

# Dyi nature play:

## MUD PIT'S 101



### TEMPORARY MUD PIT OPTIONS AS WELL AS 5X CONSTRUCTION TIPS

Mud play is one of the most **amazing open ended nature play activities** that, for children, never gets old (even for us big kids).

Want to know more about **why Mud Play is important for your child?** Read the Mud Play blog on the Nature Play QLD website.

Below are some ideas of how to create a **basic temporary mud pit** in a backyard, day care centre, school, kindergarten or play area.



#### TIP 1 'DIRT CONSIDERATIONS'

Make sure the soil you use or buy has **no additives**, like fertilisers. Children have the uncanny ability to eat dirt, even when they are not trying..

#### TIP 2 'WHERE TO POSITION YOUR MUD PIT'.

Somewhere with shade is highly recommended as kids can play for hours in these pits. Also somewhere where a lot of moisture is ok.

**Underneath trees or shrubs** are great positions for mud pits. They not only provide shade, they allow for the games to include the trees or shrubs, adding another play element to the world being crafted, and creating opportunities for kids to extend their time in being creative.

**In gullies or where water runs through your garden.** Kids can explore water catchments, practice damming, build pretend rivers, bridges or swimming pools. Adding the

element of running water into the mud pit will increase the possibilities for imaginative play.

### TIP 3 'TEMPORARY MUD PIT'S' OPTIONS AND SET UP

**OPTION 1:** Lay a heavy duty tarp or somewhere appropriate and place you soil on top. The tarp will reduce the spread of mess. Make sure your tarp is large enough to extend at least 1 meter diameter beyond your mud pile. This will more likely contain the mud and make removing the soil easy once play time is over (which can also be spread in your garden somewhere).



**OPTION 2:** Lay the tarp out and place soil in large wash up or laundry tubs.



**OPTION 3:** If you have an old blow up swimming pool, they make awesome temporary mud pits  
<http://www.growingajeweledrose.com/2012/06/play-in-mud-set-up.html>



<http://happyhooligans.ca/mobile-mud-patch/>

## TIP 4 'TOOLS OF THE MUDDY TRADE'

These are resources that will encourage and stimulate a child's imagination while playing in the mud. Which may include, but not limited to:

- POTS
- PANS
- BAKING DISHES
- OLD KITCHEN UTENSILS
- PLASTIC CONTAINERS
- BUCKETS
- WATERING CANS
- WASH UP TUBS
- CUPS
- HAND SHOVELS
- CHEF HATS
- DRESS UPS
- PIE TINS
- SAND CASTLE EQUIPMENT
- ROCKS
- STICKS
- LEAVES
- SHELLS
- FLOWERS
- FEATHERS
- BLOCKS
- PLANKS OF WOOD
- OLD PLANT POTS
- TOY ANIMALS
- TOY CARS

## TIP 5 'GET THE KIDS INVOLVED AND LET THE CHILDREN LEAD THE PLAY'



When setting up your mud pit, [getting the kids involved](#) will go a long way of getting them interested, developing a sense of ownership of their mud pit and start their creative brains firing.

It is important not to push the mud pit on children and [let them determine their level of engagement](#). You can make it more attractive, or reinvigorate interest by adding new play elements such as rocks, sticks, planks or blocks. However for the child to fully engage with the mud pit they will need to determine when, how and why they decide to get involved.

Children will invite you into their muddy imaginative worlds, but they will need time to form a foundational story. [Giving them space to create their play worlds](#) is the true gift of the mud pit, from here they will become experts of their muddy adventures and will happily take you with them.

# HAPPY MUD PLAYING

### Join the Nature Play QLD Conversation:

Subscribe to our enews @ [www.natureplayqld.org.au](http://www.natureplayqld.org.au) for latest Nature Play QLD updates

**SOCIAL MEDIA:** LIKE us on Facebook, Follow us on Twitter, and use our hash tags when posting photos of outdoor play time: **#NATUREPLAYQLD** **#8HRSCREENFREE** **#LESSSCREENMOREGREEN**

[info@natureplayqld.org.au](mailto:info@natureplayqld.org.au) ph: 61 07 3367 1989



**EXTRA TIP:** don't give kids all the tools at once, and perhaps take some out when you add some more in and keep them rotating.