sensory baskets

the sensory sessions

sensory baskets

We are big fans of sensory baskets, they are such a great way to introduce toys to your little one and they have so many great benefits for your baby's development. You can introduce them to very small babies and they are great for older ones too including little ones on the move.

They promote skills including -

- fine motor skills
- gross motor skills
- balance
- visual development, perception and occular motor control
- sense of touch
- proprioception (knowing where our body is in space)
- motor planning skills
- communitcation skills
- and concentration through toy rotation and repetition to make neural pathways stronger

We love a theme and introducing themes in baskets around a book or a colour, toys of differing textures, maybe ones that sound different or toys around an animal or pet theme work really well, you can be really creative!

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for our younger babies in a lying down position

Take each toy out and have a great conversation with your baby about it. It is amazing to have an authentic conversation, explain to them what they are looking, what it does at and how it feels. Give them lots of opportunities to look, touch and concentrate on one item at a time, spend about a minute on it before rotating to the next toy. Let your little one feel and touch two textures at the same time inbetween rotating toys. Encourage two handed holding of the toys, lying on their sides is a great position to try two handed holding as hands naturally meet together. Holding the toys to one side of the head encourages them to move their head towards the toy, practicing a motor response in response to the toy. Repetition is key when it comes to any motor control.

Tummy time

Tummy time is a great opportunity to lie out the toys in the basket or pop the basket on its side to encourage your little one to look inside and for our older ones reach in to take a toy. For our babies who are starting to move, pop the toy just out of arms reach to get them to stretch and balance for it. Toys are a great distraction during tummy time, be really responsive and lift your baby as soo ugh.

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For older babies, in a sitting position

Position the basket in front of them and encourage them to put their hands into it to retrieve toys. This works their balance, motor skills, visual development and co-ordination. Spend time explaining to your little one what they are looking at, how it feels, what it does. If your little one is just getting their sitting balance make sure that they have cushions next to them to give them some extra support as they are working on their balance when reaching for toys.

After perfecting the two handed grab from the basket it is time to hold it to see if you can encourage your little one to grab items from the basket with one hand. Encourage them to hold and touch two items that feel different at the same time.

For older bables in a standing position or our walkers

Pop the basket on its side on your sofa cushion to encourage your little one to stand and balance while reaching into the basket. For our walkers encourage walking back and forward to the basket to retrieve items, make it into a great game.

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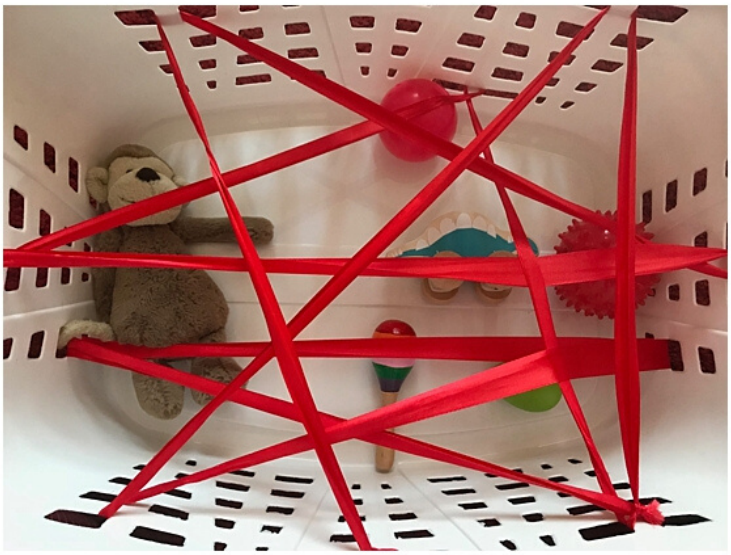
Increase the challenge by creating a spider sensory basket. Use ribbon weaved across the basket to increase the challenge of getting the toys out of the basket. Your little one needs to do more motor planning to work their way around the ribbon. Increasing the amount of ribbon across the basket and making the toys the same colour as the ribbon increases the challenge.



Hints and tips

Repetition is amazing for brain development so repeat this often, going back to the activity often helps. You don't need to change the theme every time but you can do some toy rotation by replacing a couple of toys.

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If your little one doesn't seem interested or struggles to maintain their concentration, do the activity often, repetition is amazing and really encourage them to be involved. For our movers making the game as interactive as possible and use time in a high chair when they are sitting, calm and not waiting to be fed to pull items out together.

You can use any fabric basket, box, bag, storage container, basin or tupperwear container, just always make sure that your little one is supervised at all times and avoid containers that would be unsafe e.g. plastic bags

Remember all of the motor skills that our babies get are through lots and lots of practice and this toy gives great opportunities to use the smallest muscles in their eyes and fingers to the larger arm, shoulder and core muscles so it is a great toy to practice balance, tummy time and co-ordination with.

Have lots of fun and we'd love to see your photos!

Safety first - please ensure that your little one is supervised with their toys at all times. Keep your little one in arms reach and eye sight when

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