



How to Make Fleece Balls

What you need:

- ✓ Fleece, use a yard for a set of 6 to 7 balls (scraps work too!)
- ✓ Pinking shears
- ✓ Sharp scissors
- ✓ 14 Inch plastic zip tie

How to make the fleece ball:

Cut:

1. Using pinking shears, cut fleece into 14 - 30" x 5" strips.
2. Cut off binding edges from each fleece strip.
3. Place two 30" x 5" strips directly on top of each other.

Fringe:

1. Using pinking shears, cut 1 inch wide slits up each long edge of the fleece strips.
2. Get close to the middle of the strip, but DO NOT CUT all the way through the middle of the strip.

Roll:

1. Starting at one end, tightly roll the fringed, fleece strips like a jelly roll.
2. Hold roll firmly, place zip tie around circumference, and cinch down tightly.
3. Cut zip tie off very close to lock.
4. Tie two small fleece strips across zip tie end to cover sharp edge.

Fluff:

- ✓ Work the fringed strips with your fingers into a "pom-pom" shape.

Play!

Cut



Fringe



Roll





How to Use a Fleece Ball

Fleece balls encourage sensory exploration:

Sensory play is one of the key areas of play for babies and young children, and a crucial part of their development. Sensory play is play that involves the use of one or more of the five senses; touch, sight, smell, taste and hearing.

Our senses are our guide through the world around us, and for babies and young children they provide endless opportunity for fascinating discovery. Simply gazing at a colorful toy, hearing a bird sing, smelling a flower, tasting a juicy orange or touching a furry soft toy are all opportunities for sensory learning about the world.

Fleece balls enhance gross motor skills:

Babies and toddlers improve both fine and gross motor skills with fleece and other sensory balls. Infants crawl toward the balls enhancing eye/hand coordination, use muscles to reach a ball, then grasp and hold on tight! The play with balls introduces the idea of movement and motion into child's world through rolling, swinging, and tossing games.

Fleece balls enhance socialization:

Young children interact with others as they roll a sensory ball across the floor to a trusted adult. Young children eagerly toss sensory balls to playmates. Back and forth tossing provides early experiences in turn-taking and collaborative play.

Sensory balls enhance visual and perceptual skills:

Vivid contrasting colors capture child interest and help with focus and perception. The balls help a child begin to distinguish form, color and movement – the qualities of matter in the physical universe.

For more examples of inexpensive toys and materials for infants and toddlers contact Regional Infant Toddler Specialists, Wendy Sullivan and Sarah Gould at the Capital District Child Care Council, 518 426-7181 ext. 352 or 345.

