

Activities for “Wheels”

Design Your Own Cars, Trucks, Buses and More!

Provide a set of wooden Tinker Toys and encourage your little builders to construct simple vehicles. This popular collection of materials contains pieces that easily serve as axles and wheels. Giving time and space for exploration builds fine motor development, space and part-whole concepts, and skills in problem-solving and spatial reasoning.

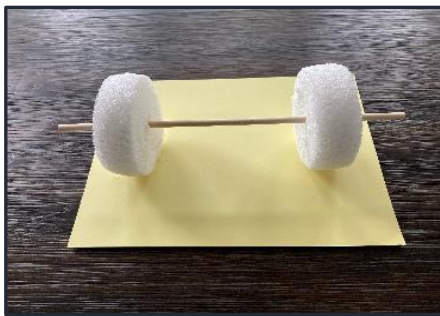


Find the Wheels!

Challenge your group to a classroom scavenger hunt! Encourage them to find toys and equipment with wheels. Before you know it, they will have found cars, trucks, community helper vehicles, baby carriages, grocery carts, food carts, and office chairs. Discuss together the attributes of the various wheels, and create a chart listing their findings and observations.

What’s the Trick to Moving a Brick?

Encourage children to push a brick along a carpeted surface. Ask them why they think it is difficult to move. Next, provide a set of 5-6 unsharpened pencils, placing them close together in a row on the carpet. Set the brick on top, and ask children to move the brick again. Ask them what happened and why the result is different. A terrific introduction to wheel concepts, problem-solving, and critical thinking!



D.I.Y. Wheel and Axle Machine

The wheel is one of the 7 simple machines. Help your little scientist build one of their very own! An adult can cut off the ends of two 3.8-inch Styrofoam balls. Have the child insert a dowel rod, straw, or unsharpened pencil into each piece of Styrofoam, connecting the pieces together. The Styrofoam pieces represent wheels, and the dowel rod is the axle. Encourage your child to test out their wheels on different surfaces and on ramps set at varied angles.

Going for a Drive!

And away we go! Children love pretending to drive. Assist your little motorists in creating a steering wheel using a Styrofoam ring like the one pictured at right. Help them cover the ring with black electrical tape. Create the interior piece from sturdy cardboard, covering it with electrical tape and connecting it to the ring. Builds concepts of movement, rotation, and direction.

