



Seaweed Pressing Method



Create beautiful artwork and ID guides with pressings collected from your local beach. Make sure you follow the *Seaweed Harvesting and Storage Method* guide to ensure you're collecting respectfully and responsibly.

You will need:

1. Seaweed and clean sea water
2. Shallow tray
3. White mounting paper (preferably watercolour, or other heavy art paper, as these cope best with being wet)
4. Baking paper or other waxed paper
5. Newspaper
6. Cardboard
7. Tools to help arrange the seaweed (brushes, tweezers, etc)
8. A press (this can be a proper flower press, or just anything heavy like a stack of books)

1. Sort and clean your specimens

- Carefully clean seaweed specimens by rinsing with fresh, clean seawater.
- Remove any decaying specimens/parts and other debris.



2. Identify your seaweed specimens before pressing

- Characteristics such as texture can be harder to identify after pressing.
- Use either a physical or online ID guide. There are a lot of seaweed species in the world, it feels really rewarding to get familiar with some of your locals.

3. Prepare your pressing tray

- Pour a couple of inches of clean seawater into your tray.

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- On a corner of the mounting paper, in pencil make a note of anything important any notes (species, date, place, who collected it, etc). You will only be able to write before the paper gets wet.
- 4. Wet your mounting paper and adjust the height of seawater in your pressing tray**
 - Thoroughly wet your mounting paper by sliding it into your pressing tray, making sure all sides get soaked.
 - Push the wetted paper down so that it is under the seawater, and adjust the height of the seawater so it just barely covers the paper. Water that is too low makes it difficult to spread out the branches of delicate seaweeds, while water that is too high makes it difficult to control the arrangement.
 - 5. Place your specimen on the wetted paper in your pressing tray**
 - Carefully place your cleaned sample in the centre of your wetted mounting paper.
 - 6. Unfold and arrange the main branches of your specimen and trim as needed**
 - To begin arranging, try to untangle and spread out all the main branches of your seaweed. Let yourself be guided by the natural branching pattern of your sample. If the branches are too crowded, do some trimming.
 - Try to trim branches at their bases but be careful not to stain or scar your mounting paper during this process.
 - 7. Carefully lift your specimen and mounting paper out of the pressing tray & let your mounting paper briefly drip dry**



Steps 4 to 7.

- 8. Lay it on top of clean newspaper**
 - This will help to remove excess water and will secure your mounting paper as you inspect and adjust your seaweed.
- 9. Cover with waxed paper**
 - Place your mounting paper on a new sheet of newspaper and cover seaweed with a covering sheet of waxed paper. This covering sheet will prevent your sample from sticking to the newsprint used to dry in the press.

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10. Begin assembling your press

- Layer the press: cardboard -> several sheets of newspaper -> your sample -> several more layers of newspaper -> then a final layer of cardboard.
- You can stack multiple layers in your press.
- Tighten nuts evenly on each corner. Additional weight can be added to the press by stacking books or bricks on top of the press.
- If using something heavy like a stack of books, sandwich your layers between them and then stack weight on top just like a normal press.

11. Check the **press daily** and change the newspaper as needed

- Open the press after several hours, or overnight. Feel with your hand to see if the paper is wet or dry. Replace any damp newspaper with some that is clean and dry. Then reseal the press and set it up to dry again.
- Continue this process until the pressed seaweed is completely dry.

12. When the press is completely dry, unload it and carefully uncover your pressed seaweed.

- Be extra careful when peeling back the waxed paper as fine filaments and blades may come away from the mounting paper.



*Congratulations on your new, beautiful (don't worry, beauty Is In the eye of the **seaholder**), seaweed pressing! You can use your pressings for ID guides, as eye-catching wall art, for greetings cards, etc.*

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