



RECREATION AT HOME

Shiny Mud Balls Activity

<https://muddyfaces.co.uk/activity/hikaru-dorodango-shiny-mud-balls/>

Experience the Japanese Art of making mud shine! This activity is good for people of all ages. It uses backyard ingredients and is oddly addictive.

Time to Complete: 1hr+

Age Group: All Ages

Materials:

- Bowl or bucket
- Strainer with small holes
- Clean plastic bag
- Soft cloth
- Dirt/soil

Directions: Download Muddy Faces PDF for full directions with photos

1. Dig up some earth and sieve it through a garden sieve to get rid of any stones.
2. Take a large handful of the earth and put it into a container, gradually add water to form a dough.
3. Move the dough back and forth between your hands, squeezing and turning as you do so, forming a sphere. (You can be quite rough with it at this stage.) As you move the ball shake it up and down as this encourages the finer particles come to the surface making it smoother. Move to the next step when the surface is smooth and quite tacky.
4. Sprinkle dry earth over the ball and gently wipe off with the curve of the outside of your thumb. Turn and repeat. (Continue with this for half an hour or more. This begins to dry the surface of the ball and form an outer 'crust'). If cracks appear stop and go to Step 5!
5. 'Rest' the ball in a sealed plastic bag placed on a soft surface, so no flat edges appear in the still soft ball, for approximately 20 mins. This allows the moisture to come to the surface and often 'magically mends' surface cracks!!
6. Repeat steps 4 and 5 until the ball starts to feel firm and has a slightly leathery surface. If cracks appear stop and go to Step 5!
7. Use a kitchen sieve to sieve the earth into finer particles. Rub this dust with your hand in circular movements to get a fine coating on your hand, then gently rub the dust particles over the ball. Continue to do this until the surface water has been absorbed and the ball feels powdery
8. Put the ball into a clean plastic bag to draw out the water.
9. Then continue to repeat steps 7 and 8 until a strong crust is formed and the dust no longer adheres to the surface of the ball. It is the dust that makes the ball shine, so the longer you repeat these stages, the slower the core dries and the better the shine. If cracks appear stop and go to Step 5!
10. Polish the ball gently with a soft cloth.
11. Keep the ball wrapped in a cloth so it can dry out slowly.
12. Enjoy & Share!



Tip

** Do not be tempted to over-polish – the surface will shine, but then it will crack after a few days, because it has dried out too quickly! If there is still moisture coming to the surface stop polishing and go back to steps 7 and 8.

Resources

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