

Disclaimer

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Make Your Own Mummified Fruit

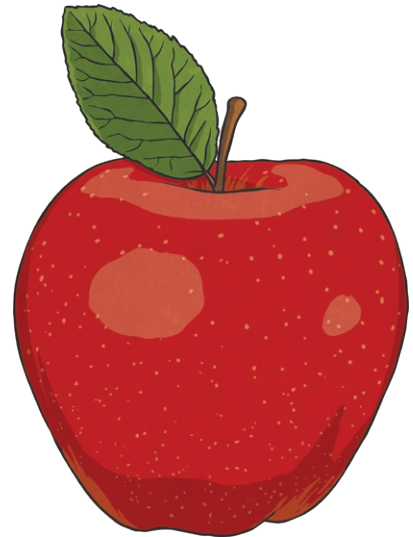
The Ancient Egyptians used a method similar to this in order to preserve bodies in the mummification process. After the brains and internal organs were removed, the body needed to be dried so that it didn't rot. This was done using natron. We are going to recreate this drying part of the process by making our own natron and drying out some fruit.

You Will Need:

- Half an apple or 2 tomatoes
- Knife (for carefully cutting the apple or tomato)
- 80g of salt
- 40g of baking soda
- 2 plastic cups
- Optional: If using a tomato, you will need a teaspoon as well.

Instructions for the Apple:

1. Cut the apple in half (you will only need one half) and half again.
2. Put a quarter of the apple into each cup.
3. Mix together the salt and baking soda. This is our natron.
4. Pour the salt mixture into only one cup, making sure the apple piece is completely covered.
5. Leave both the covered and uncovered apple pieces in their cups, somewhere out of direct sunlight, for one week.
6. After one week, uncover the salty apple piece and compare the two apple pieces.



7. Don't eat them!

Alternatives for Using a Tomato:

- Slice the lid off the tomato and use the spoon to hollow out the inside. This is a bit like removing the internal organs from the body.
- Make sure that there is natron mixture inside the tomato as well as around the tomato.
- Leave one tomato uncovered in the class so you see how the natron has affected the other tomato.

What Happens?

- The salty apple piece/tomato should be dried up and not mouldy.
- The uncovered apple piece/tomato will probably have gone a bit mouldy and started to rot.

How Does It Work?

- Natron is a desiccant- this means that it draws water out of things and dries them up. This is why salty things make you thirsty.
- By drying something out, it doesn't have the moisture it needs for the rotting process, so it works as a preservative.

Other Things to Try:

- Try a different fruit or vegetable.
- Use an apple and cut a face shape in it.
- You could even use different fruits to make a whole body (e.g. cucumbers for legs and a pepper for the body).
- Add googly eyes!

