

PLAYDOUGH

Playdough is a simple but very effective and motivating activity for children, it has many benefits:

- It's fun!
- The malleable properties of play dough secretly build up strength in all the tiny hand muscles and tendons
- It can be squashed, squeezed, rolled, flattened, chopped, cut, scored, raked, punctured, poked and shredded which can help fine motor development, hand-eye co-ordination, bilateral coordination and general concentration
- It's calming and relaxing – providing proprioception sensory input (sensation through our joints and muscles)
- Helps to develop social skills, play and communication

Recipe for playdough

Playdough is simple to make and there are many recipes, including edible playdough. The following is a basic recipe:

- 2 cups plain flour (all purpose)
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup salt
- 2 tablespoons cream of tartar
- Up to 1.5 cups boiling water (adding in small amounts until it feels just right)
- Food coloring (optional)
- A few drops of glycerin (optional – adds more shine!)



Playdough activities

There are MANY activities that you can do with playdough – the beauty of it is that you can use your imagination and create your own games. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- Pounding, squashing and squeezing
- Rolling balls between 2 hands
Rolling sausages using 2 hands; make sausages, worms, snakes, coil pots
- Roll small balls between thumb, index and middle fingers
- Make a pinch pot
- Poke objects into the playdough
- Hide objects like marbles and Lego in the playdough to be found by digging them out
- Make playdough pizza and practice cutting with a knife and fork
- Using scissors to make snips in the playdough
- Use shape cutters and other accessories
- Make letters and shapes out of long rolls of playdough to practice letter formation

There are also a number of structured playdough programmes that can be used such as 'Dough Gym' and 'Dough Disco'

Graded play with playdough

Most children will happily play with playdough, however there are some children who do not like to touch this type of texture and can find it quite threatening. If children are reluctant to play with playdough, encourage them to play with it in a way that feels safe for them or use alternatives that have a firmer texture, such as plasticine, as this will leave their hands less messy and they can work on gradually increasing the physical contact they have with the dough.

