

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.

Activity: Planting bulbs

Planting bulbs with children teaches them what plants need to grow while fostering a connection with nature. This hands-on activity supports emotional well-being and encourages physical health as children explore outside.

Planting bulbs now ensures a springtime filled with colour and wonder, whether in pots or your garden area.

Learning aims

- Introduce children to the basic needs of plants (soil, water, sunlight) and develop an understanding that bulbs grow into flowers over time
- Strengthen fine motor skills through scooping soil and gross motor skills through digging, crouching, and reaching
- To connect with nature and understand the importance of taking care of plants and the environment
- Introduce and develop new vocabulary.



Resources

- Spring bulbs (Allium, Tulip, Crocus)
- Trowels or spoons
- Watering cans
- Compost
- Planting area or pots.

Activity outline

1. Introduce the children to the bulbs, explaining that bulbs are like 'sleeping plants' which wake up in the spring when it's warmer. Invite the children to explore the bulbs, encouraging them to notice their size, colour, etc. and share images to show how they will grow into beautiful flowers. Encourage children to share any knowledge they may have and talk about the growing process
2. If planting outdoors, take the children to the designated area; if you are planting in pots have a variety of pots available

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3. Demonstrate how to dig a small hole in the soil, deep enough for the bulb to fit comfortably (about two to three times the bulb's height). Show the children how the bulb is placed in the hole with the pointed end facing up. Encourage each child to dig a hole, check the bulb has been placed in correctly by the adult and then cover it with soil
4. Provide a watering can so each child can lightly water their planted bulbs and explain that bulbs need water to help them grow
5. To foster a sense of responsibility and ownership of their plants, provide a variety of resources for children to make labels with their names or drawings so they can identify their bulbs as they start to grow
6. Explain that it will take time and patience for the bulb to grow. Plan regular check-ins to water the bulbs and observe any changes. This can include observing the soil, talking about weather changes, and eventually celebrating the first signs of growth.

Extension ideas:

- **Learn about seasons:** Share a book about the changing seasons to help children understand why the bulbs have been planted now and why they won't grow immediately. After reading, head outside to look for signs of the current season. Encourage the children to spot things like bare trees and feel the colder temperature.

Special considerations

- Adults only to handle the bulbs with gloves due to potential dermatological irritants.

NDNA products to support you with this activity:

- [Physical Activity in the Early Years](#) - online course.