

HOW YOU CAN BRONZE BABY SHOES

You can treasure the memory of your child's first steps forever by bronzing his first set of baby shoes. And you can do it yourself relatively inexpensively and easily.

Your first step will be to clean the shoes thoroughly. With a damp rag, clean the shoes of all dirt and polish. It is best to complete the cleaning by rubbing the shoes with a rag saturated in denatured alcohol. All wax and polish must be removed. Now allow the shoes to dry.

Next you will want to arrange the shoes as you want them to be bronzed. Tie the laces and arrange them properly. Adjust the tongue so that it touches the sides of the shoe. You may want to hold the laces and tongue in place with a little rubber cement. Now drive a tiny hole through the sole of each shoe and loop a string or wire around it. You are now ready to begin bronzing.

To prepare your liquid bronze use bronze, copper or gold powder and mix the powder with a fast drying spar varnish, stirring well and adding the powder until you have a liquid about like paint. Stir to prevent particles from settling on the bottom. You will probably want to mix a fresh batch of the liquid bronze for each job.

To apply the bronze, use a good camel hair brush and paint shoes, inside and out, with several coats. If there are dull spots when the liquid dries, it means the liquid has soaked right into the material and more coats are needed until the finish is even and glossy. Hang up each shoe by the loop of string to dry between coats and clean the brush each time.

When the final coat is dry, you can create an "antique" effect by mixing a little burnt umber or black color in oil with the bronzing liquid and painting it into the creases of the shoe with a small brush.

If you would like the shoes to be heavy and rigid, fill them with plaster of paris to about 1/2" from the top and let them dry for several days before starting to paint.

You will find bronze powder at any good paint or hardware store or even a printing supply house.

You will be amazed at the very professional job you have done using this method. Perhaps you will do such a good job and enjoy it so much you may want to begin a service doing it for others. It is really a lovely way to make your treasured memories last forever.