

Toilet Paper Core Critters

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Supplies:

Toilet Paper Cores, Pencil, Markers, Crayons, Scissors, Disinfectant Spray.

Optional: Glue, Pom-poms, Googly Eyes.

Directions:

Remove any toilet paper that is sticking to the core. Place rolls on a piece of newspaper and spray with disinfectant spray. Let dry overnight.



Owl: Gently fold down the top of the toilet paper core to create ears on one side, then the other side. Give them a good squeeze to make sharp points for ears that stand up nicely.



Using a pencil, find the center of the front where you want to place the eyes and the beak and mark it with a "T". This will be your reference for the beak and eye placement.

Create the eyes with the horizontal line as your reference. Owl eyes are close together and quite large. Go online and look up owl images for photo references which will help you with details of the owl you want to create. Don't go for exact realism, go for representationalism.

The beak is placed between the eyes and you can use the vertical line as your placement reference.



Adding Details: Draw in wings on either side of your owl. They should reach all the way to the bottom of your toilet paper core and wrap around to the back side. Also, sketch in a bit of a tail on the back side at the base of the core. Once you are pleased with placement and sizes of the main details, use your eraser and clean up any stray pencil marks.



Switch to a black marker for the rest of your owl and all the details. I used a marker that had both a fine tip and a brush tip which gave me a variety of markings. You can use the pencil to sketch in more marks to gain confidence, but the marker should be your finishing touches.

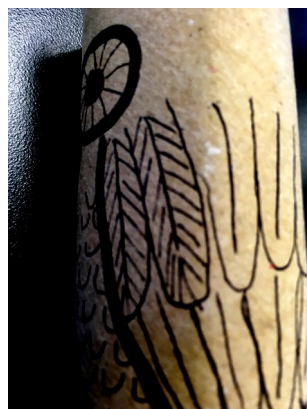
Work on the eyes first to make them really stand out. The pupils are normally black, but leave a small dot uncolored in each pupil to indicate a sparkle or highlight. Add thin lines for the iris, they can be thick and thin with thicker lines around the outside edge of each iris. Play around and have fun with the eyes. They can be very expressive and interesting.

The beak is a diamond shape that is more narrow and longer at the top than at the bottom. Color it in solid.

Use a “U” shape for small overall feathers, for the front belly, the back of the head and any spaces that need to be filled with little feathers.



Draw in long and short feathers on the wings. Add details such as the center line and slanted lines to indicate the feathers in a chevron pattern. Do vary the length of your wing feathers with the shorter ones at the top of the wings and longer ones at the bottom of the wings. Looking at your reference photos will help you determine how to do this. Also, vary the pressure you use when making lines. Thin little lines are useful for creating the individual hairs of the feathers and thicker lines are good for outlining them and center veins.



Owls normally have a framed face which makes them so unique. This can be achieved by placing small dashes of lines around the eyes. Pay attention to what directions your marks are laying. This will help create form and interest.

Use these same dashed lines to create tufted feathers around the owl's ears. Be sure to do both the sides and the top of the head.



Look your owl over and correct or enhance areas that need attention. Things to look for are : The ears are filled with fluffy markings. The eyes have enough details to make them really interesting. The back of the owl's head is filled in with smaller "U" shaped feathers. Are there thin and thick lines to make items stand out? And don't forget to add some feet at the base of your owl.



Now that you have your first owl completed, why not make it some friends? You can try making one in colors using colored markers or crayons or oil pastels. A mixture of these mediums will give you very interesting effects. Experiment and have fun!

Here are even more fun ideas to try:

- Rabbits are fun and cute animals to make. If you have some small pom-poms for tails all you need will be a bit of glue to attach it.
- Make a sculpture of your pets. I created my cat Cinnamon and it was a lot of fun. He is much more serious than this creation turned out.
- How about a bug? Spiders are pretty easy. Color it in first, add some googly eyes if you have them, cut out the front section, cut out 8 legs and bend them to make it stand up.
- Storybook characters are a fun idea and then they can be used for story time. Again consider cutting out sections around the heads and legs to make them stand out.
- Think about creating mini versions of your children, grand children and friends.
- Make a village complete with houses, stores and trees for your mini characters to play in. Maybe make your neighborhood or your own yard.
- So many ideas come to mind and what a great way to be creative with items you normally just throw away.

