

# How to Press Flowers

Pressed flowers preserve a moment in time.



Pick flowers in the morning after dew has evaporated. Harvest them when they are ready to open their buds or just before their peak. The better the quality of the blooms at picking time, the better they will look when dried and pressed.



For best results and the most vibrant colors, condition your blooms first. Plunge the stems into water immediately after cutting, then hold the stems underwater in a sink and recut the stems at an angle to allow the greatest water absorption. Place them in a clean vase filled with water and floral food.



The easiest flowers to press are those with naturally flat blooms such as violets, daisies, and single-petal roses.



You need newspaper; blotting paper; printer paper; flat, noncorrugated coffee filters; flat cardboard; or plain, untreated facial tissues to absorb moisture and aid drying. Your goal is to dry flowers as quickly as possible to prevent browning.



Avoid paper towels because their textures may be imprinted on the petals. Also avoid waxed paper because it retains moisture. Trial and error will also show you how to place the blooms on the paper so they look their best when pressed.



**Using Books:** The easiest method of flower pressing requires no special equipment other than absorbent paper and a heavy book. Start by placing the flowers between two layers of absorbent paper, then placing heavy books on top. Or place the flowers between the pages of the book itself, leaving at least 1/8 inch between multiple pressings. Weigh down the top of the book with a brick or other heavy item.



**Using an Iron:** Put flowers between two pieces of absorbent paper. Remove water from iron then heat iron to a low setting. Press the warm iron on top of the upper sheet of paper for 10 to 15 seconds. You don't need to make a gliding motion as if ironing. Wait for the paper to cool for another 10 to 15 seconds, then repeat. Check occasionally by very carefully lifting the paper to see if the flower is stiff and dry.



**Using the Microwave** This speeds up drying time. To create a press for the Microwave use two ceramic tiles and rubber bands to hold the tiles tightly together. Place the flowers between two sheets of absorbent paper, then press between the ceramic tiles. Heat for 30 to 60 seconds at a time, allowing the materials to cool before repeating. When the flowers are dry, finish the process with the traditional air-drying press with a book or heavy object. The flowers should be finished in a day or two.