

Junior Outdoor Art Explorer Badge- Outdoor

Goal: From murals on buildings to oil paintings of landscapes, art and the outdoors go hand in hand. Let nature be your inspiration as you explore, create, and design different kinds of art.

Notes:

To complete the entire badge, gather these supplies ahead of time:

- An outdoor space
- Art materials of your choosing- magazine clippings, clay, paint, crayons, markers, paper, etc.
- Store bought clay or homemade salt dough (refer to recipe below)
- A nature item of your choosing
- Markers/paint to decorate your finished product!
- String (optional)
- 3 cups flour
- 1 cup salt
- 1 cup water (plus up to 1/2 cup extra water, if needed)
- Food coloring (optional)
- Electric mixer
- Drinking straws (optional)
- Parchment paper or aluminum foil
- Assorted nature items
- Camera/phone
- Milk Carton/Water bottle/large can- other items to build a recycled material bird house
- Decorations for your birdhouse- Sticks, stickers, glue, paper, glitter, duct tape, paint, markers, etc.
- Paper and pencil for designing

Step 1: Explore Outdoor Art

What I'll do: Create Art Inspired by Wildlife

What I'll need:

- An outdoor space
- Art materials of your choosing- magazine clippings, clay, paint, crayons, markers, paper, etc.

How I'll do it:

- Get outside and observe the local wildlife in your area
- Think about the different colors, textures, and animals that you see
- Think about how these features help each living creature thrive in your environment
- Create an art piece—it could be a painting, a sculpture, or a collage—to show a whole new kind of wildlife that would be well suited to your local environment. Maybe a bullfrog

with a wide tail to fan itself during heat waves, or a pigeon that grows a fur coat when it's cold? The sky's the limit!

Step 2: Make Something

What I'll do: Make an Impression. Using clay or salt dough, make an outdoor-themed impression. You might collect leaves or shells, or anything that's unique to the area where you live.

What I'll need:

- Store bought clay or homemade salt dough (refer to recipe below)
- A nature item of your choosing
- Markers/paint to decorate your finished product!
- String (optional)

How I'll do it:

- Press your found objects into the clay or dough, then remove them and return them to the place where they were found.
- Your impression can be dried in the oven on low heat—ask an adult for help—or outside in the sun on a hot day.
- If you'd like to hang your impression (or wear it as a necklace) when it's finished, make a hole at the top for string.

Salt dough recipe

3 cups flour
1 cup salt
1 cup water (plus up to 1/2 cup extra water, if needed)
Food coloring (optional)
Electric mixer
Drinking straws (optional)
Parchment paper or aluminum foil

Instructions:

- 1.) Mix the flour and salt together in a bowl.
- 2.) Add 1 cup of water to the flour mix. To make colored dough, add 15 drops of food coloring to the water before mixing it into the dough.
- 3.) Use the electric mixer to mix the dough on medium speed until a ball forms. If the dough is dry, slowly add water (1 tablespoon at a time) until the dough comes together.
- 4.) Remove the dough; knead it until smooth.
- 5.) Form the dough into disks and make your impressions. If you want to hang your finished project, use a straw to poke a hole at the top.
- 6.) With adult help, preheat the oven to 275 degrees.
- 7.) Bake dough pieces on a foil- or parchment paper lined cookie sheet for 2 hours. Cool completely before handling.



Photo: frugalfamilyhome.com

Step 3: Find Music in Nature

What I'll do: Create "nature's symphony." Make music with items you find in nature.

What I'll need:

- An outdoor space
- Nature items

How I'll do it:

- You might shake a bag of rocks, wave swishy branches, and blow grass whistles.
- Come up with your own beat, or set up an outdoor speaker and play along with your favorite songs!
- When you're done making music, return the items back to the places where they were found.
- Can't get outside? Come up with a new song to sing about the outdoors. Think about the sounds you hear in nature (birds chirping, frogs croaking, leaves rustling, rain drops, etc.)

Step 4: Be a Nature Photographer

What I'll do: Go big and go small. Macro means big and micro means small. Try taking macro and micro shots of outdoor objects by zooming in and out with your camera or phone.

What I'll need:

- An outdoor space
- Camera/phone

How I'll do it:

- Take a series of photos where you get closer and closer in on an object until it's difficult to tell what it is.
- Share your photos with family or friends—see how long it takes them to guess what's shown in the pictures.

- Can't get outside? Take a look at these photos and get inspired!
<https://unsplash.com/s/photos/nature-close-up>

Step 5: Design Outdoor Art

What I'll do: Design a bird, bat, or owl house. Houses for flying friends are not just useful—they can also be works of art. Design a bird, bat, or owl house that will be a welcome shelter and also add to the beauty of nature.

What I'll need:

- Milk Carton/Water bottle/large can- other items to build a recycled material bird house
- Decorations for your birdhouse- Sticks, stickers, glue, paper, glitter, duct tape, paint, markers, etc.
- Paper and pencil for designing

How I'll do it:

- Collect the materials you plan to use
- Design your bird house using a pencil and paper
- Then follow your design and build your bird house
- Decorate your birdhouse and find a place outside to display your art



Photo: Supersimple.com

Where I can purchase the badge: <https://www.girlscoutshop.com/JUNIOR-OUTDOOR-ART-EXPLORER-BADGE>