

# SAINT LOUIS ART MUSEUM

## Art Quest: Painting Nature

Art: [Landscape](#)

[The Little Mountain Goats](#)

[Study of a Cedar](#)

The three paintings linked above were made over one hundred years ago and were inspired by and feature scenes of nature. Explore different drawing and painting techniques and make your own outdoor scene using paints made from materials found at home.



### Nature Paintings

#### Suggested materials

watercolor paper or construction paper, baking soda or corn starch, water, food dye, container to mix and hold the paints, brushes, rag or paper towel, pencil



#### Homemade paint recipe

For each color of paint, you will need:

1 tablespoon of baking soda or corn starch, 4 or 5 drops of food dye, one tablespoon of water

Mix baking soda or corn starch, food dye, and water in a muffin pan or other small container. For more vibrant colors, add more food dye. If the paints are too runny, add more corn starch or baking soda to thicken the paint.

You may want to begin by making paint in the three primary colors of red, yellow, and blue. To make secondary colors, mix a few drops of red and yellow food dye to make orange paint, red and blue to make purple, and yellow and blue to make green.

#### Instructions for making your nature painting:

Take a sheet of watercolor paper, construction paper, or any thick non-glossy paper. Sketch or lightly draw the main areas or features of your nature or outdoor scene, such as a skyline, an outline of a tree, or rolling hills. Don't worry about including the smaller details. Make sure to have a container of water and a rag or paper towel handy, to rinse the brush as you go back and forth between different colors to paint your outdoor scene. Paint the large areas in the background first, such as sky, mountains, or hill sides. Paint the foreground or the areas in the front last. This allows the areas that have already been painted to dry, and you are less likely to smear any parts of the painting or get your hands messy.



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