

"A box of nice things"

Long, long ago, in ancient Greece, women used small and large boxes to store their precious belongings. These were usually jewelry, such as necklaces, earrings, bracelets and more. These boxes were made by very skilled craftsmen and were adorned with various designs. Some had flowers, some had lines and others had figures.



Materials

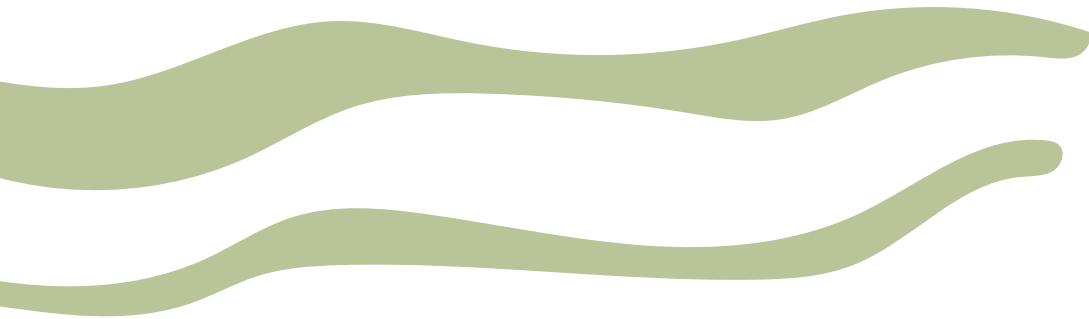
- Air-drying clay
- a hard surface to work on
- a popsicle stick or a plastic knife
- a rolling pin or a smooth bottle
- a skewer stick or a pencil
- a cup of water

Optional:

- cheese grater, various cookie cutters
- temperas, palette, brushes, cloth, cup of water

Imagine that you are a craftsman in ancient Greece and you want to make a clay box to keep the most beautiful things you own (cars, dinosaurs, jewelry, dolls, marbles, ribbons, leaves, sticks, etc.).

You will also need the help of an adult to complete all the steps, especially measuring.



Note for the adult who will help you

It doesn't matter whether the result resembles the photos we show or not. The value of the activity is in familiarizing children with clay and some basic techniques, such as ball or spaghetti molding, finger pressure, gluing with water, spreading on a sheet, cutting, engraving and painting on a vertical surface. In addition, a 4-year-old child uses clay differently from an older child. Do not expect the same results from children of different ages.

Have fun with it!

Instructions

1. Take a piece of clay and cut it in half using the stick.

Then cut one of the pieces in half again. Now you have one big piece and two small pieces.

2. Take a small piece and mold it in your hands to make a ball. Next, use the rolling pin to flatten it into a disk shape, just like a pie crust, until it reaches a diameter of 10-11 cm and a thickness of approximately 1 cm.

3. Then, take the large piece and press it with the rolling pin as if you were rolling out a sheet of dough. You want to create an elongated strip, approximately 1 cm thick and measuring 15-20 cm in length.

4. Next, cut the strip in half lengthwise and trim the sides, resulting in two large rectangles that are 15-20 cm long and 5-6 cm wide.

5. Your goal is to use these two strips as the walls of the box.

Therefore, to make them longer, join them together widthwise with water and press with your index finger to make one long strip.

6. Create small lines around the perimeter of your clay disk and apply water along the edges using your index finger. Do the same on the underside of the strip.

7. Position the clay strip along the perimeter of the disk in a standing position, and close it at the point where it joins together.

Cut off any excess using the sticks. Always attach pieces by applying water (it acts like glue for clay) and pressing down with your fingers.

8. Transform the remaining pieces into long, thin spaghetti shapes.

Position these pieces along the edge where the strip joins the disk, placing them on both the outside and inside.

9. Moisten your index finger with water and use it to press the spaghetti shapes against the strip and the disk, ensuring they stick together seamlessly and the joint becomes invisible.

10. Now it's time for the lid. Grab the last small piece of clay you had set aside. Shape the clay into a ball and roll it out like a pie crust, until it reaches a diameter of 10-11 cm and has a thickness of about 1 cm, just like you did at the beginning. Take a small piece of the remaining clay and shape it into a thick, short spaghetti-like form. Place it on the lid of the box as a handle, using water and applying pressure with your index finger.

11. Now it's time to decorate your box.

Grab your skewer stick or pencil. With the assistance of an adult, gently engrave designs of your choice onto the walls and lid of the box. It can be flowers, a prince or a princess, a warrior, dinosaurs, cars and anything else you put your mind to. Attention! Gently press the skewer stick as if you were writing, without piercing through the other side like drilling.

12. You can also make imprints by gently pressing the cheese grater all over the walls of the box or pressing various cookie cutters onto it to give it their shapes.

13. After it dries, you can paint it with whatever colors you want.

Variations:

- **The box can also take the shape of a castle. To achieve this, place a lot of spaghetti-shaped pieces around the lid resembling turrets. Then carve a large castle door and small windows into the walls.**
- **The box can also become a pot to hold our favorite flower. To do this, drill three holes in the bottom with the skewer stick and turn the lid into a saucer. Note that in this case, the second disk you roll out needs to be a little larger in diameter, i.e. 13-14 cm. Then, place the spaghetti-shaped pieces around the perimeter to form a small wall.**
- **The box can also become a pot to accommodate our favorite flower. To do this, drill three holes in the bottom with the skewer stick and turn the lid into a saucer. Be careful, the second dish you open will be a little larger in diameter, i.e. 13-14 cm. Then, place the worm around the perimeter to form a small wall.**

Your box is ready
to store your beautiful things!