

Fine Motor Fun with Real Objects at Home

KEEP THOSE LITTLE FINGERS BUSY WITH COMMON HOUSEHOLD ITEMS WHILE LEARNING, TOO!

Kitchen

Paper Plates – Not only for eating, they can also be used for drawing, cutting, punching holes, lacing yarn or stringing through holes and for sorting mats.

Dried Beans – Great art material! Use beans and glue to create a person, house, tree – anything!

Assorted colored straws – Cut into different lengths and sort or order by size and length. You can also use the cut straws for creating patterns or for stringing on yarn to make a necklace.

Coffee filters – Draw designs with washable markers, sprinkle water (or use a squirt bottle of water) and watch what happens to the colors/picture as it dries

Paper or Plastic Cups – Use as sorting cups or for stacking. If sorting, try giving your child small, soft objects such as cotton balls and marshmallows and a pair of tweezers and see if they can pick them up with tweezers or tongs and sort them in cups. If stacking, give your child a goal such as a 3-level wall or a 3-D tower. You could also put numbers on the outside of cups and have your child use tweezers or small tongs to place the number of small objects in the cup to match the number on the cup.

Toothpicks - To do this activity, cut squares of construction paper. Draw a numeral, letter, or simple shape with a marker on the construction paper square. Children place the paper on the carpet and use the toothpick to punch holes all along the black lines. When they are finished, they can hold their paper up to the light and see the light shining through the holes.

Marshmallows + Scoops - Children scoop mini marshmallows with melon, cookie, large spoons or ice cream scoops and place them in an ice cube tray or cup.

Vessels for Pouring - Children pour something from one bottle to another. Start out pouring popcorn kernels or dried beans. They can later try pouring sand or water.

Spoons – Children use a spoon to scoop small items from one bowl and then transfer them (without spilling!) to the other bowl.

Homemade Playdoh - *Make playdoh and then allow children to explore it using their hands, cookie cutters and forks/spoons. Encourage them to make balls, snakes, pancakes, etc.

Food – Let your child peel his own banana or orange or pick the grapes off the stems. Let him scoop the crackers out of the box or count out grapes, raisins, or pretzels. Allow him to pour milk/water/juice and try family style (self-serve) dinners.

Laundry

Clothespins or paperclips – Work the pincer grip by manipulating the clothespin or paper clip to attach it to paper or a piece of cardboard. Children can also use the clothespins to pick up small objects (use like tweezers) and move them from one container to another.

Outdoors

Sticks & Leaves – Help your child pick up sticks and leaves outside. Work with them to sort and order them by size or color or just talk about similarities and differences.

Pinecones – Get in some cross-body practice by having your child pick pinecones up from a pile on her left and put them in a bucket/bag/pile on her right.

Magnolia Tree pods – Use tweezers or fingers to pull the seeds out of the pods.

Sand/dirt – Scoop, pour, rake! You could also collect sand and use it for ‘sand painting’ inside on a rainy day. Have your child draw a picture with a glue stick or liquid glue/paintbrush or Q-tip then add the sand to the picture like you would glitter! Don’t forget to shake off the excess before displaying the picture.

**Homemade Playdoh Recipe*

Ingredients:

2 cups plain flour
4 teaspoons cream of tartar
¼ cup vegetable oil
1 cup salt
2 packages of Kool aid (or use food coloring)
2 cups water

Directions:

Mix all dry ingredients together. Add water in small amounts, stirring to prevent lumps. Add oil and blend well. Cook in an electric skillet or pot on 300-350*9 until dough forms. Pour onto a heatproof surface and knead. Store in an airtight container.