

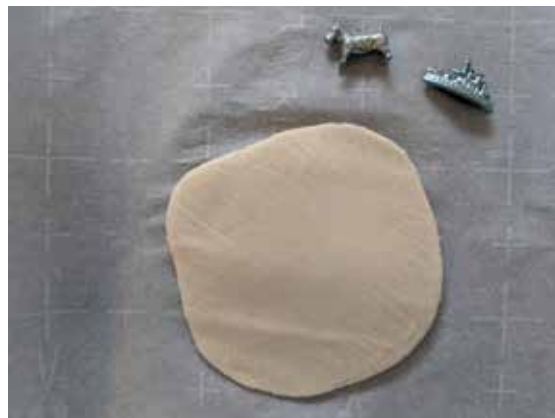
SALT DOUGH Backyard Fossils

MATERIALS

- 1/4-1/2 cup water
- 1 cup flour
- 1/2 cup salt
- Bowl for mixing
- Rolling pin
- Parchment paper
- Items for making fossils (leaves, rocks, sticks, shells, small toys)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a mixing bowl, measure out the flour and salt. Stir to mix.
2. Slowly, add water to the bowl. Start with 1/4 cup and add more as needed. Mix the ingredients until a dough starts to form. If the dough is crumbly, continue to add water. If it becomes sticky, add more flour.
3. Knead the dough for 5-7 minutes, until the ingredients have been thoroughly mixed.
4. Roll the dough out onto parchment paper, or have kids flatten the dough with their hands.
5. To make fossils, place an object onto the dough, press, and remove.
6. To preserve your fossils, bake at 200 degrees, starting at one hour. Thicker fossils will need to bake longer.



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WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Paleontology is the study of the history of life on earth. A **paleontologist** may study rocks, minerals, climate, or even the fossils of dinosaurs! A **fossil** is the remains of something that was once alive, such as plants and animals. A mold is a type of fossil that occurs when the original material, this can be bones or shells, dissolves away leaving a void or empty space in the shape of the material (bone or shell). This can also occur with dinosaur footprints! If a dinosaur left an impression (or footprint) in the sediment as it walked, a mold can form. Sometimes a mold can be filled in with sediment and a cast is formed. A cast is similar to a copy of the original animal or footprint.

What type of fossil did you make today, a cast or mold? A *mold*.



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