

Make Your Own Stepping Stones

One person's trash is another person's... art supply? Yes! Instead of tossing your old plastic and Styrofoam containers, put them to further use with this fun activity. Styrofoam meat trays and plastic frozen food containers are just the right size to use as molds for unique concrete stepping stones. Try making a couple dozen stones to embed in your garden, and make a decorative path that's durable enough to walk on!

What You Need:

- A bag of quick-setting cement
- Water
- Trowel
- Shallow plastic or Styrofoam trays and food containers
- Newspaper
- Rubber gloves
- 1-gallon bucket



What You Do:

1. Line your workspace with newspaper.
2. Lie out several clean food containers on top of the newspaper. Try to find uniquely-shaped containers, perhaps even with a design, for a more artistic stepping stone.
3. Mix the cement and water in the bucket with a trowel until it's a consistently smooth, thick paste. Check the back of the bag for the best cement-to-water ratio. The cement should be thick enough that it takes a little muscle to mix, but wet enough so that all the dry particles get absorbed. Be sure to wear rubber gloves, because cement is hard on your skin and nails!
4. Pour the wet cement into your plastic and Styrofoam food containers, just to the top.
5. Lift the container about one inch off the ground and drop it gently a few times to release air bubbles and distribute the cement evenly into the mold.
6. Leave them to dry for about 10 minutes. Now you can carve in a design or names, or stick some beads, marbles, or buttons into the cement for an artistic flair!
7. Before you take it out of the mold, let it dry for at least an hour. Wait two or three days until they're fully dry before installing them in the ground so they're strong enough to resist breaking. If your stepping stone is too crumbly or fragile after it's set, try again with a higher cement-to-water ratio.
8. Now you're free to decorate your backyard with these unique beauties!