

## [Play doh fun](#)

**Looking for some inside & educational fun on a rainy day? Then pull out the play doh and try some of our activities.**

Play doh is one of the world's best kept secrets. Not only is it fun but it has great therapeutic value. Play doh is a fantastic tool to improve: finger strength, manipulation, bilateral integration (using two hands together) and hand-eye coordination, as well as strengthening little hands and fingers.

Don't forget about the sensory kids though! Play doh is a fantastic activity idea to stimulate the sense of touch and smell. It's a particularly great activity for sensory seeking kids (kids who are looking for more sensory stimulation than the norm), especially when you add little bits and pieces to the mixture to change the texture or smell (e.g. sand, glitter, oats, essential oils, cocoa powder, poppy seeds).

Play doh is readily available at stores such as K-mart, Target, Big W, Toys R Us and other toy stores. You can also find it in supermarkets in the toy section. Take note of the brand as not all 'play dohs' are the same in texture and some kids are very particular. Importantly, some are more 'sticky' than others and seep into fabrics more thoroughly making cleaning up harder.

### **Activities to try**

There are so many useful activities that you can do with play doh that I can't list them all, but here are a few ideas to get you going:

## **Hand and finger strength:**

- Roll little balls with the play doh between thumb and forefinger. Then squish the balls between the fingers. Ask your child to count the balls as they roll them to practice their counting skills.
- Hide things inside the playdoh (such as beads or small coins) and ask your child to find them.
- Use rolling pins, cookie cutters, plastic knives etc.
- Use the play doh syringes that are easily purchased, but ensure that the child only uses one hand to operate them. Hold them just like a medical syringe (don't use the tummy to help push the dough out). If this is too hard, warm the playdoh up first or use syringes with larger holes in the end through which the play doh will come out.

## **Manipulation:**

- Roll the play doh into a snake/sausage. Then poke the play doh with one finger at a time to turn the snake into a caterpillar.
- Make an echidna/hedgehog by rolling the play doh into a ball and sticking toothpicks into it.
- Pinch and squeeze play doh to make shapes, animals and other objects. Talk about the objects you child makes (e.g. ask them to describe the object) to work on their communication skills at the same time!
- May be even place the final object on a piece of paper and then draw extra bits to complete the picture (this is a great way of turning a 'task' into a project that gives it a longer life and often sees the kids come back for more).

## **Letter formation:**

- Flatten the play doh into a pancake and draw pictures or letters in it with a pencil, the end of a spoon or a toothpick.
- Make letters and numbers out of the play doh and trace over them using correct letter formation. The sensory value of this task often helps kids to retain information and allows learning to occur without thinking about it.

## **Bilateral Integration:**

- Using a rolling pin to roll the play doh out into a pancake or pizza.

- Use a plastic knife and fork to cut play dough sausages. The cut the sausages to make the toppings for the pizza. Draw a pizza shape on paper to add the toppings to.

## **Make play doh at home**

Play doh can also be easily made at home. Here are some simple play dough recipes for you to use at home;

### **Basic playdoh**

- 1 cup salt
- 2 cups plain flour
- 1 tblsp oil
- 1 tblsp cream of tartar
- 2 cups water
- food colouring if required

Combine all the ingredients in a saucepan. Heat, stirring continuously, until the dough becomes thick and pulls away from the side of the saucepan. Take out and knead.

### **Uncooked playdoh**

- ½ cup salt
- 1 cup flour
- food colouring
- Water

Place flour in the bowl. Add salt and stir. Add water and food colouring slowly. Stir until a dough forms. Keep stirring and kneading until smooth and stretchy. Add more flour if the dough is sticky.

Play dough will keep for up to two weeks if stored in an air tight container in the refrigerator.

There are so many fun activities that can be done with play doh and we would love to hear your favourites. We are always on the look out for more recipes as often the little secret ingredient makes all the difference so please share with us.

Have fun!

Contact us today to make an initial enquiry or book an assessment for your child  
on 1800 KID SENSE (1800 543 736)

