



Learning Through Play With Playdough

Playing with playdough is not just fun it is a hands on learning experience and covers the areas of learning.

Maths

- Gain an understanding of quantity and number when making playdough and measuring out the ingredients
- Make observations about shape, and size
- Notice who has more or less playdough and count how many pieces they have
- Roll out numerals, starting to understand how they look and how they are formed
- Understand number concepts when adding other resources e.g. beads or sticks e.g. "How many have you got?" "How many more do you need?"

Understanding the World

- Observe, think and talk about how materials feel and how they change
- Develop scientific thinking e.g. cause and affect- "What do you think will happen if we add too much water?"

- Explore texture by adding e.g. sand or oats- "Does this make the playdough softer/harder?"

Expressive Art and Design

- Express their ideas whilst being creative e.g. rolling the dough in long strips to make a worm, rolling it in a round shape to make a spider
- Make believe play- pretending to make and eat cakes for a party or a picnic
- Explore pattern and print e.g. pressing dinosaurs or pine cones into the playdough
- Birthday candles
- Blocks
- Bottle caps
- Cookie cutters
- Combs
- Garlic press
- Large buttons and other objects that can be pressed into the playdough to make a design
- Feathers
- Leaves, twigs, pebbles
- Plastic knives, forks & spoons



Playdough provides opportunities for children to learn to:

- Gain a sense of pride in their own achievements e.g. "Look mummy... I made a caterpillar!".
- Release their extra energy and express their feelings through a healthy and safe outlet when playing and pounding their hands on playdough
- Take turns and share, taking account of others feelings
- Express needs, wants and interests

Communication and Language

- Talk about what they're making and how, sharing their thoughts and ideas
- Develop their vocabulary as they listen to others, especially adults who can model words/sentences for them and verbalise what they are doing
- Listen to and follow instructions e.g. adult describing how to roll the dough between their hands to make a ball
- Use and understand questions to gain more understanding "How did you do that?" "What do we need?"



Physical

- Use their fine motor skills to pinch, squeeze, roll, poke, flatten and cut
- Develop better hand-eye coordination, control and dexterity with their hands-critical skills they will need for writing and drawing
- Use tools with increasing control e.g. playdough scissors and cutters

Literacy

- Follow a recipe, helping them to connect written and spoken words and learn that writing can be used for different purposes.
- Talk about action words e.g. chop, cut
- Use descriptive language e.g. sticky, squashy
- Roll out letters shapes, starting to understand how they look and how they are formed

Playdough Recipe

- 2 cups plain flour
- 1 cup salt
- 1 tbsp oil
- 1 cup cold water
- 2 drops liquid food colouring – any colour of your choosing

Method

1. Mix the flour and salt together in a large mixing bowl
2. Add the cold water, oil and drops of food colouring and mix together
3. When your ingredients are well mixed, take them out of your bowl and place your dough onto a flat surface, such as greaseproof paper
4. Knead vigorously for a few minutes, until your dough feels like playdough and all of the stickiness has gone