

Carpentry

Tārai rākau



Carpentry is an activity that gives children the opportunity to build things and, at the same time, to develop and practice a wide range of skills.

Carpentry / Tārai rākau

Te Whāriki

Carpentry can support learning across all strands of Te Whāriki. In particular, children's developing capability to be expressive is supported in the **Communication strand**, where they discover and develop different ways to be creative and expressive, and also in the **Exploration strand**, where children gain confidence and control of their bodies, especially in the fine movements associated with using tools.



Carpentry can help children to

- gain increasing control over their bodies, hand-eye coordination, manipulative skills and muscular strength
- learn to solve problems
- understand length, size, balance and force
- learn to observe, predict and experiment
- express their creativity in a 3-dimensional way
- learn to share and cooperate with others.



Adults can support children by

- playing with them and listening to them
- watching them closely and making sure carpentry equipment is kept in the carpentry area
- being ready to help them if needed, e.g. to hold a drill
- making sure the area is well stocked with suitable wood, nails etc.
- showing them how to use the tools correctly and look after them
- allowing them to explore at their own pace
- supporting them to put their own ideas into practice without taking over.

Providing for Carpentry

Carpentry needs to be in an area where adults can easily observe children. The carpentry bench needs to be sturdy and at child height, with a trolley or shelves nearby to store wood and equipment. It needs to be on a hard surface, where dropped nails and small items can be picked up. Large magnets make this task much easier – and make it fun as well. The wood needs to be soft and untreated (pine is good) and in a range of shapes and sizes. Large logs or tree trunks on the ground are great for young children for hammering and sawing.

Ideas for equipment

- hammers that are light with a full-sized hitting surface
- small, sharp adult saw
- vices to grip wood
- nails in a range of sizes and types
- pliers to hold nails while the child hammers
- hand-drill and bit, and screws and screwdriver (short, stubby kind is the easiest to use)
- sandpaper and block
- a clipboard with paper and a pencil for children to make and record plans
- ruler and builder's pencil
- useful accessories such as PVA glue, stapler and staples, tape, string, bottle tops, hooks, nuts and bolts, scissors, rubberbands, lids and paint.

Manu aute (kites), poutoti (stilts), tītī tōrea (stick games) are easily-made resources that could be created and used by groups.

Manu aute: kites

The *Nga tamariki iti* series (available through www.thechair.minedu.govt.nz) includes the story of Hemi's kite. This story also includes very easy kite-making techniques, using mainly natural resources.

Poutoti: stilts

Easy to make, but it is important to use suitable timber, sanded to avoid splinters or sharp edges, and to size them for young children.

Tītī tōrea: sticks for stick games

These are easily-made items that can be created and used by groups. For young children, tītī tōrea may be created using rolls of paper rather than wood. However, some light types of timber are suitable. Tītī tōrea can be used with music, singing and rhythm exercises, and help children to learn about the sound and timing of clicking sticks together (rhythm).

