

Step 1 - Assess Your Environment

Will your space for loose parts play be in an open field? At an existing playground? Inside a classroom? On a veranda? The size and type of space available will help you decide what materials to gather and how to store and maintain them.

We encourage everyone to begin with a deep consideration of where they are starting from. Spend a little quiet time in the site where you work on your own. Feel its atmosphere, and think about what it offers for play currently. Remember what you have seen children do there. Think about what this place might become, then take a good look at what it is right now.



Check the space for anything unexpected. Is there broken glass, or equipment that has become old and might break? Decide, before children arrive, how big a space they can use and make sure it has all unexpected hazards removed. When children are playing, they may become very absorbed in their play and not notice something like broken glass. Sweep it away. For more about general playground safety please see our safety manual at <http://www.playgroundideas.org/build-a-playground/design-manuals>.