

GPCA DIY PLAYDOUGH

Play dough is one of those supplies that is a lot of fun to play with but can be pretty expensive. You'll think it's even more expensive once you've made it at home! You can experiment with adding natural plant dyes (for instance, beet juice works well!) and essential oils to create a more sensory experience. This dough stores well at room temperature in a sealed bag or container, but for longer life you can store in the fridge. We recommend these dough recipes for children 18 months and up.



GARFIELD PARK
CONSERVATORY
ALLIANCE 

SUPPLIES

- Microwave-safe mixing bowl
- 1 cup of water
- 1 cup of flour
- ½ cup of salt
- 1 tablespoon of cooking oil
- 1 to 2 tablespoons of cream of tartar (you can replace this with another strong acid, like lemon juice)
- Coloring options: cocoa powder (about ¼ cup), food coloring, or vegetable juice (optional)
- Scent and texture options: dried herbs, dried coffee grounds, or essential oils (optional)

ACCESSIBILITY NOTES

While this dough is made with all food-safe ingredients, keep an eye on younger children to make sure they don't eat it.

INSTRUCTIONS

Start by mixing all the dry ingredients together gently. Then add water and whisk until it has the consistency of thick pancake batter. Microwave for thirty second intervals. We use a spatula to scrape down the sides and bottom to prevent parts of the dough from overcooking. On average, our microwave takes about 2 total minutes to cook our dough and then we let it rest for about 5 minutes before kneading it. Making play dough is a lot like cooking steak—it needs some rest time to finish cooking, and if you microwave it until it looks done it is often overcooked. You can always add it back in for some more time if after resting it still seems too goopy.

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE!

Post about your adventures and tag us at @gpconservatory or use the hashtag "#GPCatHome"!

This work is supported in part by a grant from PNC for education with young children.



GPCA DIY GLUTEN-FREE PLAYDOUGH

If regular play dough was expensive, dough that accommodates food sensitivities is even more expensive! You can experiment with adding natural plant dyes and essential oils to create a more sensory experience. We recommend storing this one in the fridge because it is an uncooked recipe and has a shorter shelf-life. We recommend these dough recipes for children 18 months and up.



GARFIELD PARK
CONSERVATORY
ALLIANCE 

SUPPLIES

- 1 cup of gluten-free flour (we use the Namaste brand)
- ½ cup of salt
- ½ cup of water plus extra
- 1 tablespoon of cooking oil
- 2 tablespoons of cream of tartar (you can replace this with another strong acid, like lemon juice)
- Coloring options: cocoa powder (about ¼ cup), food coloring, or vegetable juice (optional)
- Scent and texture options: dried herbs, dried coffee grounds, or essential oils (optional)

ACCESSIBILITY NOTES

While this dough is made with all food-safe ingredients, keep an eye on younger children to make sure they don't eat it.

INSTRUCTIONS

Start by mixing all the dry ingredients together gently. If using coloring, texture, or scent add these now. Then add water and whisk until it begins to form a solid lump. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface (using your gluten-free flour!) and knead, adding in more flour or water as needed. Once it's reached your desired consistency, it's ready to go! Store in a plastic bag or sealed container in the fridge to extend shelf-life.

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