

How to Make a Sensory Gel Bag



How does a child who is blind or visually impaired use their senses? One way to find out is to make a sensory gel bag together and then play with it. It's easy to make. Depending on what you put inside the gel bag, it provides many tactile opportunities. Craft projects like this one are fun for the whole family, too, because the designs are endless!

If your child can access and play with the bag independently, allow for them to explore it with their hands and/or feet. Use the hand-under-hand or hand-under-foot strategy if your child needs help touching the bag.

Talk to your child about how the bag feels when you squish it. "The bag is soft. The pom poms make it bumpy!" Do the items inside the bag move when you squeeze the bag? Hold the bag up to a window or place it on a light box and talk about the bright, shiny objects inside the bag.

Materials:

- 1 gallon-size Ziploc freezer bag
- 16-oz. bottle of hair gel
- Duct tape

- Pom poms, sequins, acrylic gems and foam shapes in different colors and sizes (Use your imagination! Avoid anything with sharp edges that might puncture the bag.)

Instructions:

- Fill Ziploc bag with 16 ounces of hair gel.
- Add craft supplies. You can use as many items as you want. They can be the same or different. Keep in mind that as you are adding objects, particularly larger ones, you may want to increase the amount of gel you are putting in the bag so that there is enough gel to move the items around.
- Close Ziploc bag securely.
- Squeeze the bag to mix the ingredients together.
- Seal the four edges of the bag with Duct tape.



Try These Ideas:

- If your child likes to put things in their mouth, try making edible gel with Xanthum gum, which is found in the baking aisle of the grocery store. Using a scale, mix 10 grams of Xanthum gum with 1000 grams of room-temperature water in a blender. If it's too thick, add more water in 50-gram increments. Use it as you would the hair gel but it's safer for children who use their mouths to explore new things.
- Make your sensory gel bag glow in the dark by mixing glow-in-the-dark pigment powder from the crafts store with the hair gel. After you play with the gel bag on the light box, turn the light box off and touch it while it glows!