

# Molding Shapes

*This is my sun!*



Encourage your child to mold and explore dough while you describe the shapes she makes.

Your child will begin to connect the shapes she feels with her hands with the shape words she hears you say.



## Why this is important

Molding dough gives your child the experience of learning how three-dimensional shapes are formed. The experiences children gain directly through using their hands and fingers leave a special and lasting understanding of the physical world. Easy art exploration can give your child confidence for later creative expressions.

## What you do

- Give your child opportunities to press and mold soft materials, such as playdough. Help your child dampen a clay or dirt area outside in order to make mud. Explain in advance that this is a messy activity! Let her explore freely without direction.
- Describe what she is doing as she plays. *You've made something flat and round. What a long coil! You pushed your thumb all the way through the middle.*
- Try making playdough using the following recipe:

2 cups flour	1 cup water
1 cup salt	2 tablespoons cooking oil
2 tablespoons cream of tartar	1 tablespoon food coloring

Mix all ingredients together in a saucepan. Cook over low–medium heat, stirring constantly until it forms a ball. Put the ball on a board and knead for 2–3 minutes. Store the dough in an airtight container between play sessions.

## Another idea

Renew your child's interest in the game and extend your child's creativity by offering tools to press and shape the dough: popsicle sticks, sea shells, rocks, or pipe cleaners. **Make sure that these items do not go into your child's mouth. Put away things small enough to swallow when you cannot supervise their use, especially if you use this game with children under age 3.**

### Let's read together!

*Sun Bread*  
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