

Press your own flowers

Preserve your favourite blooms for years to come with this simple technique.

What you need

- Flowers
- A good number of heavy books
- Paper
- Kitchen roll (optional)



How does it work?

Pressing flowers is a great way to enjoy blossoms all year round. By reducing the moisture in the brightly coloured blooms you prevent them from rotting. This is because bacteria that cause plant matter to decay need water to survive, just like we do. Properly pressed flowers can last a long time and many will hold their colours for several years.

People have been pressing flowers for hundreds of years. In Japan, the practice is known as oshibana, and there is evidence that it dates all the way back to the 16th century. It is said that warriors used oshibana to connect with the nature around them, while also improving their powers of concentration and patience.



1 To begin, select the flowers you want to press. You can use some from a florist or supermarket, or pick your own from the garden or the countryside.



2 If you're picking your own flowers, do it on a dry, sunny day after the dew has evaporated. Pick only a few flowers and get permission first.



3 Open a thick book to about halfway through. Lay a sheet of paper on the open page. If you wish to press thicker flowers, add a sheet of kitchen roll too.



4 Place your flowers on the paper. Think about how the petals will flatten and the stems will lie. Top with another sheet of paper and close the book.



5 Pile more books on top and leave in a warm, dry place. If you used kitchen roll, remove it after a day. Check your flowers daily until they no longer feel damp.



6 Once your flowers are fully dry, carefully remove them. You can use them for different craft activities or display them in a picture frame.

TOP TIP

The best flowers to use are those with flat blooms, such as daisies and pansies. Avoid really thick flowers, like begonias, as they won't dry.

