

Dipped

Take a boring old object and give it a fun new style! In this activity, we'll transform something old that you have at home to have a modern look with a pop of bright color.

Materials:

- Blue painters tape
- Newspaper or plastic sheeting to protect your work surface
- Primer
- Colorful paint with paintbrush or spray paint
- Latex gloves
- Respirator or safety mask

Learning objectives:

- Upcycling
- Considering interior design
- Using paint
- PPE & Safety

Time required: 45+ minutes

Context:

Sometimes it's fun to add something new and colorful to the place we live to brighten it up. There are plenty of DIY (do-it-yourself) projects out there, and this is just one of them! It is a very versatile technique which is an easy way to make something that looks nice, professional, and modern. These projects look like they were simply dipped in paint. But - especially for large objects - you would need a bucket filled with paint in order to do that! Instead, we'll learn some basic painting techniques that can help you paint like a pro!

One reason why we love this project is that it's a great way to **upcycle**. Recycling is turning waste into a reusable material that is of lower quality than the original (usually it gets broken down and reformed). Upcycling, on the other hand, is turning waste into a higher quality product that is of greater value than the original. This is a growing trend in sustainability and material reuse. It is important because it thinks about processing waste products differently, and disrupts the current cycle.

Context:

In this activity, you'll learn some painting techniques. In order to paint like a pro, it is important that you protect yourself like a pro. **PPE** stands for "personal protective equipment." It includes things like gloves, hearing and eye protection, and masks - safety gear to protect us while we're making something. Depending on what you're making, you could be using tools or chemicals that are dangerous or could make us sick. We don't need to use all of the protective gear while we're working - for example, we don't need to protect our hearing while we're painting. It is your responsibility to know what the risks are and how to protect yourself - if you aren't sure, ask an adult who might be able to help. With paint, you can almost always assume it has chemicals in it that are not good to get on your skin. Because of this, we always want to use latex gloves while we're painting. Maybe it seems ok if you get paint on yourself once - but if you keep making things and get paint on yourself 100 times then it could start to be a problem. Because of that, it is important to build good, safe habits to protect ourselves while we're making. The other protection we need to consider while painting is for our lungs. When you're spray painting, the paint is going into the

Context:

air around you. No one wants to breathe in paint. A respirator or safety mask can help to keep those paint particles and nasty chemicals out of your lungs while you're painting. When you're choosing a safety mask, make sure to pick one that actually protects you: there are dust masks that might keep out larger particles like dust but that let smaller paint chemicals through. Make sure you choose one that will protect you while spray painting, in this case.

In this activity, you'll use a primer before you use your colored paint. Primer is usually white and we use it first. Imagine using a crayon or marker on black paper - it might not show up very well, right? Primer is putting a layer of white down first so that when we add our colored layer it is bright and an even color. Before you use your primer or paint, you'll need to mix it (or shake it if spray painting). The paint separates naturally, so we need to mix it really well to get the right consistency. You can mix it by shaking the can (with the cover on really tight!), rolling the can back and forth, or using a paint stick to swirl it in the can. The other step that's

Context:

essential for this project - and any time you want to paint a straight, clean line - is **masking**. We'll use blue painters tape, which is meant for this exact purpose. We put the blue tape right along the edge that we want to paint to. It covers everything beneath it so that no paint can get on it. You can paint over the tape and then when you peel it off at the end you should end up with a very clean and straight line.

Now - let's get started on our project!

Activity:

1. Our first step is to figure out which object to upcycle, and what color paint. Check first if you have leftover brightly colored paint at home that you can use. If you do, you might want to pick an object that would look nice with this color of the paint.
2. To pick an object, look for something in your house that:
 - a. Looks boring or old
 - b. Is not valuable or expensive
 - c. Is in decent shape - not badly broken or falling apart (but ok if it looks worn)
 - d. Consider items like wood stools, framed painting (preferably oil painting, landscape, or still life), vase, wood step ladder, pencils, wooden spoons, or even a container out of your recycling (glass, plastic, aluminum with no sharp edges).
3. Once you pick an object that you'd like to use: **ask for permission if that object is ok to paint!** Make sure you do this BEFORE you start painting because the paint won't come off once you start, and we don't want to ruin anything important or valuable.

Activity:

4. Are you sure you got permission? Did you ask the right person? They understood which object, and that you were going to paint it, and gave you a **clear, unmistakable “yes”**? It can never hurt to double-check.
5. Now you need your paint. If there is some leftover paint available that will work, then use that (just make sure you have enough). If you need to get new paint, you might have a huge selection of colors to choose from. Here are some things to keep in mind while you're picking paint:
 - a. Make sure the paint you choose will work on the material you're painting (you can read the label or ask them at the store). If it's wood, glass, metal, plastic - it might require a different type of paint.
 - b. Pick a color that:
 - i. You like
 - ii. Looks good on the object and has a high contrast

Activity:

- iii. Will look good in the place where you will put the object when it's done (think about the location and colors there)
- iv. Bright colors can look fun and modern. White or neutral colors can look more serious.

6. Ok! Now that you have your **PERMISSION**, the object, and the paint - let's do this! Prepare your work surface (cover it with newspapers or something to protect it in case you drip any paint, which you will). Set up outside if you are using spray paint.

7. Figure out where you want the paint to go to. You can do it $\frac{1}{3}$ of the way from the bottom edge, or whatever you think will look good. Use the blue tape to make a line straight across/around your object (for example, if you're using a painting, do one piece of tape straight across. If you're doing a stool, tape around each leg of the stool). Make sure the tape is flat and pressed down so no paint can sneak under it. If you're using spray paint, cover the top part of your object with newspaper or plastic so that it does not get any spray paint on it.

Activity:

8. Put on your PPE (latex gloves at minimum. If you're spray painting, put on your safety mask).
9. Mix your primer. Paint your first layer of primer. Try to paint an even layer that is thick enough to cover your object, but not too thick that it will take forever to dry. This will make your colorful layer extra bright! Let that dry according to the instructions on the paint can.
10. Once your primer is dry, get ready for your colorful layer. Mix your paint. Paint your bright color, all the way up to the blue tape. Try to paint it evenly, with no streaks. If you want to do a second coat of color, you can paint a second coat.
11. Clean up, including cleaning paint brushes before the paint dries. Leave your painted object on the protected surface to dry.
12. Let your design dry fully. Leave it overnight if you can.

Activity:

13. Once it's fully dry, peel the tape off. Voila!
14. Place/hang your newly upcycled object in its new location!
15. See what other kids have made and share your work at #MadeToHack.

Reflection:

Where are you planning to put your newly upcycled object?

How does it look in that location? Is it what you expected?

What would you do differently next time?

What was your favorite part?

Happy Making!

-Team Hack