

## Aboriginal Arts and Craft

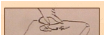
### Aboriginal Art

#### Making Ochre Paint

Ochre is a soft clay substance. It comes in many different colours including reds, browns, blacks, yellows, creams and white.

The colour of Ochre comes from minerals and oxides in the rock.

Ochre can be found almost anywhere. It is easiest to locate near rivers, streams or valleys where the rock surface has been eroded.



To make ochre paint you need to crush some ochre stone into soft powder.



Then with a stick mix some emu egg yolk with the powder to make a paste. This blends the paint together. You can also use gum from a Eucalyptus tree.

**In Aboriginal language groups, Art was used as a form of communication and as a teaching tool. Art was used in everyday life and played a significant role in ceremonial practices.**



Art was and is evident in communities in a number of ways: as painting / drawing in various forms on bark, caves, sand and ornaments; sculptures and carvings in stone, wood, bone and other plant and animal products and as body art in the form of ornaments, jewellery, headdresses, costume and body painting. Each language group had their own particular symbols and stories associated with these symbols.

Within a language group particular people would protect the special knowledge and skills needed to translate art symbols and stories into ceremonial objects or paintings. These would be passed on during special ceremonies. Some symbols are used only by men and some symbols only by women.

A great deal of time was spent before ceremonies preparing artwork, ornaments and bodies for ceremonies.

Ochres were collected and made into paints for use in body design. Objects were carved and painted to represent spiritual figures. Tools and instruments for use in ceremonies would also be carved and painted with sacred and special designs. In some areas burial poles were painted with symbols relating to the deceased and their family.

Due to the spiritual and ceremonial connections with The Dreaming, the art of Aborigines should not be reproduced in any way unless permission is given by the artist/s involved in it's development. Symbols used should not be copied as they often involve sacred and spiritual figures that are only meant to be reproduced by selected members of a language group.