



What Is It Made Of? Prep Science at Home

You can help! Everything around us is made of materials! You can help your child notice and name what things are made of every day.

Why are we learning this? Materials are part of everyday life up here

In remote communities, knowing about materials matters every day — which wood is best for building, what material keeps the rain out, which material is safe to touch in the heat. First Nations peoples have deep knowledge of natural materials — bark, grasses, clay, shells and stone — and how their properties make them useful for different purposes. When your child learns to observe and describe materials, they are connecting science to something they already experience all around them.

My child will learn to:

✓ Name materials

Know that things are made of materials — wood, metal, plastic, fabric, glass.

✓ Describe properties

Use words like hard, soft, rough, smooth, heavy, light, flexible.

✓ Explain why

Understand why different materials are used for different things.

✓ Sort and group

Put objects into groups based on what they are made of.

Big ideas to know:

What is a material?

A material is what an object is made from. Some common materials are wood, metal, plastic, fabric, glass and rubber.

Properties

Each material has properties — what it feels like, looks like and does. Hard, soft, shiny, rough, flexible, waterproof — these are all properties.

Right material for the job

We choose materials because of their properties. A raincoat is plastic or treated fabric because those are waterproof — wood would not work!

Materials are all around us!

Wood	Metal	Plastic	Fabric
Hard - Brown Can be rough Floats in water roughness	Shiny - Heavy Hard & smooth Can get hot smooth/hard	Light - Colourful Can be flexible Waterproof recycling	Soft - Flexible Can be stretchy Absorbs water Absorption
Made of Wood: Chair - Table Pencil - Ruler	Made of Metal: Spoon - Pot Scissors - Coin	Made of Plastic: Bottle - Bag Toy - Cup	Made of Fabric: Shirt - Towel Bed sheet



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Look around — what materials can you find?

Material	Properties (what it is like)	Found in...
Wood	Hard, brown, can be rough or smooth, natural	Furniture, pencils, floors, doors
Metal	Shiny, hard, heavy, conducts heat and cold	Spoons, pots, scissors, taps
Plastic	Light, can be hard or bendy, waterproof	Bottles, bags, toys, containers
Fabric / cloth	Soft, flexible, can be rough or smooth	Clothes, towels, bags
Glass	Transparent (see-through), hard, smooth	Windows, cups, jars
Rubber	Stretchy, flexible, waterproof	Tyres, erasers, rubber bands

Think Like a Scientist — Material Hunt!

Walk around your home together and find 10 objects. For each one, ask: "What is it made of?" Sort them into groups by their material.

Ask: "Why do you think this object is made of that material? Could it be made of something else instead?"

You will need: (Materials)

- Household objects (spoon, bottle, stone, cloth, toy)
- A sorting tray or flat surface
- Paper and pencil

Things to look for:

1. Something made of wood
2. Something made of metal
3. Something plastic
4. Something made of fabric
5. Something you are not sure about!

Questions to ask your child

1. What is that made of? How do you know?
2. Is it hard or soft? Heavy or light? Smooth or rough?
3. Why do you think they made that out of that material?
4. Can you find two things made of the same material?

5. What would happen if a raincoat was made of paper?
6. Is that material natural (from nature) or made by people?
7. Can you find something that is made of more than one material?

No special equipment needed — just look around the home and talk about what you can see and feel!

Key words to know:

Material	What an object is made from — wood, metal, plastic, fabric, glass
Properties	What a material is like — hard, soft, heavy, light, shiny, rough
Hard	Does not change shape easily when you push it — like metal or wood
Flexible	Bends without breaking — like fabric or rubber
Waterproof	Does not let water through — like plastic or rubber
Transparent	You can see through it — like glass or clear plastic
Natural	Comes from nature — like wood, stone, cotton or wool

Key words to look up

Material · Properties · Hard · Soft · Flexible · Waterproof · Natural

What school will check

Your child needs to recognise that objects are made of materials and describe the observable properties of those materials.

Try it at home!

Find your hardest object and your softest object at home. Now find the heaviest and the lightest. Can you think of a material that is BOTH light and waterproof?