

NATURE CROWNS

Cultures around the world have celebrated the seasons by creating crowns made of flowers and leaves for centuries. You can carry on that tradition with your little ones by making these spring Nature Crowns! Nature Crowns are fun, easy, beautiful, and wonderful opportunities for children to exercise their creative side while exploring what grows in their neighborhood. Best of all, they require little to no supplies except what the earth provides us, and a few ordinary household items! Below are three different ways to make Nature Crowns, ranging from simple to more challenging, providing an option for children of all ages and developmental levels. Try one that suits you best, or try a different one each day!



METHOD #1: PACKING TAPE

This method could not be easier! **Step 1:** Gather your natural materials- Take a walk outside, either in your yard or neighborhood, and gather a few natural items you wish to decorate your crown with. Lightweight items work best for this method- Flowers, petals, seeds, grasses, leaves, feathers, etc. **Step 2:** Spread all your items out on the surface you'll be working on. **Step 3:** Grab a roll of wide, transparent packing tape and cut a piece slightly longer than the circumference of your head. Lay it down on the surface, sticky side up, and tape each end onto the surface to secure it. **Step 4:** Begin gently placing natural items onto the sticky tape. Continue doing this until the entire tape is covered, or until you like the way it looks. **Step 5:** Cut a second piece of tape the same width of the first one, and carefully lie it, sticky side down, on top of the first piece of tape. **Step 6:** Gently press down on the tape to stick the two pieces together, making sure to press down and seal it in between the natural items. *Tip: Consider sticking the base of the natural items onto the tape, allowing the top parts of them to stick out of the tape to create a more free and wild look!* **Step 7:** Wrap completed crown around head, and tape both ends together to secure a good fit!



METHOD #2: STEM CHAINS

The best part about this method is that it doesn't require any supplies other than what you find in nature! If you have a pair of scissors you can use them to cut stems, but you can also use your hands. **Step 1:** Choose and pick your flowers and/or leaves! Dandelions are a great choice for these crowns- They are plentiful and can be found anywhere, and their stems are the strong but flexible. Flowers like daisies work great as well! You want to make sure you use plants with stems that can bend. 15-20 flowers are enough. **Step 2:** Lay your plants out on a surface, and trim their stems to about 3 inches long. **Step 3:** Use your fingernails to slice a small cut into the middle of the stem. This may take a little practice- You'll want to be sure you don't slice the stem in half. Practice it on a few stems if you need to. **Step 4:** Once

you have a slice in the middle of the first stem, take a second stem and slip it inside the cut in the previous stem, pulling it through as far as possible. This should link the two together. **Step 5:** Slice a small cut into the middle of the stem you just slipped through the first stem, and slip a new stem through that cut. Continue doing this with every new stem until you have a chain of flowers long enough to wrap around your head. **Step 6:** Once your chain is at the perfect length for your head, tie both ends of your crown together!

METHOD #3: WRAPPING



This method requires a little more in the way of materials, and a touch more fine-motor skills, but the end result is beautiful! **Step 1:** Gather natural materials- Flowers and leaves with stems work best. **Step 2:** Choose your base- The base is a sturdy, flexible material you will turn into a circle to use as the foundation of your crown, onto which you will attach your natural items. Flower or craft wire work best, however you can also use a lightweight, flexible wire coat hanger, or even a long, narrow, flexible branch. Pipe cleaners also make a great base- Just make sure to twist a few of them together to make it a bit sturdier- You may also have to use several to make it long enough to wrap around your head. **Step 3:** Wrap your chosen base around your head to determine its circumference, then attach the two ends together. **Step 4:** Choose what material you will use to attach your plants to the base- Wire works best for this. Pipe cleaners (which are basically fuzzy wires) work well and add a pop of fun texture and color. If you don't have wire, string, ribbon, yarn, or a similar material that can be used. Don't have these? Consider cutting an old dishtowel or

t-shirt into narrow strips of fabric. Believe it or not, dental floss works great too! **Step 5:** Lay all materials down on your work surface. **Step 6:** One by one, begin attaching your natural materials to your base by holding them against the base and wrapping the wire tightly around both, or by holding them against the base and tightly tying both together. Continue attaching items to the base until you've achieved your desired look. *Tip: Don't worry about making these look perfect or uniform- The most important thing is to make sure your natural items are tightly attached to your base!*



**Whatever method you choose, be sure to give your crown your own style!
And remember that parents can make Nature Crowns too!**

