

HOW TO MAKE A SEMI-PERMANENT GELATIN PLATE

These recipes will make a gelatin plate that does not need to be refrigerated. It can be considered a semi-permanent gelatin plate, comparable to the type that can be purchased ready-made; however, the homemade gelatin plate has the advantage of being renewable. If your plate becomes worn or torn, or if you'd like to try a different size or shape, simply cut it up and place it in a microwave safe bowl, add a little water to account for evaporation, and melt it in your microwave. Stir the gelatin to be sure that there are no lumps, pour it in a mold, and wait until it is firmly set (no need to refrigerate).

Internet Recipe:

6 Tablespoons gelatin (7 packets)

1½ cups water

1½ cups glycerin

Aida's Recipe:

3 cups water

7 Tablespoons gelatin or 9 packets

1 ¼ cups glycerin

(Using more water and less glycerin makes a moister gelatin plate that will keep paints moist longer while making prints. If paint begins to dry on the gelatin plate before you can pull your print, simply mist it lightly with alcohol to moisten the paint surface and continue printmaking.)

Pour the glycerin into a bowl. Sprinkle the gelatin in an even layer on top of the glycerin and allow it to sit for a few minutes until the gelatin becomes moist. Heat the water to almost boiling and add slowly to the glycerin and gelatin while stirring. Continue stirring until all the water has been added and all ingredients have been mixed thoroughly and the gelatin is completely dissolved. There should not be any lumps in the mixture. If your mixture begins to cool and there are lumps remaining, simply heat the mixture in the microwave and stir until the lumps dissolve. Pour this mixture into your mold. If bubbles form on the surface, they can be removed by dragging something stiff across the surface while the mixture is still liquid or by misting the surface with alcohol to pop the bubbles. There is no need to refrigerate for the mixture to firmly set. These recipes will make approximately a 9"–12" square x 3/8" thick. (A cookie sheet from the Dollar Store is a good size for a gelatin plate).

Tips For Storing And Reconstituting:

You can use your gelatin plate as soon as it is firmly set, but allow it to dry without a lid for a few days before covering your gelatin plate for storage. Do not seal it up in plastic, as this can promote the growth of mold. Instead, place a loose fitting lid (a simple piece of cardboard makes a great lid) on top of the container, but not in contact with the gelatin plate. Anything you place in contact with the gelatin will leave an impression. The lid should not seal tightly. Home made gelatin plates have a tendency to lose water to evaporation if they are stored for an extended period of time.

To rehydrate the plate, cut it up and melt the plate in a glass measuring cup in the microwave. Add enough water to return the total volume of the mixture to 4 ¼ cups, plus a couple of tablespoons to account for the gelatin. When all of this is thoroughly melted and mixed together, pour it back into your mold and let it set up at room temperature.

Where To Buy Glycerin:

Glycerin can be purchased at Publix, Walmart, Amazon and other retailers. Be sure to buy food grade 100% vegetable glycerin.