

Disclaimer: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision. Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.

Busy boards

Using a variety of second hand objects, a few screws and some glue, you can create an interactive activity which encourages children to use their hand-eye coordination.

Learning aims

- Visual perception
- Fine motor skills
- Hand-eye coordination.

Resources

- A wooden board, e.g. chopping board, painted or covered in self-adhesive vinyl
- A variety of interactive second-hand objects e.g. bicycle bell, sliding door lock, door handle, zip, tap handle, bolt, curtain rings, string, belt buckle, Velcro strips, etc
- Screws, glue.



Activity outline

1. Make your busy board using the range of resources available, creating opportunities for the children to:
 - a. Use both hands symmetrically (such as attaching two tap handles on each side of the board so the child can turn both at the same time)
 - b. Use both hands independently (such as fastening a belt buckle)
 - c. Cross the midline (curtain rings on a long string so the rings can be moved from one side to the other or a long zip placed horizontally so it is zipped from one side to the other).
2. Introduce the busy board to individual or small groups of children. Place the board so it is central to their body position to enable them to coordinate their visual and physical skills, as well as encouraging crossing the midline
3. Encourage them to explore the activities and demonstrate more complex tasks to them, such as coordinating two items simultaneously
4. Observe how the children use the resources and identify if there are any areas where the children are less confident, such as using their hands independently.

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Extension ideas

- You could create themed busy boards designed to meet their specific needs, such as for supporting dressing skills, e.g. fastening zips, poppers, buttons, Velcro, etc.
- See our hand eye coordination [top tips](#) for more ideas.

NDNA products to support you with this activity

- Online course: [Visual Perceptual skills](#)
- Blog post: [Woodwork in Early Years](#).