



A Sensory Trust guide

Mud painting can provide a rich, sensory experience – the smell of the mud, the texture, the sounds of mixing it and the different subtle shades. The healing properties of playing with natural properties are amazing!

You will need

- Bowls
- A handful of earth or mud in each bowl collected from your garden or an open space, be sure to collect clean soil, if you are unsure we would recommend using fresh John Innes compost
- Heavy duty or cartridge paper – if this is unavailable use an area of ground where you don't mind it getting muddy or where it can be washed away
- Paintbrushes or make your own with nature, see <https://www.sensorytrust.org.uk/information/creative-activities/painting-by-nature.html>
- Water
- Washing up liquid (not necessary but does make the 'paint' flow)
- Food colouring or paint if you want to add some colour

What to do

- Place a handful of earth in a bowl and mix with a little water to make a muddy consistency.
- Add a squirt of washing up liquid for a better flow of paint.
- Experiment with different consistencies (add more or less water) to see the effect it has on your painting
- If using colours, less mud, more water will bring out the best colour. Powder paint will give the best effect.
- Paint away!





Did you know?

The first pigments for artists paint came from the earth and there are still artists who make a living using actual mud for their art.



Try earth or mud from different areas of your garden, or open spaces to see if you can find different shades of brown. In some areas you may be able to find clay, this will create a grey colour to your art. Remember to collect mud from a place you feel confident it will be clean mud.

Extending the activity

Collect some earth, sieve it through a sieve so you have a finer mix, add an equal amount of PVA glue and water until you have a consistency of yoghurt. Use this to paint onto a canvas or cartridge paper. To use different colours repeat the same technique by using different shades of earth or simply add food colouring. Leave to dry and you have a wonderful original piece of artwork.



Sensory Trust promotes and supports the creation and management of outdoor spaces that can be used and enjoyed by everyone, regardless of age or ability.

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