

Homemade Gelatin Plate

Did you know you could make your own homemade permanent Gelatin printing plate? I've been doing gelatin printing for years and did not know that the plates could be made for pennies of the price of the commercial plates and without a lot of the hassle of plain homemade gelatin plates. The plates I originally made used gelatin and water, but they last only a few weeks at best and must be refrigerated, a real nuisance particularly in a school environments.

There are many similar recipes you can find on the Internet as well as YouTube videos to guide you. The Glycerin is a plasticizing agent that makes your plate permanent requiring no refrigeration. Glycerin can be found in most drug stores and even at retailers like Walmart and Amazon, often in the skin care section.

Materials

12 Oz of Glycerin
7 Packets of Knox unflavored gelatin
1½ Cups of boiling water
1 Pan with a smooth bottom, 8" x 8"
Fork for stirring

Directions

Prior to starting, gather material and see that your tray is level.

1. Pour room temperature glycerin into a microwavable bowl.
2. Sprinkle gelatin into the glycerin and slowly stir.
3. Pour the boiling water into this mixture. Stir slowly.
4. Place in the microwave for an additional 45 seconds.
5. Pour into the 8" x 8" pan and allow it to set up on a level surface.
6. Skim foam and bubbles off with a towel.
7. Let set for several hours until firm. Placing in the refrigerator can expedite firming.
8. To release the plate from the pan, run a knife and to loosen until you can lift it out onto a piece of acetate (or pan or plate). The bottom will become the top, the side you print with.

Some people find the second pour yields a smoother surface. If your first pour isn't smooth or if at any point your plate tears, cut it up place in a bowl, microwave and pour again.

Some things to know

Your plate will not be quite as sturdy as a commercially purchased plate like Gelli Plate or Gel Plate. It may rip or tear, but remember you can always microwave and pour again. For cleaning, use a spray bottle to spritz with water and pat dry with a paper towel. A baby wipe can be used as well.

Store your plate sandwiched between acetate sheets or plexiglass and place in a lidded plastic case. Your goal is to keep it from drying out. If you get some drying you can melt down and add a little bit of water.

Happy Printing!