With summer vacation already a month in for school age kiddos, we are focusing on a different kind of recipe.
These recipes are safe, kid-friendly and provide lots of fun ways for the kids to be creative this summer!

Homemade Outdoor Paint for Kids

Perfect for sidewalk, driveway, or patio art.

1 C. flour
1/2 C. salt
1 to 2 C. water
1/2 C. cornstarch
Food coloring
Optional additives:
1 T. baking soda (fun fizz effect)
A few drops of essential oil (pleasant scent)
Glitter (for sparkle)
Vinegar (a splash for durability, but can affect color)

In a large bowl, combine flour and salt. Stir until blended.
Gradually pour in water while stirring until smooth. Adjust more water if too thick, or cornstarch if too runny.
Mix in cornstarch with a bit of water to create a thicker, more paint-like consistency.
Stir in food coloring until you reach your desired shade.
Optional: Add baking soda, glitter, vinegar, or essential oil for extra fun.
Note: Keep in an airtight container in a cool place for up to a couple of days. Stir before use if it separates.

Long-lasting Playdough

Basic Stove-Top Recipe

1 C. all-purpose flour
1/3 C. salt
2 tsp. cream of tartar
1 C. water
1 T. vegetable oil
Food coloring (optional)

In a medium saucepan, combine flour, salt, and cream of tartar. The salt helps prevent stickiness and preserves the dough
Mix food coloring into the water, then stir in the vegetable oil. Pour this mixture into the dry ingredients
Heat over medium-low, stirring constantly until the mixture thickens and forms a ball
Remove from heat, let it cool slightly, then knead for 5 min. until smooth and soft. If sticky, cook a few more minutes.

Kinetic Sand

Provides a calming, tactile experience and supports fine motor development, focus, and imaginative play.

Sand
Cornstarch
Vegetable or canola oil (or baby/mineral oil)
Optional dish soap for extra stretch

Combine 2.5 C. of fine play sand with 1.5 C. of cornstarch.
Slowly add 1/2 C. of oil, mixing thoroughly.
Knead until fully combined and moldable.
Optional: Add a few drops of dish soap for a softer, more stretchy texture.
Customization: Add food coloring, colored craft sand, glitter, or essential oils for color, sparkle, or scent.

Air Dry Clay

This clay is safe for adults and supervised kids, though not edible. The clay air dries naturally in 24 to 48 hrs.

1 C. baking soda
1/2 C. cornstarch
3/4 C. water
Optional: white acrylic paint (to make a bright white clay)
Optional: essential oils or extracts for a light, natural scent.

In a medium saucepan, whisk the baking soda and cornstarch together until fully mixed. Slowly pour in the water while stirring continuously.
Place the pan over medium heat. Stir constantly with a rubber spatula, scraping the bottom to prevent sticking.
As the mixture heats, it will thicken into a smooth paste and gradually turn into a dough.
As soon as the dough pulls away from the sides of the pan and resembles soft mashed potatoes, remove it from heat. You don't want it to overcook or it may become crumbly.
Transfer the dough onto a plate or silicone mat. Cover it with a damp cloth and allow it to cool completely before kneading.
Once cool, knead the clay for several minutes until the texture is soft, silky, and easy to shape.
Your homemade clay is ready when: It holds its shape, It doesn't crack when bent, It feels soft and pliable and It's not sticky
If it feels too soft, add a sprinkle of cornstarch while kneading. If it feels too dry, add a few drops of water.
Store in an airtight container or sealed bag. Press out any excess air before sealing. It stays fresh for up to 2 weeks in the fridge. Let it come to room temperature before using.

Edible JELL-O® Slime (Color-Changing!)

The slime will change color as you mix it, providing a fun sensory experience.

1 box of JELL-O® mix
1 C. of cornstarch
1/2 C. of warm water

In a bowl, combine the JELL-O® mix and cornstarch.
Gradually add warm water while mixing until you achieve a slime-like consistency.

Homemade Slime

Homemade slime is a fun, hands-on activity that can also be used for simple science experiments, teaching kids about polymers and non-Newtonian fluids while providing hours of entertainment.

2 bottles (4 oz each) of washable white or clear glue
1 tsp. baking soda
1 to 2 T. saline solution (or contact lens solution containing boric acid)
Optional: food coloring, glitter, or confetti for customization

Pour the glue into a large bowl and stir in the baking soda until smooth. Add food coloring or glitter if desired for a fun effect
Slowly add saline solution while stirring. The slime will start to pull away from the sides of the bowl and form a ball
Pick up the slime and knead it with your hands until smooth and stretchy. If it's too sticky, add a few more drops of activator until the desired texture is achieved
Keep your slime in an airtight container to prevent it from drying out.

Goop

Also known as: Oobleck

16 oz. container of cornstarch
Up to 1 C. of water
Liquid watercolors or food coloring (optional)

Pour cornstarch into a tub.
Pour almost all of water on the cornstarch, around 3/4 C. Mix the water and cornstarch together with your hands. Add the rest of the water to make the consistency more liquid. Play with the ratio.
Add food coloring or liquid watercolors to make it colorful.

Washable Paint

Great for everyday art projects.

Flour Paint
Flour
Water
Food coloring

Mix flour and water into a smooth paste, divide into jars, and add color.
Dries matte and works well on paper.

Cornstarch Paint
cornstarch
cold water
food coloring

Heat cornstarch and water until thickened, cool, then color.
Smooth, vibrant, and perfect for toddlers.

Sensory & Finger Paint

Ideal for toddlers and sensory play.

Plain yogurt
Beet juice
Spinach purée
Turmeric

Mix ingredients together. Safe to taste, creamy texture, no cooking required.

Tangy Sour Gummy Worms

Requires some refrigeration time.

1 C. fruit juice or 170 to 180g fresh fruit (blended)
3 to 4 T. powdered gelatin
3 T. lemon juice
2 to 3 T. sweetener (honey, maple syrup, or agave)
Optional: food coloring or natural colorants (beet powder, spirulina, turmeric)

Sour coating
1/4 C. sugar
1 T. citric acid (or malic acid for extra tang)

Equipment
Silicone gummy worm molds or alternative molds (straws, foil trenches)
Small saucepan
Blender (if using fresh fruit)
Dropper or squeeze bottle for filling molds

Gelatin Base: If using fresh fruit, blend until smooth.
Sprinkle gelatin over lemon juice and let it bloom for 5 min.
Heat fruit puree or juice gently to 120 to 145°F, then stir in the bloomed gelatin until fully dissolved. Avoid boiling to preserve flavor and gelatin structure.
Sweetener and Color: Mix in honey, maple syrup, or other sweeteners.
Add food coloring or natural dyes if desired. For layered worms, divide the mixture and color each portion separately.
Mold the Worms: Pour the mixture into silicone molds (or straws that you bind together with a rubber band) using a dropper or squeeze bottle.
Note: For layered or striped worms, chill each layer 8 to 12 min. until tacky before adding the next.
Tap molds gently to remove air bubbles.
Set and Dry: Refrigerate for 30 to 60 min. until firm. For firmer texture and concentrated flavor, leave the gummies at room temperature overnight to dry slightly.
Sour Coating: Mix sugar and citric acid (and optional malic acid). Toss the set gummies in the mixture until lightly coated. For best results, coat just before serving to prevent moisture from making them sticky.
Notes:
Healthier Version: Use real fruit and vegetables (spinach, carrots) for natural colors and reduced sugar.
Chewier Texture: Increase gelatin slightly or refrigerate longer.
Storage: Keep in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 7 to 10 days. Avoid freezing as gelatin can degrade.
Flavor Boost: Add fruit extracts or purees for more intense taste.

Quote of the Week:

"A day without sunshine is like, you know, night."

~ Steve Martin