
10 CREATIVE BOOSTS TO TRY IN 10 MINUTES OR LESS

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Our Daily Craft

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Introduction



I think creativity is a vital part of life. It makes me crazy when people say they aren't creative, because the very act of navigating the modern world, being a parent, successfully getting through the day means you're creative in some way.

A lot of people equate being creative with being crafty, but there are a lot of ways to be creative that don't necessarily involve crafts. I think of being creative as making something, thinking about something in a different way, trying something new.

Another thing that gets in the way of people thinking they are creative is time. If you don't have time to sit down and paint a whole painting, sew a dress or make a sculpture, you feel like creativity is not for you. It's a luxury reserved for people without kids, spouses, jobs, whatever.

But the truth is, you do have time to be creative. Even you.

And you and your family will be better for it if you do take time to be creative, even little tiny chunks of time.

This ebook is all about how to carve out little bits of creative time for yourself and what to do with them once you get them. I've got 10 great ideas to get you started, but once you get creative about finding time you'll come up with your own ideas for how to use it as well.

Do you have a favorite activity from this book or something you already do when you need a little creative burst? I'd love to hear about it. Please feel free to email me with comments or questions at sarah@sarahewhite.com.

Finding Creative Time



The good news is, you don't always need a lot of time to get creative. Sure, a big project is going to take a lot of time, but you can still accomplish something even in little spans, 10 minutes or less.

It wouldn't be that hard to find 10 minutes, would it? You could wake up that much earlier or go to bed that much later and you'd hardly even notice it.

Other ideas for finding a little time include:

- Actually taking your lunch break and doing something creative with a bit of it
- Working on something creative while waiting in the school pick-up line or at an activity for the kids
- Sneaking in some time while the kids watch TV or do their homework
- Letting the chores slide one evening a week
- Taking a creative break instead of a coffee break at work
- Locking yourself in the bathroom

- Grabbing a few moments while the kids are playing and don't need you
- Taking 10 minutes after the kids go to bed before you turn on the TV or computer

I'm sure you can see pockets of time in your own schedule where you might be able to take 10 minutes for yourself. Get creative and find one today, then choose one of these activities to get you started.

1. Doodle, Draw or Sketch



I [love to doodle](#). It's a great way to jumpstart thinking because it's a little meditative, and you're focused but not really thinking, so you can come up with great ideas while you're doing it.

You don't need any supplies at all for doodling other than some kind of paper and some kind of writing device. Pencil on your notebook, crayons on a piece of newspaper, a highlighter on the back of a receipt, whatever you have handy is a great place to start.

You can get fancy pens and paper, of course, but this is about using what we have where we are.

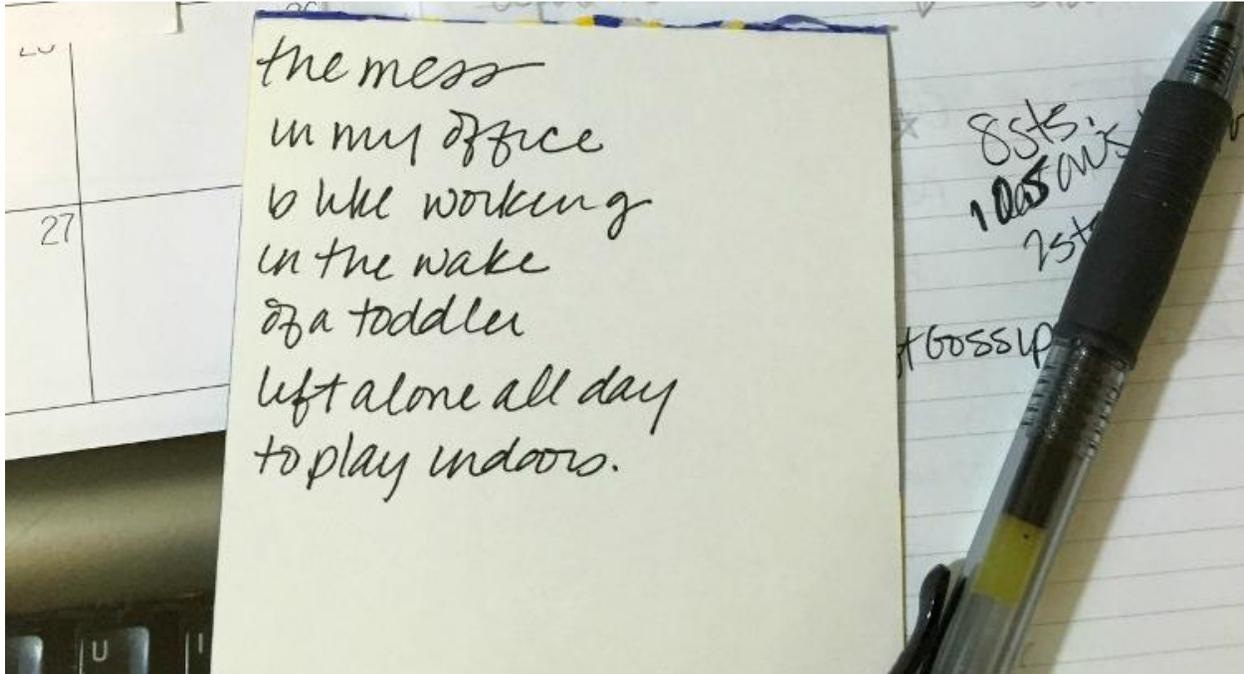
Don't worry if you feel like you don't have any drawing ability. I don't, either. But just making marks and shapes on paper is a lot of fun.

You can even start with just scribbling like a little kid, in as many different colors as you can find.

Or think about the doodles you used to make on papers when you were in school. I did innumerable chains of linked stars and hearts. Do you remember the one where you make a house shape without picking up the pen? Try it!

[One-line drawings](#) are another great place to start. Try drawing something you can see right where you are – or a tree, your child, your favorite fruit, whatever – using just one line. It's a really fun challenge.

2. Write a Poem



Even if the last time you wrote a poem was when you were forced to in high school, poetry is a great way to connect to the beauty and silliness of everyday life.

Let's get this out of the way first: Poems do not have to rhyme. They do not have to make sense. They do not have to be literally true. You can write about flying to work or swimming to Mars, or about things that really happen. There are no rules.

Good poems are stories. They take us to a place and time we have never been (even sometimes when we're the ones writing them!), into the life of a person we will never be, but while we are reading we can be transported and transformed.

That person, that situation, that place may have never really existed in just that way other than in the mind of the author, but by some magic can be preserved so that anyone who reads it can go there and know that, too. It's very powerful.

Because there are no rules you can write about anything. But here are some ideas to get you started:

- Write a poem about why you don't like poetry
- Write about [something that's driving you crazy](#)
- Write about what you had for breakfast
- Write about your favorite things that your child does
- Write a poem that starts "I believe in..."
- Write your grocery list as a poem
- Write about going to work as if it were an epic battle
- Write a poem from the perspective of someone you saw today

- Make up words and write a nonsense poem like Lewis Carroll
- Express the season or your favorite color in a poem
- Write (or rewrite) your wedding vows (even if you've never been married)

Writing poetry may feel really hard when you first start, but if you do it regularly poems or lines will start popping into your head like song lyrics you haven't heard before.

3. Make a Collage



Pretty much everyone has magazines and newspapers and junk mail lying around. Harness some of that stuff into a simple work of creativity.

Take a couple of minutes to pull together some magazines you're done reading, some catalogs and other colorful mail.

Then go through your stack quickly, pulling out things that look interesting to you. It could be a color you love or a word that strikes you, a person wearing a jacket you'd love to own or a scene that looks calming to you. This should only take a few minutes, too.

Grab a piece of paper, some scissors and a glue stick, and start cutting, gluing and piling pictures on top of each other. There doesn't have to be a lot of thought in how you do it, and it's better if you don't get bogged down in thinking too much about getting it right (that's a common theme, isn't it?).

You might also call this a [mood board](#) or vision board, but it's really just a collage.

Once you've been at it a few minutes, step back. What else does your collage need? You can write or draw on it, add some glitter if you're into that sort of thing, add some more pictures, cover something up, whatever feels good to you.

Leave the collage somewhere you will see it a few times a day. Consider adding more to it if you want. Think about what the images mean to you and how you might explore the feelings they evoke in other creative ways.

4. Do a Coloring Page



Grownups everywhere have been rediscovering what our kids already knew: [coloring is fun](#). There are so many coloring books for adults out there these days, and lots of free printable coloring pages online, so if you have coloring materials in the house you can just print out a page and get to coloring.

I know it may seem like coloring isn't that creative – I resisted my daughter using coloring pages for a long time because I wanted her to draw more on her own – but for adults who haven't been creative for a while, a coloring page is a great place to start.

It's easier to color in someone else's drawing than to have to think about what you want to draw yourself. You won't get bogged down in the idea that you're no good at drawing, or the trouble of a blank page and not knowing what to do to fill it.

Coloring is meditative, because it doesn't require a whole lot of focus (unless you choose a really intricate design that needs intense focus to stay in the lines). There are lots of coloring pages that are mandalas and

other calming, repetitive designs that can be any color you like, so you don't have to give much thought to what the right color is in any situation.

And of course if you have a child who loves to color, ask them if you can use one of their coloring pages the next time they're coloring. They'll love coloring alongside you, and the simplicity of coloring pages for kids makes them really easy and fun.

5. Nature Creations



This is a project that can be performed in a couple of steps if you need to.

First, go outside and collect five items. It doesn't really matter what they are:

- Leaves
- Rocks
- Small sticks
- Acorns
- Flowers
- Bottle caps

If you want, combine this part of the exercise with a walk by yourself or with your family, which adds more fun and gets your creative juices as well as your blood flowing.

When you get back inside (or later if you need to), use those items in a project. You could glue them to a piece of paper and make a creature of some sort, stack them into a sculpture, [paint them](#), [draw on them](#), [make rubbings](#), press them into paint and use them as stamps, whatever sounds interesting to you.

This is a great one to repeat at different times of year or in different places, and to do with kids, because everyone is drawn to different things and will use them in different ways.

6. Playdough



Whether you buy it or make your own, playing with play dough is definitely not something that should be exclusively for kids.

Using play dough instead of clay makes it feel more like play. And if you use the store-bought stuff, I guarantee that smell will take you back.

I do advocate making your own at least once, though, because it adds the creativity of cooking to the challenge, even if you're just following a recipe. Your kids will love helping if you have them, and if you don't you won't have to feel embarrassed about buying play dough for yourself.

What to make with it? Anything you want.

Start with a snake to remember the moves.

Then maybe make a little person or creature or snowman.

Try building a house or a tree.

Make a little bowl (the fancy term is "pinch pot") and let it dry out. Keep it on your desk to remember how great it feels to work a little creativity into your day.

7. Finger Painting



Here's another activity that's usually reserved for kids but is great for grownups, too. I love encouraging adults to do "kid" things because we all remember how once we try, and we can remember the sense of play, adventure and fun that went along with making things in these ways when we were kids.

It's a feeling we can harness as adults, too, and if you haven't felt it in a while, going back to those things you enjoyed as a kid is a great place to start looking.

If there's a kid in your house you may already have finger paint. If not, you can use any paint, just [paint with your fingers](#). Really.

If there is no paint in your house, you can find finger paint or kids' paint at the grocery store, big-box retailer or the dollar store, or it's another thing you can make yourself.

You can also try fun sensory things like putting food coloring in shaving cream and "painting" with that, or just dropping food coloring onto a piece of paper or a coffee filter and seeing what happens.

Another option would be to make liquid water colors and use an eyedropper to put the paint on the paper.

It's not technically finger painting, but it's still a lot of fun. The idea is just to try something new. And to have fun experimenting with materials and with your own creativity. It feels good, right?

8. Paper Folding/Cutting



One craft material that I'm pretty sure can be found in every home is paper. Whether plain white paper from the printer, newspaper, junk mail, index cards, paper from cereal boxes, all are great for trying out creative activities that don't need any prep or special materials.

Remember making snowflakes by folding paper and [cutting out shapes](#) on the folds? The kids in my daughter's kindergarten class love doing this, because it's always a surprise what comes out in the end.

If you're not a fan of surprise, search online for paper snowflake templates. You can find everything from animals to *Star Wars* characters. Print out the template and cut as directed. (There are also [books with snowflake templates](#), if this is something you really get into.)

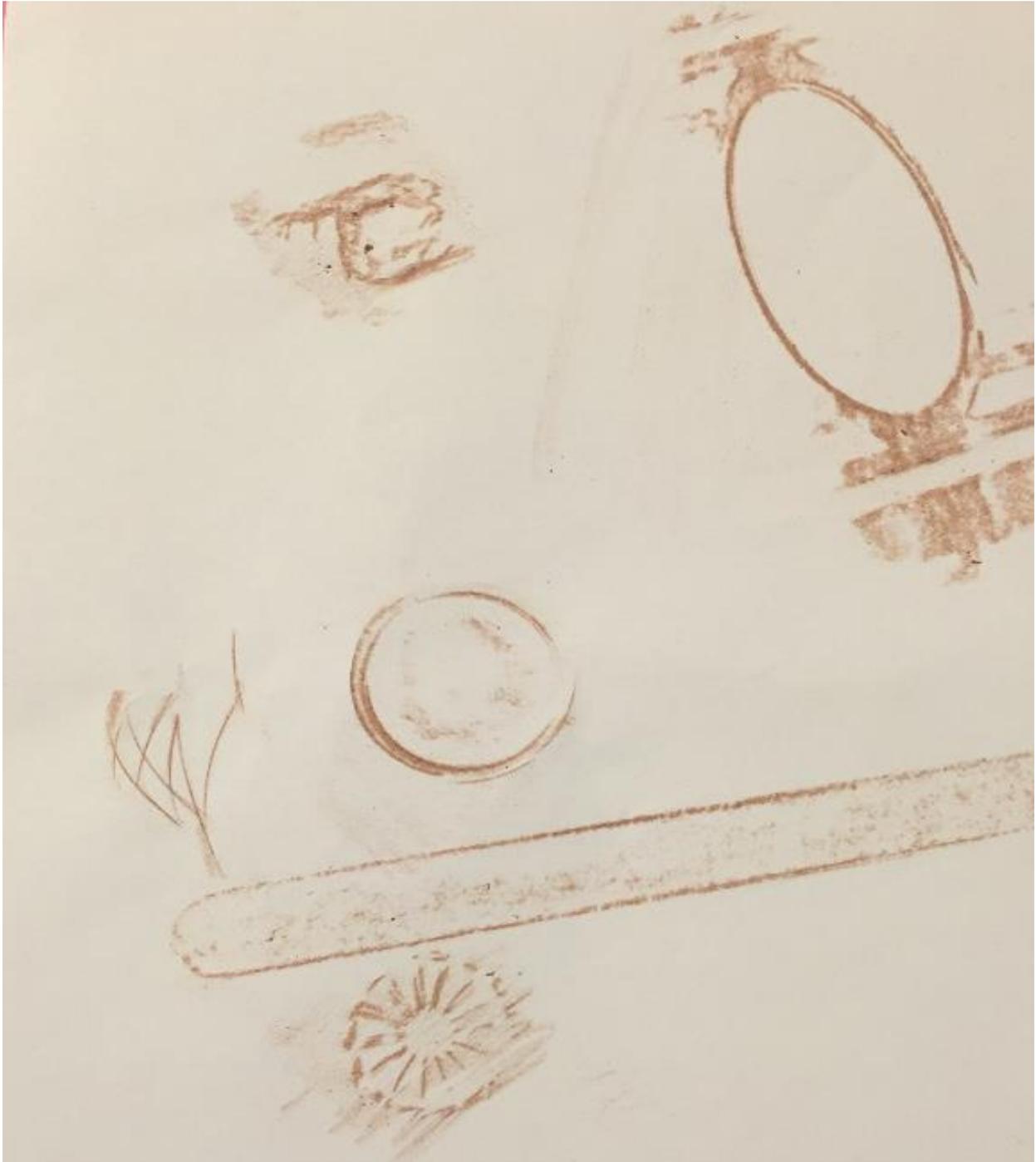
Other options include cutting stars out of paper (I love doing the method where you can make a [star with just one cut](#)) or making paper dolls.

You can also just cut strips or pull out any fancy scissors you have and make different designs and use them in a collage or weaving project. Or make bookmarks.

You can also try your hand at origami. It's great to have the right paper (and there are tons of books now that come with paper and instructions for a variety of projects, from flowers to boxes to animal shapes) but you can practice with any paper you have handy.

I will warn you, though, if you are more about getting a perfect finished product rather than enjoying the process of trying, you might want to skip origami for now; it can be kind of tricky and frustrating (to me, anyway, but I still like to try it!).

9. Make Texture Rubbings



Here's another one you can try wherever you are with whatever you have. Take a couple of minutes to look around your desk, junk drawer, purse, whatever and find some things that have interesting textures.

It could be a coin, a comb, a lid, a piece of twine, the cardboard sleeve from your last takeout coffee, a wooden ruler, a rock, a beaded bracelet.

Really, anything works.

Grab a piece of paper from the printer, a piece of the kids' construction paper, whatever, and a crayon with no paper on it.

Place the objects under the paper and, while holding the paper down, rub the crayon across. Remember how?

If you have access to lots of crayons, use different colors.

Try piling rubbings of different things in different colors on top of each other.

What else could you make a rubbing of? What about going outside and collecting more things from nature? Rubbing leaves is a classic, after all.

10. Trace Your Hand and Make Something



One thing that is always with you, no matter where you are, is your hand (two things, for most people). So why not one of them to get a little more creative?

Find a piece of paper and something to draw with. Trace your hand.

Make something with it.

You can

- Write a poem with all the words fitting in your hand

- Write [your autobiography](#), again in the shape of your hand
- Draw some scribbly shapes and color them in
- Make it into an animal like the classic Thanksgiving turkey craft
- Or try making a made up creature
- Draw a heart in the middle of your palm and write the names of all the people you love

Or whatever you want!

Where to Go from Here

I hope that you have tried and enjoyed these little creative boosts, and that doing them has given you some ideas for other creative things you might like to try.

The key to developing a regular creative practice is doing things you actually want to do and are excited about. It's not really about someone else telling you what to do.

So whether you pick up a hobby like knitting or sewing, try your hand at drawing or painting, decide to write more poetry or stories, or something else entirely, I hope you'll try to seek out that thing – or those things, no one said you only have to have one creative outlet! – that gets you excited to make and create and tap into that part of yourself as often as you can.

If you do happen to need more ideas, though, check out my daily creative challenges over at [Our Daily Craft](#). They offer gentle, easy suggestions for things you might try to ease yourself into more creative thinking and doing.

I would love to hear from you if you have enjoyed these prompts, or if you have ideas for other little boosts people could try. I'd love to see what you made, too. You can e-mail me at sarah@sarahewhite.com or tag me on Twitter or Instagram with the hashtag #ourdailycraft.