

How to Make a Nature Journal

For the activities below, you will need some paper to draw and write on. There is no better way to keep track of all of your nature drawings and writings than to make a Nature Journal! Making your very own Nature Journal is easy, just follow the directions below.

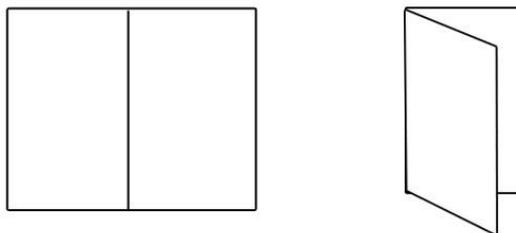
*You can also use a regular notebook as a Nature Journal, or just use some paper and a pencil

Materials:

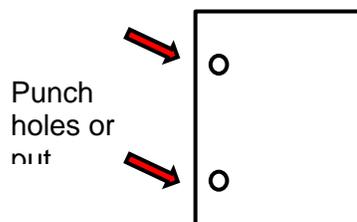
- 8 pieces of blank paper
- Hole puncher or stapler
- String, yarn, or staples

Directions:

1. First, grab 8 pieces of paper and make sure they are all stacked evenly.
2. Fold all of the papers in half widthwise, making sure all of the edges are even.



3. Next, use a hole puncher to make holes through the folded papers. Make one hole near the top and one near the bottom OR if you are using a stapler, put a staple near the top and bottom of the folded paper.



4. If you used a hole puncher, grab some string and tie it through the holes, binding all the papers together.
5. Lastly, write "Nature Journal" in large letters across the cover, and decorate it with drawings of your favorite plants, animals, or scenery. You can even use glue or tape to put leaves or twigs on the cover of your journal.

My Field Journal

Start your journal with the same information each day:

Your Name

Date and time

Location (where you are)

Weather (is it hot or cold? Windy? Cloudy? Has it recently rained?)

Remember animals are very secretive. You have the best chance of seeing things if you are quiet.

Pick a prompt or two below that interest you and explore it using your nature journal.

Birds

There are many birds that live in our area. Some of these are year-round residents; others spend only the summer or winter here. Still others only pass through as they migrate in the spring and fall. Find a good area and sit quietly, outside or by a window, for at least 5 minutes. Look and listen for birds and for evidence of birds such as their songs, droppings, nests, feathers, tracks. Draw/describe in detail one bird or bird sign that you see. Why are the birds here? What do you think they are singing about?

Plants

Find a tree or plant with rough bark. How does it feel against your hand? Against your cheek? Find several other interesting textures and draw pictures or use words to describe each of them.

How many shapes of leaves can you find in your house or yard? Can you find a leaf that has been chewed? Draw a picture of each shape you find.

Crawlies

Look for different kinds of ants. Make sure to stand a few feet away from them when observing. Where are they? Look on the ground, in trees, in bushes--anywhere! List some differences you see among the ants. Shape? Color? Size? Location? Draw one as detailed as possible.

Tiny intruder, eater of leaves, protected in a ball of armor. Can you find any roly polys (pillbugs)? What happens when you pick one up? Draw or describe them in your journal.

Other

Can you make a rainbow? See how many colors you can find around you. Glue or tape samples in your journal to create your own rainbow. Use colored pencils to capture colors for those you cannot catch, like the sky or a butterfly.

Sit outside or look out a window for 5 minutes and quietly observe. What do you see, hear, feel? Write a poem or short story about it.