

Can You Dig It?

Did you know that you can be an archaeologist at home? Get hands-on and make your own mini-excavation site!

YOU WILL NEED:

- A large container – a washing up bowl, cardboard box, plastic bin etc. Aim for something at least 30cm x 30cm.
- Some soil/sand to fill the container with
- A small spade/trowel
- A smartphone/camera
- A notebook/paper
- Some artefacts to bury!

HANDY HINT!

Try and pick objects made of a range of different materials - paper, wood, metal, plastic etc. Natural and man-made materials react differently to being buried and getting wet! Some ideas include:

- A leaf
- A pencil
- A banana peel
- A coin
- A button
- A piece of paper or card
- Seeds/dry beans



When picking things to bury in your excavation site, just remember that they will be covered with soil and watered so try to pick things that you won't mind getting messy and/or possibly wet!

METHOD:

1. Gather your objects and take pictures of them from different angles. You could even make notes about the size, shapes, weight, look, smell and colour of your objects!
2. Put a thin layer of soil/sand in your container, until you can't see the bottom anymore. Add one of your objects in and bury it under more soil.



3. Keep adding layers of soil, placing different objects in at each layer. Ideally, you should have different objects in lots of different layers!
4. Once you're near to the top of your container or you run out of objects, add a thick layer of soil and pat down softly with your spade or trowel.
5. Leave the container open and either pop it outside or keep it inside and water it lightly once a week for 4-8 weeks.

After patiently waiting, it's time to channel your inner archaeologist!

YOU WILL NEED:

- A tray
- A spade/trowel
- An old toothbrush
- A smartphone/camera
- Your notes on your artefacts



METHOD:

1. Gently start to remove the layers of your excavation site – archaeologists usually dig layer by layer, not straight down with holes!
2. When you come across one of your objects – hooray! Celebrate your first find! Carefully dig around the artefact, perhaps using the toothbrush to help remove any soil. Gently remove the object and pop it on the tray.
3. Keep digging until you've found all of your objects – some of them might look quite different or may have even separated into several pieces.
4. Take pictures of your items and make new notes about the size, shapes, weight, look, smell and colour.

Well done! You've just taken part in your first archaeological dig!

Did you notice any changes in your objects?

Which ones changed the most? Which ones changed the least?

If you made another excavation site, what would you bury next time?

We'd love to see any photos you've taken of your archaeological antics – feel free to send them to us at [EMAIL] or message us at [TWITTER]/[Facebook].