

Tile Coaster Activity

Age level: K – 3rd grade

Time required: 1 hour

Adult supervision required: Yes, general skills

Introduction

In this activity children will make drink coasters using 2" tile. A 4" x 4" tile array will be cut from a sheet. They will grout the tiles, bake the grout, and secure it to a cork backing. The children may then be given colored markers and acrylic paints to decorate the coaster, if desired. Figure 1 shows a completed, undecorated coaster.



Figure 1. Tile Coaster

Material List

2" tile	4 ea. per coaster
4" x 4" cork square	1 ea. per coaster

Fabrication

The 2" square tile typically comes in 12" x 12" sheets that can be cut into nine 4" squares. Trim the backing around the squares (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Cut tile sheets into 2-tile by 2-tile squares and trim the backing

Give each child four squares to make a complete set of coasters (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Material for a set of coasters

Grouting

The grout is made from a mixture of flour, salt, and water. Measure 1/4 cup flour, 1/8 cup salt and 1/8 cup water (or scale up in the ratio of 2:1:1 for larger quantity). See Figure 5. Mix thoroughly to make enough grout for several sets of coasters (Figure 6).



Figure 5. Grout ingredients

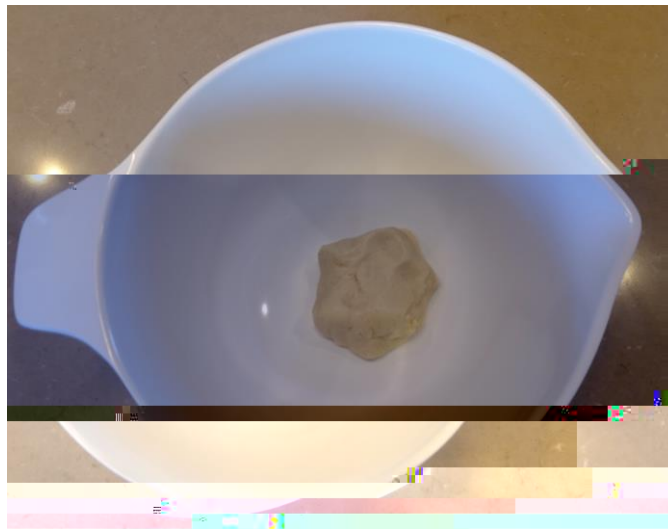


Figure 6. Prepared grout

Massage the grout into the spaces between the tiles (Figure 7).

Cork Backing

Trim the cork squares to 3 5/8" x 3 5/8" (Figure 10).



Figure 10. Trim the cork sheets

Remove the backing from the adhesive side (Figure 11).

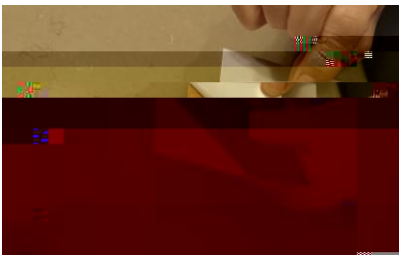


Figure 11. Peel off the backing

Secure the cork centered on the bottom of the coaster (Figure 12).

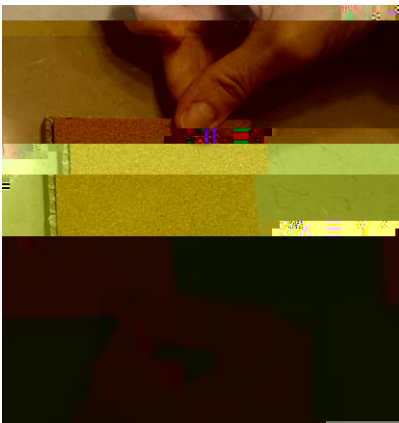


Figure 12. Center the cork on the bottom of the coaster

Provide permanent markers for the children to decorate the coasters, if desired.