

Cast a Footprint

Desert locations such as Arizona or New Mexico have been good places for paleontologists to find dinosaur footprints. They sometimes make casts of these footprints. Using sand, dough and your oven, you, too, can create a footprint cast. Follow the steps below and then go to www.zoosociety.org/kidsstuff to learn how to recycle your sand into more dinosaur crafts.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- 8½-by-11-inch footprint stencil (print from our Web site)
- 8½-by-11-inch sheet of thick cardboard
- Glue or glue stick
- Scissors
- 50-pound bag of sand (divided)*
- 9-by-13-inch baking pan (2 inches deep)
- 1⅓ cups flour
- 3 tablespoons water
- 10-inch-diameter bowl
- Hand egg beater (optional)
- Acrylic paint (optional)



MAKING A DINO FOOTPRINT:

1. With parent's permission, print dinosaur footprint stencil at www.zoosociety.org/kidsstuff.
2. Paste footprint onto cardboard using glue; let dry.
3. With scissors, cut through paper and cardboard along outline of footprint.
4. Dump 8 cups of sand into baking pan; smooth out. Save remaining sand for other projects.
5. Press cardboard footprint 1 inch into sand. Starting at the back of the foot, gently lift cardboard out of sand.
6. Create indentations in toes and palm of footprint by pressing your fingers into the sand ½ inch deep. (1 left)
7. Using a hand egg beater, or your hands, mix flour and water in bowl until plaster is a thick, doughy ball the size of a baseball.
8. Lightly press dough ball into footprint impression in sand. Bake in an oven at 300 degrees for 50-60 minutes. (2 left)
9. Have a parent help you remove pan from oven with oven mitts. Cool pan completely before removing plaster footprint from sand.
10. Slowly place fingers in cooled sand around footprint and pull out of sand. (3 left) Add paint if you like. Give as a gift for Mother's Day.

*We purchased a 50-pound bag of sand at Lowe's for \$2.67 in January. The extra sand can be used for other craft activities on our Web site. Or you can put the sand in your garden.