

# Working with Playdough



KSEY CONSULTANCY  
AN INTERNATIONAL HUB FOR EARLY YEARS  
EDUCATION

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# Introduction

Play dough is a powerful way of supporting all areas of young children's learning. From muscle strength in the hands, to curiosity about how something might work to imaginative story telling. We can also set up play dough to support the development of social skills and form relationships with others.

## Basic Recipe

What you need:

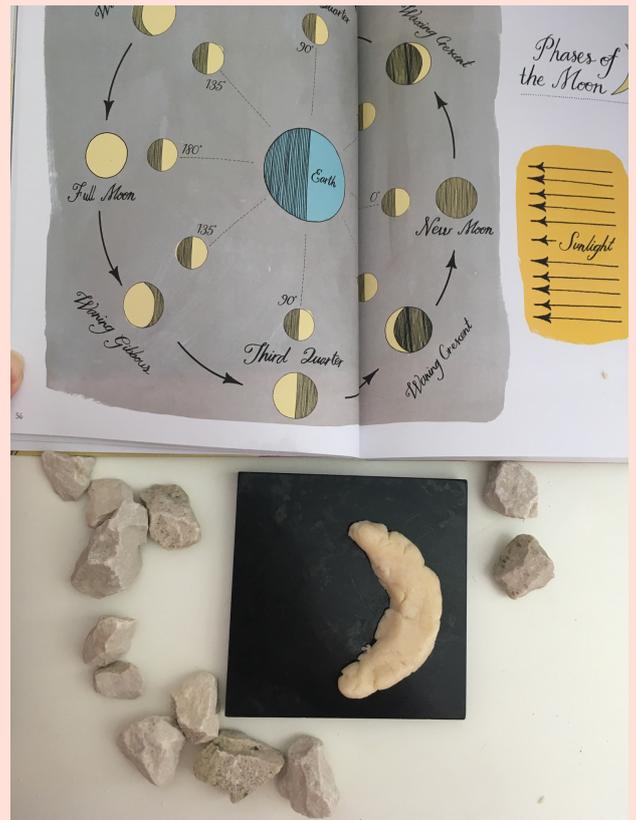
- 1 cup of water
- Food colouring
- 6 cups flour
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- Measuring cups
- Mixing bowl
- Wooden spoon

Directions:

1. Mix water and food colouring in bowl
2. Add flour and oil
3. Stir
4. Knead until smooth

Dough can be reused; store in the refrigerator in an airtight container.

Personally, within my practice I have always used this non-cook recipe so that I can get the children involved in making this. We can get so many beautiful colours from nature that I like to show children how we inject some colour into our playdough in this way too!



# Natural Colours

## Dandelion Play dough

What you need

2 cups flour

1 cup of boiling water

1/2 cup salt

1 tablespoon cream of tartar

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

10-15 dandelion flowers with petals  
pulled out



Directions:

1. Take your dandelion heads and put them into a cup of boiling water. Stir with a fork.
2. In a mixing bowl add your other ingredients and mix with a wooden spoon.
3. Once your water and dandelions have cooled add these to your mixture and stir.
4. If the mixture is cool enough knead. If the dough still feels sticky add some more flour.

We love Dandelions and so do the bees! So it's really important that we don't take these away from the wildlife they support. Instead select carefully or pick if you know the grass is about to be cut.

You might want to explore some other natural colours for your play dough. Follow the basic recipe and then try either; beetroot powder, Spinach powder, primp kin powder, turmeric and cinnamon.

# Audit

Play dough Resourcing

## PATTERN MAKERS

Blocks  
Combs  
Wooden Playdough Stampers  
Q-Tips  
Textured rolling pins  
Numicon

## TOOLS

Extruders  
Rolling pins  
Garlic Press  
Knives and forks  
Cookie Cutters  
Pizza Cutter

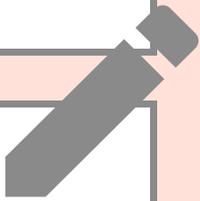
## LOOSE PARTS

Shells	Ribbon
Buttons	Feathers
Bottle Tops	Nuts and Bolts
Pipe Cleaners	Flower Petals
Googly Eyes	Birthday
Pine Cones	Candles
Sticks	Small world
Twigs	Tea Lights
Glass Gems	

## PLATFORMS

Tuff tray  
Bowls  
Plates  
Slate  
Wooden boards  
Place mats  
Snack Compartment Trays  
Cake Boards  
Mirrors

What do I need to resource now?



# Invitations

## Organisation

When working with toddlers and young children I begin by setting up a station on a table top where children can work. Making sure I resource this effectively with high quality resources that stay the same each day. I review the area often to understand if the area is set up big enough for the amount of children wanting to play there.

Provide the children with a variety of bases and platforms to work on. Like wooden chopping boards and serving platters.



## Small World and Themed

Alongside your every day continuous provision you may also notice children are interested in particular themes. Why not enhance the area with small world resources, books and curious items to deepen levels of fascination. The snack compartment dishes make a wonderful



# Invitations

## Exploring Letters

In response to the children's fascination in learning the letter names and starting to make their own CVC words we provided them with wooden letters to use in their outdoor dough. The children showed deep levels of engagement printing onto the dough and then decorating the dough with petals.



## Enhance Further

You might want to try adding wooden numerals and numicon into the dough to encourage printing and exploring number. Here the children took great enjoyment out of printing with the Numicon plates and then using the play knives to say how many would be left after cutting off a piece.

# Challenge

Why not add small world and role play resources to your dough area to encourage imaginative play and story telling?

To the right is a set up linking to the story of Aladdin which was a popular interest in the setting.

For role play you might want to add items found in your home; aprons, food packaging, oven, pans, recipe books, birthday candles, weighing scales.



You might create enhancement baskets or trays linked to a particular interest or story. I love adding loose parts and watching how the children play with these imaginatively.



# Outside

The outside environment offers opportunity for playdough to be used in a different way. Perhaps you could add it to your woodland kitchen and children can use it alongside the natural loose parts.

With the example below the children have been interested in flower fairies. They've created their own and decorated these with flower petals. We've also have children make the Gruffalo using sticks and stones and play dough monsters.



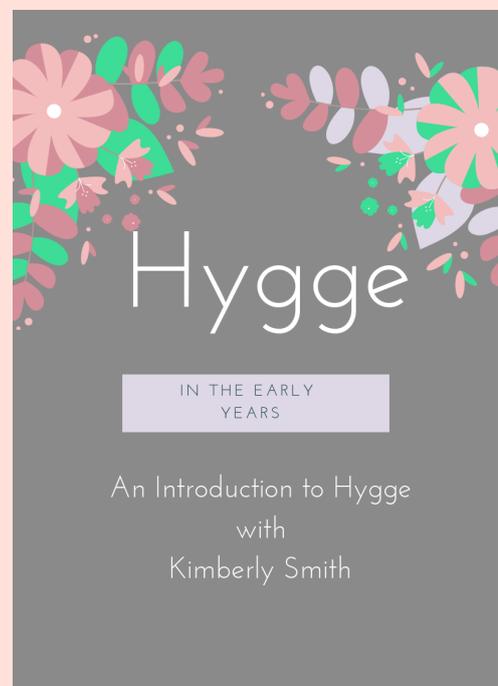
Thank you for downloading and we hope this guide inspires your practice. We would love to see what small world provision you create. Tag us with #hyggeintheearlyyears



Hygge in the Early Years



The Accreditation



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