PROJECT #54

MAKE A SCRATCH-OFF PAINTING



To make a scratch-off painting, you will need:

A paper plate or some other thick paper that can handle paint.

Oil pastels or crayons

Black acrylic or tempera paint

A palette (you can make one on anything including paper, foil, plastic cups, an old plate, a piece of cardboard)

A paintbrush

A cup of water

Some napkins

A trash can or wastebasket

A toothpick or something to scratch with (a fingernail, piece of card, a comb, spoon, fork, or the other end of your paintbrush)



Hi, I'm B, and one of the reasons I like making art so much is that when you get really focused on doing something, all of the other worries and stresses kind of fall away. It's almost like meditation. That's why I like these scratch-off paintings so much.



This style of painting is known as *sgraffito*, a form of painting that involves scratching through a layer of (usually wet) paint to reveal what is underneath.

They're more experimental and spontaneous than what you normally think of when you think of a painting, and by occupying your imagination, your mind doesn't have enough time to dwell on thoughts that don't serve you.

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Step 1 of 8

Here we go!

First, go ahead and grab your oil pastels or crayons. Start coloring the paper plate with colors. Feel free to create any pattern with your colors. You can go in rainbow order or be more abstract in your color placement like me.

Make sure to cover the paper completely. The goal is to cover all of the white.

If you're using oil pastels, you might notice that pressing down on them creates "dust" (see photos on the right). That's just the pastel breaking apart a bit. Go ahead and shake the dust off into a trash can. Be sure not to wipe the dust with your hand or blow it off your plate (this can be very messy!).



Step 2 of 8

Once you have colored the paper, go ahead and pour out some black paint onto your palette. Start with a little bit – you can always pour more out if you need it.

Before painting, dip your paintbrush in your water, then dab it on a napkin. This way, you prevent your paint from becoming too watery, which will make it harder to cover all of the color.



Step 3 of 8

Begin to cover your colored paper with thin coats of black paint until the black dries completely opaque.

It took me 3 coats of black paint to cover my plate completely.

After your last coat, let your plate dry completely.

I mentioned before that *sgraffito* usually involves scratching through *wet* paint. I definitely encourage you to experiment with that.

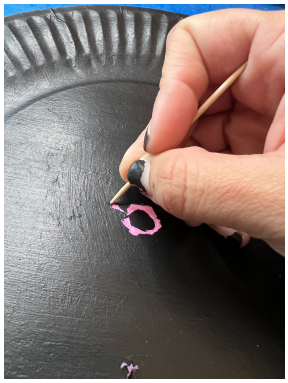
However, I chose to scratch off dry paint because it's a little easier to start with if you haven't done this form of painting before, and it's a little less messy.

Step 4 of 8

If you're waiting for the paint to dry, this would be a perfect time to clean up your supplies. Go ahead and wipe off the paint from your brush and your palette and toss it in the trash. You never want to wash paint down the sink.

After you've wiped your brush, feel free to wash the bristles with a gentle soap. Don't forget to rinse out your cup of water and throw away any dirty napkins.

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Step 5 of 8

Finally, we're ready to start our scratch-off!

Grab your toothpick/scrapey thing and start scratching off the black paint. You can make any design you desire, or you can just experiment with lines. When you scratch off the black paint, you should see your colors coming through from the bottom layer.

Don't limit yourself to just using a toothpick — feel free to use things with a broader edge in order to reveal bigger patches of color. Just be careful to not rip through your paper.



Step 6 of 8

As you work on your scratch-off painting, I hope you find a sense of calm, even if for a moment.

There's something about seeing an assortment of colors shine through the solid layer of black paint that reminds me of how our minds can become darkened by thoughts that try to convince us we're not as magical as we truly are… but even then, there is always a way to let our true light shine through. We just have to be willing to dig through the muck to get through to the good. Or scratch through the muck in this case.



Step 7 of 8

After you've scratched off a design, dust off any paint residue into the trash.

If you want to, you can always take this project a step further by painting another color on top of the black and then scratching into that color once it dries. You can make as many layers as you wish.

Thanks for joining me today. Remember to have fun and good luck experimenting!

Step 8 of 8

Do you want to share your scratch-off painting in our gallery? We'd love to see it!

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