

Safe and Easy Play Dough toddlers can help make.

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If you choose to treat the flour, bake it on a cookie sheet with parchment paper at 350 degrees for 5 minutes to help make the flour safe from bacteria, E-Coli and salmonella.

Estimated time to make 5 minutes

Here is what you will need for one dough ball.

1-gallon plastic zip bag. **OR**, medium bowl

4 plastic sandwich zip bags. **OR**, small bowls

1 cup flour

½ cup salt

½ cup water

Gloves are optional.

4 different colored food grade food coloring (*Optional*)
Generally, 5 to 10 drops each color.

Mix it up

Mix that **flour** and **salt** together in a plastic zip bag. Then, *gradually* add the **water** to the dry mixture and **knead it** thru the bag as you go. *Toddlers would love to help you with this. Older kids can make this themselves.* Now If dough is too wet, add a touch more flour. It should *feel pliable* and not too granular. *At this point, you now have 3 options.*

You have choices

1) You can either **separate** the **dough** into one **ball per each color** that you want. Then, put a ball into each one of the four plastic sandwich bags. Next, add food coloring until you get the desired colors. 4 colors = 4 bags of 1 dough ball each. I would suggest that gloves are worn during the food coloring is initially added if the dough is not going to be mixed in a plastic bag.

2) You can choose to just have the **white dough** and *not add any color* at all. You can *split* the dough into half and only add color to one of those portions. Or, you can break the dough in half

then, split the other half into smaller sections to color separately. Use your imagination or let the kiddos decide how best to do this. Consider, some colors may be more popular and you may only need a small amount of another color. Therefore, tweak as needed.

3) Leave that **whole ball** in the plastic zip bag. Then, you can make more batches by repeating the steps above until you have as many full-size dough balls per color(s) you want. That way you have several large balls of different colors which would be great for more than one child. Two kids may each want their own pink ball and not want to share. So, you could either make each their own or split a color in half.

Easy clean up.

If you find any dough or food coloring on your hands, it should *wash off with warm water and soap*. But if you chose to go with plastic zip bags, that is likely not a problem. Once the dough and food coloring is **well mixed**, the food coloring will be absorbed by the dough and not get on anyone's hands. Also, since you do not have to roll this out, or use a bunch of ingredients, the mess is minimal and the dishes dirtied are limited. Sounds like a win - win to me.

The *dough* can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 4 weeks.

The best part is that it's only flour, salt, water and food coloring (if you choose to add it). Therefore, it is *safe if eaten*, **unless** there is an *allergy* to the ingredients. You can use bowls if you choose not to use plastic zip bags.

Something to think about

If you use bowls, you may consider ones *with lids* so you can go ahead and store it in that same bowl. Remember to use a *utensil or gloves to avoid food coloring from getting on your hands*. Also, you can *press* your *thumb* into the dough ball and *place the food coloring* into that impression to make it easier to mix in that bowl or bag.

This is a quick, easy fun and cost-effective way to make homemade play dough at a fraction of a cost of the brand name. Plus, it smells better! You can always add a touch of extract to help it smell even better. You can add a drop of peppermint extract to the green ball, a drop of lemon extract to the yellow ball... you get the idea, now have a great time!

Make sure to wash your hands before and after all activities to help keep everyone safe and healthy. It is a great habit to have.