

Summer Arts for Teens: Crazy-Cool Drop-in Classes, Studios and Workshops - ParentMap

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Summer Arts for Teens: Crazy-Cool Drop-in Classes, Studios and Workshops

Sew, forge, fix, carve, paint, animate and create

By Gemma Alexander



Courtesy Gage Academy

For many teens, summer learning rests at the bottom of their priority lists. But many still crave a creative outlet for self-expression. "Art lets students explore their interests in a sophisticated, challenging way, and helps them increase their creative problem-solving skills," says Marybeth Satterlee, cofounder and program director of Coyote Central, a Seattle-based nonprofit that offers a range of innovative hands-on workshops for tweens and young teens.

Arts education can be the creative compromise when parents care about year-round learning and teens just want to have fun. Keep this list of workshops and studios for when your teens are looking for something different to do this summer.

Coyote Central: Hands-on art, from robots to videos

Based in central Seattle, Coyote Central is all about engagement. "We've expanded our offerings based on what will hook kids' interest. Our arts spread into any creative field," says Satterlee about the Studio Coyote program. The current course list includes **cooking, metalworking, glassblowing, and a lot of design-and-build (furniture, bikes, robots) and technology-based classes (animation, video game development, music production)**. Coyote takes an unconventional approach to traditional arts, too, offering classes on drawing comics, fashion designs and graffiti. The weeklong classes are designed for tweens and younger teens (ages 10–15), with hands-on projects in an apprentice-like setting.

Prices: While prices for weeklong workshops range from \$200 to \$500, families shouldn't be put off by the hefty price tag. Coyote Central has a robust scholarship program that provides reduced tuition, incremental payments or monetary scholarships, allowing all kids to be welcomed on a first come, first served basis.

Gage Academy: Drop in, tune in, make art — for free

The Gage Academy of Art, which teaches painting, drawing and sculpture for all ages, offers one of the few year-round, drop-in arts programs in the Puget Sound area, and it's expanding: Its free weekly drop-in art studio for teens ages 13–18 is now offered at two locations: on its Capitol Hill campus **every Friday evening (6:30–9:30 p.m.)** and at the **Bellevue Arts Museum on Thursdays (4–7 p.m.)**. Each month, a different professional artist teaches a specific art form. "The drop-in format really works because kids are showing up when they're ready to learn," says Andrea Goodman, youth and community manager at the Gage Academy.

Students do not need any previous experience, and sessions are not cumulative. Previous themes have included acrylics, pen-and-ink drawing and portraiture. Other summer programs include two-week workshops and the five-week portfolio intensive.

Prices: The drop-in teen program is free.



Courtesy Gage Academy

Pratt Fine Arts Center: Serious art, from beginners to pros

Located in South Seattle, Pratt Fine Arts Center, a multidisciplinary arts center serving everyone from complete novices to professional artists, offers a teen program geared toward serious artists, but it does not expect students to have previous experience. During the summer, regular quarterly classes are replaced by two Teen Art Week sessions (June 22–26 and Aug. 3–7), with topics ranging from **drawing to painting to glass and metal art**. **Additional summer intensives include bookbinding, stone carving and portfolio development**. (Note: Some classes are already full; register soon!)

Prices: Most Pratt courses fall between \$200 and \$300. Tuition assistance is available based on student need. Teens may also apply for a Pohlman Knowles Scholarship. A bonus: Students who complete a skills test after completing a Pratt course can book time to work individually in one of Pratt's five professional-quality studios for glass, jewelry/metalworking, printmaking, sculpture and wood.

Kirkland Teen Union Building: Open studio hours abound

The Kirkland Teen Union Building, aka KTUB, is a combination resource center, recreation hall and arts venue with many opportunities for teens to create and express. During the summer, the art studio is open Monday through Friday, 3–8 p.m., with access to supplies and tools on site. Open mic nights will be scheduled throughout the summer for young poets and writers who want to share their work. Monthly opportunities include a first-Tuesday painting workshop that begins at 5 p.m. and off-site art excursions. The darkroom and recording studio are also available for use by appointment. KTUB also offers five summer camps: Studio Sensations, Everything Art, Cafe, Longboard Production and Youth Institute.

Prices: All activities are free or low-cost.

The Vera Project: Lights, audio, music!

Long known as a pioneer in teen leadership and arts programming, this all-ages, volunteer-fueled music and arts venue housed at Seattle Center offers an eclectic mix of summer programs for kids ages 14–25, including silk screening, live audio engineering, stage lighting and DJ-ing. The Vera Project hosts live concerts and DJ nights several nights a week. Teens can also volunteer in many capacities, from running shows to helping in the recording studio to curating exhibitions.

Prices: Most classes are \$30, and show prices vary. Volunteer orientations do not require registration and are usually held the second Thursday and the second Saturday of the month at 4 p.m. Teens should attend an orientation or check the website to find their own entry point into this youth arts community.

Youth Speaks Seattle: Super slamming

With monthly open mics and weekly writing circles, Youth Speaks Seattle, the group synonymous with youth slam poetry, is both an outlet and a community for young writers. Open mics are held on the first Sunday of the month at The Station Café, while writing circles take place every Thursday at Miller Community Center.

Prices: Both open mics and writing circles are free, for all ages and very supportive.

Greater Seattle Bureau of Fearless Ideas: Write on!

Formerly known as 826 Seattle, this youth writing center in Seattle's Greenwood neighborhood offers a range of fun and unusual workshops. The summer schedule wasn't finalized at press time, but workshops will take place on weekdays between June 22 and July 17, and are likely to delve into such oddities as shadow puppets, illuminated manuscripts and skaldic (that's Viking) poetry.

Prices: All workshops are free, but students are limited to one per season to serve as many youths as possible.

Schack Art Center: Serving up innovative arts

Located in Everett, innovative Schack Art Center schedules a few programs of interest to teens, including a "One-hour Plates" workshop. This workshop is exactly what it says, an hour-long workshop making fused-glass plates. Multiday classes at Schack include drawing, painting, glassblowing, digital photography, claymation and even basket weaving. Studio space for all ages is also available during a limited number of "Free Fridays" (free, drop in, bring your own supplies).

Prices: Costs range from \$55 to \$350 for glassblowing, sometimes with a materials fee as well. Some scholarships are available.



Courtesy Schack Arts Center

Public libraries: Free, eclectic, awesome

Public libraries are a gold mine for all ages, including teens. At King County Library, a calendar search for teen art activities on one randomly chosen day in July reveals teen workshops in sumi painting, novel writing and lucha libre mask-making. Each branch in the library system has unique programming.

The Seattle Public Library offers an eclectic range of teen programming for the summer, but its arts programs are multiweek series and include on-trend classes in topics such as cell phone photography, stop-motion animation and storytelling. (Preregistration required for a series.)

Teens in the Sno-Isle Libraries system can attend a weekly writing circle in Monroe (or a monthly one in Snohomish) or take the "Create Your Unique Story" workshop on different dates throughout the system. Check the calendar for more free workshops ranging from cosplay to African drumming.

- At Pierce County libraries, the monthly Knit Together and Teen Art Meetups will continue through the summer. Additional workshops include activities such as henna art, shrinky dinks and making things out of duct tape. The Summer Reading Challenge incorporates arts activities through some of its badges, which are released over the course of the summer.

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