

TARRAWARRA FIELD GUIDE

Making

Paint & Ink



TARRAWARRA
MUSEUM
OF ART

Wominjeka. Welcome to TarraWarra Museum of Art.

TarraWarra Museum of Art acknowledges the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation as the original custodians of the lands and waters on which the Museum stands. We extend our respect to their community, their Ancestors and their Elders past, present and emerging.

Tarrawarra is a Woiwurrung word that translates approximately as 'slow moving water' and is the name of the area in which the Museum is located.

TarraWarra Museum of Art's founding patrons, Eva Besen AO and Marc Besen AC, generously gifted the building that houses the Museum and donated a significant proportion of their collection of modern and contemporary Australian art for the enjoyment of all visitors.

Building on the Eva and Marc Besen gift, TarraWarra Museum of Art actively engages in art, place and ideas, where unexpected links between contemporary art and modernism are presented within global, national and Indigenous contexts.

We value the immersive atmosphere of our non-urban environment which provides an inspiring retreat for the imagination and unique artistic encounters.

TarraWarra Museum of Art Education's Field Guide publication series supports the development of skills needed to make, do, think, imagine and create. With an emphasis on exploring the outside world, TarraWarra Museum of Art Field Guides are intended to inspire creativity and foster deeper connections to making.

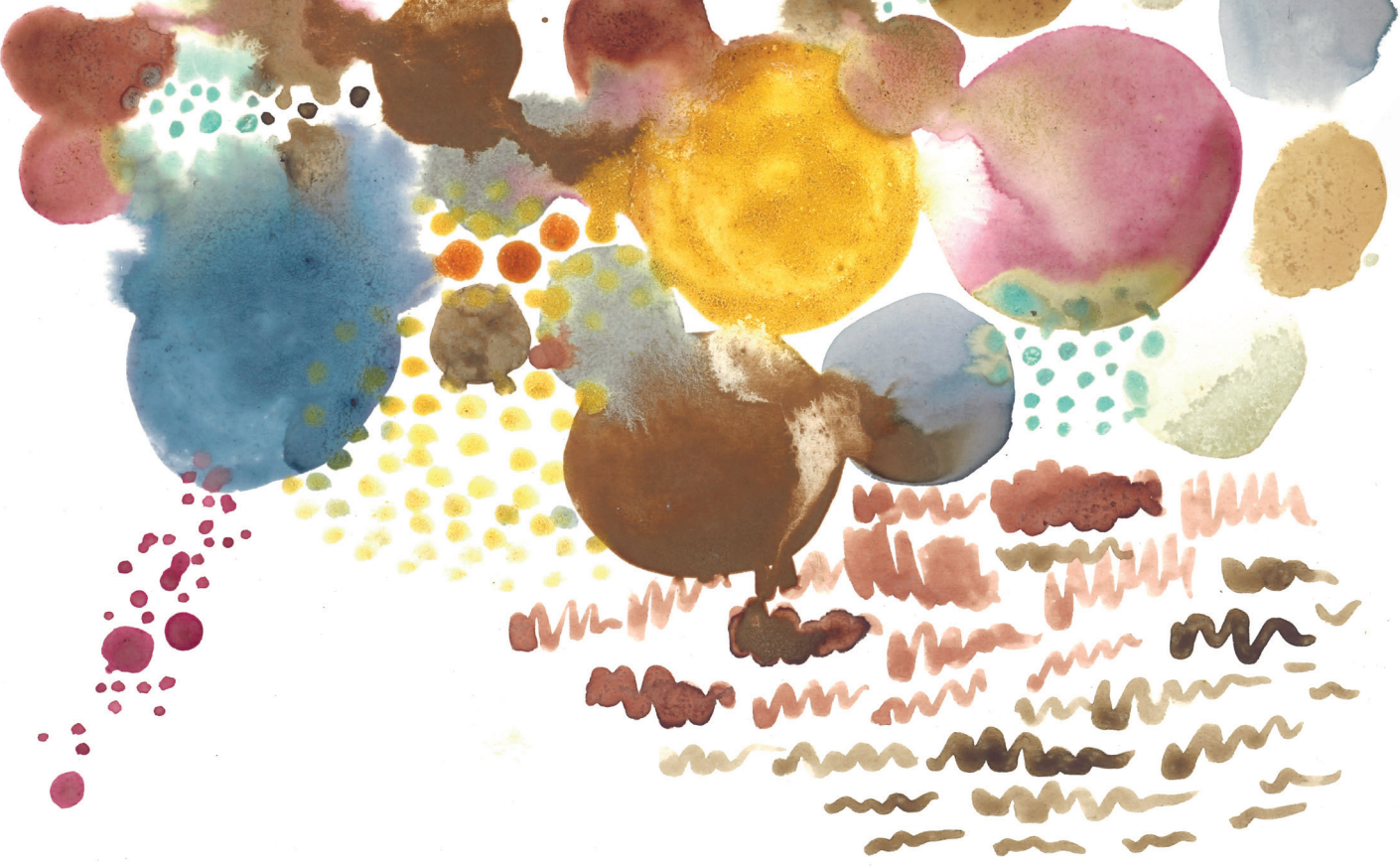
The activities, ideas and prompts in these pages have been designed to stimulate exploration and experimentation with things found in the natural world, as well as around the home, to create an array of paints and inks.

The activities, ideas, prompts, materials and tools discussed in this TarraWarra Museum of Art Field Guide should be approached with safety always as a priority. Children must be supervised by an adult at all times. The TarraWarra Museum of Art does not accept liability for any accident, injury, loss or damage incurred by anyone in reliance on the information or advice provided in this publication. Health and safety advice should be sought from medical and safety professionals.

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THINK LIKE
AN ARTIST,
CROSSED WITH
A SCIENTIST

What is the difference between paint and ink?

This is quite a tricky question. Paint and ink can be very similar to each other.

Paint is usually thought of as being opaque, meaning it covers the surface of something and is not see-through. Ink is usually thought of as being transparent, meaning you can see through it. But, as an artist and a scientist, you can choose whether your creations are paint or ink, or a combination of the two! Inkaint? Or Paink? Or Painty Ink? Or Inky Paint?

Can you really make your own paint and ink?

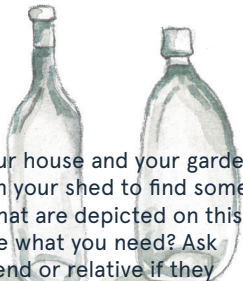
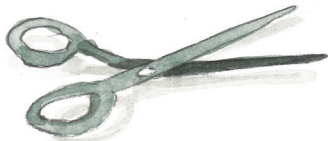
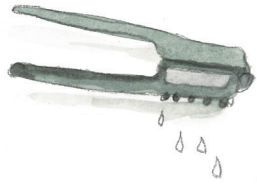
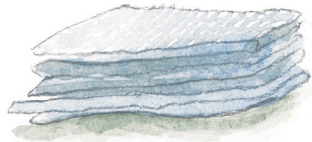
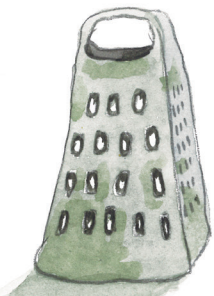
YES, YOU REALLY CAN! Making your own paint and ink doesn't have to be a very technical or complicated process; it can be great fun and very simple. You can make basic paint and ink from things that you find outside or materials that you have at home.

You'll find ideas on how to create your own paints and inks in this Field Guide. All you need to do is to think like an artist, crossed with a scientist! Harnessing your own creativity and curiosity as you carry out your painterly and inky experiments will help you to make the most amazing discoveries ... Always have an adult supervise when creating your own paints and inks. The paint and ink making experiments at the end of this Field Guide involve chemical reactions, or require heat, and you should definitely ask for help from an adult to do these experiments safely. Always remember to be very careful when making paint and ink. Working outside in the fresh air, wearing safety glasses and gloves, washing your hands regularly and remembering not to taste the paints and inks you make will all help to keep you safe. Have fun collecting colour and creating with your friends and family.



What tools do I have at home?

Look around your house and your garden, or take a peek in your shed to find some of the objects that are depicted on this page. Don't have what you need? Ask a neighbour, friend or relative if they have a particular tool you can borrow. Remember to return it once you are finished using it!



Where do I even start?

You can use just about anything to create your own paints and inks:

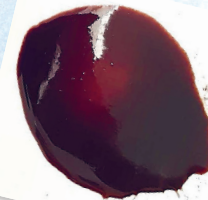
- See if you have any tea, coffee, spices, other pantry staples, fruit or vegetables at home to experiment with.
- Next time you go shopping, ask if you are allowed to buy a few bits and pieces to make your own paints and inks from.
- Step out into your garden, scour your nature strip or scout out your local park looking for all sorts of botanicals; acorns, flower buds, petals, grasses, leaves, succulents ... then smash them up! Can you squeeze out any juice to use as 'ink'?

- Search along the edges of paths, tracks, or recently disturbed ground for pieces of charcoal or coloured rock that you can grind down into a fine powder to create your own dry pigment. Further along in this Field Guide you will find instructions of what to do with your collections of materials.
- Dig down! There is coloured earth beneath your feet.
- Collect old jars or containers to store your mixtures in. You should always label any concoctions you make—and store them in the fridge—because it can be hard to remember what that strange, smelly mixture is a few weeks after making it. Keeping your paint and ink mixtures cold will help them to last longer!

Preparing what you find:

Dry materials such as coffee, spices, coloured rock, clay and charcoal will need to be ground into fine powders before they can be used to make paint. If you have a mortar and pestle, you'll be able to make very, very fine dry pigment particles, however a smooth stone and a wooden rolling pin can also be used to grind, smash and pulverise dry materials to create paint pigment!

Wet materials such as fruit, vegetables and botanicals will need to be crushed, smashed or grated first. Once you've transformed your wet material into a pulpy mess, put it in a cloth—an old t-shirt rag or dish cloth works perfectly—and squeeze out every bit of juice into a jar. This juice is your very own 'ink'!



Let's look in the kitchen!

There are lots of different things in your kitchen cupboards, pantry, fridge or fruit bowl that can be used to make paints and inks. Make sure to ask an adult before you help yourself to:

- Tea (tea bags or loose leaf tea), coffee, spices such as turmeric, curry powder, black pepper, cinnamon, ground cumin, paprika ...
- Fresh fruit and vegetables such as red cabbage, beetroot, carrot, pumpkin pulp and seeds, turmeric root, pomegranate arils, peels and skins of passionfruit, avocado, brown onions, red onions ...
- Corn flour and plain flour to use as bases to make thicker paints. Mix water, a little washing up liquid and some flour with your chosen kitchen colourant to create paint!
- Vinegars, salt, red wine, orange juice, milk, eggs ...

DID YOU KNOW?!

Milk and eggs? Painters have mixed their dry paint pigments with egg yolk—the yellow part of a raw egg—for hundreds of years. This kind of paint is called tempera. Sometimes artists use cow's milk, instead of egg yolk, to make tempera.

Egg yolk and milk are very early forms of paint mediums. A medium is a liquid, or viscous substance, that tiny particles of dry pigment can be suspended in to

create paint. There are lots of mediums to try that can be found around the home such as tap water, cooking oil, PVA glue, egg yolk, milk, yoghurt, or even shampoo! Some mediums will make the paint thick and gluggy, while others might make it lovely and smooth. You can try experimenting with different mediums to see what you like best.



CAN YOU GUESS WHAT KINDS OF THINGS FROM THE KITCHEN WERE USED TO CREATE THESE COLOURFUL EXPERIMENTS?





Let's go for a walk outside and see what we can find!



There are lots of different things outdoors, waiting to be found and unearthed, that you can use to make paints and inks. Look out for:



RUSTY OBJECTS like bottle tops, nails and screws. Leave them in a jar with some salt and water for a few weeks until the water turns a deep brown colour.



GRASS. There are SO many different types of grass and each one you find might produce its own distinct colour when pulverised and juiced.



GUM LEAVES, FLOWERS (of all different shapes, colours and sizes), succulents, berries, seed pods and nuts.



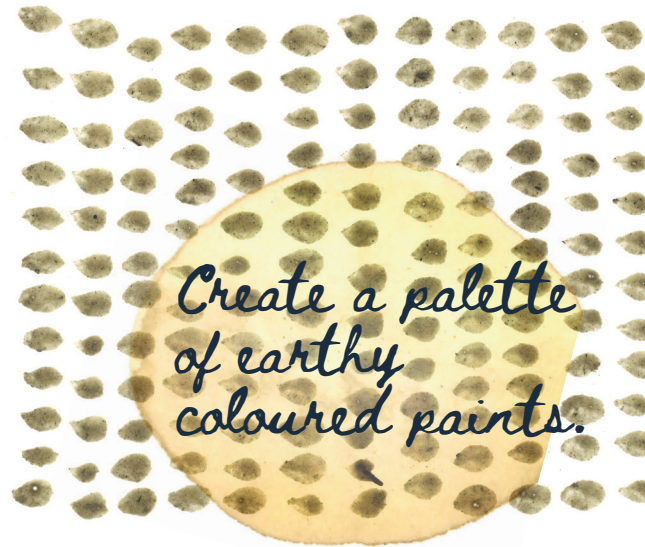
Remember! If you collect natural materials from a public park, garden or nature strip, make sure you only take a small amount. It's best not to pick flowers or plant parts from private gardens in your neighbourhood, unless you have permission from the garden's owner first.

EARTH, dirt, soil, ground—whatever you want to call the stuff under your feet—is perfect for paint making!

There are all sorts of different minerals in the earth that give clays, soils and rocks their own distinct colours. You may notice that in some places the ground appears to be red, rich chocolatey brown, almost black, very pale yellow or even chalky white.



Did you find any chunks of yellow, orange or reddish rock that are chalky to touch and leave traces of colour when rubbed on concrete? These rocks are great to grind up because they contain natural ochre, the most ancient and original art material. Ochre has been used by Indigenous artists in Australia for over 60,000 years! If you're lucky enough to find some coloured pieces of rock you can use them to draw directly onto a hard wood or stone surface, or grind some of the rock down into a very fine powder to mix into a paint.



Create a palette of earthy coloured paints.

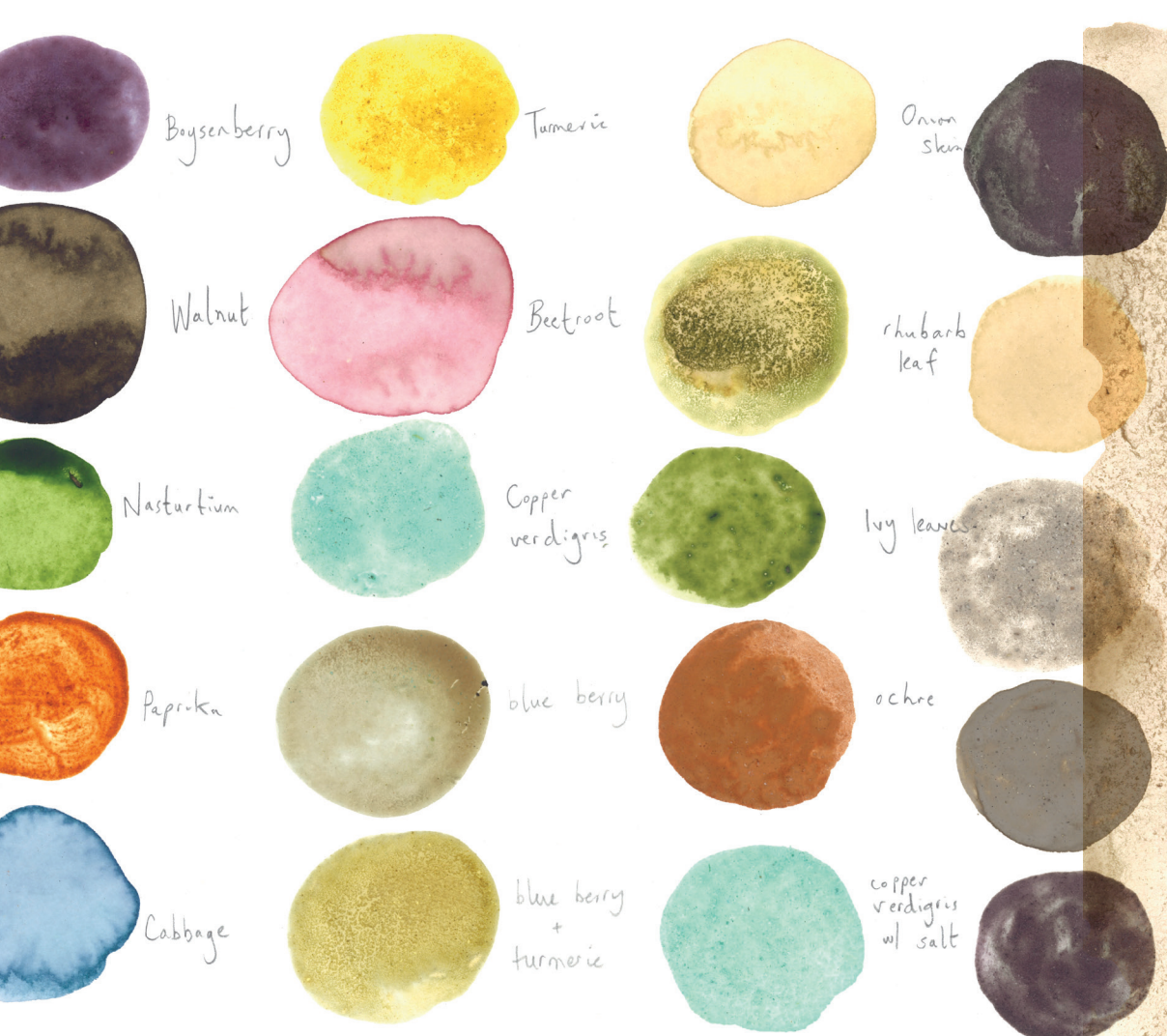
Challenge yourself to find at least three different coloured clays or soils in your neighbourhood.

Use an old teaspoon to dig down into the ground and scoop the clays and soils you find. Dry the clay and soil out in the sun, before grinding each into the finest powder that you can. Put each powder into a different jar.

Next, add a little water to your different coloured powders and mix until you create a paste. Your clay and soil paints are now

ready to brush onto paper, wood, fabric or stone. If you need to, add more water to make a smooth, flowing consistency. If your earthy paints don't stay put when your artwork dries—and easily brush off or fall off in clumps—you will need to add a medium to the water that you mixed your powders with. Try PVA glue, egg yolk or a little oil.

Keep track of what you use, so that you can try your winning earthy paint recipes again, and avoid recreating the ones that don't work so well!



All the colours of the rainbow.

CAN YOU MAKE GREENS?
 YELLOWS? PINKS? PURPLES?
 ORANGES? BLUES? REDS?

See how many different colours you can make.

*Brown, brown, beautiful brown!
 We love brown.*

Don't forget about how awesome brown can be. Tree trunks, dogs, birds, hair, eggs, house bricks, dirt roads, horses, old boots, cups of tea and cooked sausages CAN ALL BE BROWN!

As you experiment creating your own paints and inks, you'll be sure to make some 'yucky' colours. But don't despair, you could just turn them into one of the millions of beautiful brown things in the world. This way you can't go wrong!



It's fun to involve other people in your creative experimentation.

Here are some ideas that you will need help from an adult to carry out safely:

Green/Blue Verdigris. Soak an old copper spoon in an open jar of vinegar, and another copper spoon in a jar with water and then leave them for a few days, or even a few weeks. This should result in the build-up of some greenish/blue stuff called Verdigris, which can be really beautiful when painted onto paper. You could experiment using the Verdigris with different mediums.



Sunset Colours with Onions. Collect lots of brown and/or red onion skins. Pack the skins into a saucepan with 1 cup of water. Bring to the boil. Simmer for 20 minutes and cook the skins down. Leave to cool with the lid on. Strain the coloured liquid into a jar and label. Experiment with diluting this concentrated oniony liquid with different amounts of water.

Stunning Raspberry Pink with Beetroot. Bring 1 chopped up beetroot to the boil in 3/4 cup of water. Simmer for 20 minutes. Leave to cool. Strain coloured liquid into a jar.

Purple/Blue with Cabbage. Bring 1 cup of chopped up red cabbage to the boil in 3/4 cup of water. Simmer for 20 minutes. Leave to cool. Strain coloured liquid into a jar. Try painting cabbage ink onto paper by itself, and then see what happens if you brush some lemon juice or vinegar over the top.

Deep Salmon Pink with Avocado Pits. Carefully chop up two avocado pits (seeds). Put into a saucepan with 3/4 cup of water and 1 teaspoon of soda ash (washing soda). Bring to the boil. Simmer for 20 minutes. Leave to cool. Strain coloured liquid into a jar and label.

A NOTE ON PAPER ...

You might like to try experimenting with different types of paper. Thicker paper will absorb more paint and ink than very thin paper will. The colours of the paints and inks you make will appear more vivid on very white paper, than they will when applied to cardboard or coloured paper.

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