

Working at the car wash

Make the most of the outdoors and take the opportunity to get children involved with cleaning the outside bikes and ride-ons in a role-play car wash.

Learning aims

- To explore real-life experiences through role-play
- Developing motor skills through the use of different tools
- Exploring descriptive language related to experiences.

Resources

- Outside ride-ons or other outside toys
- You could ask the children to bring in their own scooters/bikes etc.
- Individual buckets or containers of soapy water
- Sponges, cloths and brushes
- You may like to add a 'Car Wash' sign, a 'reception' table with a till and a booking sheet, prices etc. so the children can take on a role
- For some extra fun, you might like to add glitter or colouring to the water
- Cones
- A change of clothes!



Activity Outline

- Set up an outdoor car wash for the children, providing warm bubbly water, sponges and vehicles to wash
- Use the cones to set out the car wash
- Allow children to drive their vehicle into the area, navigating their way around the cones to practise steering
- Provide different cleaning tools of different textures and sizes
 - Use vocabulary to describe the feel of the tools such as squishy, soft, full
- Adults to model making different movements with tools to wash the vehicles e.g. up and down, using the correct language to match these movements
- Talk about squeezing the water out of the sponges and watching it drip onto the ground
- Talk with children about the colours and different parts of the vehicles
 - What do they notice about the soapy water as they use the sponges and cloths to wash the cars/bikes?

Extending the activity

- Think about setting up a play road for the children to ride their vehicles along. You could use masking tape to lay out markings
- If you're feeling adventurous, you could set up a drive-through station using crepe paper strips, talking to the children about what it feels like as they drive through the strips of paper into the car wash
- Introducing traffic lights is a good way to explore road safety with older children
- This activity can be adapted for indoor play, using smaller vehicles and replacing water with shredded paper or different fabrics.

Working with babies

Involve younger children by putting smaller wheeled toys into a tough tray and adding a small amount of water. Babies can then be stripped off to their nappies and enjoy playing with the water and sponges with the wheeled toys in the tray.

Special considerations

Babies and children should always be supervised when using water.