

rock by rock 

# 5 ways to focus

with playdough

Did you know that...



Playdough helps kids stay calm. It can ease tension and release energy.



Playdough can keep hands busy while eyes are focused on a screen.



Kids of all ages love to show their creativity when making things out of playdough.

## Hands-on Play Increases Focus

Playdough is not just for preschool! It's actually a fun, cheap way to get your kids moving and using their hands to help break-up online learning. Plus, playdough fosters creativity, gets the blood flowing, takes your mind off of other things, and can be an outlet for under-used energy.

Don't take our word- there's research. If you multiply your kid's age by 3 you get the shortest amount of time they can focus before they need a break. So if your child is 7 they should be able to focus for about 21 minutes. But after that, they need something to give them a breather and help them re-group and focus.



# 5 Ways to focus with playdough

Try one of these 5 strategies to help increase your child's attention span.



**1 Stress ball:** Place the playdough into a balloon and let your child press or hold the ball as they are paying attention during online class.

**2 Brain break:** Keep a jar of playdough next to your kids computer. In between calls, have them take it out and make shapes. Make it a game. Let them make a shape as a brain break and see if you can guess what it is.

**3 Progress tracker:** Use playdough to keep track of things kids learned that day. For each activity they completed, have them ball up a little ball of playdough and place it like a bingo chip on their daily tracker.



**4 Tower Challenge:** Give kids five minutes between activities and have them build a tower from playdough and pasta. Do this every day for a week and see which design was the tallest.

**5 Five-minute Challenges:** Have your kids take a five minute mental break to expend energy, take a breather and refocus. Here are three quick challenges to help them take a mental breather:

- **Charades:** Have kids make their own playdough charades game. They make a shape while on zoom and their friend has to guess what it is.
- **Self-portrait (K-2):** Make a self-portrait out of playdough or make playdough figures for a member of the family and guess which family member it is.
- **Tic-Tac-Toe:** Make a tic-tac-toe board out of playdough and use the playdough to make the "x's" and "o's."

# Make your own playdough

Try making your own playdough! It's fun and it will save you money.

## Ingredients:

- 1 cup of flour
- 1 cup of water
- 1/2 cup of salt
- 2 teaspoons of cream of tarter (found in spice section of grocery store)
- 1 tablespoon of cooking oil
- Food coloring (optional)



## Steps

1. Mix dry ingredients.
2. Add cooking oil.
3. Boil water and add a few drops of food coloring if desired.
4. Mix water with dry ingredients, stir and kneed until dough is even.
5. If dough is too watery, cook over a low heat until the dough pulls away from the side of the pan. If too crumbly, add a small amount of water and kneed until dough is smooth.
6. Store in an airtight container.

