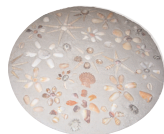


STEPPING STONES



You can find stepping stone kits in most garden centers, but we found that the stones often crack. Not so with the following “recipe.” After you’ve gathered the materials, this project takes just about an hour.

MATERIALS

- Disposable gloves (optional)
- Water
- Measuring cup (You might want to throw it away afterward.)
- 10 lb of cement mix (We used two 5-lb bags of the Quikrete.)
- Plastic utility bucket (about the size of a mop bucket)
- Large heavy spoon (A metal serving spoon worked best for us.)
- Circular mold, 12 inches in diameter (Soft plastic plant saucers work well, as do silicone, steel, or foil baking pans. You will want to dispose of the mold

afterwards. The pan should be at least 1 1/2 inches deep; the deeper the dish, the less likely that the stepping stone will break when, well, it’s stepped on.)

- Decorative materials: seashells, beads, beach glass, marbles, mementos, tiles
 - Towel
1. Wearing the gloves, measure the water into the bucket according to the cement mix directions. Add both bags of the cement, and stir it with a spoon until it becomes the consistency of thick brownie mix (not loose enough to pour or hard enough to crumble). We used

about an extra 1/2 cup water than was called for. To note: If you use the quick-setting Quikrete cement, as we did, you’ll want to work quickly so you have plenty of time to decorate.

2. Scoop the mix from the bucket into your mold, filling it almost to the brim.
3. Smooth the surface of the concrete with the back of the spoon as if you’re spreading cake frosting.
4. If you’re going to let your child press a hand- or footprint into the stone, now’s the time. Or she can press in decorations (wiggle the pieces to make sure they will stick) and lay out designs (flowers, hearts, stars, her name).
5. Let the stepping stone dry for 48 hours.
6. Turn mold upside down (on a towel) and tap it with your hand until it loosens.