

Mother's Day Carnations

In 1868, Ann Jarvis established a day to foster friendship among mothers whose families had been torn apart during the Civil War. After Ann's death, her daughter, Anna Jarvis, campaigned for Mother's Day to become a national holiday to honor mothers who had lost sons in the war.

Furthermore, it was also common to wear a red carnation if your mother was living and a white one if she had passed away.

Embrace the roots—literally—of Mother's Day by planting and growing carnations to honor mothers in your family's history. Not only will this educational activity test your child's green thumb, it's also a great bonding experience for mother and child!



What You Need:

- Computer with Internet access
- Red and white carnations
- Soil
- Small shovel
- Watering can with water
- Index cards
- Clear contact paper
- Markers

What You Do:

1. Before you begin, go online and research the history of Mother's Day in the United States. Who is Ann Jarvis and how did her actions and daughter's action impact the development of Mother's Day? What was the original meaning of Mother's Day?
2. After you and your child understand a bit more about the facts of Mother's Day, take your red and white carnations and plant them in honor of the mothers in your family.
3. Next, encourage him to find a sunny area to plant the carnations. Dig a small hole for the carnations so that the roots are completely covered and the stem remains above ground. Use extra soil to make sure the carnations stay standing.
4. Now, repeat this process with each of the carnations—and make sure to keep at least a foot between the plants.
5. Invite him to lightly water each plant.
6. Next, he can make tags for your carnations out of index cards. Do this by cutting the index cards into 2" x 3" rectangles, or smaller.
7. On each rectangle, have him write the name of each relative you wish the carnation to represent.
8. Help him laminate the tags with clear contact paper, and trim the excess paper.
9. Finally, place the tags in the ground next to the carnations to honor your relatives on Mother's Day!