

Homemade Musical Instruments - Here are some pictures for ideas on what you can use from around your house to make musical instruments and shakers.

Cutting straws to different sizes, making sure there are 2 of each size and attaching them together, from longest to shortest. This is also a good early numeracy experience as it incorporates size ordering.



To make shakers, all you need is an empty plastic bottle and different ingredients from in your cupboard. You could use rice, dried pasta, lentils or peas. Then just make sure the bottle lid is on tightly and shake away!

A folded bit of cardboard with a bottle cap stuck on either side -
'Click clack click clack!'



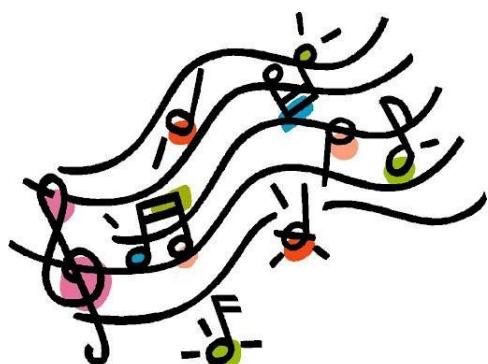
Experiences you can take part in with your homemade musical instruments -

Singing songs and rhymes - repeat the song/rhyme a couple of times first and then allow your child to repeat it after you, or finish the rhyme even if it is just one word. For example; 'twinkle, twinkle little ...' your child can finish the rhyme by saying 'star'. This experiences helps to develop your child's language and communication skills while also developing their memory and re-call skills.



Fast and slow - use the shakers to go at different paces. First shake it fast and see if your child can copy then repeat slower and allow your child to copy again. You can also add in actions which match each pace, for example; with going fast you can march or run on the spot. For going slow you can go on your tip toes and slowly creep around. This allows your child to develop their gross motor skills and be physically active while learning about rhythms and pace.

Listening and responding - Can your child listen and repeat the same noise or beat you made. Can your child make their own beat or music for you to repeat? This will help develop your child's active listening skills.



The benefits of musical experiences

There are a number of reasons why exposure to music and musical experiences in early childhood is important:

- It engages and stimulates the brain, for example developing language skills and improving short-term memory function.
- It helps with the child development of listening skills and improves concentration.
- It supports physical and mental wellbeing, by encouraging movement and providing a way of expression.
- It supports the development of gross motor skills such as coordination and balance.
- It helps children develop their social, cooperative and communication skills.
- It fosters creativity and encourages an interest in learning (e.g. about different instruments and cultures).