



## HOW TO MAKE LEAF SKELETONS (COMPLETELY SAFE & NON TOXIC)

### Step 1: pick & prepare the leaves

- \* For best results, choose leaves that have a strong vein system. Tougher, more waxy leaves have better results than softer, younger leaves
- \* Clean the leaves: gently rinse them in a bowl of water, and wipe any dirt or mud away with a soft cloth

### Step 2: gently simmer

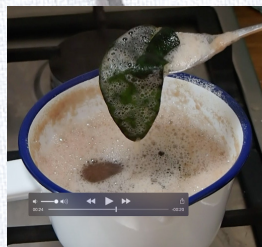
INGREDIENTS: bicarbonate soda, baking powder, water

EQUIPMENT: a saucepan, a spoon, a shallow baking dish



\* Dissolve equal parts bicarbonate soda and baking powder in a saucepan of water. I used one tablespoon of each, and approximately a litre of water

\* Place your leaves into the pot, and bring it to the boil. Reduce to a simmer, stirring it gently from time to time. The water will froth up, and will get brown and murky



\* Watch the leaves until they have softened, and you think they are ready to clean away. Depending on the leaves, this will take approximately an hour and a half. It may take longer, but start checking at about 45 minutes in. If necessary, top up the water from time to time to ensure they leaves remain covered

*How to make leaf skeletons, Naomi Bulger*



### Step 3: brush away pulp

\* Take the leaves out of the saucepan and place them into a shallow tray of clean water. Using an old toothbrush, gently try to brush away the gunk and membrane from one leaf at a time. If the leaf is too fragile, use a paint brush instead of a toothbrush. This can sometimes take a while. Be patient: work gently and methodically. Once I got into it, it felt almost meditative



### Step 4: dry & press



\* Once you're done, lay the leaf on a paper towel and leave it in a warm, sheltered place to dry for approximately one hour

\* Once you are sure the leaf is completely dry, place it between two paper towels and store it under a heavy book until you are ready to use it.

### Step 5: decorate

I prefer to leave the leaf skeletons their natural colour, but you can also bleach the leaves, dye them in food colouring, or paint them once dry.

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