



# Play dough



Every kid loves to play with play dough, but did you know how much that play can teach your child? Here are some ways that you can use a play dough to support every area of your child's development! So get your kiddo, grab some play dough and get creative!

Area of Development	What to Do??	How does this Support Kindergarten Readiness??
<p><b>Visual Motor</b> is the coordination involved in moving your hands and eyes together to do something.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roll a play dough ball at a target: roll into a bucket or container.</li> <li>• Cut play dough with a knife, pizza cutter, or other cutting tool.</li> <li>• Roll balls and stack them on each other. You could do balls of the same size or different sizes and stack from small to big.</li> <li>• Use cookie cutter to make "cookies" out of dough.</li> <li>• Use play dough stamps on rolled out dough.</li> <li>• Use a rolling pin to make a pizza and then use different colored dough to make toppings.</li> <li>• Create a mat with squares on it and have child place dough balls in each square. You can increase difficulty by making the squares smaller.</li> </ul>	<p>These activities prepare the child for reading and writing skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen to and follow directions.</li> <li>• Comprehension and understanding of concepts and tasks.</li> <li>• Cause and effect concepts.</li> <li>• Interaction and cooperation with others.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fine Motor</b> is the coordination of the muscles in the hands and fingers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use index finger to poke play dough while saying "poke".</li> <li>• Squeeze the play dough.</li> <li>• Role a play dough snake.</li> <li>• Use play dough to roll and make a ball.</li> <li>• Hide small toys in play dough and have child dig them out.</li> <li>• Use play dough scissors to cut play dough snake.</li> <li>• Roll small balls and big balls with play dough.</li> <li>• Use tooth picks to make a porcupine and have kids take them out.</li> </ul>	<p>These activities help support the child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beginning writing skills.</li> <li>• Manipulation skills that aid in playing with items such as blocks.</li> <li>• Shape and color awareness.</li> <li>• Basic recognition of geometric shapes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Gross Motor</b> is the coordination of large muscles or muscle groups of the body.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have your child stand at the table to play with play dough.</li> <li>• Have them use a small stool to step up onto when making the play dough at counter.</li> <li>• Place a bowl at the end of a balance beam or stepping stones and give the child pieces of play dough to place in the bowl at the end of the path.</li> <li>• Have the child sit on a ball at the table to play with play dough to work on balance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These activities help the child build good posture control for sitting and writing.</li> <li>• Movement and coordination activities also help to "turn on" the brain, which in turn promotes overall learning.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Concepts</b> are academic based skills such as body parts, numbers, colors, size differences, direction words etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kids can learn shapes by creating them with the play dough.</li> <li>• Create a person with the play dough and use it to identify body parts.</li> <li>• Use the play dough to demonstrate bigger/smaller, longer/shorter, and more/less, heavy/light.</li> <li>• Hold the play dough up, down, behind, and in front of self or another object.</li> <li>• Use the play dough to identify colors, match colors, and create new colors by mixing.</li> <li>• Make homemade play dough with you child. You can work on measurement, following directions, and predicting what will happen as you mix ingredients together.</li> <li>• Create snakes, balls, or other small objects and practice counting them.</li> </ul>	<p>These activities help your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an understanding of words and concepts that will be important for language and math activities in school.</li> <li>• Learn to follow multiple step instructions.</li> <li>• this builds independence independent in their school work.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Crossing Midline</b> is crossing over the imaginary line that runs down the center of the body with your eyes, hand or foot in order to do something on the other side of that line.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While sitting in a circle, pass play dough to the person next to you using the hand on the opposite side as the person is sitting.</li> <li>• Hold play dough with both hands at the same time and have them touch each body part without taking either hand off the play dough to get them to cross midline with both hands.</li> <li>• Have the child pound a rhythm on the play dough while alternating fists.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These activities help the child to build writing skills.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Communication</b> is how your child understands words; uses gestures or language to expresses themselves; and how they put sounds together to make words.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Imitate saying doh.</li> <li>• Create opportunity for Language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Have them ask for “more doh” when they want more to play with.</li> <li>○ Have the child identify what color they want after you ask them.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Model simple phrases for child to imitate (I want more doh) then play and create with them.</li> <li>• Use words like roll, oo, poke, squeeze, smoosh, etc. during play to increase their vocabulary.</li> </ul>	<p>These activities help your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build speech and articulation skills.</li> <li>• Understand that their words can be powerful in communicating to and directing others.</li> <li>• Helps the child gain self-help concepts.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Social-Emotional</b> is how your child bonds and attaches to you; develops their sense of self, independence and compassion for others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children will learn to share play dough and tools.</li> <li>• Create a sculpture together.</li> <li>• Kids could create faces about how they are feeling.</li> <li>• Play Hot Potato – pass in a circle to others until music stops.</li> <li>• Create a family to role play issues that they may be struggling with.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These activities support healthy relationships and independence in the child.</li> </ul>



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