

# Sun Prints



VIRGINIA  
**AQUARIUM**  
& MARINE SCIENCE CENTER

*Use the power of the sun to make art.*

## Duration

Preparation: 5 minutes

Activity: 2 – 4 hours

## Supplies

- Black or dark colored construction paper
- Tape
- Various toys or household items

## Background

The color in an object (construction paper) is made up of chemical bonds. Ultraviolet rays found in sunlight have the power to break those bonds. This will cause the object to lose its color or become dull.

## Instructions

1. Tape a piece of black (or dark) construction paper in a sunny spot outside.
2. Place household items on top of the paper that are heavy enough to not get carried by the wind. Try fun shapes such as buttons, toy cars, or model dinosaurs.
3. Let the paper sit in the sun for 2 – 4 hours.
4. Come back and discover how the power of the sun made art on your paper.

## Vocabulary

**chemical bonds:** the attraction that make all things stick together

**Ultraviolet rays:** Invisible rays that are part of the energy that comes from the sun

## Extension

Select different areas around your yard that will get varying amounts of sun to set up paper and materials. Make sure to mark the paper with the location. Compare the sun prints to see which ones received the most sun or least amount of sun. How did this change the print? Discuss the differences between these locations with your child. Does this location receive shade from trees or structures? What time of day did you do the experiment and did the location of the sun impact your prints?

Try this same extension at different times of the day – morning versus afternoon.