



Loose Parts

In play, loose parts are materials that can be moved, carried, combined, redesigned, lined up, and taken apart and put back together in multiple ways. They are materials with no specific set of directions that can be used alone or combined with other materials.

Loose parts can be natural or synthetic. We can provide an array of loose parts for use in play such as stones, stumps, sand, gravel, fabric, twigs, wood, pallets, balls, buckets, baskets, crates, boxes, logs, stones, flowers, rope, tyres, balls, shells, corks etc.



Having "loose parts" available in a play space allows children to use these materials as they choose. Often you will find that children would rather play with materials that they can use and adapt as they please, rather than expensive pieces of play equipment.



Encouraging children to use resources as they choose can provide a wider range of opportunities than one that is purely adult led. Children playing with loose parts are using more creativity and imagination and developing more skill and competence than they would playing with most modern plastic toys.



'Loose parts' theory is about remembering that the best play comes from things that allow children to play in many different ways and on many different levels. Environments that include 'loose parts' are infinitely more stimulating and engaging than static ones. The play environment needs to promote and support imaginative play through the provision of 'loose parts' in a way that doesn't direct play and play opportunities but allows children to develop their own ideas and explore their world.

