

# NATURE ACTIVITIES

## LEAF PRINTS

Go out and explore with trees! Gather some green leaves and make leaf prints! This activity encourages fun experimentation and tree identification.

**Resources/materials needed:** paper, markers, paint, brushes, green leaves, rolling pin

**Skills:** Cognitive, Motor Skills, Environmental Appreciation, Hand-Eye Coordination, Technical Skills, Art Making Process, Creative Reuse, Tree ID

### DIRECTIONS:

**Step 1:** Go out into your backyard or somewhere in nature and look for green leaves to gather for you leaf prints! You will only need a few, 5-10 leaves depending on how much printing you and your child would like to do. If you know tree identification, write own what kind of leaves you have collected. Research and try to match the leaf to a type of tree online or in a field guide.

While you're out on your adventure, keep an eye out for old growth trees! These trees will have a very large diameter and a great presence! Feel free to hug the tree if it is in an appropriate spot (avoid trespassing and watch out for poison ivy)

**Step 2:** Once you gathered your leaves, it is time to start making prints. Decide whether or not you would like to use markers, paint or both. Instruct your child to color the leaf on one side. The underside works well due to it's prominent vein, but feel free to experiment with both sides. If you are using paint, brush one side thinly. Multiple colors can be painted on and the result may be a surprise!

**Step 3:** Have a piece of paper set up and place the leaves paint or marker side down on the paper. Press down slightly to lock into place. Now get your rolling pin out, and if you



Photo Credit: Rainy Day Art Ideas



Photo Credit: Pickle Bums



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**Step 4:** Take your rolling pin out and roll with some pressure over the leaves. After you have applied pressure and rolled, you can lift the top paper and now lift each leaf off gently from the stem up.

Take note of how your prints turned out. Could it use more pressure or paint? Was there too much? How did the colors mix?



Photo Credit :Fatemas Art Class

**Step 5:** Keep making prints, experiment with their location on the page. Make a design with the leaves on the paper. Maybe you want to make a drawing and have the leaves as hair. Get creative!

**Step 3:** Let the prints dry over night if it is paint and they should be dry the next morning. You can choose to cut individual leaves out and make a collage, or color in areas of the leaf print you wanted to a some color such as the stems. If you can identify what the tree is that the leaf came from, you can make a tree journal, sketch the tree and glue the printed leaf to it with a description and name identifier. There are many possibilities!



Photo Credit: Instructables

**Reflection:** Talk about your experience. Do you like printing leaves? What kind of leaves you collect and print? Can you identify them? How did your color mixing go? Did you have to adjust the pressure applied to make a good looking print?

**Resources:**

<https://www.kcedventures.com/blog/making-leaf-prints-the-quickest-and-most-beautiful-fall-project-ever>  
<https://picklebums.com/easy-leaf-printing/>



Photo Credit: smART Class