

Herb Sachets

OBJECTIVE

To create herbal sachets from dried herbs

SESSION DURATION

25 minutes

SUMMARY

Tell the students they will be making natural air fresheners. Sachets make small places such as closets and drawers smell nice. We use plants like herbs because they already have strong smells. You can add these same oils, called essential oils, to other materials if herbs aren't available.

ACTIVITY

Depending on the student's age, have them measure and cut a 4 by 6-inch rectangle of fabric. They should fold the fabric and staple the two long sides together. Then have them staple the two short sides, leaving a small corner area open in which to add the herbs. Have them turn the pocket inside out. Next, have them fill the pocket with the dried herbs and then staple it closed (or close the bag if pre-made.) More advanced students can sew the materials at home.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Fabric (muslin or other type of light-weight fabric) OR small pre-made organza bags
- Stapler
- Dried herbs (lavender, rosemary, scented geranium, lemon balm, or lemon verbena work especially well.)
- Unscented potpourri material
- Essential oils
- Spoon
- Clay pots (to hold dried herbs)
- Herb signs (to put in the pot, lavender, etc.)
- Potted herbs as examples

HANDOUTS

- Combinations
- Uses
- How to Dry Herbs

Herb Sachet Combinations

Use	Herbs
Aromatherapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lavender• Mint• Lemon• Rosemary
Fly Repellent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cloves• Basil• Bay Leaves
Flea Repellent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mint• Lemongrass• Lavender• Mint• Citronella
Uplifting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mint• Lemon
Soothing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Marjoram• Lavender
Moth Repellent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cinnamon• Cloves• Black Peppercorns

Uses for Herb Sachets

- Put in drawers like socks or underwear
- Put in your car
- Put in closets
- Put on the inside of shoes
- Put under a bed pillow (or inside the pillowcase)
- Others?

How to Dry Herbs

In the Microwave

Microwaves evaporate the water from the herbs, leaving the oils in the dried material.

- Separate the leaves from the stems.
- Place a single layer of herbs on a paper towel on a microwave-safe plate. Cover with a second paper towel.
- Microwave on high for 30 seconds. Be sure to keep a close eye on the herbs and stop the microwave if you smell the herbs burning.
- If the herbs are not quite dry yet, continue drying them at 15-30-second intervals. Depending on the herb and the moisture content, this method can take anywhere from a minute to ten minutes. Monitor closely so materials don't catch on fire.
- The herbs are dry when they have the texture of cornflakes and crumble when pressed.

In the Oven

Oven-drying herbs is a much quicker method than air-drying, but not as fast and easy as the microwave. You'll have to be careful not to burn the herbs, and you may have to experiment with your oven to find the ideal technique.

- Separate the leaves from the stems
- Place a single layer of herbs on an oven rack covered with a layer of muslin. You can also use parchment paper and dry one side out at a time.
- Set the oven on the lowest possible setting and place the rack in the oven. Ideally, the herbs should not be at more than 100 degrees F; you may need to preheat the oven, then turn it off to achieve such a low temperature. Use an oven thermometer to help you find the right technique with your oven.
- Leave the door ajar, so that excess moisture can escape, and the oven does not get too hot.
- Dry the leaves for 30 minutes, then turn them over once. Continue drying for an additional 30 minutes.
- After a total of one hour, turn off the oven and allow the herbs to cool in the oven. The herbs are dry when they have the texture of cornflakes and crumble when pressed.

Air-dry

Air drying takes the longest time but is the simplest method.

- Separate the leaves from the stems
- Place a single layer of herbs on a rack or a baking tray lined with cheesecloth or parchment. If you're going to be drying herbs using this method frequently, you may wish to make a drying screen out of mesh, like mosquito screening, mounted on a wooden frame.
- Place in a warm spot out of direct sunlight.
- Turn the leaves regularly, about every 12 hours or so.
- This method should dry the herbs in 2-3 days. The herbs are dry when they have the texture of cornflakes and crumble when pressed.