

Playdough recipe

This super-easy playdough recipe is the perfect way to spend an afternoon inside. It's quick enough to hold a young child's attention and you only need a few cupboard ingredients. Little hands can play with the results straightaway, so there's immediate gratification for all involved!

Makes: 1 coloured ball
Prep: 10 minutes

You will need

- 8 tbsp plain flour
- 2 tbsp table salt
- 60ml warm water
- food colouring
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil

Method

1. Mix the flour and salt in a large bowl. In a separate bowl mix together the water, a few drops of food colouring and the oil.
2. Pour the coloured water into the flour mix and bring together with a spoon.
3. Dust a work surface with a little flour and turn out the dough. Knead together for a few minutes to form a smooth, pliable dough. If you want a more intense colour you can work in a few extra drops of food colouring.
4. Store in a plastic sandwich bag (squeeze out the air) in the fridge to keep it fresh. You can make a batch of colours.

Source: <https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/guide/playdough-recipe>

How to make Grass Heads

You will need

- Old tights/ stockings
- Some compost or earth
- Grass seeds
- Rubber band or thread
- For decorating - googly eyes, felt
- A pot/jar for your grass head to sit in!

Method

- 1) Put 2-3 generous tablespoons full of grass seeds at the bottom of your tights.
- 2) Then add a lot of earth until you have a nice sized ball. Tie the bottom of the tights. Shape into a ball if necessary.
- 3) Pinch a “nose”, twist it and wrap and tie in place with a rubber band/thread.
- 4) Glue on googly eyes and mouth with PVA.
- 5) Place in a yoghurt pot or similar - we had a painted flowerpot (with no holes). Add water and the tights will “soak the water up” into the earth. If you want to speed it up, you can give the head a quick shower under the tap to moisten the earth the first time round. After that take care not make it too wet. Place in a sunny spot!
- 6) Wait for hair to grow. Make sure you don't keep the head too wet - we did at first, which meant that the mouth fell off and that the googly eyes didn't dry properly for ages. It also means your grass head can get mouldy. So your head should feel moist but not soggy. Basically just add a little water to the pot every so often.
- 7) Cut your hair. Again and again!



Source: <https://www.redtedart.com/kids-crafts-grass-heads/>

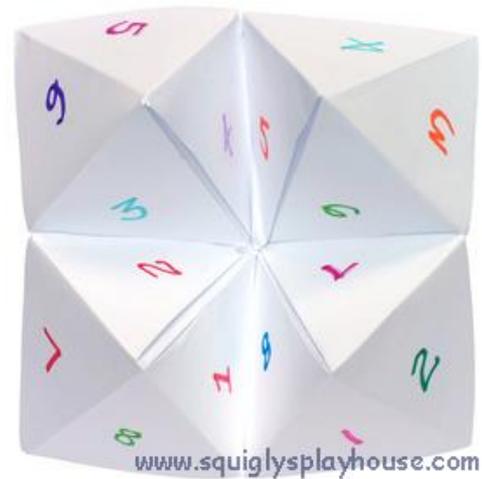
How to make a Cootie Catcher

What you need:

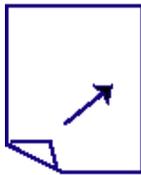
- Scissors
- Rectangular sheet of plain paper
- Pen or Markers

What you do:

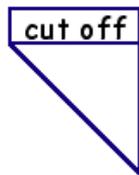
Follow these step-by-step instructions to create your very own Cootie Catcher.



1. Fold the bottom of the paper to the side of the page to make a triangle.



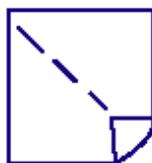
2. Use scissors to cut off the flap at the top.



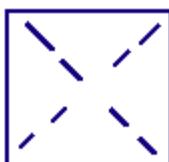
3. Open the triangle and you will have a square.



4. Fold one corner of the paper diagonally to the other corner.



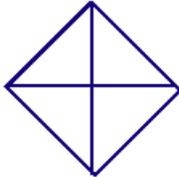
5. Open your paper. You will now have a centre point marked on the paper.



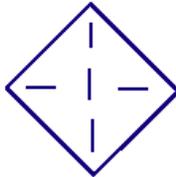
6. Fold each corner of the paper towards the centre.



7. When all four corners have been folded, your Cootie Catcher should look like this.



8. Turn the paper over so that the folded sides are face down.



9. Then fold all the corners to the centre diagonally.



10. Once you have folded in the four corners, write the numbers one through 8 on each of the triangles.



11. Hold the paper in front of you as shown and fold it into a square.



12. Now unfold and fold the square in half horizontally.



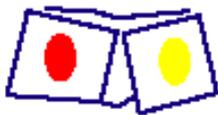
13. Open each flap and write something on each triangle. What you write depends on the type of Cootie catcher you have made.



14. Flip the Cootie Catcher over and write the name of a colour, animal, person or place on the flap.



15. Flip the Cootie Catcher over so that the numbers are face up. Fold the square in half and slip your thumbs and pointer finger under the four flaps.



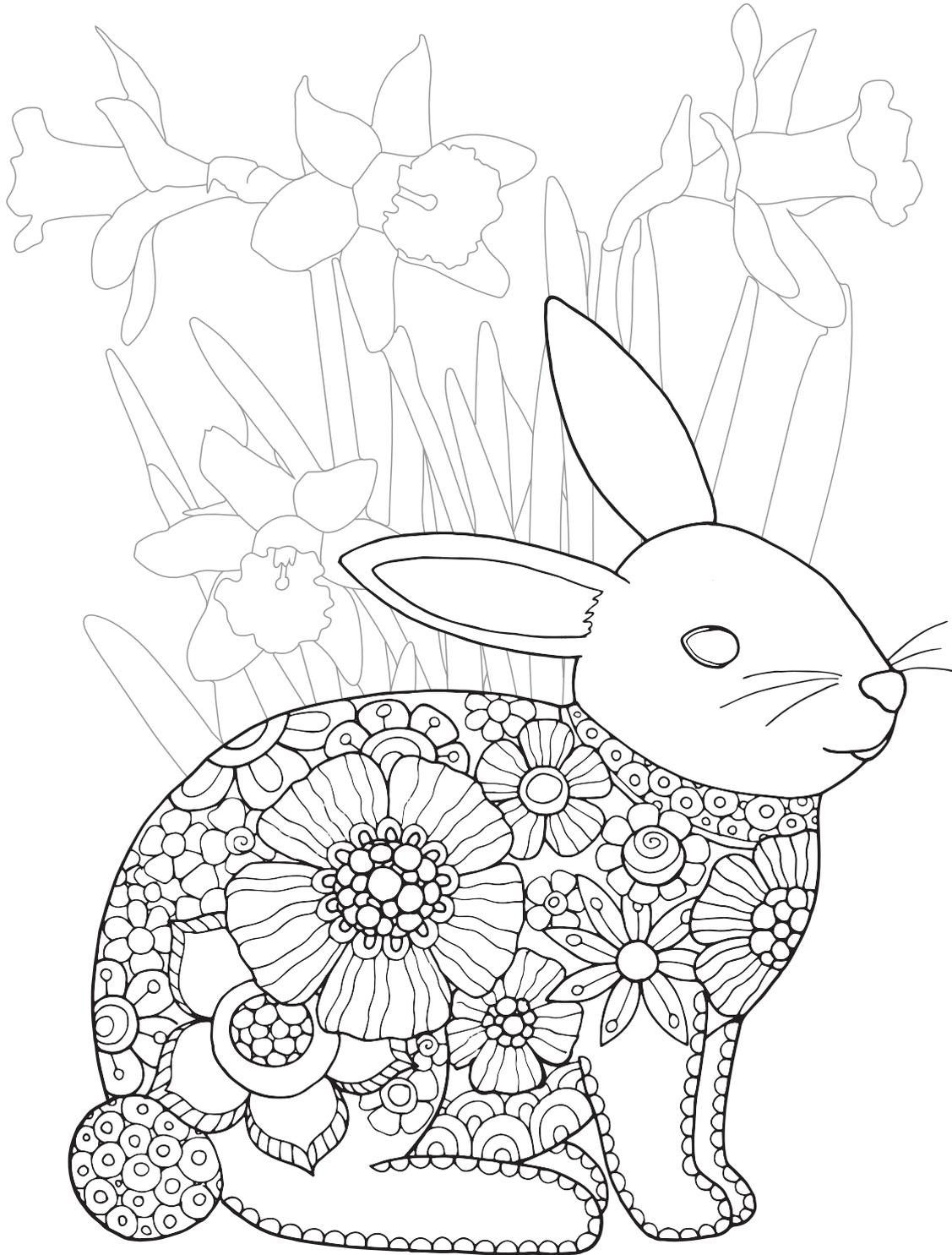
How to play:

1. Find a friend and ask them to pick a colour, animal, person or place that you have written on one of the flaps.
2. Moving the flaps in and out and side to side in time with the letters, spell out the word they have chosen.
3. Open the Cootie Catcher to reveal the numbers and ask them to pick one. Count out the number they have chosen by moving the flaps in and out and side to side. Ask them to pick another number and count it out in the same manner.
4. This time ask them to pick a third number and reveal the answer you have written on the inside flap.

Source:

<https://www.squiglyplayhouse.com/ArtsAndCrafts/Crafts/CootieCatchers.html>

Mindfulness Colouring Page



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Glitter jars: How to make your own calm down jar or bottle

Designed to soothe and relax, the swirling patterns created by glitter in these homemade glitter jars, water and food colouring are ideal for calming down a stressed out child (or adult, for that matter) – leading to their alternative name, ‘calm down jars’.

Just give them a good shake, then watch until the glitter settles in the bottom of the jar to refocus and refresh an overwhelmed mind.

You will need

- A jar or plastic bottle
- A jug of warm water
- 60ml glitter glue
- 3 drops of gel food colouring
- 60g-80g glitter



Note: For younger children, we'd recommend using a plastic jar or bottle rather than a glass jar, to prevent any accidents! Our quantities are based on a standard 500ml jar, so if you're using a larger bottle or container, you may need to scale up the ratios.

Method

1. Add warm water to your jar or bottle until it reaches around a third of the way up.
2. Add the glitter glue and stir until it combined with the water.
3. Add around 3 drops of food colour and stir. You can add more or less depending on your preferred shade, but remember not to add too much or the mixture will become very dark and it will become hard to see the glitter.
4. Pour in the glitter! Again, you can use more or less than suggested, or go for a mix of chunky and fine glitter to give more texture to your jar. Stir well until combined with the existing mixture.
5. Top up your jar with the rest of the warm water, until it is almost full. Leave a little gap at the top of the jar to allow the mixture to move.

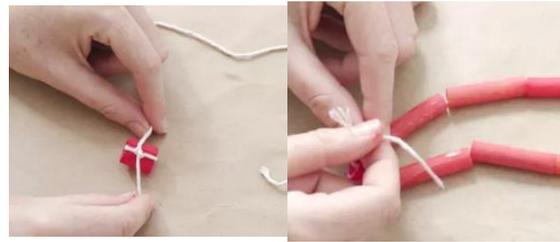
Top tip: Some of our Facebook followers tell us that adding a squirt of baby oil or liquid soap to your jar can give a slower moving ‘galaxy’ effect. You could also add sequins for extra effect.

Source: <https://www.goodtoknow.co.uk/family/things-to-do/glitter-jars-how-to-calm-down-jar-105300>

How to Make a Macaroni Necklace

You will need

- 1 large jar filled with 2 cups water
- 1/2 cup vinegar
- Paint or food colouring
- Cookie sheet or tray
- Uncooked pasta: Macaroni, Rigatoni, Penne, Ditalini, Ziti (the possibilities are endless!)
- String
- Scissors



Method

1. You want to make a mixture of vinegar, water, and dye. Start the dying process by filling a large jar or bowl with 2 cups of water. Pour a ½ cup of vinegar into the water.
2. Add the pasta that you want to dye into the water-vinegar mixture. If you plan to dye the pasta a few different colours, set up multiple jars with water and vinegar.
3. Squeeze paint into your water and vinegar mixture. You want the mixture to be really saturated with the colour you are planning on dying your pasta. If you are using food colouring—add in several (at least 4-5) drops into the mixture.
4. Have your pasta soak in the dye mixture for 20 minutes. You can take a piece out to check on how it is doing. If the colour is too light, have it soak for longer or try adding more pigment to the water and vinegar.
5. Carefully pour the dye mixture out into a sink. You can use a colander to help make sure you don't lose any of the pasta down the drain. Put the dyed pasta onto a cookie sheet or tray, and set out to dry. Wait about 30 minutes for your pasta to dry.
6. Measure the string to decide how long or short you want your necklace to be. Once you have decided, use scissors to cut the string.
7. Thread your string through one of your pieces of pasta, and tie a knot. This will help keep your other pasta beads from sliding off the string. You can also use this tied-on pasta to help fasten your necklace closed.
8. If you are using pasta with holes in them (penne, ziti, rigatoni, ditalini), then take the untied end of your string and thread it through that pasta. You can also experiment with tying your dyed pasta onto the string. Continue adding pasta beads to your necklaces until you feel that it's complete. If you want to space out your beads, you can try tying knots in the string between them.
9. Make sure you stop threading beads onto your string with enough room to tie it closed. Use the threading end to feed the string through the first tied on pasta bead. Then tie a knot in the string.

Source: <https://www.thesprucecrafts.com/macaroni-necklace-4175051>

Salt Dough Handprint Ornament

Ingredients

- 4 cups all purpose flour
- 1 cup salt
- 1.5 cups warm water
- Clear Glaze Finish or Mod Podge



Instructions

Preheat your oven to 130 degrees Celsius

1. Combine all of your ingredients and knead for 10 minutes. If your dough is too dry add a little bit more water in and continue to knead.
2. Roll out the dough to a thickness that you'd like your salt dough ornament to be.
3. Using a large cookie cutter, cut out different shapes for your salt dough ornament.
4. If you want your child's handprint- have you child place their hand into the salt dough ornament. If the dough is too hard to get an imprint it may be too dry and you can continue to knead by adding in a little bit more water.
5. Using a straw, make a hole in the top for where you want to hang your salt dough ornament.
6. Bake for 1-2 hours. If your ornaments are still doughy, put back in for another hour. (It will depend on your thickness how long you need to bake for. The thinner ornaments will take less time but thicker may take more).
7. If you encounter too much puffing, roll out thinner ornaments and this will help reduce the puffing. If the ornament is still a bit doughy, bake for longer or let sit out a few days to harden before decorating. The thickness of the dough will determine how long you have to bake them for. You can also raise the temperature but do this gradually as they may start to puff up. We prefer to bake them at a lower temperature for longer and let them air dry for a few days.
8. Once cool, you can decorate by painting with acrylic or kids paint.
9. To make the hand glittery, fill the handprint with glue then sprinkle glitter on top of the glue, shake off the excess and let it dry.
10. Spray with a clear glaze finish or finish with mod podge.

Source: <https://www.thebestideasforkids.com/salt-dough-handprint-ornament/>

Hopscotch

Hopscotch is an old traditional game that still brings loads of fun and laughter in school yards everywhere. With these easy steps you can create your own hopscotch at home, inside or out!



What you need

- Chalk or masking tape
- Markers for each person playing - pebble, bottle cap, shell, button, etc.

Activity

Use chalk to draw a hopscotch pattern on the ground or use masking tape on the floor.

Create a diagram with eight sections and number them.

Each player has a marker such as a stone, bottlecap, shell, button, etc.

For younger children simply hopping across the single versus double squares can provide hours of fun.

The first player stands behind the starting line to toss his or her marker in square one.

Hop over square one to square two and then continue hopping to square eight, turn around, and hop back again.

Pause in square two to pick up the marker, hop in square one, and out.

Then continue by tossing the stone in square two.

All hopping is done on one foot unless the hopscotch design is such that two squares are side-by-side.

Then two feet can be placed down with one in each square.

A player must always hop over any square where a marker has been placed.

Getting out: A player is out if the marker fails to land in the proper square, the hopper steps on a line, the hopper loses balance when bending over to pick up the marker and puts a second hand or foot down, the hopper goes into a square where a marker is, or if a player puts two feet down in a single box.

The player puts the marker in the square where he or she will resume playing on the next turn, and the next player begins.

Source: <https://www.kidspot.com.au/things-to-do/activity-articles/hopscotch/news-story/4272569c82c29d6bd2a66080f43ec352>

Videos: How to play Elastics

With just a long piece of elastic and a couple of pairs of willing ankles, elastics was the ultimate game of fun. Even better were the great jingles you sang as you jumped! Such a great retro party game to keep the kids entertained. If you don't have people to hold the elastic you can put it around the bottom of a chair.

Click on the links below to go to the YouTube tutorial:

How To Play Elastics by Pinehill Primary School
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=znkZx5CSTFs>



PLAY: Eduplus - Elastic Rope Skipping Game
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=3&v=UGWEINHON_k&feature=emb_logo



Videos: How to play string games

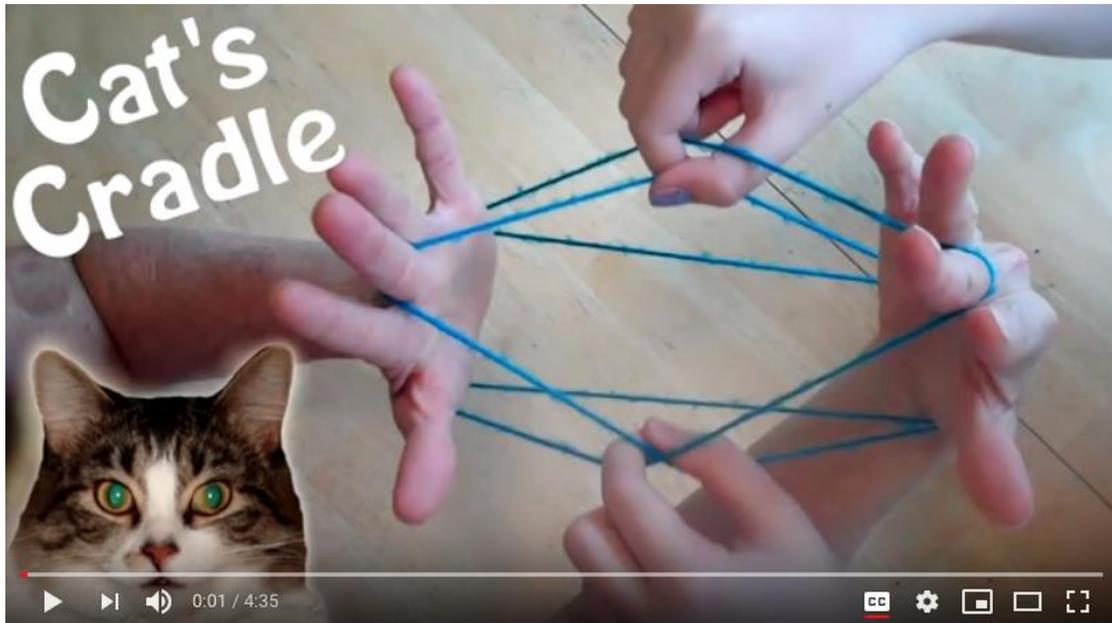
String games are an easy game with different variations to explore online. This game can be played as a one or two person game. All you will need is a string!

String hand game "two of diamonds"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=KP0J_wsUSXw&feature=emb_logo



How to do Cat's Cradle EASY! Step by step, with string
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VpHTPnrYLzQ>



Article: 30 ideas for easy outdoor games

Follow the link to read an article with 30 suggestions of fun, outdoor games:

JENNY WILLIAMS CULTURE 08.28.09 08:00 AM

30 Classic Outdoor Games for Kids



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<https://www.wired.com/2009/08/simpleoutdoorplay/>

Try some of the following play ideas:

- Make a sock puppet using old socks. Sew on buttons or paste other bits of material for eyes, nose and hair.
- Fill a box with clean, old clothes for dressing up.
- Tape some scrap paper together to make a simple book. Let your child create the story and decorate the pages either by drawing the characters themselves or cutting and pasting them out of old magazines.
- Make a video. Your child could write the script and make the costumes, then video themselves using a smartphone or camera. They can edit and add special effects with software or apps.
- Find some big, old boxes and see what your child can do with them. They could become a cubby house, rocket ship or hideout. You could ask your local supermarket or electrical retailer if they have boxes you could take home.
- Turn old sheets into a tent by draping them over the backs of chairs, or make a cubby house by draping a sheet over the edges of the table.

Source: <https://raisingchildren.net.au/school-age/play-media-technology/low-cost-play-ideas/homemade-toys>

Educational online games:

PBS Kids

The broadcaster PBS is known for its great video content for kids, and its website offers numerous educational games that will engage kids' curiosity to learn.

<https://pbskids.org/games/>

ABC Kids

ABC Kids creates a magical world where your children can learn, play and explore through our trusted programs, games, and activities.

<https://www.abc.net.au/abckids/games/>

Tvokids

Tvokids has an extensive range of content separated into two categories – age 2 to 5, and 11 and under – that includes games.

<https://www.tvokids.com/>

Learning Games for Kids

These online learning games and songs for kids are fun, teach important skills for preschool and elementary school kids and they're free.

<https://www.learninggamesforkids.com/>