



Mill House
Day Nursery

Dough Ideas for Home Learning April 2020



Playdough Recipe

You will need

- 8 tbsp plain flour
- 2 tbsp table salt
- 60ml warm water
- food colouring
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil

Makes 1 ball of dough



Method

- 1 Mix the flour and salt in a large bowl. In a separate bowl mix together the water, a few drops of food colouring and the oil.
- 2 Pour the coloured water into the flour mix and bring together with a spoon.
- 3 Dust a work surface with a little flour and turn out the dough. Knead together for a few minutes to form a smooth, pliable dough. If you want a more intense colour you can work in a few extra drops of food colouring.
- 4 Store in a plastic sandwich bag (squeeze out the air) in the fridge to keep it fresh.

Salt Dough Recipe

You will need

- 1 cup of plain flour (approx. 250g)
- ½ cup table salt (approx. 125g)
- ½ cup water (approx. 125ml)

Makes 1 ball of dough



Method

- 1 Preheat the oven to its lowest setting and line a baking sheet with baking parchment.
- 2 Mix the flour and salt in a large bowl.
- 3 Add the water and stir until it comes together into a ball.
- 4 Transfer the dough to a floured work surface and roll it out and cut out shapes or make models.
- 5 Put your finished items on the lined baking sheet and bake for 3 hrs or until solid.
- 6 Leave to cool and then paint.

The benefits of play dough

Children love using dough. It's great for supporting holistic development (all areas of development) and it's offered every day at nursery which we refer to as 'continuous provision'.

Recipes

Two basic recipes have been provided, the playdough recipe is for dough that can be used and stored for play another day. The salt dough recipe is one that can be used to create objects which are then baked and painted.

Both recipes can be made by children themselves. Don't get too hung up on exact measures, neither of the recipes are based on an exact science!

Equipment



That's the great thing about dough play, you don't need much in the way of equipment. Make up a 'dough tool box' which is freely accessible to your child. Risk assess equipment but also trust your child.

Your dough box may include:

- Cutlery
 - One or two plates, cups and saucers
 - A pot or pan
 - A small chopping board
- Muffin tin
 - Fairy cake cases
 - Scissors
 - Garlic press



Pretend food. Take a look at this YouTube clip with your child:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SzCiWHV NMY>

Try not to take over! Let your child make their own food items (or whatever else they wish to make) and you make your own; this way, your child's work will be theirs and not yours.

Salt dough food makes a great addition to a 'shop' which your child will enjoy visiting.

Money. Your child will enjoy making money to spend in their pretend shop. Cut out disks of dough and imprint with dents to represent the value. If a tin of beans costs 3p your child could pay with 'coins' to the value of 3. Keep this simple, so what if a tin of baked beans costs 40p in real life? It's about teaching children 'number bonds', e.g., 1 add 2 equals 3.

Gifts. Invite your child to make a gift for a family member or friend, e.g., a painted heart or hand print.



Small world items. Children enjoy making small world items, such as animals, people, vehicles and much more. Favourites at nursery have included: snakes, sharks, rainbows, train tracks, birthday cakes (of course!), unicorns, princesses, and currently worms. Take a look at this YouTube clip (there are many, many more) for inspiration.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YdgZe12x5iY>

Once more, try not to take over! Let your child make their own creatures and you make your own; again, this ensures that it's your child's work which shines through.

The process not the product

Activities which your children take part in are about the process, not about the end product. Let's set some Golden Rules:

- Avoid being critical. It doesn't matter if the piece of work your child presents as a dog looks more like road kill! Try something like 'Tell me all about your dog. Does he have a name? What does he like doing? Who is his best friend?'
- Avoid asking 'what is it?' which implies that the work doesn't make sense. 'Tell me about your work!' is a better response and will encourage dialogue. I once asked a child 'What is it' to which he replied 'If you look at it carefully you'll find out.'
- Don't praise for the sake of praising. Not every piece of work will be a 'wow' piece and children can become 'praise motivated' rather than creatively motivated. Praise when praise is due, otherwise encourage your child. 'What else might you add? Are there any other colours you could add?' Be tuned in to your child. The same child presented me with a black piece of paper which he had covered in black paint. I looked carefully at his work (having been told off a few days previously by him – see above) and asked 'What other colours might you add?' to which he replied 'None. It's the night.' Yep, caught out again by a 3 ½ year old. I learned that 'Tell me about your work' would have been more helpful on both occasions!
- Have fun!!! These Covid-19 days will end – the most important thing is to ensure that we all make the most of these days we have been given and that something positive emerges from them.

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