

Materials:

- Anything from nature: leaves, seed heads, feathers, sheep's wool...the more fluffy/spiky the better
- Small cut twigs – roughly between 5” and 8” (can be any thickness)
- Short lengths of garden twine, string or raffia (plain or coloured); approximately 6” long
- Blank card approximately A4 size
- Variety of paint colours (acrylic paints would be best but can use other types too)
- Wipeable or old tablecloth (to keep work surface clean)
- Jar of water

What to do:

Take a twig and remove any leaves, smaller twiglets from them so that the twig is relatively smooth and easy to grip.

Using the raffia/string/twine, attach items such as feathers, and seed heads by binding them to one end of the twig to make your ‘paint brush’.

Make sure your work surface is covered to protect it from paint splashes and away you go! Paint whatever you like on the card; it doesn't have to be a picture, it can be abstract.

It's not about what you paint but the lines and patterns that you make with your nature paint brush. Try using your ‘brushes’ in different ways, with different strokes and colours or apply a small amount of paint on the card and see what patterns you can make with your brush.

It's not about creating a picture of nature but exploring the patterns that nature can help you make. There is no right or wrong way of doing this activity.



Useful notes

We have found that pine cones and seed heads dipped in paint make great patterns; Feathers are useful for fine details (dipping the quill end in the paint) or long strokes (dipping the vane in the paint), whilst leaves can be painted on and pressed onto the card or attached to the twig to create the paintbrush.

Twigs: different thicknesses of twigs will help people with varying degrees of dexterity so vary the twigs to allow people to choose the most comfortable one for them to hold. You don't want them too short or too long.

You can extend this activity by the following:

See **adding a frame** (see how a little extra work adds a great finish to this activity)

See **keepsake brushes** (the used brush heads make great hanging ornaments; [click here to find out how to keep them](#))

