



Leaf Rubbings and Stamps

Why do deciduous trees lose their leaves in the fall? When temperatures drop in the winter, these trees drop their leaves instead of spending valuable energy to protect them from frosts.

Fall is a great time to observe the broad diversity in leaves and leaf shapes, and there are many ways we can preserve the images of leaves! Learn how to make rubbings and stamps of the leaves of your neighborhood.

You will need:

For rubbings: Leaves of different shapes and sizes, paper, crayons or oil pastels

For stamping: Leaves of different shapes and sizes, paper, craft paint



Try this activity with leaves in the fall, and with flowers and petals in spring and summer!



Leaf Rubbings:

Step 1: Gather the leaves you've collected, and place them underside up on your work surface. The underside is the side of the leaf where you can more easily feel the **veins**. This side is also where most of the **stomata** of the leaf are located, which are special plant parts that help the plant exchange oxygen and carbon dioxide!

Step 2: Place a sheet of paper on top of the upside-down leaf.

Step 3: Holding the leaf and paper in place, gently rub over the area of paper covering the leaf. Continue until the entire shape of the leaf has appeared!

Step 4: Repeat with more leaves to fill your page and create a work of art documenting the diversity of leaves you've observed!

Leaf Stamping:

Step 1: Gather your leaves on a protected work surface (use a tray or newspaper to keep your surface clean!).

Step 2: Use a brush, piece of foam, or your fingers to paint the lower surface of your leaves.

Step 3: Gently press the leaves, painted-side down, onto sheets of paper. Make sure to press all areas of the leaf so that the entire leaf image transfers, and then remove the leaf.

Step 4: Repeat and enjoy your painted leaf images!

