



## How to...



**WOW!**

The world's most famous portrait, the Mona Lisa, has its own mailbox in the Louvre Museum for the many letters it receives.

# Appreciate fine art

Find out how to connect with paintings, sculptures, and more.

Going to an art museum or gallery can be a fun activity to do with family and friends. For many people, though, viewing art can feel intimidating. It may even seem boring if you're not sure what the art is about. Thankfully, there are many ways to appreciate different types of art and tap into what the work might mean to you. Here are some steps to get you started.

### Choose a museum

You don't need to visit the most famous museum in your area. Instead, have an adult help you look at the websites of a few local museums to see what types of art or special exhibits are on display. Choose one to visit that has something you're interested in. For example, if you love fashion, you might head to a museum that is featuring sketches from famous designers. If you enjoy taking photos, you might want to view a photography exhibit.

### Take your time

When you're at the museum and a piece of art catches your eye, pause and spend some time really taking it in. You can start by getting close to the artwork (without touching it) so you can see details you might miss if you were viewing it online. If you're looking at a painting, for example, consider the texture on the surface and whether any brushstrokes are visible. Then step back and look at

the way the brushstrokes work together to create the piece of art. Think about the story the artwork may be trying to tell. Try looking at it from a different angle, or bring a notebook and pencil with you so you can sketch it. You might see new aspects of it that you didn't notice before.

### Consider the meaning

Once you've absorbed the physical aspects of the work, try to find out more about what it means. A volunteer at the museum (often called a docent) may be available to talk to you about the piece. Free brochures may also provide information. You can also ask yourself what the work means to you. For example, maybe the colors in the piece remind you of a place that's special to you or it taps into emotions you've been feeling.

### Reflect on what you saw

Thinking about the meaning, subject, colors, and setting of a piece of art can help you better understand and appreciate artists and their work. After you leave the museum, consider which pieces of art stay in your mind and why. Talk to a friend or adult who went with you, and ask them about their favorite pieces, too. Thinking about how artists—especially those who might be from a different background or lived thousands of years ago—can connect with others through their work is part of the magic of art.



Focus on all the details.

## 4 museums you can visit online

From famous paintings to ancient artifacts, these museums offer tours you can take from home.

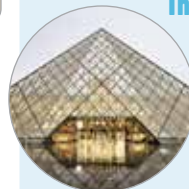
### The British Museum

This museum in London, in the UK, offers an online collection featuring art and artifacts from around the world that date back as far as 2 million years ago. [tinyurl.com/TWJUS-TBM](https://tinyurl.com/TWJUS-TBM)



### The Louvre

You can virtually walk five galleries of this museum in Paris, France,



to spot everything from paintings by artists like Rembrandt to an exhibit on the importance of dance. [tinyurl.com/TWJUS-LouvreTour](https://tinyurl.com/TWJUS-LouvreTour)

### The Metropolitan Museum of Art

The online time machine at this New York City museum features treasures such as an ancient bowl that sits on top of carved feet. [tinyurl.com/TWJUS-MetTour](https://tinyurl.com/TWJUS-MetTour)



### National Museum of Natural History

In the online tour of this museum in Washington, DC, you can go back in time and zoom in on a giant mastodon fossil. [tinyurl.com/TWJUS-NaturalHistory](https://tinyurl.com/TWJUS-NaturalHistory)

