



Mitten Magic - A Helpful Strategy To Keep Mittens On All Winter Long

Keeping mittens on in the winter is key to playing outdoors. It is imperative that children have proper grasp when wearing their mittens. This means that children's thumbs are in the thumb spot which will allow for children to grasp items and support outdoor unstructured free play. If children do not have proper grasp with their mittens on, they cannot interact with tools, loose parts and other wintery materials. This equates to stationary bored children who cry to go inside within 5 minutes.

Here's how to make it work: (pictures below)

- Children need mittens that are easy to put on. Short mittens allow for greater success and permits adults to assist children's thumbs in the thumb spot of the mitten.
- Our favourite mittens are from [H&M](#) and the key is to size down. Children up to 3 years old will fit in the 9-12 month size and children up to 5 in the 18 month-2T size.
- Adapting a pair of children's socks. (Cut the toe of the sock, Create a small slit in the heel of the sock)
- Children put on their mittens first and place the adapted socks over top. The sock will reinforce keeping the thumb in the thumb spot and will allow extra coverage on wrists. All socks are easy and inexpensive to attain from the dollar store.

Outdoor winter play is successful when children have proper grasp and warm hands. Children will be able to use shovels in the snow, mallets to break up the ice, basic grasp for transporting materials and friends in their toboggans, making forts, and using toilet brushes for painting the snow. Whatever the provocation or planned winter activity, if you don't have proper grasp, your time outside will be minimal. Let's make it work for little hands and pass on this info to colleagues and families that you work with.

1. Short mittens and a pair of children's socks



2. Cut the toes off the socks



3. Cut a slit in the heel of the socks



4. Mittens on first and then add the adapted socks



Thumbs up! Ready to Play!