

# Playdough

## Best for Ages

1+

## Workspace

Flat, clean surface

## Is electricity required?

No

## Description

Mixing your own playdough is a fun sensory exploration while developing fine motor skills.

## Materials

### Tools:

- Mixing bowl
- Spatula
- Measuring spoons: ¼ cup, ½ cup, 1 cup, 1 tablespoon

### Ingredients:

- 2 cups Flour
- ½ cup Salt
- 2 tbsp Cream of tartar or alum
- Powdered drink mix for scent (optional)
- ¼ cup Oil (vegetable, coconut, canola, olive)
- Food coloring (optional)
- 1 cup Hot Water (warm in tea kettle/ microwave or hot water from faucet)

## What to Do

1. Gather tools and ingredients.
2. In the mixing bowl, combine flour, salt, powdered drink mix (optional) and cream of tartar or alum using the spatula.
3. Add the wet ingredients: oil and food coloring (optional).
4. Slowly pour in the hot water. Mix ingredients together using the spatula.
5. When the playdough has cooled, take it out of the bowl and place on your clean surface.
6. Start kneading the dough with your hands to thoroughly mix. The playdough is ready when it feels smooth.
7. Now it's time to explore your playdough!



## Concepts Explored

- Fine Motor Skills
- Following Instructions

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## Troubleshooting Tips

- If your playdough is sticky, add a little more dry ingredient. For a smooth dough, add more flour. For a rough texture, add more salt.
- If your playdough is too dry and crumbly, add more oil to the mixture. Coconut oil is a great way to keep your playdough (and your hands) soft and smooth.



What could we add to change the texture?

What shapes can you make with the playdough?

What can we add to change the color of the playdough?

## What is Happening?

- The stirring, scooping and dumping motions used in making playdough along with stretching and kneading playdough help to develop **fine motor skills** which is the coordination of small muscles in your wrist and hands. This develops **pre-writing skills** which prepare muscles for the future ability to hold and move a pencil or crayon.
- Using a recipe is a great way to learn how to follow step-by-step **instructions**. Children will retain concepts such as measuring, mixing and other scientific language when those words are introduced while following instructions.

## Taking it Forward

- **If you like this activity, you'll also like** other fine motor skills activities such as [sensory bins](#) and [tiny tools](#)
- Use your playdough to explore printing. Find leaves, toys, and other objects that have an interesting pattern. Press the object into the playdough and slowly remove to create an imprint of the pattern.
- Learn more about the benefits of playing with playdough online:
  - <https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/playdough-power>