



LOOSE PARTS PLAY TIDY UP TIPS

It's tidy up time!

It can be hard for children to stop playing when they are having fun and fully engaged in playing.

Here are some tips that can help:

- Have clear processes for tidying up that everyone has discussed and agreed.
- Give children a signal that play time will be ending soon.
- Use things like a sign, flag or bell to give the signal.
- Have a visual and aural signal to be as inclusive as possible.
- Remember it doesn't have to be an adult giving the signal – children might enjoy sharing this responsibility.

For tidying up, we have clear instructions and procedures – someone collects all the fabric, and the older pupils roll in all the tyres.

Campie Primary School, Scotland

Make it fun!

- How about using shopping trolleys, or sweeping up loose parts with a big brush?
- Containers and sheets used for play can also be used to collect and tidy loose parts.
- Children often need to work together to tidy away large loose parts.
- Try making tidy up time into challenges or put on some music to tidy to.
- Remember to ask children for their ideas and incorporate these into routines.



We keep it fun; it really helps to get the children involved. We play a game to get everything off the floor called "the floor is lava".

Campie Primary School, Scotland

Is it mess? Does it need to be tidied away?

When the 'remains' of children's play are left out in the play space, treasures can be found that give an insight into children's interests. For example, you might find small constructions made of soil, leaves and twigs or an obstacle course of tyres and planks. Instead of mess, try thinking about it as evidence.

If you can, leaving loose parts out allows children to return to their play. When this happens, play develops and deepens. Play remains can also act as a prompt to other children who come across them.

Some schools leave their tyres and other things outside all the time so children have something to play with when they choose.

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