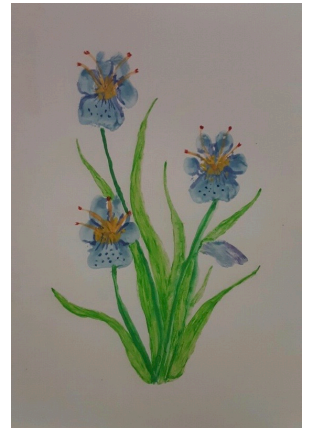




Craft: Paw Print Flower Art

For this craft, you and your dog will create a painting of flowers made from your dog's paw prints. This craft works best with watercolor paints but can be completed using other mediums as well.

1. First, get the dog's paw prints on some paper. You could do one, a few, or a whole bunch of flowers. In the example at right, the flowers are growing in the wild, and not in a vase, so the artists chose to keep all the flowers the same color. There are a few ways to get your dog's pawprints on paper. It may help if you do some practice runs on scratch paper before you make your final imprint.
 - a. Method one: Use a paint brush to apply the paint directly to all 5 pads on one paw. Do so quickly, before the paint dries out on his paw, then place the paw onto the spot where you want the flowers to be. Repeat for additional flowers. It may help to mask the areas that you don't want paint to prevent an unintentional paw drop, drip or smudge. You can use another sheet of paper, post it notes, or plastic wrap for masking. This method gets less paint on the hairs between the toes, for a cleaner print, but you may find that you like the look that the hairs add to the flower in method two.
 - b. Method two: Get your watercolor paint mixed up and fairly wet. On a scrap piece of paper, use a paintbrush to test the degree of saturation (both the intensity of the color and how much water is going to soak into the paper or make a mess). When you've got a good consistency and the right amount of color, place your dog's paw on the pad of paint, and then directly onto the paper. You can press down each toe and the foot pad, to make sure all areas have made contact.
2. Let your pawprints dry and think about how you will draw the stems and leaves. You could cut out the paw shapes from a clear zip-loc baggie, to mask the areas you don't want to paint over, when adding the stems and leaves.
3. Decide where to put the stems and leaves. Use a paintbrush to add them. You may find it helps if you practice painting stems and leaves on scratch paper. Be sure to let each color or layer dry before adding more paint. Otherwise you may end up with some unintentional paint bleed.



4. Add some highlights to the flower to give it depth. Darker makes the area look recessed, lighter makes the area look closer. Then add some color in the center and the Pistil and Stamen. You might look at some actual flowers (like Irises, or Pansies, both of which resemble a paw print) to guide your addition of flower parts and colors.

5. If at any time you make a smudge, or drip some paint onto the paper, it can be removed by taking a clean wet brush or Q-tip to pull the paint off the page. That's the beauty of watercolor!

TIPS: If you get an incomplete impression because the paint has dried out on part of the dog's paw or never got on the pad sufficiently in the first place, you can dip your finger into the mixed paint and reconstruct a toe pad or part of the foot pad with a dab from your finger. When using watercolor paint, you will not see a tell-tale human fingerprint left behind as you would with other types of paint.

If you do choose to use a paint other than watercolor, make sure it is non-toxic and water soluble.

You may get more cooperation from your dog if you give him a treat in advance, rather than as a reward. The paint on his foot may feel funny to him, and if he's busy eating a yummy treat he may not care as much what you are doing with his paw.

