

15

**Incredibly
FUN
Non-Food
Recipes**

by Kim Kotecki

Silly Putty

Play Dough

Homemade Chalk

Bubbles

Beer Shampoo

Face Paint

Invisible Ink

...and MORE!

I'll admit, I'm not known for being "the chef" in our household. Jason is much more of the creative type in the kitchen. Don't get me wrong, I can make a mean grilled cheese and a fabulous box of mac 'n cheese, but when it comes to recipes, Jason is much more interested. One of our mutually favorite channels, though, is The Food Network. It has some great shows, but in my opinion it's missing out on an interesting niche – non-edible recipes. It's still cooking, but with a very childlike slant. So, in an attempt to fill the void, I have compiled fifteen of my favorite recipes to resurrect your childlike spirit and leave Adultitis in the dust. Happy cooking!



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SOURCES

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<http://www.recipezaar.com>

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Silly Putty

Also known as the first low-tech copy machine, you can imagine silly putty proved to be very inefficient. Whether you keep it on your desk at work for brainstorming sessions, like I do, or bring out the newspaper for some transferring hijinks, keeping a supply around is a simple and effective treatment for Adultitis. Guaranteed.



MATERIALS

glue (wood glue works well
but white glue will work too)

Epsom salts

water

measuring spoons

plastic spoon

2 small cups

waxed paper

plastic bag (optional)

DIRECTIONS

1. In one cup, put 1/2 tsp Epsom salt and 1/2 tsp water, stir to dissolve salt. (NOTE: It may not all dissolve.)
2. In the other cup, put 1 tablespoon glue. Add the Epsom salt water to the glue and stir.
3. Watch as your new material starts to form. Pull out the putty and put it on the waxed paper. You can experiment with it to find out more about its properties.
4. You can store the new putty in a plastic bag.

Quicksand Goo

Kids are fascinated by quicksand. Good thing there's always that low-hanging branch to throw in after the sinking citizen in the classic western movies. No need to make this recipe outdoors by overgrown trees, this batch won't be big enough for you to sink in, unless of course you were shrunk by Rick Moranis in the classic late 80's flick.



MATERIALS

One box of cornstarch (16 oz.)

Large mixing bowl

Cookie sheet, square cake pan,
or something similar

Pitcher of water

Spoon

Gallon size zipper-lock bag

Newspaper or a plastic drip
cloth to cover the floor

Water

Food Coloring

DIRECTIONS

1. Pour approximately 1/4 of the box (about 4 oz.) of cornstarch into the mixing bowl and slowly add about a half a cup of water. Stir. Sometimes it is easier to mix the cornstarch and water with your bare hands (of course, this only adds to the fun).
2. Continue adding cornstarch and water in small amounts until you get a mixture that has the consistency of honey. It may take a little work to get the consistency just right, but you will eventually end up mixing one box of cornstarch with roughly 1 to 2 cups of water. Notice that the mixture gets thicker or more viscous as you add more cornstarch.
3. Sink your hand into the bowl of "quicksand" and notice its unusual consistency. Compare what it feels like to move your hand around slowly and then very fast. You can't move your hand around very fast! In fact, the faster you thrash around, the more like a SOLID the gooey stuff becomes. Sink you entire hand into the goo and try to grab the fluid and pull it up. That's the sensation of sinking in quicksand! (Continued >>)

DiRECTiONS (cont.)

4. Drop a plastic toy animal into the cornstarch mixture and then try to get it out. It's pretty tough even for an experienced quicksand mixologist.

Slap Test: Pour the mixture onto the cookie sheet or cake pan. Notice its unusual consistency when you are pouring it into the pan. Stir it around with your finger, first slowly and then as fast as you can. Skim your finger across the top of the glop. What do you notice? Sink your entire hand into the glop and try to grab the fluid and pull it up. That's the sensation of sinking in quicksand!

Try to roll the fluid between your palms to make a ball. You can even hold your hand flat over the top of the pan and slap the liquid glop as hard as you can. Most people will run for cover as you get ready to slap the liquid, fearing that it will splash everywhere.

According to theory, the mixture should stay in the pan. Yeah, right! If your cornstarch water mixture inadvertently splatters everywhere, you will know to add more cornstarch. When you are finished, pour the glop into a large zipper-lock plastic bag for later use.

*IMPORTANT - READ THIS! The cornstarch will not stay mixed with the water indefinitely. Over time, the grains of cornstarch will separate from the water and form a solid clump at the bottom of the plastic storage bag. It is for this reason that you must not pour this mixture down the drain. It will clog the pipes and stop up the drain. Pour the mixture into a zipper-lock bag and dispose of it in the garbage.

Play Dough

It's nearly impossible to replicate the smell that comes with the name brand version, but at least you can play with it just the same. Rolling it into a long snake is often a favorite technique. Kids always feel tempted to mix the colors, which I've noticed drives most adults mad. If you're making it homemade on the cheap with this recipe, however, who cares? Make all of the brown play dough you can!

MATERIALS

1 cup flour

1/2 cup salt

2 teaspoons cream of tartar

1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
(optional)

1 tablespoon vegetable oil

1 cup water

food coloring

DIRECTIONS

1. Combine the dry ingredients in a nonstick saucepan.
2. Add the oil, water, and food coloring and whisk until smooth.
3. Stirring constantly with a rubber spatula, cook the mixture over medium heat until it forms a ball, about 3 to 4 minutes.
4. Turn the dough onto a counter, let it cool slightly, then knead the dough until it has a smooth texture, about 1 minute.
5. The dough will keep up to a week in a Ziplock bag.



Finger Paint

I wish my mom would've had this recipe when I was little. I begged for finger paints for every birthday, holiday and even when I had "been REALLY good!" (Which was NOT often – I was a pistol growing up!) That's why it shocked me beyond belief while teaching when I discovered that some kids hate the idea of paint on their hands. To each his own!

MATERIALS

1/3 cup plain flour

1/3 cup water

1 tablespoon glycerine

food coloring

(Makes 1 finger paint pot)

DIRECTIONS

1. Combine flour & water well.
2. Stir in glycerine & food coloring.
3. Repeat to make different colors.



Butterfly Bait

Who doesn't want butterflies to land in their midst?! I hereby declare butterflies the official insect of childhood. You could get your cardio in for the week by chasing them around in an open field, or you could just whip up this magical bait and let them come to you. Your choice.

MATERIALS

12 ounces beer, regular

2 lbs dark brown sugar

2 cups molasses or syrup

2 lbs bananas or peaches,
well ripened

This mixture attracts
Butterflies by day and
Moths by night. Serves 1.

DIRECTIONS

1. Mix all ingredients in a large jar or crock.
2. Cover loosely and place in the sun. Let ferment for 1 day. Make sure cover is loose fitting as it expands with fermentation.
3. Store in shady area after fermenting.
4. Dab mixture on posts, rocks, or tree trunks with an old paint brush. Results will improve with time. Butterflies seem to find it more easily on a large rock in a flower bed.



Bouncing Raisins

What do you get when you mix the concept of a lava lamp with California's famous dancing dried grapes? Bouncing raisins, of course. Why? Why not?! There's fun to be had in watching raisins bounce around without your assistance. Trust me.



MATERIALS

6 raisins

Glass tumbler

Vinegar

Baking soda (or Alka Seltzer tablet)

DIRECTIONS

1. Pour a cup of water into the glass jar.
2. Add one teaspoon of baking soda and stir until dissolved.
3. Gently add one-fourth cup of vinegar and wait until it stops fizzing.
4. Drop in three or four raisins.
5. Watch and see what happens (it takes about 10 to 15 minutes).

The gas, carbon dioxide, that forms when you add vinegar to the baking soda forms bubbles all over the raisins. The raisins start to rise as the bubbles of carbon dioxide carry the raisins upwards and they fall when the bubbles are released.

Bubbles

Remember how sticky your hands would get after a few minutes of bubble blowing? It was worth it, until you accidentally knocked over the bottle. Doh! Now with this recipe you can make at home you don't have to feel bad when the cement get soaked. Enjoy the hours of watching floating spheres of wonderfulness... or minutes, if you have a preschooler with a short attention span.

MATERIALS

1/2 cup of dish detergent

5 cups water (soft water is best - if your water is very hard consider using distilled or bottled water)

2 tablespoons glycerine. You can substitute light corn syrup (not golden syrup!)

DIRECTIONS

1. Mix the ingredients together very carefully, so that you they don't get too bubbly.
2. Pour into storage containers and, if possible, leave overnight to blend.

Bonus: Making a Bubble Wand

1. Loop some wire (garden wire works particularly well and is easy to loop) into home-made bubble wands.
2. You can make huge wands out of wire coat-hangers, but adult supervision is required because the ends can be sharp.
3. Pipe cleaners work too, but get soggy.
4. Drinking straws make lots and lots of sweet little bubbles.
5. Raid your kitchen drawers - look carefully and there are bound to be a few kitchen implements that have holes in them!

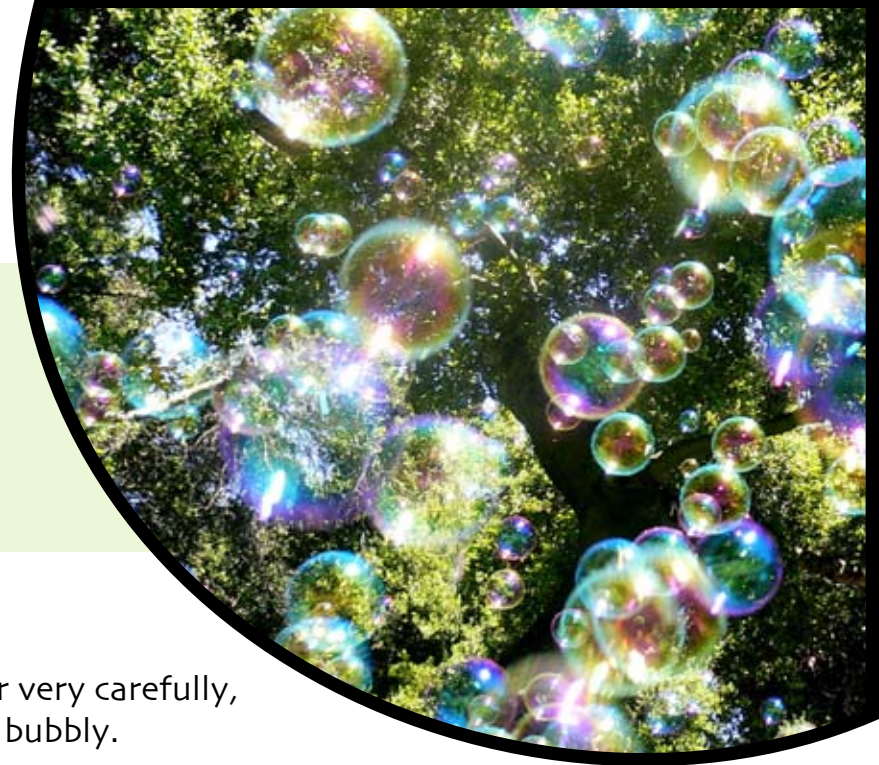
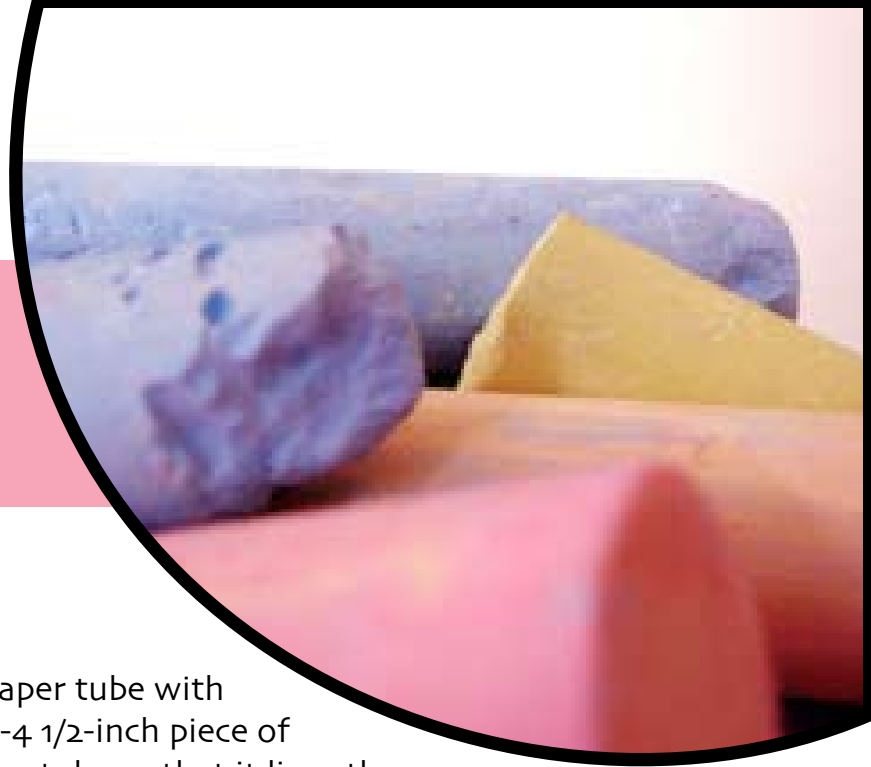


Photo by jurvetson

Homemade Chalk

Hopscotch, four square, playing school, or just simply drawing- there's much to be done with homemade chalk. The texture on your hands is bound to whisk you back to a much simpler time; a time when tag was the event for the day and recess was certainly your favorite subject.

(Best for ages 4-104)



MATERIALS

Toilet tissue tube (or ice cube tray to create smaller chunks for small hands)

Duct tape

Aluminum foil if you are using a toilet paper tube (or petroleum jelly if you're using an ice cube tray)

Disposable plastic container

Plaster of Paris (Playbox plaster of Paris, dickblick.com)

Water

Liquid tempera paint (Prang Ready-To-Use tempera paint, about \$5 for six colors, dickblick.com)

Spoon

DIRECTIONS

1. Cover one end of the toilet paper tube with duct tape. Loosely roll an 8- by-4 1/2-inch piece of aluminum foil and slip it into the tube so that it lines the inside, fitting snugly. (Or coat the inside of the ice cube tray with petroleum jelly.)
2. Set tube upright (duct tape side down) on protected surface.
3. In a disposable plastic container, mix 1 cup plaster of Paris with 1/2 cup water. Stir slowly and thoroughly until plaster is dissolved, about 1 minute.
4. Immediately add 2 tablespoons paint (or more for brighter chalk color, but be careful it can stain). Mix thoroughly.
5. Spoon into the tube (or ice cube tray). Tap gently so mixture settles to the bottom.
6. Let dry overnight before using.

Face Paint

From a simple Batman logo on your cheek, to a full blown Darth Maul tattoo, face paint definitely has its place... like wearing a fake mustache and going out to dinner on a Saturday night. Yep, Jason's brother did this and it was hilarious! Be bold... or not, it's up to you.



MATERIALS

3 tablespoons cornstarch

1 tablespoon flour

3/4 cup Karo light corn syrup

1/4 cup water

food coloring, liquid or gel

Makes 1 batch

This face paint is thin (not like the other Crisco/cold cream recipes) and comes off easily with soap and water.

DIRECTIONS

1. Mix cornstarch and flour together in a bowl.
2. Gradually stir in Karo syrup and water until smooth.
3. Divide mixture into individual containers as needed (Mix and store in baby food jars or discarded film canisters - or Glad plastic ware cups/lids).
4. Color each one with the food coloring of your choice until you reach your desired color (I like mine darker -- they seem to show up on the skin much better). Leave one batch untinted.

NOTE: Add another tsp or so of cornstarch if you feel the mixture is too thin.

NOTE: If using the gel food coloring (I find the colors are more vibrant), you will want to mix with your spoon first and then put the lid on the container and shake, shake, shake to mix it all up. Otherwise, your paint will be speckled with "pieces" of the gel food coloring.

Memory Handprint Clay

There are many Adultitis-ridden adults who would rather not have tiny fingerprints on their windows and sliding glass doors. Luckily, though, there are just as many who appreciate that those tiny digits will only be around for a short amount of time. In an effort to freeze time, this is a fun thing to do with those little hands and feet in your life before they grow into their size 12's.



MATERIALS

1 Cup Flour

1 Cup Salt

Water

Food Coloring (optional)

DIRECTIONS

1. Mix flour and salt, add enough water to get a firm clay-like mixture.
2. Remove 1/2 cup of dough and press it into a circular shape on a lightly greased cookie sheet. It should be large enough for a child's hand or foot to fit onto with the fingers or toes spread out.
3. Push hand or foot firmly into dough.
4. Let dough dry for several weeks or put in oven at 225 degrees for 2 to 4 hours, depending on the thickness of the dough.

Invisible Ink

Afraid the boss might be reading your emails? Send your interoffice messages a different way...with a blank piece of paper. Being a spy always seemed so magical and enticing. Why not incorporate some of that childlike mysticism into your correspondences. Just think what fun the recipient of your note will have when they learn they have to hold it up to light to be able to read it. Cool.

MATERIALS

Baking Soda

Paper

Water

Light Bulb (heat source)

Paintbrush or Swab

Measuring Cup

Purple Grape Juice (opt.)

DIRECTIONS

1. Mix equal parts water and baking soda.
2. Use a cotton swab, toothpick, or paintbrush to write a message onto white paper, using the baking soda solution as 'ink'.
3. Allow the ink to dry.
4. One way to read the message is to hold the paper up to a heat source, such as a light bulb. The baking soda will cause the writing in the paper to turn brown.
5. A second method to read the message is to paint over the paper with purple grape juice. The message will appear in a different color.

Tips:

- If you are using the heating method, avoid igniting the paper - don't use a halogen bulb.
- Baking soda and grape juice react with each other in an acid-base reaction, producing a color change in the paper.
- The baking soda mixture can also be used more diluted, with one part baking soda to two parts water.
- Grape juice concentrate results in a more visible color change than regular grape juice.

(Hey, its invisible.)

Beer Shampoo

I know it's a marriage you never expected, but don't knock it until you try it. The same results will not occur, however, if you try to mix shampoo with Pepsi or even orange juice. Yuck. Smart dudes like Mr. Wizard would tell you that the proteins from the malt and hops in the beer coat the hair shaft and help repair any damaged hair. So, enjoy a Friday night out and get your hair repaired all at once. It's multitasking.

MATERIALS

3/4 cup beer
(any cheap brand)

1 cup shampoo

Makes 1 1/4 cup

DIRECTIONS

1. In a saucepan, boil the beer until it is reduced to 1/4 cup.

2. Cool the beer and add it to the shampoo.

Note: You have changed the composition of the shampoo, therefore, changing the preservatives that have been added -- so this is something that I would use up fairly quickly as the shelf life has been changed.



Paper Maché

Kids would tell you that the good thing about making paper maché glue is that it's two degrees from their favorite thing in the entire world: candy. Simply whip up a piñata with the glue, and then all you need is to fill it with sugary goodness. There are probably many other uses for paper maché glue, but are any quite as exciting as making a homemade character that you get to beat with a stick until chocolate falls on you?



MATERIALS

3/4 cup water

3 tablespoons sugar

1 teaspoon white vinegar

1/2 cup cornstarch or cornflour

3/4 cup cold water

Makes: 1 1/2 cups

DIRECTIONS

1. Mix water, sugar, and vinegar in small saucepan. Bring to a rolling boil.
2. Separate bowl: mix cornstarch and cold water.
3. Water mix to VERY LOW heat.
4. Add cornstarch mixture slowly to first mixture. Stir **CONSTANTLY** For about 2 minutes (keep an eye on it -- you know how cornstarch is).
5. Take off heat and let cool. Ready to use warm for paper mache but let sit until cool if using in glue bottle, etc.

Kool-Aid Paint

Even though Bob Ross wasn't known for his watercolors, I have a feeling that if he were around today he would certainly have given this medium a try. Can a "happy little tree" get much happier than if it were painted with lime Kool-Aid? I think not.

MATERIALS

1 (1/4 ounce) package Kool-Aid
(any flavor or color you
want to use)

1/2 tablespoon hot water

Makes 1 color

DIRECTIONS

1. Pour Kool-Aid in a very small container.
(Glad Mini Round/4oz containers work very well.)
2. Add water.
3. Stir well until the Kool-Aid is dissolved.
4. Have fun!



Chemical Volcano

Science fairs wouldn't be complete without the display of at least a handful of volcanos. We humans like to see things explode and erupt. Of all of the fun recipes in this book, I guarantee that this one will be tried the most. Remember to wear an old shirt and revel in this childlike thrill.

MATERIALS

- 1 tablespoon liquid dish washing soap
- 3 drops red food coloring
- 1 cup vinegar
- 1 1/2 cups warm water
- 2 tablespoons baking soda
- 1 empty 25 oz. plastic bottle

DIRECTIONS

1. Build a mound of dirt up around the bottle, keeping the top open.
2. Combine the soap and food coloring in the bottle.
3. Add vinegar and pour in water almost to the top.
4. Here's the amazing part! In a large spoon blend the baking soda with a little tap water to moisten it and then quickly pour into the bottle.
5. The contents will erupt out of the bottle just like a volcano.
6. You will want to see this more than once so be prepared.





The End

Have fun making stuff. And clean up your messes. (Or not.)