

**TRY THIS
AT HOME!**

**FOLLOW THE
INSTRUCTIONS
BELOW TO
START YOUR
OWN ROCK
COLLECTION.**

START YOUR OWN

Step 1: Collect Some Rocks

- 1 Ask an adult to go rock hunting with you. Try to collect rocks found in natural settings, such as along a river bank, or on the forest floor, rather than rocks that have been moved by humans, like rocks in driveways.

TIP!

YOU SHOULD PROBABLY ONLY COLLECT ROCKS YOU ARE ABLE TO CARRY.

- 2 Place your finds in individual plastic zipper bags. But first, use a permanent marker to label each bag with the date and where you found the rock.

Step 2: Organize and Study Your Rocks

- 1 Clean your rocks in a bucket of soapy water. Do they look different all cleaned up?
- 2 After the rocks are totally dry, paint a small patch on each rock with white correction fluid. After it dries, write a number on the white patch with your permanent marker.
- 3 In your notebook, record the number for each rock, as well as the date and location where you found it. Add other important information such as the size, color, texture, and shape of each rock. Check out the sample notebook entry on the right.
- 4 Use your rock identification guide to see if you can identify your rocks or the minerals in your rocks. Get an adult to help you with this if you have trouble. To learn more about your rocks do some online research by searching for the phrases "rock identification key" and "mineral identification key."

TIP!

DO NOT PUT ROCKS IN YOUR PARENTS' WASHING MACHINE.

TIP!

ROCKS THAT TURN TO MUD WHEN YOU WASH THEM ARE CALLED MUD.

- 5 Store your rocks in individual small boxes, egg cartons, plastic trays, or on a special shelf.

Step 3: Sort and Display Your Collection

- 1 You can sort your rocks any way you'd like, including by color, size, texture, shape, type, or anything else you can think of.

TIP!

STORING ROCKS IN EGG CARTONS IS GOOD. THROWING OUT THE EGGS TO GET THE CARTON ISN'T!

- 2 Choose some rocks to display in a special place (you don't need to display every rock in your collection). You can even create labels describing the rocks.
- 3 Arrange your display and invite your friends and family to check out your exhibit. Be ready to answer questions about your rocks. You know your visitors will be curious!

Rock Collection Log

Rock#:	Date Found:	Location:
Color:	Texture:	Sketch:
Description/Other Notes:		

ROCK COLLECTION

Why collect rocks?

- Rocks hold secrets about how the earth was formed, where glaciers flowed, how environments changed, and what creatures roamed where. Once you start learning about rocks, you can begin to understand their stories.
- You can find rocks just about anywhere. They are in your backyard, in the woods, and in the park. You don't have to travel to an exotic land to find rocks (but you can!).
- Rocks are free, unless you decide to buy some special samples.
- Making a collection is fun, and it's cool to display your collection for your friends and family to see.
- You can become a geologist-in-training by collecting and studying rocks.

BONUS IDEA!

Turn some of your rocks into PET ROCKS!

A BACKPACK FOR HOLDING YOUR ROCKS WHEN YOU ARE OUT COLLECTING

You will need...

A NOTEBOOK FOR RECORDING INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR FINDS

EGG CARTONS OR SMALL BOXES FOR STORING AND DISPLAYING YOUR ROCKS

A ROCK FIELD GUIDE FOR IDENTIFYING YOUR ROCKS, LIKE *SMITHSONIAN HANDBOOKS: ROCKS & MINERALS* BY CHRIS PELLANT

A PERMANENT MARKER AND WHITE CORRECTION FLUID FOR LABELING YOUR ROCKS (ASK AN ADULT TO HELP YOU FIND THESE)

A SMALL SHOVEL FOR DIGGING UP ROCKS

A BUNCH OF SMALL PLASTIC ZIPPER BAGS

A MAGNIFYING GLASS FOR LOOKING AT THE DETAILS OF YOUR ROCKS

A BUCKET, DISH SOAP, AND WATER FOR CLEANING YOUR ROCKS

