



girl scouts
of greater chicago
and northwest
indiana



Backyard Outdoor Art Adventures For Girls in Grades K-5

LEAVE NO TRACE

Before starting your outdoor art adventure, get familiar with the Leave No Trace principles. This helps us keep nature safe and protected for everyone to enjoy. You will use Leave No Trace principles throughout your activities.

Seven Leave No Trace Principles

- Know Before You Go
- Stick to Trails
- Trash Your Trash
- Leave it As You Find It
- Keep Wildlife Wild
- Respect Others
- Find more information at Int.org

NATURE DETECTIVE WALK

With this activity you will get creatively inspired from nature!

Know before you go: pick a route in your neighborhood or backyard for a nature walk. Make sure to stick to trails by staying on the sidewalk or path, off of flower beds or delicate surfaces, and respect your neighbor's yards. While on the walk, try any of following three things to get creatively inspired.

DAISY OUTDOOR ART MAKER

Let's play Color Match!

1. Identify what colors everyone is wearing.
2. How many of these colors can you find in nature?
3. See who can find the most matching colors!

BROWNIE OUTDOOR ART CREATOR

Let's use our senses!

1. Write or draw pictures of what you see, feel, hear and smell outside.
2. Ask questions like: Is it sunny, or cool? Can you smell pine needles or damp soil? Can you hear the wind? Does the air have a taste if you stick out your tongue?

JUNIOR OUTDOOR ART EXPLORER

Creative Wildlife

1. While out and about, write notes or draw pictures of the wildlife you see, like dogs, squirrels, or birds.
2. Reflect about the different colors, textures, and body parts you see, and how they help that animal stay alive.
3. Once you make it back home, create your own animal art piece inventing a new kind of creature.
4. Ask what features their new animal has that would help it thrive in nature.



Supplies Needed

- An outdoor space to walk (e.g. your block or backyard)
- Notebook or scratch paper
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils

Time to Complete

- 20-40 minutes

NATURE IMPRESSION



Use clay to make a nature impression keepsake, while leaving no trace!



Supplies Needed

- Clay or salt dough (*recipe below*)
 - 2 cups all-purpose flour (can substitute gluten free flour)
 - 1 cup salt
 - 1 cup water
- Objects found in nature
- An easy-to-clean creative surface, like a table covered with a plastic tablecloth

Time to Complete

- 20-30 minutes

1. Make salt dough (Optional)
 - In a large bowl, stir together the flour and salt
 - Slowly add water while stirring, until the dough looks like play-dough
 - Form the dough into a ball and knead for 5 minutes. You can add more flour if it is too sticky, or more water if it is too dry/crumblly
 - When done, it can air-dry or be baked at 200° F until dry
2. Collect leaves, needles, or other nature objects.
3. Roll out a small ball of dough, then press your object into the dough.
4. **Leave it as you find it:** When done with nature objects, put them back where they were found.
5. Poke a hole in your dough to create a necklace, window hanging, or ornament.
6. Let dough air-dry or bake until hard.
7. Color dough with paint or markers.
8. Safety Notes:
 - Wash hands before and after handling objects from outside.
 - Gloves are a great way to keep hands clean and dry while working on this craft.

MAKING A NATURE SYMPHONY

Explore sounds in nature to create your own musical masterpiece!

1. Go outside and spend a minute listening to the sounds. What do you hear? How many different things can be heard?
2. Try making sounds using objects found in nature.
 - Collect objects outside, such as rocks, twigs, or leaves.
 - Add the objects to a container to make your own DIY maraca, or try creating sounds with the objects as they are.
 - Use the new musical instruments to create a musical beat!
 - Additional ways you can use your musical tunes:
 - a. **Daisy Outdoor Art Maker** - Dance to your new musical tune
 - b. **Brownie Outdoor Art Creator** - Create your own song lyrics and sing along
 - c. **Junior Outdoor Art** - Try playing along to a favorite song
3. When you are ready, try recording your music to enjoy later! (Optional)
4. Remember to **leave it as you find it**, and return any objects that belong in nature to nature.
5. **Trash your trash** and take back anything that does not belong in nature.



Supplies Needed

- Empty containers, such as jars, bottles, or plastic resealable bags
- *Optional: Cellphone with recording capability or audio recorder*

Time to Complete

- 30 minutes

NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

Photographers see nature through a camera lens. Try seeing nature like a photographer!

1. Go outside to your neighborhood or backyard.
2. Try taking pictures of the following:
 - Something you think is pretty, that you found in nature
 - Something you wouldn't expect to find in nature
 - Something at three different times during the day, such as morning, afternoon, and evening
 - Something from the viewpoint of a tiny creature, like an ant or butterfly
 - Something while zoomed out (from far away), and something when zoomed in (really close)
3. Review your photo selection and create a digital album to share with your friends or family.
4. Reflect that this is a great way to **leave it as you find it**, while still saving a memory: "take only pictures, leave only footprints."



Supplies Needed

- Camera
 - A cell phone camera works for this activity
 - No camera? Try sketching out with paper and pencil what you see

Time to Complete

- 15-30 minutes

COMMUNITY WINDOW ART TWO WAYS

Design a piece of art that can be displayed from your window, for everyone passing by to enjoy. It is a great way to **respect others** by showing kindness! There are two ways here to create window art:

Option 1: Permanent Markers

1. Prepare the plastic bag. You can choose to cut away any markings the bag has, leaving a rectangle of clear plastic. Fold tape around the edges to create a border. Sealing the bag closed is OK.
2. Draw on the plastic (tip: place a piece of white paper under the bag to clearly see the drawing) with permanent markers. Use one of the following ideas for inspiration:
 - **Daisy Outdoor Maker** - A “Leave No Trace” picture, showing ways to help protect nature
 - **Brownie Outdoor Art Creator** - Shapes, images, and designs inspired by what you’ve seen in nature, such as birds, animals, leaves, and flowers
 - **Junior Outdoor Art Explorer** - Go online and look at examples of stained glass. Then, using a black permanent marker to create borders and filling in with colored markers, create your own stained-glass image
3. Hang your art piece in a window to show to the whole community!

Option 2: Tissue Paper

1. Prepare the plastic bag. Feel free to cut away the top part of the bag, if it has distracting markings on it
2. Cut out pieces of tissue paper to create a stained-glass style pattern. Ideas for inspiration can be found in Option 1, Step #2
3. Fold tape around the edges to create a border. Sealing the bag closed is OK
4. Hang your art piece in a window to show to the whole community!



Supplies Needed

- An outdoor space to walk (e.g. your block or backyard)
- Notebook or scratch paper
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils

Time to Complete

- 20-40 minutes