

OUTside Rocks! Project tips & tricks

Thanks for your interest in OUTside Rocks as a class or group project! Rock painting is a great way to get kids and families out exploring their hometowns.

What you'll need:

- rocks
- paint for decorating rocks (see tips below)
- instructions and tips for the project
- paint brushes
- some type of sealer or top coat to protect rocks from the elements



Optional supplies:

- paint pens for fine detail or lettering
- rub-on tattoos
- paper towel or sponge for applying tattoos to rocks
- primer to help paint adhere
- a sheet of paper labels for the back of your rocks
- Modge Podge or similar product for adhering labels

How to get ralking

1. Collect rocks. Go rock hunting as a group or have students bring in their own rocks.
2. Decorate your rocks as a class or group project. There are a ton of fun techniques out there, so get creative!
3. Share your creations on our OUTside Rocks! Facebook group, so people in your hometown know to look for them. Join the group so you can follow your rocks.
4. Hide your rocks in your community for others to find. Walking paths, trails and parks make great hiding spots.
5. Repeat!

OUTside Rocks! tips and instructions

Here are a few tips and ideas for those of you who are new to ralking.

Rocks

Find rocks in nature or buy them by the bag at a landscaping supply or hardware store. For best results:

1. Before painting, check to make sure rocks are clean and VERY dry. Paint won't stick to a dirty or wet rock.
2. For best results, brush or spray on an **optional** coat of acrylic primer and let dry well.
3. Decorate the front of your rocks. We'd love to see designs that reflect nature and outdoor play, but it's up to you.

4. **On the back of the rock**, use Modge Podge or a similar product to attach one of the paper labels available at saskatchewaninmotion.ca. Alternatively, use paint pens to write the following text:

*Keep or rehide
Share a pic at OUTside Rocks! on FB*

This directs people to our Facebook group and lets them know to share their finds so you can track your rocks.

5. Once paint is dry (we recommend letting them sit a couple of days), add a clear coat to both sides of your rocks to protect your students' work from the elements.



Source: Westman Rocks! on Facebook

Need some inspiration? Check out these links for decorating ideas and more information about rock painting. Pinterest is another great source.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1917195238604373/>

<https://rockpainting101.com/how-to-paint-rocks/>

IMPORTANT

Please **do not glue or attach anything (beads, large glitter etc.) to the rocks**. Birds or small animals might try to eat anything attached to the rocks.

Tools for the job

Here are a few suggestions for materials that work well on rocks and hold up in the elements. Feel free to use your imagination! The options are endless.

Paint - The best options for decorating rocks are:

- acrylic paint pens
- acrylic patio paint applied with a brush
- self-sealing craft paint (no top coat required)
- spray paint (for background colours)
- acrylic craft paint applied with a brush
- rub-on tattoos

We know that **tempera paint** is common in classrooms. If that's what you have, it can be used for rock painting - just **be sure to let it dry very well** before applying a sealer as it will easily reactivate if it gets wet.

For ease, consider spray paint or acrylic paint / patio paint applied with a brush for background colours (not always necessary). Use paint pens for lettering or finer details.

If you feel like getting fancy, try [paint or nail polish](#) pouring for your background. Check out this article about [tempera paint pouring](#) if that's what you have in your classroom.

Sealer – Once rocks are **very** dry, add a coat of outdoor sealer for protection. It's available in spray or brush on versions.

Tips

- If the children in your class group are very young, please feel free to simplify things as necessary. Maybe let them colour the background while you do the word art.
- Drying time is key at each step! We don't want your young artists' masterpieces smeared or smudged.
- Have some hesitant artists in your group? Temporary tattoos, paint pouring techniques or word art are simple ideas anyone can do.

Applying temporary tattoos

Temporary tattoos are a great option for people who don't feel artistic. Follow these steps for best results.

1. Paint background colour if desired and let dry. You can skip this step if your rock is the right colour to show off the tattoo.
2. Peel clear protective sheet off the tattoo and place face down on the rock.
3. Hold a damp (not wet) paper towel on the back of the tattoo for about 30 seconds.
4. Use paper towel to rub the back of the rock until paper starts to slide.
5. Peel paper off the rock.
6. Allow to dry.
7. Apply Modge Podge (or similar product) and allow to dry. You can skip this step if your tattoo does not contain a metallic finish.
8. Apply acrylic spray sealer to weather proof.

A note about Sharpies

Some sites mention Sharpies as a method for decorating rocks. Sharpie **paint pens** are fine but be very careful with any type of regular marker. If you choose this method, take extra care, do some online research and use a sealer that doesn't cause the marker to bleed (some do).

Tips for community groups

Planning a one-time rock painting event? Here are some ways to get around the need to let things dry between steps.

1. If you plan to decorate the rocks with tattoos, paint a base coat ahead of time and have kids apply the tattoos. Paint rocks different colours so kids can pick their rock colour.
2. Have kids decorate the rocks and then send them home with a Dixie Cup of sealer (or something similar) that they could apply once the paint is fully dried. Let families hide their own rocks.
3. Have kids paint their rocks and leave them with you. When they're dry, apply the topcoat, put the Facebook information on the back, and hide the rocks. Alternatively, have kids pick up their completed rocks and hide them.
4. Buy a type of craft paint that's good for the outdoors (sometimes called self-sealing paint). Have kids paint their rocks, take them home and hide them. They may not last quite as long as if they were sealed, but will last longer than regular acrylic paint without sealer.



What's next?

- Track your rocks. Keep up with what happens with your rocks by joining our [OUTside Rocks! Facebook group](#). We'll continue to share rock painting tips and ideas there.
- Paint and hide rocks as often as you like. It's a great way to get your hometown moving. Keep using the back of your rocks to direct people to OUTside Rocks!
- Use our community tools to promote OUTside Rocks! in your hometown. Visit saskatchewaninmotion.ca to download posters and social media content.

Questions?

Send a note to info@saskinmotion.ca.