

Monart Basic Projects: Explaining the Degree of Difficulty

Parents and teachers have had a hard time knowing the skill level of a project by simply observing the thumbnail sample. We are upgrading The [Monart Store](#) to show more pages of a project in order for you to make your decisions. I have also made a list of the Basic Monart projects broken down into 3 categories, with some advice about many of the projects. I am using the categories of **SIMPLE**, **MEDIUM**, and **MORE COMPLEX**.

The **BASIC MONART** projects cannot be limited by considering their use in relation to student ages. Any beginner, including adult students, need to start with the [Basic Projects](#). Of course, students from PreK-K1 are of an age that can only handle some of the Basic projects. It is best to use a few of the Basic projects for them to start with in conjunction with the [Drawing thru the Alphabet \(DTA\)](#) curriculum. There is a sliding scale for all ages. For example, there is a huge difference between a beginning 4-5-year-old and one who has been using the DTA program for a year. A beginning 9-year-old could be less skilled than a 7 year-old who has been doing Monart for 2 years.

Keep in mind: All of the Basic Lessons can be altered and used for most age groupings. You can learn to eliminate or add details, simplify background information, or change the media.

Along with designating a project as **SIMPLE, MEDIUM, OR MORE COMPLEX**, I have made some specific comments for your consideration in picking projects. Media use is one of the main considerations.

- The most common media for use with 4-6-year-old students is to draw with black thin-tipped marker and fill-in with colored markers. Beginners of any age should start with this media for at least 6 weeks.
- Drawing with ink first is important. The student slows down and develops eye/hand coordination. Using pencils and erasers too soon makes for sloppy eyes.
- For students over 6, purchase a light box. Instead of being dependent on erasers, they can trace the lines they want and make changes. This promotes confident visual skills. By the time you introduce pencils and erasers they will not need to erase so much.

Here are the categories of degrees of difficulty for you to consider in choosing **BASIC PROJECTS**.

SIMPLE

Easy to follow and to use the 5 elements to draw the subject. Very little or no background. No need to use pencil to draw the object. 4-5-year-old students cannot handle pencil and erasures. Also, black line drawing with ink is better to train the eyes, since they take more observation time when they know they cannot erase. Plus, they do not care about proportion yet.

ANIMALS:

- Baby Panda in Tree
- Bats
- Beaver
- Cheetah
- Cobra
- Dog-Springer Spaniel
- Gecko
- Giraffe Heads
- Moose
- Panda
- Polar Bear

- Rattlesnake
- Rhino Black
- Rhino White

BIRDS:

- Birds in Flight: The best choice for a first try with kids under 8
- Black-Capped Chickadee
- Chicks and Eggs
- Hen and Chicks: Instructions make it easy to handle overlapping in this one.
- Lady Bug
- Owl: Do in Marker instead and it is o.k.

- Toucan: Done with many 4 yr olds in marker, but only one branch to sit on, few leaves.
- Partridge: Do in marker instead. Only do one branch for it to sit on.
- Robin: Do in marker instead. Only do one branch for it to sit on.

HUMAN FORM:

- Boy-Native American Dancer: One of the few human form projects that the vary young can handle. Keep it 2 dimensional and don't expect complex designs until 6 or so.
- Kabuki Male Portrait: Very basic and 2D. Secret is to use a small 5X7 paper.
- Russian Dolls: Most successful with PreK-k1. Use the simplest samples.

IMAGINARY BEINGS:

- Sea Dragon: One of the most successful projects for young students.

LANDSCAPE AND BUILDINGS

NONE YET

PLANTS, FLOWERS, AND VEGETABLES:

- Blue Bells
- Calla Lily
- Flowers in Basket
- Golden Poppy: Eliminate the blue background. Do in marker instead of water color.
- Madrone Trees: This is the simplest water color for any age, even 4 yr olds can do it.

VEHICLES:

- Balloons-Hot Air: One of the most successful projects with young kids, even at 4.
- Sled-snow: Just do the boy with the sled and eliminate all the background except for a few grey snow mounds and a bush with berries.

WATER WORLDS:

- Butterfly fish
- Clown Fish: One of the most successful with PK-K1 to start with.
- Crocodile
- Fish-Tropical

MEDIUM

A few more steps to draw the main subject. Or more difficulty use of media use the shape of subject. But easy backgrounds. If indicate chalk pastel, you can use marker instead and made it easier. The chalk pastel just makes hairy animals look more realistic. The long-legged animals are harder to draw the shape, (like the horse or okapi). But when 4-6-year-old students make the legs all crooked they are charming drawings. They have a Picasso abstraction

to them that everyone loves. I do these long-legged animals with the little kids anyway. They don't care if the legs are all out of shape.

ANIMALS:

- Cow-Domestic
- Ground Hog
- Horse-Foal
- Leopard Snow (Chalk Pastel)
- Mandrill Chalk Pastel)
- Okapi
- Siamese Cat: Two Versions, (marker version o.k. , not the chalk pastel).

BIRDS:

- Bittern: Chalk pastel
- Blue Titmouse: Colored Pencil
- Flamingo: Overlapping of neck shape a bit difficult
- Great Horned Bill
- Parrots-Macaw: Can do in marker instead and it is o.k. Eliminate lots of the background.
- Emperor Penguin: Only do one instead of the pair. Leave the white paper for the body.
- Swan Black: Can do in marker, but on white paper.
- Whooping cranes: Just do one, instead of the two. An easy first try at chalk pastel.
- Woodpecker: Can be done with marker, Do one branch and a few leaves and olives.

DESIGN

- Design-Abstract: Follow the instructions to do a far less complex design than the samples and it is very doable for PK-6, instead of the 6-8-year-old students.

HUMAN FORM:

- Girl with Calla Lilly: Lots of overlapping. Start with flowers to achieve it.
- Ice Skater: Lots of parts, but instructions help with progression of step-by-Step (SXS)
- Inuit Children: Lots of Parts, but instructions help with progression of S XS.
- Skiers: Lots of Parts, but instructions help with progression of SXS
- Surfer Girl: Very 2D, instructions help with progression of SXS

IMAGINARY BEINGS:

- Dinosaur-Trex
- Triceratops

LANDSCAPE AND BUILDINGS:

NONE AS YET

PLANTS, FLOWERS, AND VEGATEBLES

- Easter Lily: Lots of overlapping on the stems and leaves.

VEHICLES:

- Kayaking: Do the bear and boat in marker. Eliminate the complex background and add a little water under the kayak.

WATER WORLDS

- Crab-Hermit: A little overlapping, but they can do it if you follow the progressive instructions.
- Mandarin fish: Complex body design. But let them just make up their own and it works.
- Sea Turtle: Complex design on shell but let them make up their own.

MORE COMPLEX

More complex lines in the main subject. Sometimes there are more complex background ideas. There is often some overlapping of images, which little ones cannot handle, especially when they are drawing with ink instead of pencil. If they are about 6 and have been doing DTA and simple Monart projects, they could be ready.

ANIMALS:

- Alpaca
- Bunny-Hopping
- Iguana
- Red Panda in Tree
- Stag Deer
- Zebras: Two are overlapped

BIRDS:

- Aracari Chestnut: Pencil shading and overlapping images
- Birds in a Cage: Too many overlapping choices
- Hummingbird: Blending in colored pencil
- Monarch Butterfly: Complex wing patterns and overlapping.
- Swan White: Needs to be chalk pastel, but an easy one when they are ready.
- Thrush: O.k. with the more skilled when ready, but in colored pencil

DESIGN:

- Totem Poles: Very young can copy pretty closely, older students can use variety of ideas.

LANDSCAPE AND BUILDINGS:

- Lighthouse
- Palms-Cocoa: Designed for use with oil pastel., which is o.k. around 6.

PLANTS, FLOWERS, VEGETABLES:

- Artichoke: Lots of overlapping from bottom up. Blending and shading.
- Hollyhocks: Lots of overlapping.
- Magnolia: The beginnings of shading to create 3D
- Peony: Need to shade with chalk pastel or colored pencil to get shape.

VEHICLES:

- Boat-Catamaran: Complex shape with overlapping pieces
- Custom Cars
- Woody: Very complex shape with lots of pieces.

WATER WORLDS:

- Sea Dragon: Designed for colored pencil shading and a way to make water that is a challenge for kids under 6.