

Homemade Play Dough

Store bought play dough is fun to play with but you can make your own at home for less and part of the fun is making it with the kids. Here is a easy to follow recipe that can be made on the stove or in the microwave:

- * 1 cup of flour
- * 1 cup of water
- * 2 tablespoons of cream of tartar
- * ½ cup of salt
- * 1 tablespoon of oil
- * Food coloring (optional)

Combine all the ingredients in a pot or microwave safe dish and mix until it is lump-free. Then on the stove stir over low heat until the mixture starts to thicken being careful that it doesn't burn or stick to the bottom. Stop when it is the consistency you want for the play dough. When making the play dough in the microwave cook it in small increments on a lower power setting. Take it out and stir at least every 45 seconds. Again, you are done when the play dough has reached the desired consistency.

Let the children play and build whatever they want. If they don't already have toys designated for play dough let them use some kitchen utensils such as cookie cutters and a rolling pin. It is food safe and easy to clean-up afterwards.

If something is sculpted or made that the child is particularly proud of, set it in the sun for a day or two and let it dry out. It should harden nicely and they will be able to keep it for some time.

Charge the children to use the dough to find different textures around the house or outside. Gently press the play dough into the textured surface and see if the children

can guess what it came from (like the bottom of a shoe or a cheese grater).