

# CARDBOARD SUNFLOWERS

Make painted sunflowers on cardboard or on fabric, paint your message on them and attach to stick-stems. Make a few, or enough to turn your public event into a field of sunflowers

**CUT CIRCLES:** Choose the size sunflower you want. I have been making 18 inch circles on 8 foot pole-stems. Mark circle (draw around a big bucket, lid, or use a pencil tied to a string like a compass). Cut a circle using a utility knife with a sharp blade or some heavy duty scissors. This is your prototype. Using the model, trace and cut out two cardboard circles for each sunflower.

**GLUE & TAPE:** Put elmers or wood glue near edge of a circle and sandwich two together. Leave about  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the circle unglued— this will be your opening to slide in the stem. Make a pencil mark so you know where the unglued section is. Use masking tape (2 inch width; don't get the cheapest — it usually lacks adhesive) to tape around the glued edge, leaving the unglued part untaped for stem/stick.

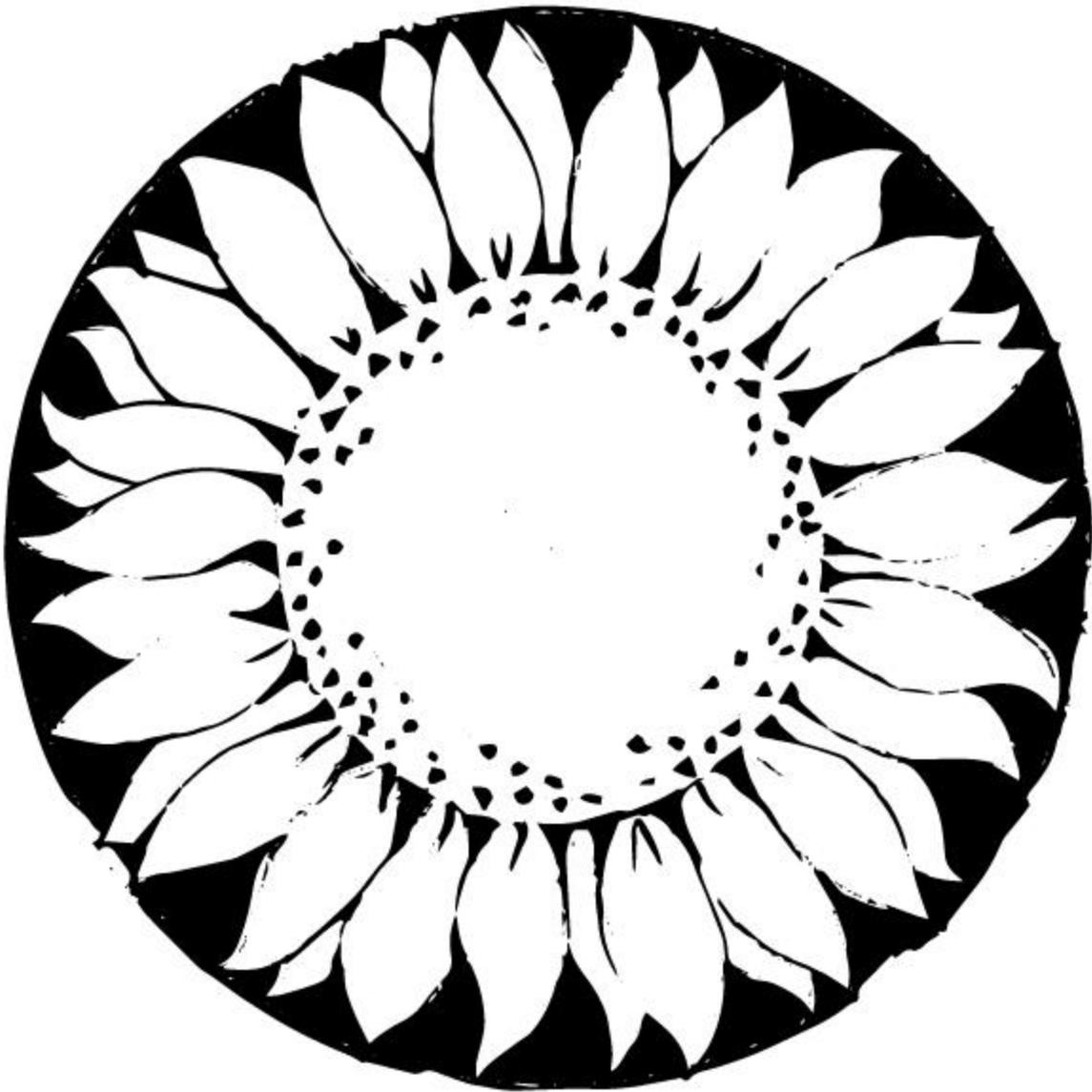


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**PAINT:** Yellow. Paint both sides bright sunflower yellow, using latex house paint or acrylic paint. I use semigloss if there's any chance of rain.

**CUT STENCIL:** Choose the size sunflower you want. I have been making 18 inch circles on 8 foot pole-stems. Mark circle (draw around a big bucket, lid, or use a pencil tied to a string like a compass). Cut a circle using a utility knife with a sharp blade or some heavy duty scissors. This is your prototype. Using the model, trace and cut out two cardboard circles for each sunflower.

**CUT CIRCLES:** Download the sunflower image and enlarge it on a copier so it is as big around as your cardboard circle. The enlarged sunflower will fit onto two 11 x 17 sheets, which you then need to trim and glue together. Using an exacto knife, create a stencil for the sunflower petals, cutting out the darker areas around the petals so the spray paint paints the outline of the sunflower.



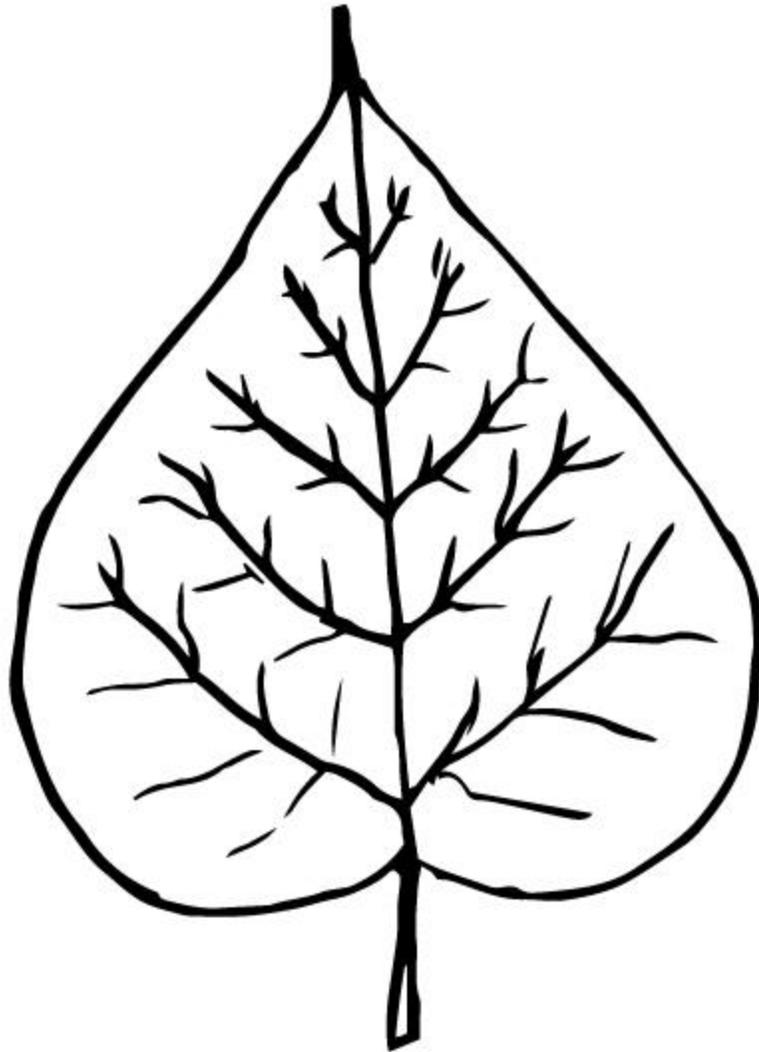
**SPRAYPAINT:** Set up a spray stencil area out of doors for ventilation. Buy spray paint. I usually use a dark brown, sometimes red or black. Practice spraying evenly, taking your finger off the nozzle before you stop moving so you don't get heavy puddling areas of paint. Just enough to mostly cover. If you go too close or too heavy it will soak the stencil and may bleed under it. Let it dry, then do the other side.



**PAINTING SUNFLOWER CENTERS:** I have usually hand painted the center circle inside the petals. If you look at sunflowers (google image sunflower) their centers may be all kind of colors, from light yellow to black. The key is that if you are going to paint a word/s in the sunflower center, it's best to have a light/dark contrast to make your message as bold and readable as possible.

**PAINT WORDS/MESSAGE:** Less is more. Choose your key words or message. This is not the place for lengthy messages. Three words fit well. Get a paintbrush you can letter well with, practice, and then paint. Make sure you paint it upright to avoid upside-down words, with the opening for the stick to slide in on the bottom!

**LEAVES:** Cut out a leaf shape template from cardboard—or heavy paper. Trace and cut out. To make a more durable template, masking tape the edges and staple and tape over a piece of flexible wire (I use 14-16 gauge "tie wire"). Paint green; with a small bush and lighter green shade, paint the veins of the leaf. I usually make one, sometimes two leaves for each sunflower



**STEM-STICK:** I usually use an 8 foot long 1 by 2 inch “furring strip” for a stem. Bamboo or any sticks can be used. Make sure they don’t have big knots or cracks in the wood so they won’t break. Paint them green to match the leaves.

**ASSEMBLY:** Open the un-glued, untaped bottom of the sunflower and slide onto the top of the stick. If it tears or won’t slide on easily, you can cut the top of your stick into a 45% point and/or put duct tape over the tip so the sunflower slides on easily. Staple and glue the leaf/leaves on.



**CARRY TOGETHER:** Organize your folks to carry the sunflowers together, like a field. People can even practice moving them as if moving in a breeze (Practice: “Breeze to the Right. Breeze to the Left.”) People can also wear green or yellow to match the sunflowers—or even a green or yellow headband or scarf. We often have the groups of sunflowers right behind a lead banner for a contingent. For a march in St Paul, the banner in front of the sunflowers was painted like a river.

Source: David Solnit and 350.org