How do I paint a rock?

Materials:

- Rock - smooth and flat is best
- Acrylic outdoor paint
- Mod Podge Outdoor or outdoor clear spray sealant
- Paint pens/Sharpie pens
- Stencils (optional)

Tools:

- Paintbrushes
- Water basin

Directions:

1. Pick a smooth, flat rock. You can decorate any rock, but it's harder to decorate ones with ridges. If you can't find them in nature, the craft stores sell them as do home improvement centers.

2. Wash the rock with soap and water and allow it to dry in the sun or on a towel on your counter before decorating it. (Dirt can mess up your designs)

3. Once the rock is dry, paint the top with a base coat of acrylic paint—pick any color you like. Wait for it to dry. This helps so that the rock (which is porous) doesn't suck the life out of your pens/markers. Another option is to prime with white paint to help the colors that you paint on top appear more vibrant.

4. When the base coat is dry, add a fun design. Using a fine or extra-fine tip acrylic paint pen, Sharpie pen or a small paintbrush small detail can be added. You can write a positive note like, "Be Happy" along with the design. Just make sure to let it fully dry between layers. Pinterest and Facebook are great places to find inspiration for colorful creations and creative messages. Never glue embellishments to rocks you plan on hiding. While they are beautiful, these additions are terrible for the environment and the animals. No matter how strong you think that glue is, a squirrel is going to be able to pick it off.

5. If you don't have paint or don't have the time to do a base coat, feel free to write a positive message directly on the rock itself!

6. Allow the design to dry completely (for best results, dry overnight).

7. Seal the rock to protect your design. This can be done with a coat (or two or three) of Mod Podge Outdoor (or two or three) light coats of clear spray sealant. Don't forget the bottom of the rock. This will help protect your beautiful painted rock from the elements.