chess-set you can cook up in your own kitchen; costs so little!



AN AMUSING ONE-OF-A-KIND chess set that's sure to warm the cockles of a father's heart, a grandfather's or favorite uncle's . . . and it's a snap to stir up a game with play clay. The expense . . . little more than the cost of the clay which is cooked up out of baking soda and corn starch.

Do you sit wondering what on earth to give some of those "have everything" people on your Christmas gift list . . . trying to balance

your savings against your forthcoming spendings? Well, have you ever given your talents a fair try? If not, this is the year to begin, for self expression's the thing. You might take the plunge with an amusing one-of-a-kind chess set guaranteed to warm the cockles of a father's heart, a grandfather's or a favorite uncle's. It's a snap to stir up a game with play clay and the financial investment is tiny. You'll need baking soda, corn starch, straight pins, white glue, poster paint and brush and clear nail polish. And here's the recipe for the play clay:

- 2 cups baking soda (1-pound package)
- 1 cup corn starch
- 11/4 cups cold water

In a saucepan, thoroughly combine baking soda and corn starch. Add water, mixing until smooth. Bring to boil over medium heat stirring constantly. Cook a minute longer or until mixture resembles most mashed potatoes (overcooking makes clay crumbly). Remove from heat immediately, transfer to plate and cover with a damp cloth until cool enough to handle. Knead a little and store all but what you're about to use in closed plastic bag so, it won't dry out.

Now, move over, Michelangelo, and start creating.

One chess set requires 2 kings, 2 queens, 4 each bishops, knights and rooks and 16 pawns. Plan to work on a single group at a time.

In the set shown, the larger cubes and balls are about 1-inch in diameter, the smaller ones, about %-inch in diameter. The balls used for horse ears and rook towers are so tiny they defy measurement. So

that everything comes out the same size make a sketch to guide you.

To form balls, roll clay between the palms of your hands and to form cubes pat the balls into squares. Make all components needed for one group, set them on waxed paper to dry for half an hour, then rework any that bave settled into "squash-hood." Allow another half hour drying period. Meanwhile, start another group.

To build the pieces, cut the heads off a batch of straight pins. Dip pin in white glue and stick it half-way down into the center of each cube base. Push protruding pin top into a ball, which comes next. Repeat for each section you use. The pinning should be done before the clay is completely dry. The mini balls on the rooks and knights are applied by moistening with water and pressing. The cruwns for the king and queen are cut from a big coin shaped silver sequin and pushed into the clay at this stage. Or you can use little jewels, a bit of gilt braid, anything shiny.

When the pieces are hard and completely dry, paint them with poster paint. When the paint's dry, coat with nail polish.







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