

cwb

Nifty Nail

Dig out that pile of pennies you've been saving and make yourself a copper-plated nail.

You need:

2 to 4 oz. lemon juice	large, clean nail
or vinegar (60–125 mL)	salt
10 to 20 dull copper pennies	small glass or jar

What to do:

Put the pennies into a glass and cover them with lemon juice or vinegar. Add a pinch of salt. Let them stand for 2 or 3 minutes.

Clean the nail with scouring powder and water. Then add the nail to the solution.

Wait at least 15 minutes. Then fish out the nail.

What happens:

The nail is coated with copper.

Why:

Copper from the pennies interacts with the acid of the lemon juice to form a new compound (copper citrate). When you insert the nail into the solution, the compound plates the nail with a thin layer of copper that cannot be rubbed off.

Once you've got your copper nail, you might want to wear it on a string.

