

# Winter sensory play dough

Evergreen trees keep their leaves in colder months and their scent reminds us of winter. Kew's tallest tree is an evergreen and can be found in the Redwood Grove. Standing at 40 metres, it is taller than six giraffes!

With your child, hunt for some evergreen trees outdoors and use your senses to connect with the environment. At home, explore texture and scent with this sensory play dough activity.

## You will need:



Evergreen foliage and cones



Ingredients for homemade no-cook play dough (recipes available online) – flour, salt, water, oil, cream of tartar or lemon juice



Tools such as cookie cutters, rollers and wooden tongs

- 1 With your child, go for a walk in your local woodland or park, or visit the Pinetum at Kew Gardens or Wakehurst. Look for trees covered in green, needle-like leaves – these are evergreens. Together: Look up high and down low. What do you see? Touch the leaves. What do they feel like? Take a big sniff. What does the tree smell like? Collect some fallen evergreen branches and cones.

! **Remember:** Avoid yew trees – these are poisonous evergreens with bright red berries.

- 2 Find a simple no-cook play dough recipe online. With your child, combine the ingredients to create a smooth dough. Mixing and stirring are great activities for developing gross motor skills.

★ **Top tip:** Homemade play dough is made from natural ingredients, so is perfect for toddlers. Play around with colour and scent using food colouring, spices or herbs.

- 3 On a table or tray, set out the play dough, evergreen branches and cones. Add some child-friendly tools, such as spoons, wooden tongs or cookie cutters.

Let your child explore – there's no right or wrong way to play here!

🧑 **Play idea:** Roll the cones across the surface of the dough or use the evergreen branches as a stamp.

**Share your photos @kewgardens.**



## Taking it forwards:

Explore the texture and colour of the evergreen leaves further. Try covering the branches with paint to make prints on paper or use glue to create a collage.