

April Showers Bring May Flowers!



Rose Garden, 1972

Sitting just outside the Oval Office is the beautiful **Rose Garden**. Landscape designer Rachel Lambert Mellon, often known as Bunny Mellon, transformed the Rose Garden during the Kennedy administration into its current iconic design.

First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy made a scrapbook with real clippings of plants and flowers from the Rose Garden and gave it to Bunny Mellon to showcase the results of her hard work.

Now it is your turn to make a keepsake of the beautiful flowers and plants where you live through **flower pressing**. This craft has been practiced for hundreds of years to create art and savor memories of special occasions.

While there are a variety of methods for pressing flowers, the one constant is to *remove all the moisture out of the flowers*. Drying your plants prevents mold from growing and ensures that they will last. Our method is very simple but can be sped up if needed with an iron.

Supplies Needed

- 2 Sheets of paper (parchment paper if you have it)
- Heavy book
- Flowers and/or plants*
- Iron (*optional*)

*This activity works best with flowers that have thin blooms, such as violets or daisies, since they dry faster and retain their color. This is not the ideal method for pressing larger flowers such as whole roses – with bigger flowers you can press individual petals instead.

Instructions

1. Pick the flowers and/or plants you want to preserve/press.
If there are visible water droplets, dry the flower off with a paper towel very gently.



FLOWER PRESSING

2. Place the flowers between two sheets of paper. Then set a heavy book on top to flatten them.
If you picked flowers but do not have time for the pressing process, place the flowers in a plastic bag and place that into the fridge to preserve the blooms till you are ready to proceed.



3. (*Optional*) If you want to speed up the pressing process, you can use a clothes iron before the next step.
 - a. Ask an adult to help bring the iron to a low temperature, with NO steam (remember you need to dry out the flowers).
 - b. With the flowers still in-between two sheets of paper, place the iron on the top sheet for 10 sec (no movements). Then remove the iron and let the paper cool before repeating the small process again as many times as you want. The more you iron, the less time the flower will need to dry out in the next step.



4. Now place the paper with the flowers into the middle of heavy book like an old dictionary. Leave inside until the flower is dry to the touch – about 2 to 7 days depending if you did the optional ironing.
 - a. Remember to check the flowers every few days for mold or other issues.

5. Now use your dried, pressed flower to create a scrapbook or frame to make new wall art as keepsake of springtime!

