

Make a mud kitchen

A mud kitchen offers boundless opportunities for open-ended play and children can use all kinds of materials to enhance their ideas.

A mud kitchen provides an area for children to freely explore and investigate mud, and use it in their imaginative play.

Resources

Mud kitchens do not have to include expensive resources. We recommend having the following basics:

- Pans and pots
- Utensils such as spoons, mashers, sieves, ladles, forks, spatulas
- Kettle
- Bowls, plates and cups
- Weighing scales
- Measuring jugs
- Muffin and cake tins
- Cake cases
- Mud (of course!)
- Water.



You can change these on a regular basis to make this a more engaging area. You can also enhance the area by adding the following:

- Flowers and buds
- Pebbles, stones, gravel, sand
- Pine cones, acorns, conkers
- Seed pods and seeds
- Herbs and spices
- Powder paint
- Leaves
- Twigs, sticks and bark chippings
- Mortar and pestle.

Activity outline

- You can create a simple mud kitchen using some old crates or pallets, or utilise an old role play area you no longer need
- Mud kitchens should not look clean and tidy - they should look well used and loved
- Children should be able to freely access these and use their imagination, practice their skills in other areas of learning, e.g. maths, literacy and physical development
- One way of encouraging mark-making and literacy in the mud area is to provide menu boards with chalks so the children can write the “specials” up for the day
- Why not add in a recipe book for the children to utilise and add to? Take photos of the children’s creations then talk about what they used and the method they adopted to make it. This is their recipe. Other children can then follow their ideas and the book will keep growing. Obviously, we suggest laminating this to keep it wipe-clean
- A 'mud kitchen in a box' is a good alternative for pack away settings or those with limited outdoor area space. Why not have resources in a box and take them to the local woods or park to play?