

Sensory Bins:

- Develops fine motor skills
- Connects sensory information and neuropathways in the brain
- Exercises problem solving and cognitive development
- Calming

How to Make a Sensory Bin

1. Pick a large, shallow container for your sensory bin. Large Tupperware, buckets, kiddie pools, cookie trays and baking pans are great containers for your bin.
2. Pick a place to set up your sensory bin. If your bin is going to be messy, consider setting up outside or putting down a cover (garbage bag, tarp, etc.) in order to make clean up easy! Make sure the kids will be able to play without adult assistance. Also, have wipes/towels ready to go for messy little hands.
3. Choose your medium – you likely have lots of ingredients in your cupboard. Make sure you are aware of the age and stage of your child. If you have younger kids, avoid using small pieces that can be swallowed.
 - a. Beans
 - b. Rice
 - c. Popcorn kernels
 - d. Cotton Balls
 - e. Easter Grass
 - f. Loose ribbons
 - g. Sand
 - h. Water – add dish soap to make bubbles and get a head start on washing hands ☺
 - i. Water beads (can be purchased at the dollar store)
 - j. Aquarium Rocks
 - k. Bird Seed
 - l. Pasta
 - m. Pom Poms
 - n. Buttons
 - o. Homemade Snow (Shaving Cream and Baking Soda)
 - p. Fabric Scraps
 - q. Ice
 - r. Oatmeal (Cooked or Dry)
 - s. Pudding
 - t. Cornstarch and Water
 - u. Play Doh
 - v. Freeze objects in ice and have kids work to unfreeze them (dinosaur bones are really fun)

*Think about engaging other senses in your bin:

1. Sight – Colour your pasta/rice, use different coloured objects
2. Sound – Use items that make noise (think tin or hard plastic)
3. Smell – Add scents to the bins like essential oils, smelly soap, etc.

4. Add play items that kids can use to manipulate the medium.
 - a. Spoons, Forks
 - b. Tongs
 - c. Egg Cups
 - d. Small Tupperware
 - e. Shovels and Pails
 - f. Action figures
 - g. Measuring Cups or Spoons
 - h. Play food/Dishes

5. Ways to Play - Let the kids have fun and explore play on their own terms. Supervision is important but letting the kids explore the bins will be the most benefit to them.
 - a. Include academic concepts – counting for younger kids and measuring and fractions for older kids. Have kids practice writing letters and numbers in the medium with their finger.
 - b. Set up your bin for real life learning. For example:
 - i. Have dirt, plastic flower and gardening tools and practice planting flowers.
 - ii. Have water with soap and plastic dishes where kids can practice washing dishes
 - iii. Have cotton balls or shaving cream (something that looks like snow and have polar creatures to play with.
 - c. Hide objects in the bins for kids to find in the bin. Practice directions like Left and Right to locate them.

Ideas for Sensory Bins:

<https://yourkidstable.com/ultimate-list-of-sensory-bin-ideas/>

<https://littlebinsforlittlehands.com/all-about-sensory-bins-5-things-need-know/>