

# Explore Tools

Play and discover how tools can be used in different ways!



**Materials Needed:** Clay or Play-Doh, water, a variety of age-appropriate tools (popsicle sticks, crayons, cups, sponges, pipettes, paintbrushes, straws, string, etc.)

**Caution:** Closely supervise children when using tools.

Activities are intended to be done together with a grown-up!

- **Imagine:** How can these materials be used as tools?
- **Create:** Use the tools to shape clay, paint, draw, or build something.
- **Experiment:** Can you use these tools in a new or an unexpected way?
- **Discover:** Look for tools around your home. What are they used for?



## Who Uses Tools?

**We do!**

Tools come in all shapes and sizes. We use them for almost everything we do. Humans (*Homo sapiens*) have used tools since they first walked on Earth hundreds of thousands of years ago. Archaeologists find tools on or in the ground. Stone and bone tools are often found because they can be preserved in the ground for a long time. Tools help us learn about our history!



Tool found in Northwest Alaska by UAMN archaeologists.  
Image: Sam Coffman.

**Some animals use tools too!**



A macaque uses a stone tool.  
Image: Michael D. Gumert.



A crow uses a stick tool to reach food.  
Image: Mick Sibley.



An octopus uses shells as a shield and can carry them around for future use.  
Image: Nick Hobgood.

Primates are well known for using tools, but many other animals also use them, including elephants, dolphins, sea otters, fish, birds, and even insects!