



# Flower Pressing

**Supplies:**

- White paper
- Heavy Books or bricks
- A variety of flowers and leaves
- White Glue
- Card Stock
- Waxed Paper
- Crayons
- Contact Paper

**Age or Grade:** 3-12

**Time:** Unlimited



**Background:** Pressing flowers is an excellent way to preserve flowers from special occasions, or simply create a beautiful nature craft. While there are many techniques for pressing flowers, including using special presses or a microwave, the method described in this activity is achievable for any child without special equipment. This is a great way to relax by being creative!

**Project Goal:** Press and Preserve flowers and leaves to use to create decorations cards, bookmarks, placemats and other decorative items.

**What to Do:**

1. Get permission from your parents for this or any craft!
2. Gather flowers and leaves from around the yard. Do not pick flowers or plants without permission and adult supervision. If you are picking wild flowers, only pick flowers that are commonly found. Some flowers are very rare and should never be picked!
3. Try collecting flowers on a sunny day when they are not wet from rain or dew, or lay them out on a paper towel to dry for a few minutes.
4. Place the flower face down on a piece of white paper.
5. Place 2-3 pieces of paper on top, if you are going to dry multiple layers of flowers.
6. Place papers on a large book or board, then place one or more heavy books on top of the layers of flowers and paper. You may also layer cardboard or card stock. Consider using recycled papers, as long as they are clean and do not have marker or ink that could smear. Do not use paper towels, as your flowers will take on the texture of the paper towels and not press evenly.
7. Leave the flowers alone for seven to 10 days. You will want to check to make sure all the moisture is gone and your flower is papery.
8. When the flowers are dry, you can use them in a variety of crafts including cards, bookmarks and decorations.

*Hint:* Try drying individual petals and leaves and arranging them to make new designs and patterns.



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## Virginia 4-H Healthy Living @ Home Activity

**Mounting on Paper :** When gluing flowers to paper, place the flowers on a piece of waxed paper or another non-stick surface. Consider using a small brush or a cotton swab. Place a few drops of glue in a small cup and dilute with a few drops of water. This will make the glue easier to spread on the back of the flower. Carefully transfer the flower to paper then brush lightly with a cotton swab or dry brush.

**Pressing in Waxed Paper:** Fold a piece of waxed paper in half. Place dried flowers between layers of waxed paper. Preheat an iron to low heat. Gently press the hot iron on the waxed paper. You may place a piece of paper over the waxed paper to prevent the wax from transferring to the iron. Continue to gently press and move the iron until the waxed paper seals to itself. For extra fun, try sprinkling crayons shavings in between the layers of waxed paper before ironing. These will melt and form a stained-glass effect.

**Mounting in Contact Paper:** Cut a piece of contact paper and place on a table, sticky side up, then carefully lay dried flowers on the lower half of the contact paper. Once the flower design is in place, carefully fold the blank half of the contact paper over the flowers.

**Packing Tape:** You may also cover pressed flowers with clear packing tape.

**Reflect:**

1. How long did it take your flowers to dry?
2. Did it take all of your flowers the same amount of time to dry?
3. Which way did you choose to mount your flower?
4. What happened when you mounted your flower?

**Apply:**

1. How can we use homemade crafts like this to spread joy in our communities?
2. What are other ways you could use dried flowers?

**Notes for  
Parents or  
Helpers:**

**Notes for Parents or Helpers:** Results can vary a great deal, depending on the type of flower or leaf or the amount of color and moisture in the flowers or leave. Choose bright colors! Sometimes the color will fade as it dries. Consider separating petals and flower parts rather than whole flowers. These can be used to interesting designs and patterns

Experiment with different flowers, colors and patterns. You may use dried flowers on cards, bookmarks and decorations. Be creative!

**Use common flowers from around your own yard.** Many parks have rules against picking flowers. As your children: Why do these rules exist? Why should we avoid picking wildflowers? Consider having your children “collect flowers” by photographing or sketching them.



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