



## Is it sandcastle or sand castle? Either way, here are the best tips on how to build one

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Once upon a time, a dime store pail and shovel was all you needed for a day of play at the beach. For some of us, the joy of building a sandcastle is ingrained in our earliest childhood memory. Now you're all grown up, and sand art has evolved too. You don't need to be an artist to take your technique to the next level. A few simple tips and tools can turn something basic into a whimsical work of sand art.

### **Be intentional with water**

To build a strong foundation, you'll need wet sand, making water as essential as sand. Mix sand with water in roughly equal parts to create a sturdy paste that's ready to mound and shape.

### **Use your hands**

A plastic bucket is great for transporting water and for mixing, but keep in mind it's nearly impossible to dump a bucket of wet sand without it sticking to the pail. It's best to use your hands like a scoop to build your base. Many people find sand soothing to the touch (an added bonus).

## Invest in a shovel

A small shovel may be the nostalgic favorite, but a sturdy garden shovel moves bigger quantities of sand more efficiently.

## Use easy-to-find tools

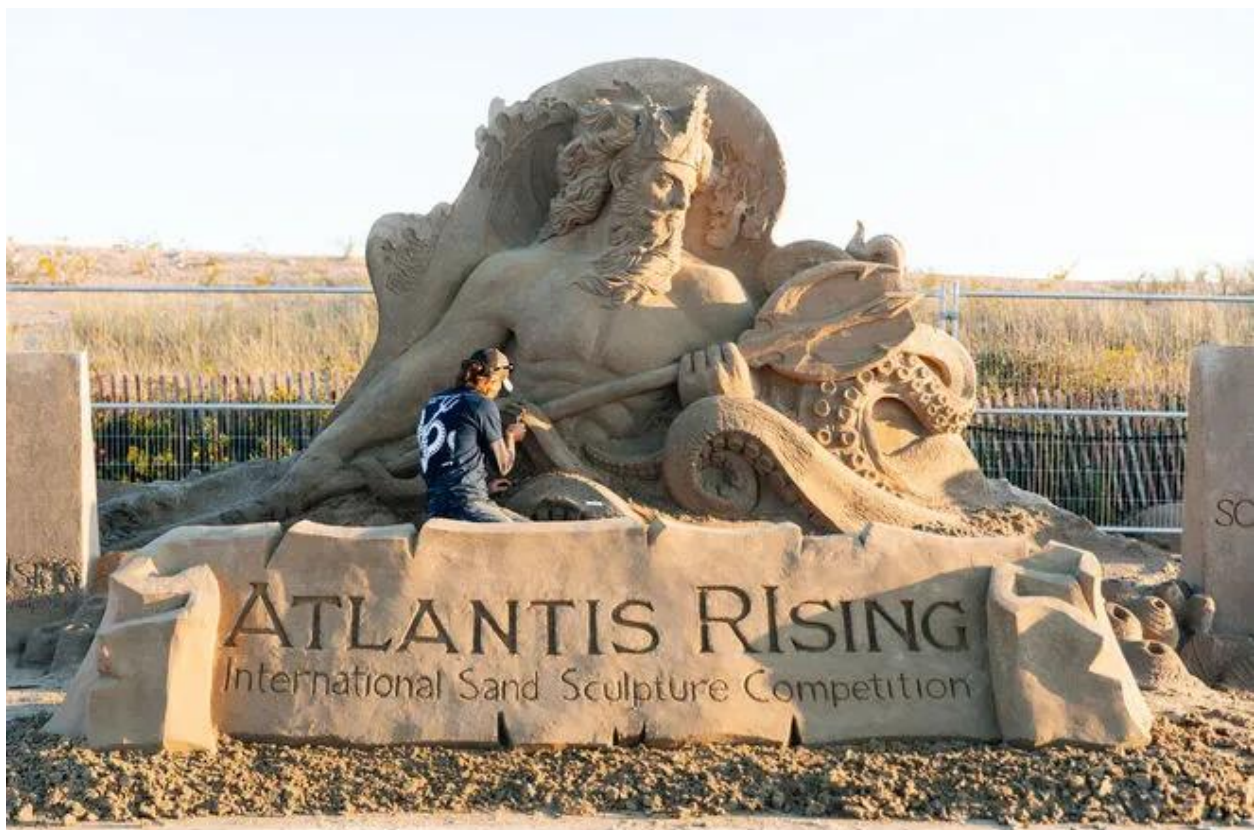
Your kitchen drawer is a treasure trove of tools that can take sand art from simple to show-stopping. A plastic knife makes carving details like elaborate ridges and fancy pleats a breeze. You can use the bristles of a toothbrush to create patterns and swirls, and a cake spatula for smoothing. A drinking straw pokes holes that are uniform in size, and it can also be used to gently blow away excess sand hiding in nooks and crannies.

## Enlist Mother Nature for decorative accents

For decorative accents, found objects such as driftwood, seaweed, stones and shells add natural panache to your sandcastle.

Need some inspiration? Consider visiting a sand art festival and watch seasoned amateurs and experts construct architectural wonders. From California to Rhode Island and from Texas to Florida, you'll see sandcastle masterpieces that are sure to impress. Here's a quick round-up of sand art festivals and competitions around the country.

## Atlantis Rising International Sand Sculpture Competition, Westerly, Rhode Island



Westerly, Rhode Island, is a picturesque New England seaside town. Beautiful beaches are plentiful, and swimming, surfing and sailing are some of the most popular activities.

[Atlantis Rising International Sand Sculpture Competition](#) is held on a weekend in October at [Misquamicut State Beach](#). On a clear day, the views go all the way to Block Island's towering bluffs.

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Sand artists from around the world are invited to build imaginative sand sculptures. There are food vendors, live music and entertainment at this lively event. It's a festive way to say goodbye to New England's short-lived summer season.