

St. Patrick's Day Activities

St. Patrick's Day (March 17) is a cultural celebration connected to Irish heritage. Many people celebrate with the color **green**, parades, music, and fun traditions. In early childhood settings, this is a great time to explore **colors, nature (rainbows), kindness, and classroom community**.

Learning goals (Ages 0–8)

Children will practice:

- **Language & literacy:** new words (green, rainbow, lucky, shamrock)
- **Math:** counting, sorting, patterns, measuring
- **Science:** color mixing, light/rainbows, nature
- **SEL:** kindness, turn-taking, teamwork
- **Fine motor & gross motor:** cutting, stamping, movement games

1) Green Discovery Basket + “Green Hunt”

Ages: 0–8 (adapt by age)

Time: 10–20 min

Set-up

Create a basket/tray with safe “green” items:

- green fabric scrap, plastic lid, toy frog, leaf, green ball, green spoon
Add picture cards of green objects (optional).



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How to do it

1. Show 3–5 items: “These are green!”
2. Pass items to touch/hold (infants) or place items on a green mat (older kids).
3. **Green Hunt:** invite kids to find one green item in the room and bring it to the “green table.”

Prompts by age

- **Infants:** “Green! Soft. Ball.” (label + texture)
- **1–2:** “Find green.” “Put it in.” “All done.”
- **2–3:** “Is this green or not green?”
- **3–5:** “How many green things did we find?”
- **6–8:** tally marks + bar graph (green vs. not green)

2) Shamrock Stamping + Texture Art

Ages: 1–6 (0–12 months can do sensory touch with supervision)

Time: 15–30 min

Materials

- shamrock stampers (sponges cut into clovers or cookie cutters)
- green paint or washable ink
- optional textures: cotton balls, tissue paper, yarn, stickers

How to do it



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1. Model one stamp: “Press... lift... wow!”
2. Children stamp 5–10 shamrocks (or as many as they want).
3. Add texture: glue cotton clouds, tissue “grass,” stickers “gold.”

Skills

- fine motor, sensory exploration, cause/effect

Adaptations

- **1–2:** limit materials; offer one stamp + stickers
- **3–5:** create a pattern: shamrock–coin–shamrock–coin
- **6–8:** write a caption: “My shamrocks are ___ (big/small/light/dark).”

3) Rainbow Collage

Ages: 2–8 (adaptable to 1–2 with pre-cut pieces)

Time: 20–40 min

Materials

- strips of paper (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple)
- glue sticks
- cotton balls (clouds)
- optional “pot of gold” cup shape



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How to do it

1. Show a rainbow model (or draw a simple arc).
2. Children place colors in order (or any order for younger kids).
3. Add clouds and a gold circle at the end.

Differentiation

- **1–2:** adult pre-cuts; child places + presses
- **2–3:** tear paper (great fine motor!) and glue
- **3–5:** name colors; practice order
- **6–8:** add labels + sentence: “A rainbow has ___ colors.”

Extensions

- **Math:** count strips used
- **Science talk:** “Rainbows can appear after rain when sunlight shines through water.”

4) “Pot of Gold” Counting + Sorting Center

Ages: 1–8

Time: 10–25 min (center)

Materials

- black cup/bowl (“pot”)



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- gold counters (yellow pom-poms, coins, cubes)
- number cards 1–10 (or 1–20 for school age)
- tongs/tweezers (fine motor)

How to do it

1. Children pick a number card.
2. Use tongs to move that many “coins” into the pot.
3. Count out loud together.

Differentiation

- **1–2:** count 1–3 with adult help
- **2–3:** count 1–5 and match number
- **3–5:** count 1–10, compare more/less
- **6–8:** addition/subtraction story cards:
 - “You had 6 coins. You found 3 more. How many now?”
 - “You had 10 coins. You gave 4 away. How many left?”

5) Lucky Patterns ✨

Ages: 3–8

Time: 15–25 min

Option A: Pattern Strips



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Children create patterns using:

- shamrock stickers, gold circles, green squares
Patterns: AB, AAB, ABC.

Option B: “How Many Wore Green?” Graph

1. Ask: “Who has something green today?”
2. Kids place a cube in the “green” cup or “not green” cup.
3. Count and compare.

Teacher talk:

“Green is fun, but you don’t have to wear green to join in.”

6) Leprechaun Trap STEM

Ages: 5–8

Time: 30–60 min

Materials

- recycled boxes, paper tubes, string, tape
- craft sticks, paper clips, cups
- gold counters as the “goal”

Challenge choices (pick one)

- **Trap theme:** build a “trap” to catch a pretend leprechaun (keep silly, not scary)
- **Alternative theme:** build a “bridge/ramp” to deliver gold coins into the pot



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STEM process

1. Plan (draw a quick sketch)
2. Build
3. Test
4. Improve

Reflection questions

- “What worked?”
- “What would you change?”
- “How did your team solve problems?”

7) Kindness = “Lucky Classroom”

Ages: 2–8

Time: 10 min daily or 20–30 min one-time

How to do it

1. Ask: “What makes our classroom feel lucky?”
(friends, helping, safe hands, kind words)
2. Each time a child shows kindness, add a shamrock to a poster.
3. Read a few aloud daily: “Today we were lucky because...”

Examples of “kindness shamrocks”



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- “I shared the blocks.”
- “I helped clean up.”
- “I asked, ‘Are you okay?’”

8) Story Time + Retell

Ages: 0–8

Time: 10–20 min

How to do it

- Read a rainbow or St. Patrick’s Day themed book.
- Use props: felt rainbow, gold coin, shamrock.
- After reading, children retell:
 - **Toddlers:** show one prop that matches the story
 - **Preschool:** first/next/last
 - **School age:** character + problem + solution



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