

The Fall Craft Afternoon Kit

A printable companion to Easy Fall Crafts for Kids

Print this kit and keep it with the craft supplies. It gives you the five crafts as cut-out step cards, the full supply checklist with every substitution, the age guide, the mess-and-clean-up table, a before-you-start checklist and a page to record what you made — everything you need to run a craft afternoon without scrolling back through the article.

Before You Start

- Pick ONE craft, not five. A finished project beats five half-finished ones.
- Check the drying time. Three of the five crafts need an hour in the middle.
- Put an old shirt on the child — not an apron. Sleeves and collars are where paint lands.
- Cover the work surface with newspaper, not the floor.
- Keep a damp cloth within reach for the first-minute wipe.
- Match the craft to the age using the guide on the next page.

The Five Crafts at a Glance

Craft	Hands-on	Best age	Mess	Shop trip?
Painted noodle sunflower	30 min + drying	4 – 8	Medium	Pasta, googly eyes
Fork-printed autumn tree	15 min	2 – 6	Low	No
Alphabet pumpkins	20 min	3 – 6	Low	No
Scarecrow face	35 min + drying	5 – 10	Medium	No
Leaf printing and coffee-filter leaves	25 min	3 – 10	Low to medium	No

Hands-on time is the time a child is actually working. It does not include the drying stages, which are where most craft afternoons fall apart.

Supply Checklist

Supply	Used for	On hand?
Dried pasta shapes	Sunflower petals	
Acrylic or washable paint	Pasta, trunks, pumpkins	
Cardboard or cardstock	Sunflower and scarecrow bases	
Zip bags	Coating pasta in paint	
Parchment paper	Drying painted pasta	

Supply	Used for	On hand?
Googly eyes	Sunflower centre, scarecrow face	
Glue	Assembling everything	
Forks	Printing the tree canopy	
Clothespins and craft poms	Alphabet pumpkin painting	
Scrapbook paper	Scarecrow hat and nose	
Straw or raffia	Scarecrow hair	
Coffee filters	Coffee-filter leaves	
Leaves from outside	Leaf printing	

Substitutions — If You Are Out of Something

Instead of	Use
Dried pasta	Black beans, dried lentils, or torn paper petals
Acrylic paint	Washable tempera, or food colouring thickened with flour
Cardboard	The side of a cereal box, cut flat
Zip bags	A bowl and a spoon, stirred gently
Parchment paper	A baking tray lined with foil, or newspaper
Googly eyes	Circles of white paper with a marker pupil
Glue	A glue stick for paper; white school glue for pasta and straw
Forks	A cotton bud bundle, or a sponge cut into a fork shape
Clothespins and poms	A cotton bud held in fingers, or a small sponge
Scrapbook paper	Patterned wrapping paper or a magazine page
Straw or raffia	Shredded brown paper, or dried grass
Coffee filters	Thin kitchen paper, folded double

Craft Step Cards — Cut Along the Lines

1. Painted Noodle Sunflower

Shake pasta in a zip bag with yellow and orange paint. Spread on parchment and dry one hour. Draw and paint a brown circle on cardboard; paint a green stem. Glue pasta around the circle, then black beans in the centre. Add googly eyes.

2. Fork-Printed Autumn Tree

Draw and colour a brown trunk on cardstock. Pour red, orange, yellow and brown paint onto a plate. Dip the back of a fork and press prints around the branches, reloading each time. Add prints along the bottom for fallen leaves.

3. Alphabet Pumpkins	Draw a vine with eight to twelve coin-sized pumpkins. Write one letter in each. Clip a craft pom into a clothespin, dip in orange paint. Call a letter; the child finds and paints that pumpkin. Continue until all are filled.
4. Scarecrow Face	Cut a large circle from cardboard and paint it; dry. Cut a hat and triangle nose from scrapbook paper. Glue on googly eyes, nose and a marker mouth. Glue straw along the top edge for hair, press for ten seconds, then glue the hat to the back.
5. Leaf Printing and Coffee-Filter Leaves	Collect flat leaves with strong veins. Paint the veined side thinly, press face-down on paper, cover and rub firmly, then peel from the stem end. For filter leaves: dot a coffee filter with markers, spray lightly with water, dry flat, then cut into leaf shapes.

What Each Age Can Do Alone

Age	Alone	Needs you for	Best craft
Under 2	Fork printing with a hand-over-hand start	Paint pots, glue, scissors	Fork-printed tree
2 – 3	Fork printing, dotting markers, pressing leaves	Cutting, precise gluing, bag-painting pasta	Fork tree, filter leaves
4 – 5	Painting pasta, gluing pasta, painting pumpkins	Base shapes, cutting cardboard, the hat	Noodle sunflower, alphabet pumpkins
6 – 8	The whole sunflower and scarecrow	Thick cardboard; any hot-glue step	Scarecrow, noodle sunflower
9 – 12	Everything, plus their own design	Nothing — hand over supplies and step back	Scarecrow, leaf printing

For a child under three, do the first two prints with your hand over theirs, then let go. It teaches the motion in fifteen seconds and prevents the frustration that ends the activity early.

Mess and Clean-Up

Craft	Real mess	Put down first	Clean-up
Fork-printed tree	Low	Newspaper under the paper	Washable paint wipes off with a damp cloth
Alphabet pumpkins	Low	Nothing much	Wipe the clothespin and pom
Coffee-filter leaves	Low to medium	A rimmed tray — water spreads	Rinse the tray; marker stains bare wood
Noodle sunflower	Medium	Newspaper over the whole surface	Painted pasta drops paint crumbs — sweep after
Scarecrow face	Medium	Newspaper plus a bin for straw	Shake the newspaper straight into the bin

Drying, Storing and Keeping

- Painted pasta needs a full hour, spread in one layer. Piled up, the pieces stick and the paint never sets.
- Cardboard warps when it dries unevenly. Paint both sides, or weight the finished piece under a book overnight.
- Leaf prints are dry in ten minutes — thin paint is the reason. This is the one you can hang the same afternoon.
- Coffee-filter leaves need pressing. An hour under a heavy book turns a curled filter into a flat leaf.
- Store flat, not stacked. A folder or shallow box keeps everything intact; a drawer pile does not.
- To keep the scarecrow past November, seal it with matte craft varnish or a thin white-glue wash.

When It Goes Wrong

Problem	Why	The fix
Pasta will not stick	Too much glue makes it slide	Less glue, press for ten seconds, let it set before the next piece
Fork prints look like blobs	Too much paint on the fork	Wipe the fork on the plate edge before each print
Leaf print has no veins	Paint filled the veins	Use less paint and press harder — veins must stay open
Filter colours turned muddy	Too much water or too many colours	Two or three colours and a light spray
Scarecrow hair falls off	Glue still wet when the hat went on	Glue the hair, wait five minutes, then add the hat
Child lost interest	Craft pitched at the wrong age	Switch to the fork tree or filter leaves — both finish in one sitting

What We Made

Date	Craft	Who made it	Where it lives now

Next Autumn's List

Write down the crafts you did not get to this year, and anything you would change next time. Keep this page with the supply box so it is there when the leaves turn again.

Craft to try next year

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Supplies to Restock Before Next Autumn

Supply	Ran out?	Buy before next year
Dried pasta shapes		
Washable paint — red, orange, yellow, brown		
Cardstock and cardboard		
Googly eyes		
White school glue and glue sticks		
Craft poms and clothespins		
Coffee filters		
Scrapbook paper		

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