

## Related book

*The Ice Cream Store* by Dennis Lee

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## What Can We Do With Playdough?

3+

### Science skills

Children make their own playdough, then embark on a variety of scientific experiences using observation, measuring and fine motor skills.

### Materials

Playdough Recipe

½ cup (125 ml) salt

1 cup (250 ml) water

Food coloring

⅓ teaspoon (1-2 ml) flavoring: mint for green color, orange for orange color, almond for yellow color, cinnamon oil for red color, vanilla for no color at all, optional

1 cup (250 ml) flour

2 teaspoons (10 ml) cream of tartar

1 tablespoon (15 ml) oil

Double boiler pan

Wooden spoon

Butter knife

Wax paper

Closed plastic container with lid

### What to do

This recipe is always soft and pliable. It makes a small amount of playdough for home use or triple the recipe for the classroom (that makes a 5" or 12.5 cm ball). If you make this recipe with the children, take proper precautions when you cook the dough. If a child tastes the playdough, it will taste salty but it will not harm him.

1. Let the children put the ingredients in the pan. For example, divide the 3 cups of flour for a triple recipe into ¼ cup (60 ml) amounts so each child can add one ingredient.
2. Mix the dry ingredients. Add oil, water and food coloring.
3. Put this mixture in the double boiler pan over hot water.
4. Cook and stir constantly for 3 minutes, until the mixture comes away from the sides of the pan.
5. Scrape the dough out of the pan with the butter knife.
6. After the playdough is cooked and partially cooled, let each child have a turn kneading it.
7. Put the ball of playdough on wax paper. Knead while warm, and then store it in an airtight container.

### More to do

**Art:** Use playdough in craft projects to create a base to hold pipe cleaner flower stems. ■ Make copies of the playdough recipe to send home and let each child take a small ball of playdough home as a gift. ■ You can combine this recipe with other favorite classroom recipes as a gift for Mom and Dad. Each child can design her own recipe book cover.

**Dramatic Play:** Put playdough in the kitchen area to be used by four to six children during free play.

**Fine motor:** Give each child in the group a small amount of playdough and show them how to roll it into a long snake shape. Encourage children to make the shape of letters or numbers. ■ Encourage the children to make three-dimensional fruit and vegetable shapes, such as a banana, apple, bunch of grapes, watermelon slice, carrots, potato, peas, string beans or an onion. Use the pretend food in the dramatic play center.

**Math:** Teach liquid measurement and dry measurement of ingredients. How many  $\frac{1}{4}$  cups equals 1 cup? How many  $\frac{1}{3}$  cups equal 1 cup. ■ Ask the children to make playdough balls of various sizes, then sort in them a row showing the gradual gradation of size, largest to smallest. Mix them up, then try doing smallest to largest. ■ Put different size playdough balls on a balance scale. When does the scale balance? When does it tip to one side? Why? ■ Take a walk and pick up leaves of various sizes and shapes. Back in the classroom, trace around the leaf and cut out a playdough cookie leaf.

**More science:** Give the children a box containing a comb, a screw, a large washer, a carved wooden or plastic building block, a large paper clip, puzzle piece, a piece each of plastic and canvas, a potato scrubber and any other safe object that has texture. You can also add several dull, sturdy plastic dinner knives for cutting the playdough and several plastic trays. Let the children experiment with the objects, using them to make shapes in the soft playdough. You can also add small wooden rolling pins and a spatula. ■ Leave a small amount of playdough out for a day. What causes the crust to form? Leave it out for a week and discuss how it feels now. Could it be made into a new shape now? ■ Compare the playdough recipe with another similar recipe such as cookie dough, bread dough or Christmas ornament dough. Which ingredients are the same and which are different?

## Original poem

*I Like to Play With Playdough*

*I like to play with playdough* downloaded by test@gryphonhouse.com from

*And roll it in a ball.*

ProFilePlanner.com

*Then poke it, push it, and pat it*

*And make anything at all.*

*Sometimes I make some cookies*

*And put them on a tray.*

*Other times I design a snowman*

*That does not melt away.*

*Now I'll make some numbers,*

*My favorite one is three.*

*Please come to the table*

*And make something with me.*

## Related book

*From Kids With Love* by Janis Hill and Laurie Patrick

■ Mary Brehm, Aurora, OH