

Wind wands

As with many activities that involve the four elements of air, fire, earth and water, being out in nature enlivens all our senses. We feel the wind on our skin as a gentle touch, we listen to the different sounds made by leaves rustling in the trees, we see clouds drifting across the sky and smell the rain on the earth after a shower.



AWAKENING THE SENSES

A sudden breeze affects our sense of temperature; our sense of movement and balance are influenced as we are blown by a strong wind. Simply being in nature can enliven our whole sense of life.

Rudolf Steiner said that the world enters through the senses to nourish the spirit, and the spirit goes out to transform, to create the world anew. That is why it is important to provide a

Hints and tips

- Make sure you attach the ribbons securely to the circular wand.
- Opt for making the ribbons all the same colour, or choose colours that go well together or combine a number of different patterns.
- You can use coloured crêpe paper instead of ribbons, but make sure the crêpe does not get wet.

young child with an environment and experiences that nourish all the senses. Nature is one such environment and the more time spent in it, the better. Wind wands are great outdoor toys: providing a simple way of enjoying flying, they are the precursor to the more complicated kite-flying.

You can tie on different lengths or types of ribbon to add variety to the experience. For instance, strips of crêpe paper make a wonderful sound, crackling and rustling as they brush against each other. Satin ribbon, however, moves sleekly and fluidly, and the bright colours look wonderful when flying together in the wind.

A wind wand is made in such a way that your toddler can easily hold and shake it or, with big movements, swing it around in the air. Both you and your toddler can run down a hill together, each holding a wind wand. The more you can spend time outdoors playing with this type of toy with your young children, the more they will strengthen their limbs and enliven their senses.

'Children cannot learn skills for handling the elements early enough... and for this, they must experience them first hand.'

Irmgard Kutsch and Brigitte Walden, *Nature Activities for Children*



Making a wind wand

These wind wands provide an airy activity that takes no skill at all and can be enjoyed by children of all ages.

You will need

1 metre (40 in) thin cane

Strong thread

5 x 1 metre (40 in)
lengths coloured ribbon

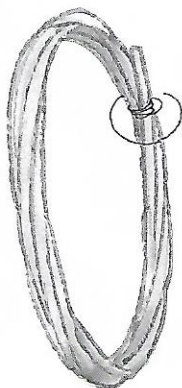
Dressmaking scissors

Sewing needle

Sewing thread

How to do it

1 Twist the cane into a neat hand-sized ring, weaving it in and out once or twice to keep its shape. Secure the ends with strong thread.



2 Hem what will be the loose end of each length of ribbon to prevent it fraying (or cut the ends at an angle).

3 Sew each length of ribbon onto the cane, spacing them evenly apart. Turn down each ribbon end before you sew it to the cane to prevent fraying.

