

A Tinker Tray Play Guide to Treasure Baskets

What is a treasure basket?

A treasure basket is a selection of items chosen to provoke curiosity in babies and very young children. The items can be very commonplace everyday objects that a baby can explore safely. A good basket will stimulate the senses by providing a variety of shapes, textures and sounds to provide a rich learning environment.



How do we play with a treasure basket?

An adult should present the treasure basket to the baby and then retreat to a nearby location to observe. Babies should be in a happy, alert mood. Preferably not hungry or tired. They should be in a comfortable sitting position.

It is important that babies can explore the basket in their own way and in their own time, to make their own choice of which object to select and how to explore it. Adults should be unobtrusive and resist the urge to 'show' the items to baby.

Babies use their senses to understand the environment around them and will often handle and mouth objects that they encounter. This is perfectly fine and should be encouraged.

The basket should be played with for approximately 30-60 minutes, depending on the level of engagement shown by the child. It should then be put away. If it's accessible all the time the items will lose their intrigue.

What will my baby learn from a treasure basket?

Babies gain a variety of skills and experiences from a treasure basket. Physical development from sitting up unaided to play. Fine motor skills and hand eye coordination by grasping the objects and bringing them to their mouth. This action is part of their sensory motor development too. Handling and mouthing objects to understand its physical properties stimulates growth of the brain. They also learn to focus and concentrate for an extended period.

What age child is a treasure basket suitable for?

Treasure baskets can be enjoyed by babies and young children as soon as they can sit unaided and hold their own toys, to approximately 18-24 months.

Each of these items has been chosen with safety in mind. They are of a large size and are sturdy enough to be played with by the littlest of people. That said, all play should be supervised by an adult to ensure safe exploration of the items.



How do I keep it clean?

These items can be wiped clean using warm soapy water.