

Fun ways to say Happy Valentine's Day

With Valentine's Day approaching, why not get little ones to make a keepsake for a parent or carer. You only need a few basics, which can be found in most kitchen cupboards

Heart handprints

Step 1

Stir all the ingredients together in a mixing bowl, including any optional ingredients, until they are all bound together.

Step 2

Take the mixture out of the bowl, put onto a floured surface and knead for approx. 10 minutes until the dough is firm and soft – if it's too sticky add more flour, if it's too dry add more water.

Step 3

When thoroughly kneaded, place the dough on a floured flat surface and let it stand for approx. 20 minutes.

Step 4

Roll out the dough until it's a sheet roughly 25cm x 25cm and between 0.5 and 1cm thick (wide enough for two handprints).

Step 5

Press the child's hands firmly into the dough and cut a heart shape around them.

Step 6

Line a flat baking tray with foil and place the dough heart shapes (handprint facing upwards) onto it. Place in the oven at 50°C for 30mins and then turn up to 100°C (200°F, Gas Mark 1/4) for about four hours. If you set the oven higher the dough is likely to bubble and crack.

Step 7

Turn over the salt dough halfway through cooking (handprints facing downwards), to dry both sides evenly. When dry, turn off the oven and leave the dough inside to cool down slowly. Once dry, the salt dough can be painted with acrylic or poster paint.

Hints and Tips

- *Using a little vegetable oil makes the salt dough easier to knead and the lemon juice makes it set harder.*
- *You can dry the salt dough in the open air but this will take 2-3 days!*
- *If the edges are rough, they can be smoothed off using sandpaper.*
- *As well as painting the handprints, why not coat them with glitter spray or varnish/glaze.*
- *Wrap the handprint in cellophane and tie with pretty ribbon.*
- *Unused dough can be stored in an airtight container or plastic food wrap for approximately a week.*

Alternative

Make a thumb print, cut it into a heart shape with a small hole in the top and thread through thin ribbon to make a pendant.



Designed by Helen Gant

GROUP
ACTIVITY

Store cupboard

Makes dough for 3 double handprints

- 2 cups of plain flour
- 1 cup of table salt
- 1 cup of water
- Mixing bowl
- Rolling pin
- Aprons
- Table cover
- Acrylic or poster paint
- 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil (optional)
- 1 tablespoon of lemon (optional)

