Digging Area

Overview

A digging area supports children's development across a range of areas. From developing physical skills to enhancing communication skills, children experience hands-on exploration with natural materials.



Setting Up

Use an accessible space and clearly define the boundaries of the area. This could be with tyres or sleepers.
Choose the natural materials children will dig in; sand, soil, bark, gravel... thinking carefully about which is best for the age of the children who will be using it.

Make sure there is enough of the material for your little explorers to scoop, dig, and transport as they play.

Equipment

- Natural materials, such as sand, gravel, soil, bark.
- A set of buckets in a range of sizes.
- A set of spades, scoops, rakes and sifters, in a range of sizes.
- Wheelbarrows, small-world trucks.

Key Interactions

Play alongside children, following their lead and talking about what is happening in the area. e.g.
"You have filled the bucket to the top."
Ask questions, such as,
"Which digger is the best to move the sand?"

The Benefits

- Active Play – independent play, testing ideas, choosing resources.
- Physical and Sensory Exploration.
- Creative and Critical Thinking Development.

Progression in Learning

Additional natural materials, such as large sticks, wood slices, small logs.
A set of balance scales.
Different molds for materials. Small-world toys, e.g. dinosaurs, cars.