

# Playfully preparing for school

TODDLER

Play is the key way children learn about themselves, others and the world they live in. It is essential to their learning, development, health, and physical, mental and social well-being – and it's FUN! Play provides the building blocks to be ready for school.



## More fun with playdough

There are many types of playdough that toddlers will enjoy exploring. Try simple dough for baking (and eating!) e.g. damper or scented dough for a calming experience e.g. lavender, or even sparkling dough by adding glitter! You can also make gluten-free playdough – just use gluten free flour!

### Did you know?

Manipulating dough strengthens little hands ready for using pencils and scissors later on.

### Add language

Playing together with dough provides a wonderful opportunity to use repetitive language and sing songs e.g. "This is the way we squeeze the dough, squeeze the dough, squeeze the dough". Young children learn language through lots of repetition.

Free play with playdough is a fantastic way to introduce some new words e.g. squish, squeeze, roll, sticky, etc.

A wide range of spoken words is an important foundation for developing literacy skills (reading and writing words).

### Other development

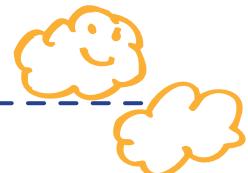
Allowing your child plenty of time to play with the



dough gives them a chance for creative development. Your toddler may enjoy just playing and exploring with the dough but not actually 'making' something. Allow them to explore the sensation and properties of dough. Exploring and experimenting with all the different things you can do with playdough feeds your toddler's curiosity. This is important for developing these skills for science. Comparing sizes, shapes, colours, position and direction develops early maths concepts.

### Variations

Simple props e.g. patty pans, straws, or gumnuts encourage creative exploration as your toddler can push these into or through the dough.



Playgroup WA has a treasure trove of play activities for babies, toddlers and 3-5 year olds, for home and playgroup. These play activities cover a balanced diet of play across sensory, movement, language and thinking skill areas.

You can find them at [www.playgroupwa.com.au/playideas](http://www.playgroupwa.com.au/playideas) or visit [www.facebook.com/playgroupwa](https://www.facebook.com/playgroupwa)

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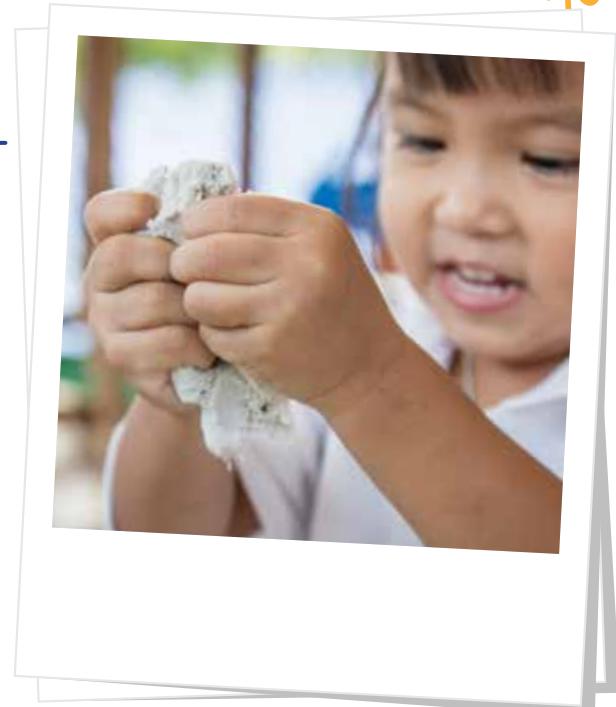
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## More fun with playdough Continued...

### Safety

Pay special attention to safety when using hot water when making your dough. Home-made playdough is safe to eat but contains a lot of salt. Discourage children from consuming large quantities.



### Making Playdough

Here is a quick easy recipe which keeps well in the fridge for months:

#### Ingredients

1 cup salt  
2 cups plain flour  
2 tablespoons oil  
3 teaspoons cream of tartar  
2 cups boiling water  
colour if required

#### Method

1. Combine ingredients (except water) in a bowl.
2. Pour the boiling water and stir.
3. Knead lightly on table top.



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