

# Early Childhood - Infant Cognitive Learning activities

Can my baby learn? Of course

What can I do to help my baby make connections that they will recall to build on, building a strong foundation? Allow them time to explore, and support their growth by providing them lots of rich vocabulary words describing what they are doing.



## Sensory Ideas for Play

- Fill bags with small items
- Collect textured items
- Play in shredded paper
- Use recycled items
- Mix-in objects (spoons, bowls, lids, sifters, etc.)
- Play with water and mud
- Foods like dried beans, rice, pasta, salt, oatmeal, popcorn are all fun to explore.



## #1 Sensory Play

Below are several examples of how this can look. The basic is - give baby a bottle or bag (they can't get into) and allow them to play with it. The brain is pattern seeking - They will automatically begin to look for patterns and solutions in the mix, beginning to "explore" and "discover"



### Materials:

Bottle - secure the top by hot gluing

VOSS water bottles work great

Baby oil filled  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the bottle

Water

Food coloring/ dye/ paint

Depending on how bright you want it to be

Any items you want to begin to explore. Below are examples for magnetic bottles, calm down glitter bottles, and more.



### Rain Stick Sensory bottles:

Collect materials from nature

(dry them before putting them inside the bottle so they don't rot)

Do not add water

Add combinations of sticks, dirt, rocks and other items that when shaken will sound different

Hot glue the top of the bottle

Shake away!

### Magnetic Discovery:

If you add water, items will rust so here is the solution:

Materials:

Bottle (this one is a VOSS plastic water bottle recycled)

Mineral oil or baby oil (be sure bottle is completely dry when you begin) 2/3 of the bottle filled

Magnets

Nuts and washers

Super glue or hot glue the lid

Use a magnetic wand or horseshow magnet that is NOT a choking hazard for baby to make items stick and move.

More Sensory Ingredients:

Hair Gel

Glitter

Spangles

The hair gel mixed with  $\frac{1}{2}$  water will make items move much slower, and add more consistency.







More examples of how your bottles could look

You can create themes for animals or shapes or colors

Just make sure to crazy glue the tops or hot glue them before giving to baby.

**Sensory Bags work much in the same way.** All you need to get started is a gallon size zip lock baggie, something to put inside and masking tape. These may be secured to the floor, or the wall, or even a high chair table top for lots of up close attention!

Sensory bags are a great way to let babies explore and safely touch things that they normally couldn't because of choking hazards or the mess factor. I usually toss things like cotton balls, crayons and other textured items into a plastic bag, zip and tape the top and then tape it to a wall. This leads to hours of entertainment!





In this picture Mimi Poppinz Aka Super Nanny is putting a paper and a few props of paint inside of the gallon zip lock bag. Baby Riker will much the colors until they all mix, no mess! And then it dries there will be some one of a kind art work!

**You can also add:**

Shaving Cream in the bag.

In one corner have a few drops of red paint.

In the other corner a few drops of yellow paint.

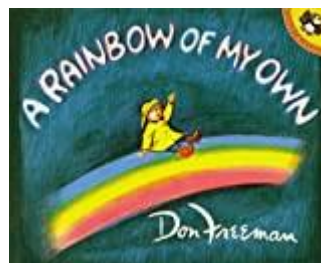
Watch as they mix into orange.

The more baby squishes the more colors mix.

Next time: Change colors.

Red/ Blue

Blue/ yellow



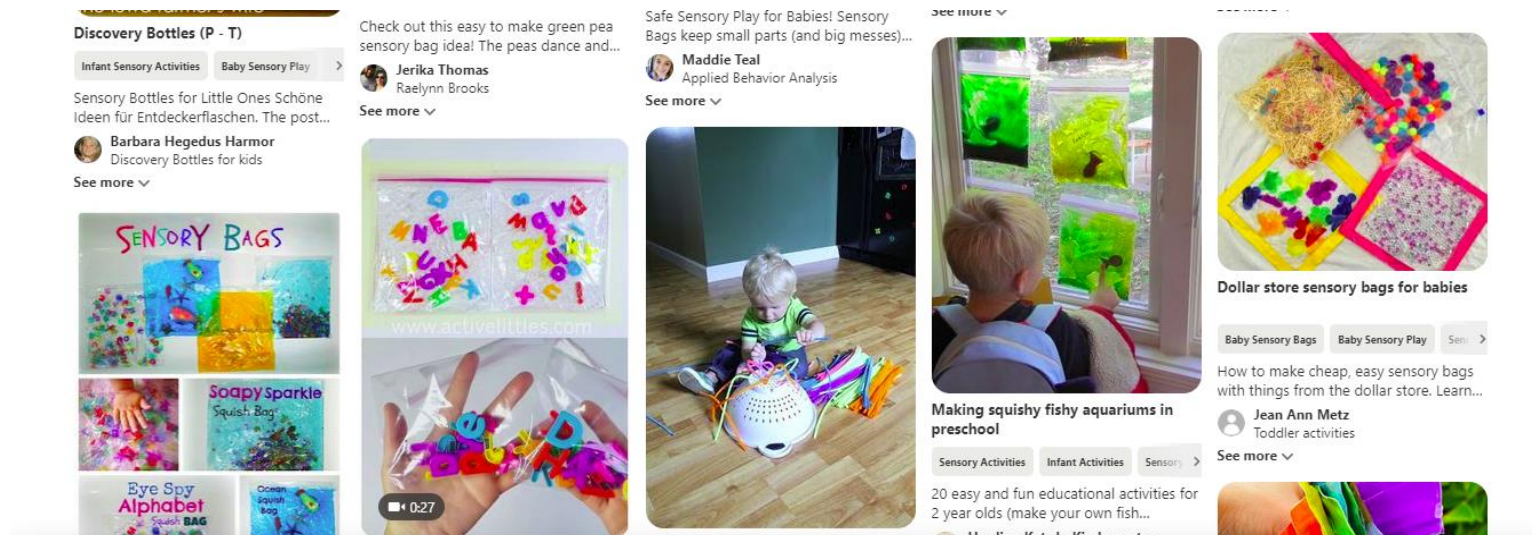
## The How To

To make these really cool sensory bags, all you need is some hair gel, baggies, and food color. I purchased hair gel from the Dollar Store and used food color that comes in tubes to make the bright colors... if you make one for every color you can also talk about the rainbow and use for color recognition!





Fill each Ziploc baggie with about 1/4 to 1/2 cup of hair gel and added some food color to get the bright colors. The yellow hair gel worked as well as the clear gel and it smelled great! Use tape to secure the bag and allow your baby to squish away - mess free!



**Above:** Use a colander on the floor to poke pipe cleaners through. Babies love the sensory and wonder of making the pieces fit!



## Rainbow Spaghetti!

1. Simply cook the **spaghetti** according to the packet instructions & place into a bowl.
2. Add a few tablespoons of the oil (enough to coat)
3. Add a few drops of **food colouring** and mix well.
4. Let the **spaghetti** dry (an hour or so)
5. Place into a large container and let the fun begin! If you liked this activity, you may also like our:

You may also use this in a ziplock bag if the mess scares you :-)

Another favorite:



Let baby tear off the masking tape

Just make sure they don't eat it!

Ball rescue!

All you need is a muffin tin

Balls

Masking tape

And baby!



269 likes

**babyplayhacks** 🍰 Ball Rescue 🍰 This is another great, easy to prep activity for babies working on their pincer grasp and up! 🙌 I am on a bit of a tape kick because Norah has been having so much fun with sticky tape lately! This can be set up with most small, safe toys, I used ball pit balls. Click the link in bio for a very similar product on Amazon (mine are from Target) 🛒 Just tape toys down in a muffin tin using painters tape, start with a few toys or fill the whole tin, and let baby go at it! This activity will help build coordination and problem solving skills! Let baby discover herself or help her figure out how to peel the tape back, and describe the toys as she pulls them up. Supervise as always. I saw a similar idea on @craftyliving!





MimiPoppinz:

Here is Riker again!

Today he is exploring a rice bin

Materials:

Dry rice

Measuring cups


Items to find mixed in that are not choking hazards

## Spaghetti play

Boil a package of noodles, cool and let baby play with them. While you're supervising, go ahead and join in on the fun, too—who doesn't love to play with noodles?

## Kitchen rock band

Let baby safely explore your kitchen by setting some different utensils and bowls on the floor to explore. My little guy loves measuring spoons, spatulas and plastic bowls.







## Plastic egg play

Put those leftover plastic Easter eggs to use by taking them apart and stacking them—and then encouraging baby to try, too.



## Stack cups

Make cup towers with plastic cups and watch your little one knock them down and rebuild them! (Or just knock them down...)



## Sort toys in muffin tins

Place an assortment of different balls into muffin tins and let baby play with them. Colored cotton balls are especially fun for older tots interested in sorting by colors.





## Vegetable peel play

While making dinner, let baby play with those leftover potato, zucchini and carrot peels. They will love the different textures and fragrances.



## Tub drums

Flip over a few tubs or buckets and you've got some makeshift hand drums!



## Hanging loofas

Grab a few loofas from the store (they are dirt cheap) and string them on some yarn. Then hang them off of a table or the handles of your refrigerator to let your little one bat at.



## Sensory bags

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## Cardboard tunnel

Save those Amazon boxes and craft a tunnel for baby to crawl through.



## Wipe dispenser sensory box

Save your empty wipe dispensers to fill with fabric scraps. Your little one will love pulling the scraps out and putting them back in. It's like a mini laundry basket for them! (See, you really can [get little ones started on "chores."](#))



## Whipped cream painting

Spray a little whipped cream on a highchair tray or table and let your little one paint pictures in it.



## DIY ball pit

Pull out that plastic pool and fill it with inexpensive plastic balls—or use your pack 'n' play! Either one will do the trick and keep baby entertained for ~~hours.~~



## ★ Plastic egg play

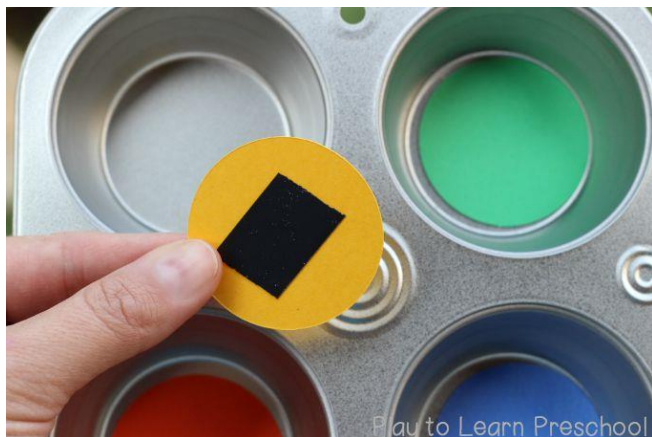
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These are chick peas that have been food colored to be sorted. Great for little fingers. Safe to eat!

## Most of all:

Have Fun! Make Connections! And DESCRIBE What baby is doing. This is called "mapping" and it creates connections and increases understanding.

A few motor activities you can also do around the house!



Mimi Poppinz makes an obstacle course out of old boxes!

Let not forget how much fun it is to play inside of a nice sized box!

Save those amazon boxes and pampers boxes!

Fun for building and making a play space.

Once they are no longer needed, discard!



Mimi Poppinz sets up Riker in his safe area...

Just surround with pillows and make a play place!

## Baby Work out?

Let them push items while learning to walk... Increase muscle strength and build confidence.



Haha! Baby work out [See More](#)

Have a Great Day, until Next time....More to come! Thank you!