

BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL · GRADES 1–4

After-School Craft Pack

8 low-cost, low-prep ideas

Materials you'll have on hand

Most of these crafts use the same basic kit: paper, card, glue, scissors, paint, string, sellotape. None need expensive specialist supplies. Each takes 30–45 minutes.

Crafts 1–4

1. Friendship bracelets

Cut three lengths of embroidery thread (or string). Tie at one end. Plait or knot in patterns. Tie around a friend's wrist. There are dozens of pattern videos online.

2. Paper plate masks

Cut eye-holes in a paper plate. Add ears, beak, fur with extra paper or felt. Attach elastic. Make any animal — children get inventive.

3. Salt dough models

Mix 2 cups flour, 1 cup salt, 1 cup water. Knead into a dough. Mould into shapes — letters, animals, jewellery. Bake 2 hours at low temperature, or air-dry overnight. Paint when dry.

4. Cardboard tube rocket

Toilet roll tube. Add a paper cone for the nose, paper triangle fins for the tail, paint silver. Attach paper streamers to the bottom for flames.

Crafts 5–8

5. Cardboard loom weaving

Cut notches in a piece of cardboard. Wind wool around — that's the WARP. Then weave another wool over and under in different colours — the WEFT. End with a small handmade textile.

6. Pebble painting

Smooth pebbles + acrylic paint = endless designs. Ladybirds, monsters, faces, patterns. Seal with PVA when dry. Display on a 'kindness rock' wall — children leave them in the playground for others to find.



7. Paper bag puppets

A paper lunch bag becomes a puppet. Add face on the flap, body on the front. Mouth opens when child puts hand in. Make a whole cast — perform plays for parents.

8. String and pin art

Wood block + small nails (adult hammers them in) + coloured thread. Children wind thread around nails to make geometric patterns. Mathematical and meditative.

Tips for running craft sessions

- Cover tables with old newspapers — saves cleaning later
- Have a 'finished' shelf for drying work
- Set up materials BEFORE children arrive — a stressful start ruins the session
- Display finished work — encourages effort
- Don't focus on perfection. Focus on the experience and the conversation while crafting.

