

By Lindsay Ponta

# DIY Clay Handprint in a Frame

*Mark This Moment in Time With a Homemade Mother's Day Gift*



Everything may feel different and uncertain right now, but one thing hasn't changed: Parents still want to preserve memories of their little ones. A clay handprint in a frame is an easy keepsake to make for Mother's Day or to mark any milestone moment in your child's life.

Best of all, you don't even need a special handprint kit. It might be hard to track down certain supplies like toilet paper and Clorox wipes right now, but as long as you can get your hands on (pun intended!) a package of air-dry clay, you're pretty much set.

You can even wait to shop for the perfect shadow box until things settle back down. Your child's clay handprint will look adorable propped on a shelf in the meantime. ■

## **BONUS:** Make a Clay Handprint Bowl

Follow Steps 1 and 2 on the right. Then, instead of cutting a square or rectangle panel, place a bowl over the center of the handprint, and use it as a guide to cut out a circle. Place the slab of clay inside a larger bowl with the handprint facing up, and gently press it into the curves. Leave the clay in the bowl to dry for a day or two. To remove the clay from the bowl, tap around the outside of the bowl and turn it upside down to shake out the clay. You can use a fine-grit sandpaper to smooth the edges, if needed. Finish by following Step 10 to paint the handprint. If you'd like to make and paint a little keepsake banner, you can glue it to an upper inside edge of the bowl.

*Lindsay Ponta created the DIY and lifestyle website Shrimp Salad Circus in 2009 to inspire busy women to live perfectly-imperfect creative lives. She lives in Silver Spring, MD. Find easy DIYs and recipes at [shrimpsaladcircus.com](http://shrimpsaladcircus.com).*

### **SUPPLIES:**

- Air-dry clay
- Clay roller or rolling pin
- Parchment paper or silicone mat
- Bench scraper or kitchen knife and ruler
- Alphabet stamps
- 2 thin paintbrushes
- Dark acrylic paint
- Metallic wax paste
- Lint-free cloth or paper towel
- Strong glue, such as E6000 or Power-Tac
- Shadow box

**1** Using a clay roller or rolling pin, roll out your air-dry clay to a uniform 1/4-inch thickness. Use parchment paper or a silicone mat underneath to prevent the clay from sticking when you eventually peel it off.

**2** Help your child press their hand into the clay using gentle and even pressure, being careful not to press their hand all the way through the clay. Lift slowly to remove.

**3** Cut a square or rectangle around the handprint using a bench scraper or kitchen knife and ruler to create a panel.



**4** Roll out a small piece of air-dry clay to 1/8-inch thickness and cut out a long rectangle using your bench scraper or knife and ruler. Set aside clay scraps.

**5** Gently press alphabet stamps into the rectangle to spell out a name, date or a cute memory. If you don't have alphabet stamps, use something with a fine tip, such as a mechanical pencil without the lead, to carefully write the letters by hand.



**6** Slowly bend the rectangle into a banner shape like you see in the picture, cutting a triangle out of each end.

**7** Set aside the handprint panel and the banner to dry completely overnight.

**8** In the morning, check that the clay is hard and dry all the way through to the back. If not, leave it out for another 12 hours before checking again. You shouldn't see any moisture underneath.

**9** Use a thin paintbrush to fill in the letters of the banner with dark acrylic paint. For a watercolor effect, you can dilute the paint. Wipe away mistakes with a damp paper towel or lint-free cloth.



**10** With a dry paintbrush, apply metallic wax paste or metallic acrylic paint inside the hand print so that it stands out. Buff away any excess wax or paint with a clean, lint-free cloth.

**11** Glue the banner to the handprint panel and the handprint panel to the back of the shadow box. I recommend a strong industrial-strength glue for long-term durability. Let the glue dry overnight before assembling the shadow box frame.