

# Pressed Flowers By Preserved Gardens




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## How to Press Flowers, Leaves and Herbs

Instructions and basic techniques for pressing flowers and foliage, and using different types of presses.

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### *Pressed Flowers*

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#### Pressed Flowers and

##### Foliage

[Shades of Blue](#)  
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[White, Cream and Ivory](#)

I encourage everyone who wants to work with pressed flowers to try and press your own flowers. Pressing flowers can be very gratifying in itself and will add to the enjoyment of creating a finished pressed flower piece.

There are several good methods for pressing flowers. We'll cover some of the basics here.

**Flower Preparation** - For best results make sure you pick your flowers at their freshest and press when there is no moisture on them. It's very important to properly [condition your flowers](#) if you don't press them immediately upon picking them. I normally condition them regardless of how soon I'm able to press or dry my flowers. The colors are better when you take this extra step.

When preparing the flower for pressing some thought should be given as to how it will look when flattened. Avoid allowing parts to overlap unless for artistic effect. Leaves should normally be laid out flat.

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**Pressing Flowers in Books** - Place flower between 2 sheets of paper to protect the pages of the book. Leave at least 1/8" of pages between pressings, weigh the book down and wait a couple of weeks.

You can put the book with flowers and paper in the microwave and zap in short bursts, (30 seconds to a minute at a time, checking between to see if they're done.)

[Purple Flowers](#)  
[Red Flowers](#)  
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[Foliage, Autumn Leaves and Greenery](#)  
[Assorted Pressed Flowers](#)  
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[Flower Presses](#)

## Pressed Flower Community

[Pressed Flower Shop](#) - Pressed flower art, crafts, gifts and items offered by individual pressed flower artists. Includes a link to a forum for pressed flower lovers.

## Preserved Flowers

[Antiqued Preserved Flowers](#)

[Home](#)  
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## Outside Resources

[Art and Craft Supply](#)  
[Botanical Arts and Artists Resources and Reference](#)  
[Handmade Crafters](#)  
[Pressed Flower Sites](#)  
[Oil Burners and Candles](#)  
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## Flower and Garden Information

[Conditioning Fresh Flowers](#)  
[Flower Arranging Tips](#)  
[Florists - Fresh Flowers](#)  
[State Flowers and Trees](#)  
[Garden Arts and Sources](#)



Repeat until almost done, then put in a another book or press to finish.

I have an old set of encyclopedia Britannica that I picked up at a garage sale for under \$10 that I use for pressing. They look better than phone books and you come across some pretty interesting info as you press.

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**Flower Presses** - You can buy a flower press or make your own. Personally, I prefer a [botanical flower press](#) because it allows greater air circulation. It would be hard to make your own though, unless you're good with wood-working.

To make a **simple wooden press**: Cut 2 boards, hold them together with a long bolt and wing nut in each corner. Cut pieces of cardboard and blotting paper (or newsprint) to fit between the boards, and layer it; Wood, cardboard, blotting paper, plain white paper, flower, plain white paper, blotting paper, cardboard, then repeat your layers etc. Place the other piece of wood on top and tighten the wing nuts. Your color retention will be greatly improved if you put the flowers between sheets of paper and then change just the blotter at least every couple of days. The flowers will turn brown if they don't dry quick enough.

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**Microwave Pressing** - For best results you can use a [microwave flower press](#) that has been designed specifically for the purpose. I prefer this press because it allows greater air circulation.

When pressing in the microwave, be careful not to over do it. Start out with short bursts at a medium setting, perhaps 30-60 seconds, then experiment with the timing. Let the plant material cool between zaps. I open the press to let the steam escape while cooling, then repeat until almost dry. To save time, consider working with 2 presses, just zap one while the other cools and alternate.

While still in the paper, place your flowers in a book or flower press to finish pressing. This normally takes anywhere from a few hours to a day depending on the particular flower.

The Microfleur press is very good too, especially for very

**[Pink Flower Arrangements](#)**

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thin flowers; you can get one from Pat Smith at [Sonshine Crafts](#)...email her for details.

To make a **simple microwave press**: Use regular ceramic tiles, with rubber bands to keep the whole thing together. I've tried a lot of materials for the padding and what worked best for me is plain old paper toweling as padding, with the flowers placed between two pieces of regular paper, like you'd use in a printer. It's important to put the flowers between printer paper so they don't pick up any texture your paper toweling may have.

I've also substituted coffee filters for the paper with very good results, especially when the flower isn't completely flat, such as roses. The coffee filters aren't as stiff as computer paper so the flowers come out much nicer.

An even simpler way to press in the microwave is to substitute corrugated cardboard for the ceramic tiles in the instructions above. Try it! It works and will give you a feel for if you like using the microwave before you spend the time and money for a more permanent microwave press.

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You should get good results with any of these methods. Different flowers press better with different methods, so experiment. There are many examples of flowers that press well on other pages of this website and also in my [Pressed Flower Database](#).

The variety of flowers and plant materials to press is so great that you really need a couple of different presses if you want to be well covered. A flower that presses well in one type of press may do poorly in another type of press,

If I could only have one press I would choose a botanical press. However, I sometimes see presses of solid wood with either straps or wing nut fasteners that are referred to as "botanical presses" but that's not accurate. A professional style botanical press should have the more open frame-work design.

As time permits I'll write up instructions to make several different types of presses, so check back every now and then for new designs. I experiment a lot and have well over a dozen good press designs.

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**More Advanced Pressing Methods** - The methods discussed above work well with simple flowers and leaves. You will need to put more effort into [Pressing Full Open Roses](#) but it can be done. As lilies open, always remove the stamens to prevent staining the flower.

Pressing Fruits and Vegetables can be fun, and with proper [Fruit and Vegetable Preparation](#) you can get some pretty good results.

In some cases it helps to treat your plant materials with a *little* [glycerin](#) before pressing, especially with foliage and fall leaves. Just spray it on and allow the leaves to dry to the touch before pressing.

- You can get glycerin from a pharmacy or craft store and mix it with either water or alcohol.
- Anti-freeze is a mixture of glycerin and methyl alcohol, so that's an option as well. Methyl alcohol is toxic so take common sense precautions when using it.
- The main softening ingredient in fabric softener is glycerin, so you can also use a little fabric softener mixed with water.
- As a precaution you may want to [dye foliage or flowers](#) that are prone to fading, before you press them.

*Remember...* When in doubt give it a try! Have some fun, experiment, and never stop playing!

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- For more information and interaction with persons interested in Pressed Flowers, go to our Pressed Flower Forum, where you can ask questions, get ideas and share your knowledge. Please join and help make it a good place to share info.
  - For more information about [conditioning your flowers](#) visit The Gardener.

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vegetables in the garden or you want to organize your flowers, bushes, or shrubs, our rust resistant metal garden markers are for you.

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*A gardener learns more in the mistakes than in the successes.  
~ Barbara Borland*

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