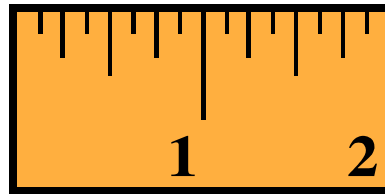




Preschool Block Center Tip Sheet

The block center should be out of the flow of traffic, blocked off, accessible and have enough space for three or more children to build independent structures without crowding.



Interlocking materials (Legos, Lincoln logs, etc.) are considered fine motor materials, and should not be stored with blocks. A block will be 2 inches or more on each side.

A rug is not required under the block center; however, depending on the flooring in the classroom, it might help make the area more comfortable for children sitting on the floor. as well as, contain the noise that might be generated within the interest center.

Materials should be stored in open and labeled shelves and/or containers.

Blocks and block accessories should be organized and stored neatly based on type.

Block play should be available outside or in large indoor gross motor space.

At least two different types of blocks should be available to the children.

Blocks can be store bought and/or homemade.

A variety of accessories stored by type should be accessible to the children for play with blocks. Accessories could include people, animals, road signs, transportation toys, etc.

Language to use in the Block Area

Examples of vocabulary words

- architect
- symmetrical
- balance
- structure
- unit
- foundation
- skyscraper
- functional
- dimensions
- vehicle
- transport
- angle
- column
- tower
- accessible
- scaffolding
- excavation
- blueprints
- steeple

Examples of open-ended questions

- What would happen if.....?
- Tell me about what you are making.
- How are these the same and different?
- Can you put them together another way? Show/tell me.
- Which is the tallest? Shortest? Thickest? How do you know?
- Can you tell me how you used those _____?
- How did you create _____?
- What can you tell me about _____?
- What do you suppose would happen if we _____?
- What supplies would you need to make _____?
- How do you think you could make that bigger/wider/taller etc.....?

Homemade Block Ideas

Various sizes of square and rectangle-shaped recycled food containers – Make sure all containers are clean. Stuff containers with newspaper and tape lids closed. To make blocks with milk and juice cartons you can cut one of the cartons in half. Stuff both of the cartons with newspaper. Insert the top of a second milk carton into the halved carton. Use duct tape to secure the two cartons together.



Empty baby wipe boxes and tissue boxes. Clean as needed and secure lids. Containers can be covered with duct tape, packing tape, or contact paper to increase durability.



Styrofoam packing materials, pool noodles and sponges. Styrofoam would need to be cut into block shapes to ensure they do not interlock. Pool noodles can be cut into several different lengths for different size cylindrical blocks. Only clean/unused sponges should be used.



Scrap wood – Ensure scrap wood is flat-surfaced, the right size, and sanded for safety.