

Mark Making Ideas

There are lots of interesting **fun** ways to support your child in making marks at home. This will help to develop their interest and confidence in using their hands to create patterns and shapes that are vital skills to learn before writing and drawing.

Shaving foam

Can be squeezed onto a table, tray or into a bathtub and smeared thin using hands. Use fingers or any other object (paintbrush, stick etc) to make marks that can easily be rubbed out and drawn over again and again.



Indoors



in the garden

Salt

A shallow bucket, washing up bowl or plate with a little bit of salt is great for mark making! Can be pushed around endlessly and pictures can be added to or wiped out with ease. Try to choose a colour for the container that is bright against the white salt.



The same works for a tray of sand or glitter! You and your child can test out other simple ingredients from the kitchen too! Can you draw in rice? Does it work for flour?

Different equipment

Start keeping a few used envelopes from the post, cardboard boxes of any size, kitchen roll tubes, egg boxes, tickets and other interesting paper items. With some crayons, pens or pencils most children will be interested in how different it feels to draw over and colour in objects that are 3D instead of paper.



Have a mark making basket or box

If your child knows where to get hold of pencils, paper, notebooks by themselves they are far more likely to pick them up and have a go. Fill it with interesting bits that can be moved easily like notebooks and clipboards. Some children enjoy lying on their tummies to draw, some like walking, not all enjoy sitting at a table. Make it possible for them to find out what works for them. These items could go out with you when you're on the bus or going to the park!



Most importantly: HAVE FUN!!!

- There should be no pressure to get things 'right'. Mark making should be fun for your child and you should let them know you are proud of their attempts.
- Join in! Talk through their ideas with them and show them that you are interested. If they see that you care about what they are doing then they will learn that mark making is important to you. Let them tell you about their picture before asking 'What is it?' - because they may not be drawing anything particular but might be finding out how colours mix on the paper or what happens if they draw really fast.
- Is there a special place your child's picture could be displayed if they are really proud? You could ask them where they would like it to go. Talk to them about what they like about their picture and replace it if they make another one they are even more proud of.
- Think of ways you could bring their pictures into the rest of their day - for example if they say they are drawing a car then can you go and look at cars together? You could count how many wheels they have, see how many of their favourite colour cars you can find, talk about the names of the different parts of cars and so on. You could both play with toy cars together and imagine where the cars could be going or see what happens if you roll them down different surfaces like a cushion or stairs.
- If they are attempting to write letters or their name then can you find one of the letters in it elsewhere in the house? Maybe on books or food packets. How many of that letter can you find? Do they all look the same? Does your child want to take a photo of it to remember? You could write their name and hide it or the letters from it in different places, going on a 'name hunt' together to find them. Letters are tricky to form and not all children are ready to start trying at nursery but if your child is interested then look closely at a letter important to them and talk about the different circles and lines in it.