

9 tips for outdoor art inspiration

"Children use a variety of ways to express and communicate through music, movement and a wide range of materials." - Birth to 5 Matters: Expressive Arts & Design (Early Years Coalition 2021)

Art is the expression of creative skill and imagination and although typically in a visual form, such as painting, there are many different forms of art that provide opportunities for children to express themselves.

Here are some top tips for supporting children to express themselves through the arts, outdoors.

Painting and sculptures

- Offer a range of different media for children to use. For example, mud, sand, water, paint/s, clay, play dough, wood, natural materials, loose parts and connecting materials such as string
- **Provide a range of backgrounds and bases** to create on, so children can work independently or with others. For example, open floor space, rolls of lining paper, and sheets of plain fabric, round cut off logs, mirrored tiles, Perspex, slate or tiles
- **Provide a range of tools and resources** for children to pour, mix and apply. For example, rollers and brushes, natural paintbrushes made from twigs and shrubs, spray bottles, jugs, and buckets.



Music

- Offer a range of objects made from different materials, such as pot and pans, baking trays, empty plastic bottles alongside utensils or sticks, which can be used to create sound and music
- Support children to create their own musical instruments using recycled materials. For example, make wind chimes from old keys or bottle tops, or add dried peas or rice inside an empty plastic bottle to make shakers
- Sing with the children and encourage them to sing and make up songs.

Dance, role play and performance

- Provide space for children to move, dance and perform. This could simply be an open space
- Create a dedicated space to inspire children to perform. Mirrored tiles on walls, a stage made from wooden pallets, images of people singing, dancing and acting
- Provide open-ended resources for children to use and combine in their performances. For example, fabrics, hats and props.