

## THE ART OF FLOWER PRESSING

The art of flower pressing allows you to preserve flowers and foliage you collect on your travels. You can use your press to create beautiful keepsakes, turning your piece of nature into art.

## CHOOSING YOUR FLOWERS

Selecting flowers for your collection is always fun. The best time to collect is on a dry day in the mid- afternoon, picking wildflowers and foliage that catches your eye. Choose pieces in a variety of colours, shapes and sizes. Your collection can include flowers, leaves, fernery and even grass.

When choosing pieces to press, select flowers that are in prime condition, avoiding any with tears or blemishes. Look for flowers that have just bloomed, as this is when their colour is at its most vibrant. A flowers' colour will fade when pressed, so catch them in their prime for the best results.

Most importantly when choosing your plants to press, make sure they are completely dry and free from rain or dew. Wet plants are prone to mould. Finally, remember to press plants promptly after they are picked, without giving them time to wilt.



## HOW TO USE YOUR FLOWER PRESS

- Loosen the straps of your press.
- Place two pieces of blotting paper between each layer of cardboard.
- Choose flowers and leaves of equal thickness to press together.
- Place them between the blotting papers, making sure to spread the petals and leaves out flat in your desired position. If you want to curve the flower stems, shape them gently before pressing.
- If your flower has a thick centre, you may want to remove the petals, leaves and stem. You can then press them separately. Afterwards you can reassemble the flower when mounting.
- Remember that leaves and flowers should be free of moisture and spread out flat without any pieces overlapping in the press.
- When you are satisfied with your arrangement, replace the top of the press and bring the straps back up over the sides. Hold the first strap against the press with one hand, then tighten it with the other hand.
- Repeat the procedure with the remaining strap while making sure that the pressure is even on both sides.
- Leave the flowers in the press for approximately 1-3 weeks, retightening the straps each day.
- When the flowers and leaves are fully pressed and dry, remove them and store them in a flat box between layers of tissue paper until ready for use.



## MOUNTING YOUR FLOWERS

After 1-3 weeks in your press, your flowers will be ready to use. You can get creative and mount your flowers to a variety of flat surfaces including wood, paper, cardboard, and glass.

When mounting your flowers, remember to handle them carefully, as they will be fragile. You should also avoid placing pressed flowers in direct sunlight, as their colours will fade.

First, plan your positioning and gently set the flowers in place. You may want to use tweezers for small pieces. Once in position, apply a small amount of craft glue to the thickest parts of your foliage. Do not use too much, as you want it to dry easily. Attaching them delicately to your desired surface. Allow ample time to dry.

You may use your collection on any of the following:

## SCRAPBOOKING & JOURNALS

Collecting and displaying pressed flowers and leaves is a great way to document memories of days or trips in nature. Your pressed plants can be applied to both the covers and inside pages of your books.

To mount your flowers in Scrapbooks or Journals, plan your positioning first and gently set the flowers in place. Once you're happy with the layout you can begin to apply a small amount of craft glue to the flowers and stick it down. In scrapbooks or journals, you may want to apply a bit more glue or cover with clear plastic. Allow time to dry.

When pressed flowers are mounted in books, it's also good to place a piece of tissue paper in-between the decorated pages for extra protection.

## STATIONERY & GREETING CARDS

Pressed flowers can be a beautiful addition to personalising your own stationery and greeting cards. Start with quality paper or card stock as your base. Place your flowers in your desired position, then apply a small amount of craft glue to mount. You may also use other mediums to add to the design such as markers, paint and lettering stamps, to complete your message.



## FRAMED FLOWERS

Pressed flowers can make a beautiful framed art piece, and glass is a great way to preserve your flowers by holding them flat. When creating a floral picture, start with positioning your flowers on soft paper (like baking paper or cotton fabric). Once your flowers are in place, apply a small amount of craft glue to keep them in place. You may want to use multiple flowers in an arrangement, or even add the plant's Latin scientific name written below to creating a more botanical look.

Finish by using a mat board in a square or oval shape to frame your arrangement. Place the front of the frame on and seal, ready to hang.

## SUN-CATCHERS

Creating your own sun-catcher is also a great way to use your flowers as a decoration, delicately sandwiched between glass.

You can either buy a pre-made glass frame with metal edging and hanging chains attached. Alternatively, you can do it yourself by placing your flowers between two pieces of glass, then sealing the edges with stained glass lead. You can then solder together with a chain for hanging.

## DECOUPAGE

Pressed flowers, ferns, or leaves can be used to decorate any wood surface using decoupage techniques.

Prime your wood first by sealing or painting it. Once the base is completely dry, you are then ready to mount your plants.

After delicately placing your foliage into position, use a pour-on or clear spray finish, or gently apply an acrylic medium with a sponge brush to seal the flowers in place.

We hope you enjoy your flower press!

