child draw their designs using markers. When they are done, give them a spray bottle filled with water and let them spray the filter. Watch what happens when the water hits the marker. Your child will enjoy watching the colors move and change. The filter will almost look like it has been tie-dyed!
4. Let the filters dry on paper towels (or newspaper).
5. Help your child cut the pipe cleaners in half. (This may be too difficult for children to do on their own, due to the wires!)
6. Have your child take a filter and use their fingers to gather the filter in the center, as if they are pinching it. Wrap a halved pipe cleaner around the gathered area, and then twist it tightly into a corkscrew shape.
7. Take another halved pipe cleaner, bend it at its centerpoint, and wrap it around the first pipe cleaner. You should end up with two pieces jutting out. Bend these pieces so they resemble butterfly antennae.

Your child has just transformed their old coffee filter into a beautiful butterfly! This dramatic change might remind you of an more fantastic one: the metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a butterfly!

