

Making Your Own Scratch, Position, and Grab Board

To make a position board you will need the following supplies:

1. Polypropylene pegboard preferred – best results with durability and cleanliness. The size is determined by your use of the board (table or tray top, wall hanging, or floor.) In general you may want to start with a board that is about 16 inches wide and 18 inches tall.
2. Computer cord ties
3. Hot glue or fabric glue
4. 1/8" elastic – minimal width, use larger widths for children that have increased strength
5. Plastic tubing – large enough to cover elastic
6. Loop turner – available at JoAnn Fabric – for pulling elastic through tubing
7. Drill – to put holes in some items to be placed on boards
8. Items to be attached to board

Level 1 Scratch Boards



Figure 1 Level 1 Board

Scratch boards initially have very low profile materials such as fabric, sandpaper, corrugated cardboard, metal squares, carpet samples, and so forth. Make sure to get a variety of materials. Cut them into pieces that are roughly the size of the child's hand and place them next to each other using glue onto the pegboard or Styrofoam board.

Level 2 Grab and Release Board



Figure 2 Level 2 Board

Attach elastic to the end of the item(s) to be attached. At first the elastic should be Once the child begins to open his/her hand slightly, add item that have higher profiles such as pot scrubbers, brushes, combs, pieces of wood, rocks, utensils, and so forth. This allows the child to practice grasping and releasing items. You may want to use computer cord ties to attach these objects to the pegboard because the child may have the strength to pull them loose from the board.

Level 3 Grasp and Manipulate Board



Figure 3 Level 3 Board

Attach elastic to the end of the item(s) to be attached. Initially the elastic should be about 3 inches long, but as the child develops the ability to manipulate the objects you want to make the elastic long enough to be brought up to a child's mouth from its original location.

Cut a piece of tubing and using the loop turner, thread the elastic through the tubing. Once the elastic is covered its entire length, tie the other end of the elastic to the pegboard.

Tips

Caution must be used to determine appropriate items to be attached to the board. Do not use any items that pose a choking hazard, that are easily broken, or that have sharp edges. The builder is responsible for the safety of the child using the equipment.

Make sure that any drilled holes or the edges of items or the board are not sharp. You may need to sand or use duct tape to bind edges that could scratch or cut a child.

The items placed on a position board are determined by the developmental level of the child or children to play with the board. Evaluate items for sensory characteristics – visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory, and taste. Evaluate an item for the skill needed to manipulate it – pushing, batting, grasping, pulling, taking apart, putting together, etc. Ensure that items can be compared to others of size, weight, shape, etc.

A position board that requires skills that are too developmental high or too low for a child will not promote active learning, and may result in limited or stereotypical activity or no activity at all.



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