

Make Your Own Plant Press!

At the Sandy Hook Interactive Herbarium we use our plant press in order to preserve our beautiful plant specimen. Although our plant press is more professional, making a miniature plant press is fun and easy! Here we have provided you with the information needed to construct your own miniature plant press that you can use whenever you spot a pretty plant you'd like to preserve!

You will need:

- 2 strong pieces of wood (wooden coasters work well!)
- Flat, long, skinny pieces of wood (Popsicle sticks work!)
- Absorbent paper (Try tissue paper!)
- Cardboard (thinner cardboard works best!)
- Rope (Thinner rope or string preferred)
- Tools required:
 - Scissors
 - Glue
 - Pencil

Part 1: Making the actual Plant Press

1. Be sure your 2 pieces of wood are the same size and that your skinny pieces of wood are not too much longer than the length of the 2 pieces of wood (And that the skinny pieces of wood are of equal length as well).
2. Glue four rows of the skinny pieces of wood at equal intervals onto one of the 2 larger pieces of wood.
3. Do the same to the second large piece of wood (If your 2 large pieces of wood are not square be sure to glue the skinny pieces of wood perpendicular to the ones on the other large piece of wood).
4. Allow the glue to completely dry.

Part 2: Preparing the Paper for Pressing

1. Mark the cardboard so that pieces may be cut that are the same size as the plant press (do the same to the tissue paper as well)

2. Cut out the pieces; make sure you have AT LEAST 4 pieces of cardboard and 6 pieces of tissue paper cut out.

Part 3: Making the Straps

1. Stack one part of the wooden plant press, then the pieces of cardboard and tissue paper, and then the second part of the plant press.
2. Use this stack of parts as a good indicator as to how long the straps should be. To do so wrap the string around the stack at least 3 complete times, the more stinging the better. Using this measurement cut two equal sized pieces of string.
3. These strings will be used to tightly tie the plant press all together when you are pressing a plant. If you would like you can tie loops at the end of each string so that getting the plant press tied tightly, or you may just tie the string when you are ready. When we at the Sandy Hook Interactive Herbarium press plants we use pull straps, much like the ones you can find to adjust the straps of a backpack, this allows us to secure the plant press as tightly as possible.

Part 4: Using the Plant Press

1. Find a flower or multiple flowers that you would like to preserve, cut off a specimen which will fit inside your plant press. Remember, the amount of specimen you have will determine the amount of cardboard you will need as well as tissue paper. Also be sure that the number of specimen you will fit, along with the cardboard pieces and tissue paper you will need, in the plant press.
2. Start by having the plant press separated into two pieces. Lay these pieces next to each other latticed side up. Be sure to arrange these pieces so that one's grooves are horizontal and the other's are vertical.
3. Place two pieces of cardboard on each piece of the plant press.
4. Place three pieces of tissue paper (amount may vary if you substitute the tissue paper for another absorbent paper) on each piece.
5. Place your plant specimen on top of one piece of the plant press. If you are pressing more than one plant at a time follow with another three pieces of

tissue paper, a piece of cardboard, another three sheets of tissue paper, your second flower, and so on till you are left with all your flowers stacked.

6. Pick up the second side of your plant press and flip it over on top of the first part so that the contents are sandwiched inside.
7. Wrap your two straps around the plant press securely and tighten as much as possible.
8. Leave plant specimen in the press for two weeks or until completely dry.
9. Remove plants from press and adore your new specimen.

Note: Pieces like cardboard can be reused once dry.

Good Luck!