

Make Your Own Stamps

This St. Patrick's Day, let your child celebrate spuds—staples in most Irish fare—by turning them into shamrock stamps. Watch him marvel at how fun and simple it is to turn ordinary potatoes into custom-designed stamps! These homemade stamps are sure to brighten any blank canvas, but are especially suited for adorning festive greeting cards. Letting him stamp away is a great way to exercise those tiny hand muscles and get him in touch with his creativity.



What You Need:

- Raw potatoes in various sizes
- Acrylic paints
- Card stock or construction paper; or large drawing paper and paper trimmer
- Paring knife
- Cookie cutters (Optional)
- Small bowls
- Glitter (Optional)
- Ribbon (Optional)

What You Do:

1. Cut the potatoes in half and dry any moisture off the raw sides with a paper towel.
2. Carve a heart shape out of the raw side of the potato. An easy way to do this is to etch the outline of a heart onto the potato with a pencil tip, then cut away the outer edges of the potato.
3. Ask your child to pour different colored paints into small bowls. Green, orange, and white suit the occasion because they represent the colors of Ireland.
4. Now have your child dip the raw side of the potato into the paint and scrape off any excess paint back into the bowl.
5. Invite him to stamp away on the paper and show him that four hearts stamped together form a shamrock! If he wants, he can sprinkle glitter over the paint to jazz things up. Note: Stamping on small surfaces can be a little tricky for younger kids, so try giving him a large piece of paper and larger potato to work with.
6. Once the stamped images have dried, ask him how he wants to crop the picture down to greeting card size. A simple paper trimmer can be used to turn one piece of paper into multiple cards, each with their own design!
7. Encourage him to practice his writing skills by jotting down a simple sentiment inside the card and signing his name.
8. Tie a ribbon around the middle fold of the card for a more finished look.

Urge him to use these potato stamps to decorate all sorts of things besides cards; try posters, wrapping paper, and lunch bags, too.