

IMPRINTS

How were dinosaur tracks formed?



SUPPLIES:

½ cup flour
½ cup corn meal
½ cup of water
mixing bowl
paper plates
plastic wrap
shells

1. Pour the flour and the cornmeal into the mixing bowl.
2. Slowly add the water to the flour cornmeal mix. The dough should not stick to your hands. This is your "home made mud".
3. Give a paper plate and a ping-pong size ball of dough to each person.
4. Flatten the dough on the plate to make a "pizza shape".
5. Choose a shell and press it against the "mud".
6. When done wrap the plate with plastic foil to take home. Make sure to unwrap the plate for the dough to dry and to avoid mildew.
7. Allow the "mud" to dry. It takes two to five days depending on the temperature and humidity. You can speed up the process with a hair dryer.

BACKGROUND INFO

- The word fossil comes from the Latin word *fossilis*, which means "dug up."

- **An imprint fossil forms when an object is pressed into mud, such as a leaf or insect, or when animals walk or crawl over it. If the imprint is not disturbed before it dries, a hard print of the animal or the animal's track forms.**
- Fossils are the remains or traces of dead plants and animals that have been preserved for thousands or millions of years.
- The most common fossils are those of the hard parts of animals and plants such as tree trunks, teeth, bones or shells. Soft tissue is rarely fossilized. Foot prints and skins impressions are also considered fossils.
- There are two main types of fossils: body fossils and trace fossils. Body fossils are preserved remains of animals, plants and other organisms and trace fossils are direct evidence of life impressions and include foot prints trails, burrows, and dung.

EXTRA ACTIVITY

What is a Fossil? (Grades k-4) from American Museum of Natural History.