

Treasure Baskets

The treasure basket is a collection of everyday objects chosen to stimulate the different senses. It is one way of giving babies a wide range of experiences as well as the chance to explore and decide for themselves what they want to play with.

- Babies learn from the treasure basket by looking, touching, sucking, licking, banging, picking up and dropping, shaking, by moving things from hand to mouth and looking carefully at objects
- A baby's curiosity about the contents of the treasure basket means that she will often concentrate for longer and longer periods of time.
- When more than one baby is sat at a treasure basket they can learn to communicate. You can see them exchange glances and smiles and watch them touch each other and exchange, sometimes tussle, over objects.
- Adults have control over the items that go into the basket but the babies are learning by choosing from the basket themselves. So often we give our children things to play with, taking away the chance to choose.
- The basket should be strong enough for the baby to lean on without tipping up and be made of a natural material.
- Use everyday objects but make sure they are safe, particularly as babies want to put everything in their mouths.
- Items need not be expensive, in fact the best ones are often completely free, being something you have lying around the house.
- Fill the basket - the fuller the better.



- Balance the use of bright colours and man made materials with the subtle colours, textures and shapes of natural objects.
- Constantly check the state of the basket, cleaning objects, discarding broken ones and adding new items on a regular basis.
- Seat the baby sideways at the basket so he can reach everything and rest on the side of the basket if he needs to. Provide cushions as support for younger babies.
- Sit nearby so you can watch to give the baby security and confidence. Only intervene if she clearly needs your attention.
- The basket could have a theme e.g. music or smell (variety of different scents). Have a number of baskets with different themes - let your imagination run wild!



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