

Resources to Support Outdoor Learning Experiences

This is a list of the many resources which can support learning outdoors. It is a list of *possible* suggestions that will enhance your outdoor area or garden and is by no means a complete list. These lists included lots of open-ended resources which can be used for a variety of experiences and so some resources are repeated in several places. Lots of the suggested items are free or can be sourced cheaply.

‘Because of the freedom the outdoor offers to move on a large scale, to be active, noisy and messy and to use all their senses with their whole body, young children engage in a way they most need to explore, make sense of life and express their feelings and ideas. Many young children relate much more strongly to learning offered outdoors rather than indoors.’ Jan White 2008

Definitions-

Continuous Provision – ‘Carefully chosen and organised quality resources placed in areas which are always available for children to access independently across every area of learning.’

Enhanced Provision – ‘Resources that are placed within the indoor and outdoor learning environment which match the theme or the interests of children.’

Play Experience	Possible Resources	
Plants and Growing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tubs, compost bags or a planned space within the area for growing • Wood for making home-made plant markers at the woodwork bench • Tools -Long-handled spade, fork, rake, broom • Range of child and adult-sized hand tools – trowel, rake, soil sieve, fork, dibber • Gardening clothing such as dungarees, child-sized gloves • Water supply – water butt, tap, watering can, water sprayers • Gardening bags, baskets, tool boxes, buckets and wheelbarrows • A selection of trays and baskets for carrying and transporting seeds, cut flowers, crops etc. • Range of pots including biodegradable and seed trays • Peat-free compost and loam top soil • Shells, bark, twigs, pebbles, slate etc. to decorate the beds • Canes with ends protected, twine • Lollipop sticks or plant markers, plans for planting, waterproof pens • Gardening books and magazines • A selection of baskets for carrying and transporting seeds, cut flowers, crops etc. • Brooms, dustpan and brushes for sweeping any excess soil • Sink or washing up bowl for cleaning hands • Sponges and clothes for cleaning the tools • Designated digging area with logs and stepping stones 	
Discovery and Investigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bird boxes, bird table, insect boxes and aquariums • Collecting pots, pooters or bug jars • Good-quality magnifiers to look closely at plants, materials and mini-beasts • Collections of natural materials; pine cones, acorns, corks, seed heads, gourds, dried flowers, fresh leaves, skeleton leaves, fresh flowers, vegetables, bean pods etc • Clip boards, paper, whiteboards • Binoculars for watching birds and any other animals • Laminated books and pictures of birds, insects etc... • Camera • Baskets, buckets, trugs and carrying containers 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring mixing.... adding water to materials; soil, sand, gravel, cornflour (see water resources) • Large trays or sheets of wood on the ground • Spoons, droppers, whisks, sticks, mini pots etc... 	
Water Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rain clothes; jackets, trousers, all-in-one suits, rain ponchos and wellies for adults and children • Outdoor tap and water butt • Hose, reel - Hose attachments, shower hose and head • 1, 2 and 5 metre lengths of transparent piping – different diameters • A variety of watering cans • Guttering and down-pipes • Plastic sheeting or pond liner • Waterproof tape (duct tape) • Trellis, milk and bread crates, string, rope • Shower curtain or big plastic sheet, umbrellas • Long-handled brooms for adults and children • Buckets and wide range of other containers, some with handles • Wheelbarrow, water trays and large open containers • Spray bottles and water bottles with a variety of nozzles • Transparent bottles in a variety of shapes and sizes • Funnels, water wheels, pumps and siphons • Rocket balloons • Plastic and foil trays • Brushes, sponges and cloths • A wide range of brushes, from fine to wallpaper, trays and rollers • Sturdy steps or safe two-step ladder • Wheelbarrow • Washing up bowls • Washing line and a variety of pegs • Items to wash such as dolls/baby clothes, washing line and a variety of pegs • Drying Towels • Tuff Spot (Builder's tray) • Paddling pool • Bubbles, bubble wands, food colourings, soap flakes, washing up liquid, whisks • Pebbles, stones, shells, feathers, leaves, flowers, fruit & vegetables • Ping pong balls and little boats • Small world animals and people • Cups and teapot for domestic play 	
Cake, Pie, Perfume and Other Recipe-Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to sand, water, compost, pebbles and other mixing materials • Petals, flower heads, herbs, fragrant plants and leaves • A range of baking tins, trays, jelly and cake moulds and pans • Small plastic bottles with lids • Large and small bowls, colanders, jugs, large and small bowls • Funnels, measuring jugs, basters and pipettes • Mixing utensils including a range of ladles, spoons, whisks, graters , and masher • Measuring spoons, assorted sized pastry cutters, muffin and cake tins • Laminated recipes, pictures of food and meals, white boards • Pastry brush, lollipop sticks, twigs, ribbons, tape, • Candles, numbers • Seed trays, baking trays and different sized plant pots • Rolling pin and board, pestle and mortar • Wire cooling rack, chopping board • Essences to add to sand and other materials • Crockery, cutlery, table cloth, salt, pepper, napkins, trays • Beads, jewels, shells, leaves, feathers and stamps for decorating • Magnifying glasses 	

Sand Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to water • Buckets, spades, plastic cups, moulds • Plastic bottles and containers, tubing and piping • Foil, plastic or tin lids and trays • Sand wheels, pulleys, cranes • ‘Spilling’ funnel; that mixes sand and water building walls and mark-making • Small world figures, animals • Cars and trucks, dumpers and tippers • Small bags and sacks • Notebook, pen and other mark-making tools • Camera • Shells, pebbles, stones, gems, gravel, twigs, lollipop sticks, bark • Spoons, scoops, trowels, rakes, sieves, colanders, funnels, brushes • Buckets with valves to transport water easily • Clip boards, pens, white boards, labels and signs • ‘Bones’ made from plastic, polystyrene, baked dough • ‘Fossils’ made by pressing things in plasticene/clay • Materials to add to sand such as perfumed oils, paint, glue, food colouring, glitter, sawdust and salt • Builder’s tray (tuff spot) for ‘cement’ mixing – add buckets, shovels, goggles, gloves, hard hats and overalls 	
Mark-making and writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A large chalk board to use with chalk or attach frieze paper to • Clipboards, Whiteboards • A variety of paper including rolls of wallpaper lining roll • White and clear shower curtains, big plastic sheeting and other sheets • Ribbons, ribbon sticks, scarves and pom-poms • Pegs, rope, duct tape, blue tac, scissors and string • Chunky pencils, chalks, twigs and feathers • Large pieces of cardboard to use as canvases • Spray bottles, squirting bottles, bottles with a variety of nozzles • A wide range of decorator’s brushes and rollers • Sponges and other kitchen utensils as paint applicators • Recycled materials, such as cardboard boxes and tubes • Designated area for collage or white plastic sheet • Natural materials in baskets for large collage – pine cones, twigs, stones, leaves... • Synthetic items for collage – tyres, rope, bricks... • Camera • View finders/ frames • Large chalk and white boards • Mesh, trellis, willow panels and netting for weaving • Very large trays such as oven trays • Bamboo and willow canes – tape ends for safety purposes • Natural items, ribbons, plastic strips and scarves for weaving • A range of 1 metre lengths of fabrics for weaving • Tinsel, ropes and garlands • For threading and hanging – pine cones, CDs, beads, shells and scarves • Plastic door screens, cardboard boxes and large roll tubes • String, rope and pegs • Wood – drift wood, logs, tree trunk slices, branches, twigs • Simple woodwork tools and goggles • Pads, notebooks, clip-boards, labels, badges etc for outdoor role-play areas (car wash, police station, window cleaner, park café, garage, train station etc) • Treasure maps, routes and journeys to follow and create • Blank road signs, breakdown triangles, report pads for breakdown assistance 	
Dance Movement and Physical play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pom-poms, hoops • Ribbons, ribbon sticks, scarves and lengths of fabric • Bubbles, balloons and large feathers 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dancing pole such as a home-made 'Maypole' • Ankle and wrist bells • Rain sticks • Instruments such as triangles, hand drums, maracas and castanets • Range of music on CD , portable player • Raised/ stage area – large wooden pallets • Curtains, washing line and pegs • Boxes and trolleys for storage • Wooden pallets • Carpet tiles or mats • Ropes of different lengths • Small Parachute • Bubble mixture and bubble hoops • Large mark-making tools such as sticks, chunky chinks, squirting water bottles • Gardening tools such as spades, rakes and brushes • Wheelbarrows, a range of bikes, trolleys and other transporters • A range of pushchairs, prams and shopping trolleys • Gardening bags, assorted baskets, buckets, pulleys • Low safe steps, stepping stones, carpet tiles • Hammock • A-Frames, clothes airer • Assorted balls, beanbags, hoops, quoits and cones/markers • Crates such as bread and milk • Guttering, pipes and planks • Tree trunks, logs, branches and twigs • Tyres • Buckets, barrels, large boxes • Tents and tunnels 	
Dry collage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface- floor or table top- white or plain sheeting, wall paper, frieze paper, very large sheets of paper, shower curtain, blanket pegged or held down • Baskets of natural materials such as sand, gravel, pebbles, stones, pine cones, slices of tree branch, large seeds, vegetables, dried and fresh flowers, twigs, bamboo canes, drift wood, feathers, corks, shells, wood shavings and leaves • Collections of other materials- lolly sticks, string, rope, ribbon, buttons, pasta • Other large scale items may include; tyres, large construction resources, planks, wheels, slices of tree trunk, branches • Mark-making and creative materials to enhance the collage • Camera 	
Sound and music-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hooks, A-Frames and airers to hang instruments • Saucepans, tins, pots, buckets and lids • Big plastic and metal containers • Wooden and metal beaters, spoons, brushes and sticks • Lengths of plastic and copper piping – range of diameters • Pipes, funnels, cardboard tubes to use as megaphones • Old cutlery – large and small • Natural materials for shaking – pebbles, seeds, stones • Metal and wooden wind chimes • Bamboo sticks of various diameters and lengths 	

<p>Role Play</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Themed Boxes. For example, 'Fire Fighters', 'Picnic', 'Barbecue', 'Car Wash' and 'Explorer'. <p>For example, in the 'Car Wash' provision box, provision could include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rollers, brushes, clothes, rags, sponges • Buckets, pipes, hoses, sprinklers, sprays, water jets • Wellies, waterproof clothing, gloves, utility belt, woolly hats • Tickets, signs, labels, directions, posters • Office resources- waiting chair, telephone, cash desk, money, receipts, note pads <p><i>Children could combine other resources, such as those used for construction, creative and physical play, during role-play.</i></p>	
<p>Quiet Reflective space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A quiet, cosy and comfortable area which is least likely to be disturbed – the position needs to be flexible and season/weather appropriate • Enclosure - drapes, canopies, dens, tents, willow structures (could use an existing structure, e.g. play house or shed) • Flooring – rugs and blankets, duvet covers, cushions, plastic beanbags, carpet squares • Seating- logs, benches, soft seating, waterproof seating • Parasol, large umbrella • Hammock • Netting and voile to provide a ceiling/ help enclose • Camouflage-style parachute or fabric • Wind chimes, mobiles, water features • Sensory garden provision; herbs, fragrant plants, grasses, seed heads • Tactile objects that project curiosity and discovery 	
<p>Construction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guttering, tubes and pipes • Milk and bread crates • Buckets, pots and tubs • Tyres • Large wooden blocks, planks of wood • Cardboard boxes – assorted sizes and shapes • Bricks, sand, mud, trowel, spade • Bamboo canes, broom handles, doweling • Garden mesh, tarpaulin, camouflage net, parachute, strong tape, rope, string, pegs • Logs, trunk slices, branches and twigs • A-frames, clothes airers/clothes horses • Large pieces of fabric, blankets, plastic sheets, curtains and nets • Parachutes • Door mats, carpet tiles, beach mats, blankets and rugs • Markers and cones • Hose pipes, buckets, wheelbarrows, bikes and trolleys for transporting • Natural materials such as twigs, leaves, shells, stones, pebbles and sticks • Wooden bench and specially chosen tools, safety glasses • Hooks in walls and fences to provide attachment points • Clip boards/pad and pens for designs and plans • Camera • Road mats and floor maps • Small world figures and animals • Remote control toys and Beebots 	
<p>Den-Making</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A-frames, clothes airers/clothes horses • Large wooden blocks, planks of wood • Sticks, poles and canes • Cardboard boxes – assorted sizes and shapes • Guttering, tubes and pipes • Milk and bread crates 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parachutes • Logs, trunk slices, branches • Large pieces of fabric, blankets, plastic sheets, curtains nets, silver foil rescue blankets • Door mats, carpet tiles, beach mats, blankets and rugs • String, washing line, sturdy pegs and bulldog clips, strong tape • Hooks in walls and fences to provide attachment points • Clip boards/pad and pens for designs and plans • Camera 	
'Rainy Day' Box	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets of waterproof clothing and wellies for children and adults • Large and small umbrellas • Range of containers for collecting rainwater • Rain Gauge • Builder's tray – Tuff Spots • Plastic sheets and mark-making resources • Tools for exploring water – sponges, brooms, brushes, metal and wooden spoons • Tents, gazebo and tarpaulin • Waterproof camera • Books on rain and water • Waterproof pens, clip boards, laminated paper • Books about weather and rainy day stories 	
'Windy Day' Box	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Windmills and pin wheels • Kites, windsocks, bunting, flags, scarves and ribbon • 'Flying' seeds and seed heads such as sycamore seeds and bulrushes • Wind chimes and noisy mobiles • Old CDs, bells, bamboo, space pans and wooden spoons for hanging • Washing line and dolls' clothes • Pop-up tent or wind break for shelter • Tie strips of fabric or plastic to handles of bikes and trikes • Dressing-up clothes with wings and wide sleeves • Bubble mixture and blowing machines • Large feathers and objects to chase • Water sprays and squeeze bottles • Books about weather and windy day stories 	
'Sunny Day' Box	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paddling pool and water resources (see above) • Beach and seaside items (see sand resources)...wind break, deck chairs, cool box, • Suitcase of holiday clothing and items • Items to use for shadow play such as paddles, plastic shapes, and strips • Concave and convex mirrors, coloured acetate sheets • Unbreakable mirrors and other reflective surfaces; hang from trees and gutters; CDs, streamers of foil, prisms, pie tins • Droppers and water sprays • Washing line and dolls' clothes/items to wash and dry • Books about weather and sunny day/summer/holiday stories 	
'Snowy/Icy Day' Box	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plastic or rubber gloves to wear under mittens • Moulds, buckets, scoops, pots and bun tins • Spoons, blunt knives, spatulas, spades, shovels, rakes, sticks • Tuff spot/builder's tray or empty water tray • Decorative items such as pebbles, leaves, twigs and stones • Pop-up tent or a plastic sheet to make a shelter • Coloured water in spray bottles, crepe paper strips to colour snow • Binoculars and camera to follow animal tracks • Bird food or breadcrumbs • Boots and tyres to make prints and tracks • Trays and plastic sacks for sliding 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Magnifiers to look at frosty spider webs and icicles• Collecting pots, black paper• Salt and warm water to melt snow or icy• Books about weather, bird identification and snowy day stories	
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