



HOME GROWN KIDS

◆ Childcare from Home ◆



B **A** **C** **K** **Y** **A** **R** **D**

P **L** **A** **Y**

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Outdoor Transparent Painting

Preschool children use both gross and fine motor skills and caregivers can introduce a new vocabulary word, transparent, during this creative early childhood activity.



You Will Need

- A large clear plastic sheet (readily available from places like Noel Leamings as ex fridge, washing machine packaging etc)
- Tempera paints in lots of colours
- Paint brushes
- Wire to hold up the plastic sheet
- A fence to hang it on!

Let the children help in attaching the plastic to the fence thereby encouraging the growth of motor skills. Get the children to paint the 'canvas' with any images they like, or you can suggest ideas from a theme, eg jungle theme, dinosaur theme etc. These murals are an amazing addition to the child's outside play area



Sheet Painting

You will Need

- Spray bottles
- Water
- Liquid Tempera paint in lots of colours
- One old sheet

Fill a spray bottle with half water and half the paint mixture. Hang the sheet on a fence or clothesline or where ever you can. You can hang up some rope and use that. Or even just lay it out and have the children spray it on the ground. If you like the idea of cleaning, you can get the children to stand on the sheet and spray their own foot outlines. You can take this idea as far as you are prepared to clean your children, and their clothes etc! (use water based paints etc)

Young preschool children use fine motor and colour recognition skills as they explore creativity during this activity.

Outdoor Water Art

You Will Need

- A spray bottle for each child
- Watercolours
- Water
- One large fence or wall

Have the children spray directly on the wall, in any theme you may suggest, or any way they like. The wall can easily be cleaned if necessary, or you can wait for the rain to do it and make the first day after the rain has finished as 'new paint the wall day', etc

Car Wash

You Will Need

- Sponges
- Soapy water
- Children's outdoor toys eg ride on cars, bikes etc
- A hose



Pick an area outside where the children can 'drive' their 'cars' up to park and wash them. You can also use spray bottles filled with soapy water etc

Cardboard Boxes

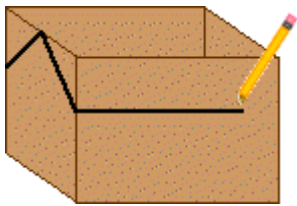
Running, climbing, jumping and digging are ways for children to refine their motor skills. A good active environment provides activities to develop these skills. Set up appliance boxes (available from any appliance store, and recyclable when you have finished with them!) to create tunnels, buildings, space ships, even castles. Let the children create their own doors, windows, turrets, etc



You can even make cardboard furniture such as chairs, TV's, tables, almost anything to go inside their creations.

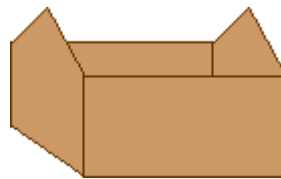
Below are some plans for making a barn. You can take them as far as you like eg do a simplified version etc

Cardboard Box Barn...



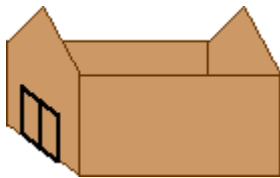
Step 1:

Mark the cardboard box so that it has the roof-line of a barn.



Cut the cardboard along your markings, making a barn shape.

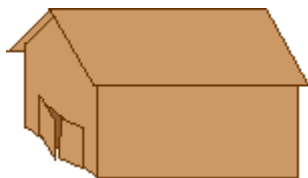
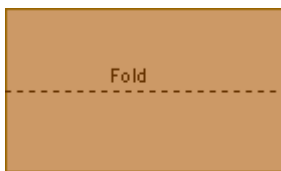
Step 2:



Mark the barn doors (they should be shaped like a rectangle with a vertical line in the centre, making a double door). Cut along the top, bottom and middle lines; the outer vertical lines will be the hinges, creating double doors.

If you put barn doors on both sides of the barn, two children can enter the barn at the same time, depending on the size of your box.

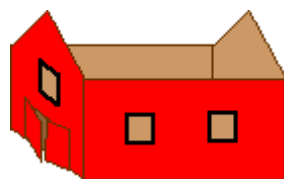
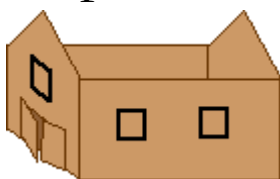
Step 3:



For the roof, cut a rectangle of cardboard that is about an inch or two longer than the barn and wider than the two triangular tops of the barn.

Mark where the fold line will be and then carefully fold the rectangle in half. Place the roof on the barn to make sure that it fits.

Step 4:



Mark where you will want windows on your barn. Paint the barn red.



Step 5:



When the red paint dries, paint the inside of the windows black (or cut them out if you like for more light). When that paint has dried, you can paint white trim around the windows and doors. Also paint a large white "X" on the barn doors. Paint the roof white or light grey (or a rainbow if the children like!).



Step 6:

Place the roof on the barn.

You now have a fantastic barn with a removable roof. You can make some animals up to go inside, or just let the children play. The roof can be secured on with tape if you desire, or easily removable for supervision etc

Woodwork & Garage Tools

Letting children use real wood, hammers, nails, saws etc allows them to use 'real world' materials instead of plastic imitations, giving them valuable lessons in using materials that are common to most garages etc. They get to use both fine and gross motor skills in a variety of ways. You can use smaller hammers for smaller children who don't have the physical strength yet etc.



For beginners, pre-drill some starter holes in scrap pieces of wood. If you don't have a drill, you can hammer in a nail yourself and then remove it to make the holes. Try to choose nails with larger heads (flat head nails, not jolts which are the normal builders framing nail), then move onto more challenging sizes when they get the hang of it.



You can also cut out cardboard squares and glue them together to form a 'cardboard block' which you can glue down to a piece of wood. The child can then nail themselves without pre-drilled holes as cardboard is much easier to nail into than wood. This works well with beginner nailers and saves your fingers! The child also learns gross motor skills by using the arm and wrist to swing the hammer, and fine motor skills to hold the nail. They also learn not to hit their fingers!

If you have access to a small hand saw, these are a great way for children to practise hand/eye coordination. Be careful they don't saw their hands!

You can also:

- Drill holes and get the children to use screws, practising left & right hand turns and how screws work
- Collect different nuts and bolts and get them to find the right sizes and put them together
- Drill holes through two pieces of wood and nail/screw/bolt them together
(supervise younger ones with the small pieces etc)

Ring Toss Game

You Will Need

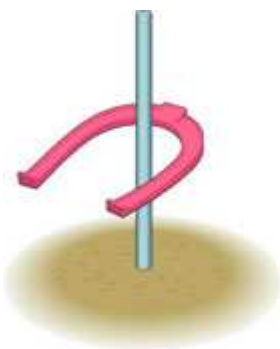
A drill

Scrap wood

A dowel or large nail

Glue, if using a dowel

Rubber or plastic rings (or anything similar, eg cardboard rings glued together to make them heavier etc)



Drill a hole in the scrap wood base the same size as your dowel (If you are using a large nail, just bang the nail in!)

Press the dowel in and glue in place

Wait until dry, then place the ring toss on the ground and mark out some lines at different distances from the ring toss. Get the children to step back when they can throw the rings around the ring toss, like horse shoes, to increase the challenge for them.

Water Ideas

Please make sure you supervise children at all times around water, especially half full buckets etc

- Half fill a small bucket with water and add a little food colouring. Give the children paint brushes and set them to painting whatever they can find eg their bike, garage door, fence, paths, themselves etc Food colouring is non toxic and washes off with water and it won't stain.
- Drop food colouring on to ice cubes and watch what happens
- Drop salt on to ice cubes and watch what happens
- Put some water into the baby bath. Cover it with non transparent material, eg black polythene, an old towel etc. Make two small hand holes and put a variety of objects in the water. The children have to put their hands through the holes and guess what object they are holding before bringing it out to see if they are correct
- Half fill a small bowl with water, add a little dish washing detergent and use an egg beater to make lots of bubbles.
- Use a baby bath to bath the dolls. Add soap, face cloth, towel, toy clothes line and pegs etc to complete the process



- Half fill a yoghurt pot with water and add a little dish washing detergent. Use a straw to blow bubbles.
- Freeze an ice container full of water and look at the patterns it makes. For variation add food colouring, plastic toys, flowers etc
- Find some old dishes for the children to wash and dry
- Weigh different containers of water and encourage the children to write down the weights, use a black board for this if you have one.
- Fill a container with water. Get the child to make two piles of objects, one that they think will float, and one that they think will sink. Then have them test them to see if they are right. Change the objects and have them try again.
- Wash doll clothes and hang them out
- Have a water tea party
- Wash the car
- Have bowls of warm and cold water for splash and water play
- Pour water on a concrete path and blow it along with straws
- Put the child's feet into a bowl of water and have them make water footprints on a path, use hands as well
- Get some rubber gloves and allow the children to do some scrubbing wearing them for the different feelings it produces
- Draw fish on yoghurt or margarine pots and cut out. Add a paper clip to each fish. Use a magnet tied to a pole and a piece of string to catch your fish in a dry and wet container
- Put shells in the water and make a beach
- Put a bowl out in the rain and collect the water, see how much you get
- Soak various objects in the water, rope is especially good, and drag them along the concrete looking at the patterns they make



"Why is it that children can never walk around a puddle?"

Ball Play

There are many sorts of balls to try:

Tennis
Softball
Ping-Pong
Soccer

Basketball
Rugby
Foam
Wheat

Sock
Pom poms
Foil
Beach

Bean bags
Balloons
Soft balls with bells etc



Bat
Kick
Throw

Roll
Pass
Chest pass

Dribble
Blow it!
With your head

Bounce

And there are many ways of moving a ball:

How many ways can you find to move a ball?
With your:

Chin
Feet
Knee
Hands
Elbow

Armpit
Back
Head
Shoulder
Wrist

Back of hand
Fingertips
Wrist
Thigh
Calf

3 fingers
1 finger
Palm
Knuckles...



Ten Pin Bowling

Stand ten plastic bottles in a group on the floor. You can use milk bottles, fizzy drink bottles, water bottles etc. Weigh them down according to the children's strength etc by putting water inside them, or rice/sand
Use whatever ball you have handy to try to knock as many over as you can. The bottles don't have to be in the traditional bowling grouping and you can bowl, throw, roll etc

Count how many they knock over and try again. Stand back further when it gets easier



Football

Use a lightweight ball that is large enough for your preschooler to kick easily (At least 13cm's diameter). These are cheap, soft and readily available at the Warehouse or similar.

Put the ball on the ground and kick it towards your child and ask them to kick it back. If there are other children present see if they can kick it in a circle, or other form of passing around etc from child to child. You can change directions, kick in shapes like triangles, squares.



When they have mastered kicking a stationary ball, get them to try kicking a rolling ball they have to chase. Start by getting them to kick a slowly moving ball, then gradually build up the speed of the ball, and the angle they approach it. From the side, behind, directly in front etc. From there you can teach them to keep it moving by running with it. Make a game out of seeing who can keep the ball moving.

If you can, take them to watch a ball game like soccer, rugby, netball etc and get them to imitate what they see at home. Also get them to try kicking a ball you drop or throw to them.

Golf

Show your child how to hit a medium sized (10cm) lightweight ball around the garden with a paper towel tube or rolled up newspaper. Encourage them to hit the ball as hard as they can so it travels a long way. If you are restricted by garden size, get them to hit the ball against a wall etc. Or make a trip to the park and take the ball and 'putter' with you.



Lie some hoops on the ground and encourage them to hit their ball into the middle of each hoop. You can also make a competition out of it and many children can play this at once.



Variations:

Hockey - set up two marks close together on a fence or wall. Tell the child this is the 'goal' area and see if they can hit their ball to score a goal. You can take this further by standing in the goal yourself as the goalie, or getting another child to do it, taking turns of course.

Tennis - Make a tennis racquet from a piece of stiff cardboard, or use a plastic spade or similar. Show your child how to hold it with two hands and then gently throw the lightweight ball for them to hit. Then get them to throw it at you so they can practise both sides of throwing and hitting.



Throw & Catch Games

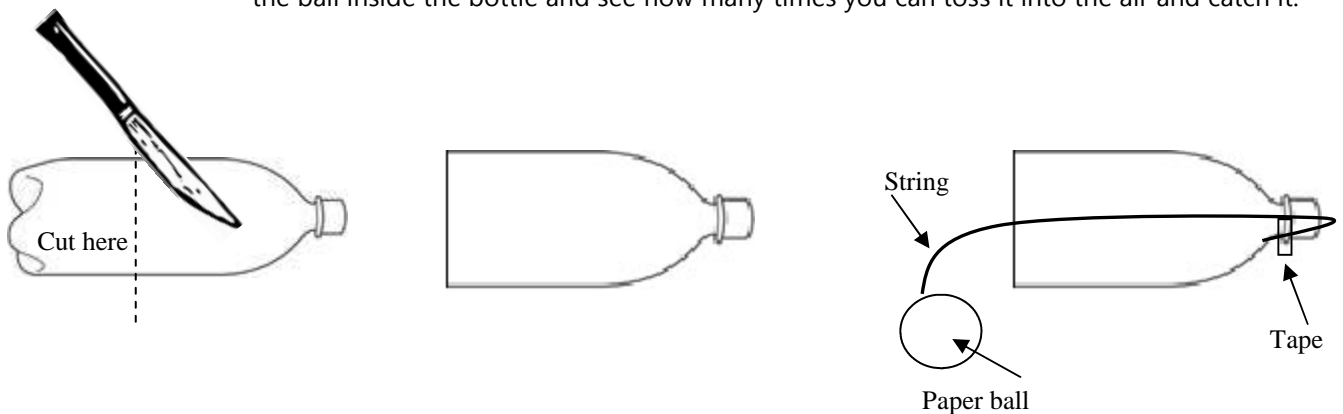
Here are 2 simple games you can play with tools made from very common things around your house and very little effort.

You Will Need:

Plastic bottles
Tape
Scissors
Breadknife or similar
Paper or piece of sponge
String or wool (30cm)

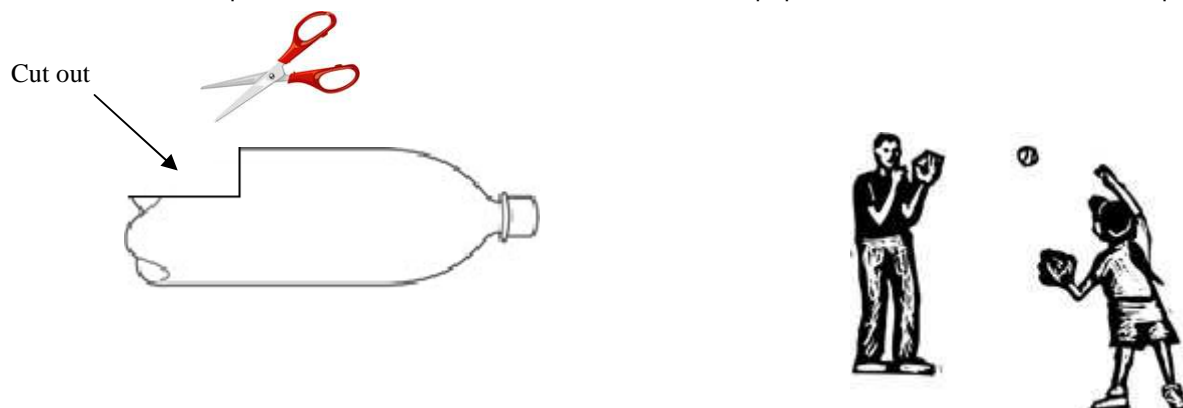
Method:

Using a breadknife, cut down a large plastic bottle
Screw a piece of paper into a ball (or use the sponge etc) and wind the sticky tape around it
Tape the string to the ball firmly
Remove the bottle cap
Feed the string through the bottle, starting at the large end and securely fix it on the outside of the bottle neck
Put the ball inside the bottle and see how many times you can toss it into the air and catch it.



Method:

Cut down a large plastic bottle so that it measures about 25cms from the neck end.
Using your scissors, cut out a section as shown in the diagram. Round off the corners for safety
Make another paper or sponge ball, but not attached to any string
Make another scoop and then use them to throw and catch the paper ball, or similar between two people



Treasure Hunt

You Will Need:

Paper
Colouring in pens
A treasure box (let the children make one or you can use anything)
Treasure (can be small cheap presents from the \$2 shop or sweets etc)



Method:

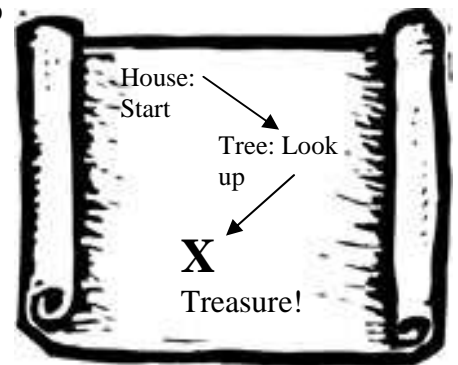
Start by hiding your treasure chest somewhere in the yard. Then back track several times, working out your clues. When you have 3-4 of them, you can start making your map, an example of which is here:

Depending on the age and stage of the children, you can get as complicated or simple as you need. For example, most pre-schoolers will not be able to read the writing, but they can follow a simple diagram telling them to walk to a tree and search for a clue, then go to where the clue says by way of a picture eg The map may show a tree, so you tell the child to find the tree and look for a clue. At the base of the tree may be a picture of a car, so they check your car (with supervision of course), and so on.



You can even cut up your map and use that as clues, hiding a piece at each point with a picture of where to go to the next place.

As they get better at it, you can make it more complicated, like finding a letter that matches one on the map, and that eventually spells their name and finds the treasure at the same time.



Fort Hideout:

You will Need:

Old sheets or blankets
Pegs
Chairs or rope



Method:

Place the chairs about 2 metres apart and drape the sheets over them to form the hideout. You can use the pegs to secure the sheets etc. You can also use the rope by attaching two lengths of it to a fence or similar and placing the sheets and blankets over them. This simple outside fort can be made with many variations. If you have an old sheet, let the children decorate it with pirates etc

Balance Beam

Use a plank about 2 metres long. Place some smaller pieces of wood in the middle of it underneath to create your balance beam. You can get the children to stand at either end, or walk from one end to the other etc.

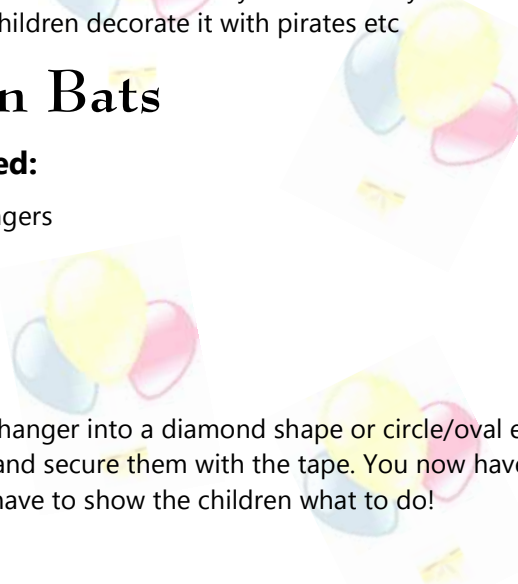
Balloon Bats

You will need:

Metal coat hangers
Nylons
masking tape
Balloons

Method:

Bend the coat hanger into a diamond shape or circle/oval etc and twist the hook closed to form the handle. Stretch the nylons over it and secure them with the tape. You now have a bat to hit the balloons with. Make two or three if you need to. You won't have to show the children what to do!



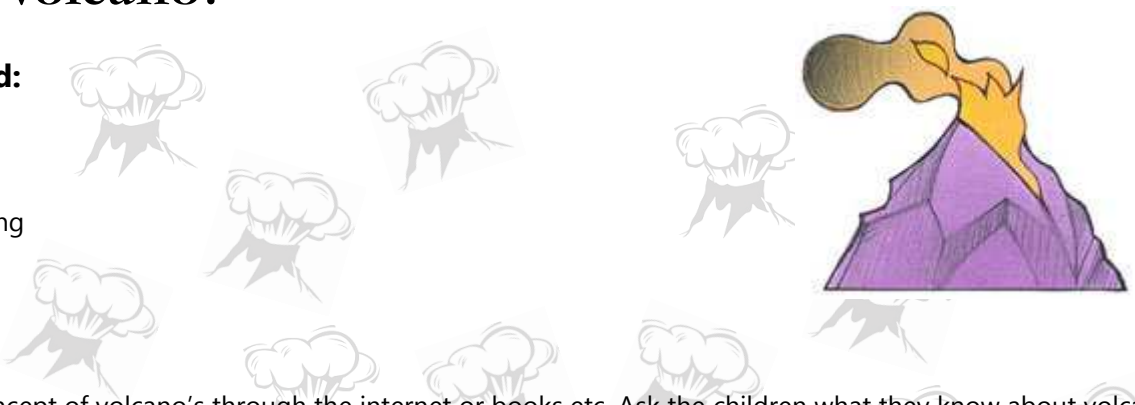
Make a Volcano!

You Will Need:

Baking soda
Vinegar
Red food colouring
Play sand or dirt

Method:

Introduce the concept of volcano's through the internet or books etc. Ask the children what they know about volcanos. Then you can tell the children that they are going to build their very own volcano. Have the children build a volcano shape in the sandpit, or other suitable place. Make a depression or hole in the top to put your ingredients. Place 2 table spoons of baking soda in the hole. Mix the food colouring with 1/2 a cup of vinegar and have the children get ready. The volcano will erupt as soon as you add the vinegar to the baking soda!



Play A Game

Hide and Seek



Hopscotch



Tug of War



Ring of Roses



Skipping

