

## A Classic Silhouette

They're timeless and something any mother would cherish. A silhouette of your little one (both two and four-legged) is a classic way to capture those sweet little noses and foreheads, the curve of their chin and the wave of their hair.

I love how this very traditional art form, dating back to the early 1700's in France, can be found on everything from jewelry to pillows, stationary and canvas.

And you no longer have to be super-skilled with scissors to make your own.

You can choose a canvas of any shape, but I really liked these oval ones. You can find them by Fredrix at a number of art supply stores online or Dick Blick's if you have one near you. <http://www.dickblick.com/1/3/oval-canvas>

Here's an link to canvases [http://www.pearlpaint.com/shop-Fredrix-Oval-Canvases\\_90017\\_9919.html](http://www.pearlpaint.com/shop-Fredrix-Oval-Canvases_90017_9919.html)

- 1)** I start by priming the canvas with Gesso. But you don't have to do this. It just helps the color adhere a little better. Then I use a base color to coat the entire oval. I use acrylic paint you can find at Michael's or JoAnn Fabrics.
- 2)** Ahead of time or while the canvas is drying you can take a photo of your child standing with a profile against a blank background. It's helpful if you use a plain wall as a background because it's easier when cutting.
- 3)** Choose to print the photo a size slightly smaller than the oval. I like to have at least an inch or two of space around most of the edges. Do what looks best to you. There's no right or wrong answer. If at first your print seems too big, just print again slightly smaller. The print quality doesn't have to be great. I use a basic black and white print on my own computer on plain paper.
- 4)** Cut out around the silhouette trying to stay as tight to the edge as possible with small details like the little hairs that stick out slightly included. The end result is much sweeter than a perfectly straight silhouette.
- 5)** Once the background color of the canvas is dry I take this cut out and tape the back of it down with painters tape so it won't move around. Then I trace

the edges all around with a pencil.

**6)** Paint the inside of the silhouette a different color. So far I've used black and a dark brown. But you really could do anything you want depending upon the room and décor you want it to match.

**7)** It typically takes two coats of paint to make the silhouette look solid. If you went outside of your lines at all you can always take more of the base color and go over the parts you want to 'erase.'

**8)** If you want to make it even more decorative, you can paint around the outside edge of the canvas as well. I liked how that looked so I added it with the ones I did for my house and a gift. The gift I also painted the back simply because I got my own fingerprints of paint on it and wanted it to look more polished.

Oh and when painting the edge black, I had to keep a steady hand because it can bleed over onto the front. But if that happens, just let it dry and go over it with your base color. It covered up any marks that may have seeped over.

I also added the child's name, age and date so that years from now when you've forgotten exactly when it was made, it won't be hard to figure out.

**9)** Let the whole thing dry and then you're ready to grace your walls with a new and very personal piece of art. Or you have a gift that will be sentimental for generations to come.