Make a Roman-Inspired Coin

Just like modern coins, the ancient Romans had a specific formula they used for their coins. Follow the directions below to design your own coin!

Materials: Two foam circles (you can cut these out from take-out containers), a pen, Quick-drying clay (we used this recipe), and paint

Part ONE: Design Your Coin

Step 1: Design the front or OBVERSE of your coin. You can put an image of yourself or research Roman emperors and draw your favorite. You can also include a name and/or title.

Step 2: Transfer this design onto the foam circle using a pen or pencil. You’ll want to make sure you make your lines pretty deep into the foam. This will make it show up better when you press it into the clay later on. NOTE: In order for your letters and words to be readable, you need to write backwards. For example, Hadrian would be written NAIRDAH

Step 3: Design the back or REVERSE of your coin. This is where the emperors included important achievements, favorite sayings, or religious messages. This is a place to show off your personality a bit!

Step 4: Transfer this design onto the second foam circle using a pen or pencil. (Remember, you’ll need to reverse your words and images like you did on the obverse).

At this point, you will have two circles that look like those in the picture to the right. These will be your dies for imprinting your design on the clay.
Making a Roman Inspired Coin

Part TWO: Make Your Coin

Step 1: Take a small piece of your model magic and roll it into a ball.

Step 2: Flatten it with the palms of your hands. You’ll want to keep it thicker than a metal coin – about ¼ of an inch.

Step 3: Place the clay between your foam circles. Gently press on both sides, and then peel off the circles to reveal imprints of your design. If your clay gets a bit rolled at the edges, gently flatten with your hands. Let dry for approx. 24 hours.

Step 4: Paint! We went for a golden look, but the Romans also used bronze and silver. Better yet, make it your favorite color. When in Rome, right?