



EQUIPPING AN OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT

Babies

The most important asset (or 'equipment') for young babies in the outdoors is an adult to support the child as they experience the many sights, sounds, smells around them, moving them to interesting places, allaying the fears of new things and showing delight in the environment around them

They also need rugs set with manipulative toys, under trees or canopies, near play and interesting sounds and activity.

Toddlers

Add

Active Play

- ◆ Trolleys, wheel toys, pull-alongs (toys, trolleys or boxes)
- ◆ Tunnels, boxes, low ramp for climbing up, steps, swings (enclosed tyre type) and a variety of soft balls.

Sensorimotor Play

- ◆ Buckets and spades and filling and emptying equipment in sand.
- ◆ Plastic bottles and jugs and lots of basins for water play.

Two year Olds

Add

Active Play

- ◆ Walking planks, stepping stones, small slide with platform top. Bubbles to chase, Large balls and wheel toys, push along trucks and cars.

Sensorimotor Play

- ◆ Large pots and spoons in sand
- ◆ Water paint pots.

Three year olds

Add

For active Play

- ◆ Bats, ball bean bags, trampoline, slide
- ◆ Large blocks to build with.

Sensorimotor Play

- ◆ Large spades and rakes, sieves and funnels.
- ◆ 'Cooking' equipment.
- ◆ Jungle animals, farm animals, dinosaurs in sand, mud and pebbles.
- ◆ Watering cans, brooms, rakes.

Pretend Play.

- ◆ Steering wheels ladders, hoses, telephones, tool bag with plastic or wooden tools, ticket bag and tickets,
- ◆ Hats, bags, baskets, materials for dress ups, horses reins, hobby horses.
- ◆ Dolls beds, bathing materials – basins, soap & towels
- ◆ Clothes lines, pegs and pieces of material to wash.
- ◆ Small boats, fishing line and fish

Four Year Olds Add

Active Play

Horizontal bars, trapeze swing, rope ladders, trees, scramble net.

Sensorimotor

- ◆ Sand moulds, small cooking equipment and tea sets in sand. Trucks, smoothers and rakes, as well as small blocks, gum nuts, pine cones, corks, tile offcuts, shells etc. to use in sand.
- ◆ Alternative messy play materials such as 'brickies' sand, filter sand, gravel, garden mulch, pebbles, sawdust, wood shavings.
- ◆ Water play equipment -funnels, hoses and joiners, measuring beakers, water wheels, pumps etc. plus supplementary tables and buckets.
- ◆ Woodwork tools and soft wood offcuts.

Pretend Play

- ◆ Cubby building materials – large blocks, sheets, frames, shrubs, large cartons etc. Plus carpet squares and rugs.
- ◆ Props for hospital, police, firefighter, office play. This may include oil can, torch, camera, binoculars, maps, engine parts, twine, rope, medical kit, seat belt, keys, mobile phones, computers, note books etc..
- ◆ Imaginative play props that may include sets of animals – (farm, jungle, Australian, sea creatures, dinosaurs), small dolls, figurines, small teddies as well as wood offcuts, small logs, foliage, rocks etc.
- ◆ Writing implements, clipboards, reference books and chalk.

Five Year olds Add

Active Play

- ◆ Real sports equipment plus perceptual motor equipment – balance beams, rockers, spinners etc.
- ◆ Real gardening tools and construction materials – palings, bricks, lattice etc.

Pretend Play

- ◆ Camping equipment – tents and pegs, ropes, real torches, compasses, pulleys, backpacks and suitcases.
- ◆ Circus props – striped material, flags, gym mats, costumes and waste materials and equipment to build sets for concerts.
- ◆ Science equipment – specimen containers, magnifying glasses, tape measure and metre rule, ice cube trays for sorting, shears or outdoor scissors for cutting flowers or foliage for play.

This list of suggestions is by no means exhaustive and is not meant to be used as an absolute guide. Rather, the equipment and materials listed tend to be used for optimum play value at the stages indicated. However, providing safety guidelines are in place, children can be offered a range of these materials at any stage. The adult's role is to observe the play of the children and make available props that they think will support and extend play.