

## **Green Cleaning Gourds**

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THE PURPOSE OF GREEN CLEANING IS TO ATTAIN A FINISH OR SURFACE THAT IS MORE EVEN IN COLOR AND APPEARS CLEANER; USEFUL FOR MORE FINER CRAFTING DETAILS.

- (1) First of all, gourds must NOT BE HARVESTED until after a killing frost, when all the vines are brown and dead.
- (2) Clip stem at desired length and rinse gourds with hose to remove dust and bug spray.
- (3) Scrape or peel gourd with a whittling motion, completing entire gourd. This includes scraping the stem. A small wire brush is useful for finishing the base of the stem. The gourd skin is similar to cucumber peeling.
- (4) Scrub in light suds and warm water with steel scouring pad to remove minute particles. A small amount of bleach can be added to water, if desired, to help stop mildew.
- (5) Rinse and dry.
- (6) Place near low heat indoors, using plant flats or shallow cardboard boxes. These can be put above the duct work in the basement or along baseboard heaters. Gourds should be turned every day or two to insure uniform drying. Also, gourds can be hung up by the stem, using various methods. A fan will speed drying time, surrounding the gourd with constantly moving air.
- (7) Size of gourd determines drying time. In three weeks to two months, gourds will become very light in weight and seeds may or may not rattle.
- (8) Store in a dry place in open crates or hanging in potato bags.
- (9) Craft as you wish when thoroughly dried.

SOMETIMES, FAILURES DO OCCUR, OFTEN BECAUSE THE GOURD HADN'T MATURED AT THE TIME OF THE FROST. SOME MAY SHRIVEL DURING DRYING, AND THOUGH THIS MAY NOT BE THE DESIRED EFFECT, THEY STILL ARE IN DEMAND FOR FLOWER ARRANGING AND CREATIVE CRAFTING.