

## **Cornstarch Paste for Paste Papers**

### **Ingredients:**

1 cup cornstarch  
7 cups cold water  
1 teaspoon liquid dish soap  
1 teaspoon glycerin  
1/2 teaspoon oil of clove - for bug deterrent (cedar or peppermint oils also work, if you want to use those instead)

### **Directions:**

- Mix the cornstarch with 1 cup of the cold water in a large bowl.
- Add dish soap, glycerin to the cornstarch and water mixture.
- Bring rest of the water to a boil and add to the cornstarch blending constantly.
- Stir in one of the oils.
- Cover the paste.
- Let this sit overnight for a few hours at room temperature.
- Next day, blend again if necessary to remove any lumps.

Paste should have the consistency of honey. Pour into a resealable container until use. (Keep cool or in refrigerator.)

### **To make paste paints:**

To add colorant - pigment, use at least 1 -2 tablespoons to one cup paste.

## **Using dug earth clays for paste colorant**

### **For gritty paste**

You can add the clay as it is (with no refinement, other than picking out any stones, gravel or organic matter), and stir and mash 1 - 2 tablespoons per 1 cup cornstarch paste until there are no hard clay lumps in the paste paint. This is a very coarse paste paint and will have a VERY gritty texture. It may not stay on the surface of your paper as well as smoother paint will, unless spread very thinly, or very wet.

### **For refined paste**

#### **Water grading:**

Take at least 1/2 cup of clay and put it in a jar with water, shake vigorously until the water looks muddy! Pour this muddy water into another jar and let the mud settle (let it sit for at least one hour). You may shake this original jar several times this way, pouring them off into jars to settle. When the particles no longer suspend themselves, start afresh with a new batch of clay. You can save the coarse clays to use for a gritty paste.

When mud sediment has settled, very carefully without disturbing the sediment, pour off as much water as you can to leave the least amount of water in the jar. Do this repeatedly (Let settle then pour off) until the least amount of water is in the jar with the sediment. Keep the lid off to evaporate the water. When the sediment is leather hard or dry, it is ready to use.

#### **Very dry clay grading:**

An alternate of water serving is to use a sieve on **VERY dry clay** that has been broken up - if it has ANY moisture in it, you will just gum up your sieve and be with no resulting fineness, and be frustrated! You can use a mortar a pestle (not for food use again after this) to break up the dried clay before running it through a sieve. Use a coarse sieve screen first then a fine one. If you like, you can also use those fine particles as suspension in water and follow the steps above for water grading.

### **Measure and use these with your cornstarch paste recipe.**

**Altering the color:** For an easy way to darken the paste paint - you can take very crushed charcoal (dry sieve it to small particle size), and add this to the paint for a slightly darker shade. Ground up chalk or mica flakes for lighter or sparkly effects. Have fun with it! You can also enjoy the clay paste just as it is!

