

## Playdough

One of the children's favorite activities at Nursery is playing with play dough. It is the perfect indoor activity. Give them a rolling pin, some cookie cutters and let them go! I love seeing their imagination work and it's also great for developing fine motor skills. Children really need to have strong muscles in their hands for writing, cutting, and other tasks. Think of all they do with play dough to build those muscles: roll, flatten, chop, cut, poke, squash, pinch, cut, pound, and manipulate. I love making my own play dough, because it is so much softer (and cheaper) than the store-bought stuff. I find it also lasts longer as well. Over the years I've tried dozens of recipes and this one here is the best playdough recipe out there!

## HOW TO MAKE HOMEMADE PLAYDOUGH

### MATERIALS

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup salt
- 4 teaspoons cream of tartar
- 2 cups lukewarm water
- 2 Tablespoons vegetable oil (coconut oil works too)
- Food colouring

(powder food colouring works well with playdough and it's cheaper too! You can buy these for 39p from the Turkish Food Market at the bottom of Umfreville Road and maybe at others along Green Lanes. Please be aware, a little goes a long way! 1/2 a teaspoon per cup of water is about right.)

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Stir together the flour, salt and cream of tartar in a large pot. Next add the food colouring to the water. Add the water and the oil to the mixture.
2. Stir the mixture thoroughly. Cook over medium-heat, stirring constantly. Continue stirring until the dough has thickened and begins to form into a ball. Remove from heat and then place on a worktop.

3. Allow to cool slightly and then knead until smooth
4. Once it's room temperature, you're ready to PLAY.
5. Store the play dough inside the bags to keep soft. If stored properly it will keep soft for up to 4 weeks.

For a fun addition, add some food essence.

## Maths

### Ordering Numerals

Write numbers on individual cards and encourage your child to order them. If they recognise numbers beyond 10, then give them 1-20. This is a good way of learning which number comes before and after and is 1 more and 1 less than any given number.



### Number Value

Write different numerals on a piece of card and ask your child to match it using blocks. Any blocks including Lego, Duplo, Mega blocks or wooden will do.



### Shape Pizzas

Shape pizzas are good for developing shape recognition and counting skills. Use a paper plate or cut out a circle for the base, and cut out different colored shapes for the toppings.



### **Colour Hunt**

This is a great indoor activity. All you need is a few colored pieces of paper. Then set your little ones off to find objects that match the color on the pieces of paper. You can concentrate on one (Y is for Yellow for us!) or do a few – or a whole rainbow! Matching and sorting activities help children to develop a range of thinking skills and build the foundations for later concepts.



### **Purple Place Games**

Purple Place is a pack of three mini-games for children in which kids can have fun training their memory, coordination and deductive skills on their PC. You may already have this on your PC or laptop depending on the version of Microsoft Windows you are using. If not, you can download it for free.

