

Shape, space and measure 2

**Explore position  
and space**

## Teacher guidance



### Books

- *Duck in the Truck* by Jez Alborough
- *Cat Up, Cat Down* by Catherine Hnatov



### Rhymes

- *Hokey Cokey*

### Top tips

- When playing alongside children in provision both inside and outside, play simple games that use instructions. Encourage children to respond to simple positional language, such as 'in', 'out', 'on', 'under', 'over', 'in front', 'behind'.
- When introducing positional language, using gestures can support children's understanding.
- Enhance provision with a range of real life 3-D objects, such as tissue boxes, tins and crisp tubes, for children to explore.

### Key resources

- real life 3-D objects
- cardboard boxes of different sizes
- squares of carpet and fabric



## Small steps

Step 1

Respond to simple language of position

Step 2

Arrange blocks in a chosen position

Step 3

Select shapes for a space

Step 4

Recognise when 2 objects are the same shape

Step 5

Explore and describe shapes and objects

Step 6

Sort shapes and objects into simple categories

# Explore position and space

## Notes and guidance

In this block, children will build on prior learning where they have explored and built with shapes and objects. They will progress to arranging blocks in chosen positions and will gain an awareness of space and where objects will fit or won't fit. Throughout the block, children will be introduced to positional language such as 'in', 'out', 'on', 'under', 'over' and 'behind' and will be supported to begin to use this language themselves. Books and rhymes can be used to introduce children to this positional language in meaningful contexts.

Children will also begin to explore, describe and categorise shapes and objects. At this stage, the language used to describe shapes should be simple and informal, such as 'sharp', 'pointy', 'round', 'curvy' and 'flat'. Children will not be expected to use mathematical names or language. Within provision, ensure there are a wide range of resources available that encourage children to use this informal shape vocabulary.

## Sentence stems

- I will put the block ...
- The \_\_\_ will/will not fit inside the \_\_\_.
- The \_\_\_ and \_\_\_ are the same.
- My object is ...

## Key questions

- Where will you put your \_\_\_?
- What will fit inside the \_\_\_?
- What do you notice about this object/shape?

## Links to the curriculum

*Development Matters* – Birth to three

- Compare sizes, weights etc. using gesture and language – 'bigger/little/smaller', 'high/low', 'tall', 'heavy'.

*Development Matters* – 3 and 4-year-olds

- Understand position through words alone – for example, "The bag is under the table," – with no pointing.

*Birth to 5 Matters* – Range 3

- Beginning to select a shape for a specific space
- Enjoys using blocks to create their own simple structures and arrangements

*Birth to 5 Matters* – Range 4

- Responds to some spatial and positional language
- Recognises that two objects have the same shape

## Adult-led activities



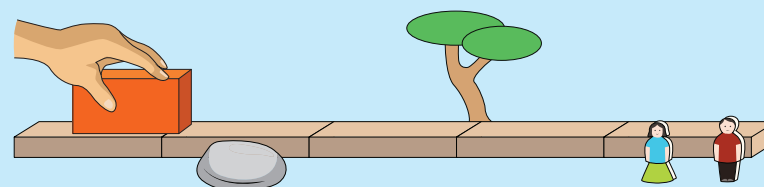
### Step 1

In this small step, children will **respond to simple language of position**. Sing rhymes such as *Hokey Cokey* with children, but change the language of left and right to “Put **one** arm/leg in/out”. Encourage children to join in and follow the simple instruction of “in, out, shake it all about”.



### Step 2

In this small step, children will **arrange blocks in a chosen position**. After reading stories such as *Duck in the Truck* by Jez Alborough, prompt children to make a simple road in the construction area. Enact the story by placing blocks and small-world characters along the road.

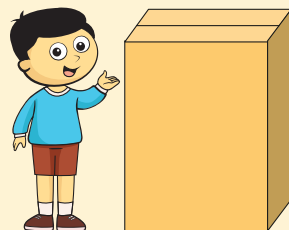


### Step 3

In this small step, children will **select shapes for a space**. Place a large cardboard box in the middle of the carpet. Ask children what might fit inside the box. Would they fit inside the box?

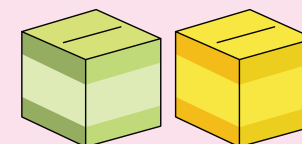
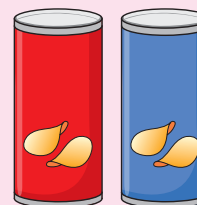
Then show children a smaller cardboard box and a range of items, ensuring that some items will fit and some will not.

Encourage children to select the items they think will fit inside the box and prompt them to check.



### Step 4

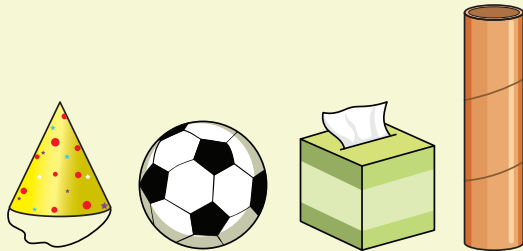
In this small step, children will **recognise when 2 objects are the same shape**. Provide children with a range of box modelling and building blocks that include identical pieces. Model comparing 2 objects to see if they are the same shape and encourage children to continue this themselves.



## Adult-led activities

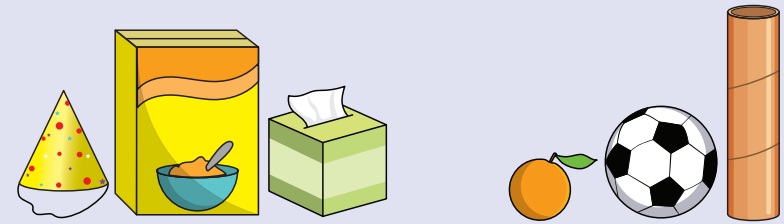
### Step 5

In this small step, children will **explore and describe shapes and objects**. Show children a range of objects such as a party hat, a ball, a tissue box and a tube. As children explore the objects, model the language of 'sharp', 'pointy', 'curvy', 'round' and 'flat'.



### Step 6

In this small step, children will **sort shapes and objects into simple categories**. Provide children with a range of objects similar to those explored in the previous step. Support them to use the vocabulary of 'sharp', 'pointy', 'curvy', 'round' and 'flat' to categorise the objects.



## Continuous provision

In provision, provide children with small squares of carpet or material and a selection of loose parts, such as corks, pine cones, shells and pebbles. Prompt them to make their own simple scenes and encourage children to talk about where they are placing each item.

Provide children with a selection of different-sized boxes and a range of objects to put inside them. Prompt them to explore which objects will fit inside and which will not. Encourage children to use language of bigger, little and smaller to compare sizes.