

Balls

Multi-coloured pool balls, foam basketballs, space hoppers - there are so many types of balls available of all sizes, and lots of innovative ways to incorporate them into sessions to give multisensory experiences for all abilities.

Useful types of ball:

- Inflatable beach balls are light and brightly coloured and can be thrown in the air without the worry of hurting anyone.
- Exercise balls are good for taking weight, helping balance and engendering trust in partners. They can be linked to colour themes, or to reinforce the feeling of 'flying'.
- Flashing light balls are loved by all participants. They add another dimension to play and focus attention.
- Ping-pong balls are light and safe and are good to use in large quantities for maximum effect.
- Clear hamster balls with battery lights inside can be used to create magic, focus attention, make pathways or reinforce a theme, such as a forming lumps of lava in a 'volcano', depending on the colour of the lights inside.
- White polystyrene balls come in a variety of sizes, which is useful, and some even split in half, so you can reveal things from inside.

Here are some ideas:

- Use a variety of textures/sizes for manual and visual exploration. They could be foam, plastic with holes in, spiky, squashy, light reflective.
- Use large, clear or silver containers for rolling balls around in. These give sound and visual stimulus. You could also use dustbin lids, whose corrugated surface give different sound qualities.
- Clear, giant water bottles with small rubber balls inside perform like instruments when rolled, tapped, shaken and it is fun to see the balls rolling/bouncing around inside.
- Half-pipe tubes, either plastic or cardboard, can be used to roll a variety of small balls down. This can encourage social activity, one rolling, one catching, as well as opportunities for tracking the ball as it passes.
- Flexible ducting hose also works well for rolling balls through. Participants enjoy seeing balls disappear at one end and reappear at the other. It is particularly good with flashing light balls, whose journey can be followed along the tube.
- Rolling balls around on moonhoops allows clients to see and enjoy the motion of several balls rolling together. Careful, it's not easy!
- Long sheets of corrugated plastic are great for rolling a variety of small balls down. This is something several participants can access at the same time and becomes a group activity, particularly retrieving the balls at the bottom!
- Use mirrors to enhance the balls effect; bouncing on (this gives sounds too), rolling over, doubling and tripling the image.
- Ping pong balls in plastic egg boxes make loud shakers.

Links

Tubes (Prop)

Mirrors (Prop)

Moonhoops

Workshops - Snow Queen, Mindscape

Videos

Ping pong balls

Purple pathway

Balls and chutes