

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.



Autumn Play

Meeting in the outdoors instead of your usual playgroup venue is a great way to enjoy new experiences, inspire both children and adults, and build a sense of community. The milder weather in autumn is a perfect time for these excursions. Parks with lots of trees are particularly good for exploring and comparing changes in the environment.

Did you know?

Autumn is a colourful time to explore seasonal changes, develop early science and maths concepts and have fun together.

Add language

Point out, label and describe small creatures and objects such as ants, earth worms or stones found on a nature walk. Talk about the differences in the leaves in autumn. Count leaves and talk as you sort them into different colours, sizes or shapes – this helps children learn the language of maths.

Other development

Having playgroup in natural settings is extremely beneficial for developing social skills, imagination and problem solving. Children learn science concepts while exploring fallen leaves, rocks, soil and plants. Watching what the insects and birds are doing helps children develop skills



in observing. Noticing differences in size, shape, body parts and activity helps children develop a sense of enquiry. This all builds a child's understanding of their world and their place in that world.

Variations

Why not visit a nature playground and keep an eye out for autumn events and festivals in your area. If your playgroup can't go out into nature, why not bring a little nature to playgroup? You can collect leaves or other natural items outside then use them for an inside activity. Autumn is a great time for this! You can try screen-printing, leaf rubbing, stencils, or sticking items onto contact to make nature collages! You can stick twigs and leaves and nuts into playdough to create nature scenes.



- 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 or visit www.facebook.com/playgroupwa