

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.

Top tips: Natural resources

Natural materials help inspire children's creativity and imagination. Natural objects found in the environment can have a variety of uses to enhance children's play.

For example, a cardboard tube could be a telescope, a wand, a tunnel or even the stem of a flower. The possibilities for natural resources are endless.

Here are some top tips to help embed them into your setting, remember, these don't all have to be done at once; small changes can make a big difference:

1. **Natural resources:** Use resources like leaves, pebbles, sand, water, pinecones, sticks and shells for children to play and explore
2. **Furniture:** Use wooden furniture where possible and think about rattan/wicker baskets for toy storage
3. **Plants:** Adding child safe plants such as spider plants and ferns can have calming effects on the environment
4. **Wooden blocks and person figures have endless uses:** houses, boats, castles, farms, zoos. The people could be anyone - kings, princesses, goblins, nurses, astronaut. The children can take this learning anywhere - the only limit is their imagination
5. **Interior decoration:** Murals using images of forests, mountains, the ocean or the desert can help to immerse children in natural themes. You could hang natural mobiles made of leaves, feathers or driftwood in children's play areas too
6. **Consider having some textured mats:** such as grass, pebbles, bark for children to sit on to mimic outdoor textures.



And more resources at www.ndna.org.uk/hub/myndna