





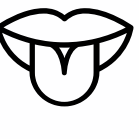
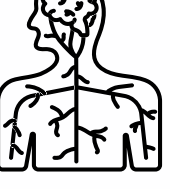


How to: Make Your Own Sensory Room

What is Sensory Processing?

Sensory processing is how we interpret stimuli and understand the world around us, and how we respond to those messages and interact with stimuli.

What are the 8 Sensory Systems?

- Visual 
- Auditory 
- Tactile 
- Olfactory 
- Proprioception 
- Vestibular 
- Gustatory 
- Interoception 

[Click here to learn more about the 8 senses](#)



What is a Sensory Room?

A sensory room is an environment designed to have a regulating and calming effect for individuals experiencing sensory overload or who crave sensory stimulation.



Consider the 8 Sensory Systems

When creating a sensory room, consider designing the room with sensory opportunities for all 8 senses.

Sensory Retreat Zones & Safe Surfaces

Sensory retreat zones provide a calming space to wind down from overwhelming sensory input.

This could include:

- Tents or tunnels
- Large cardboard boxes
- Blanket forts

Consider having soft furnishings and materials to promote safety (e.g., foam or gel tiles, padded mats and furniture).



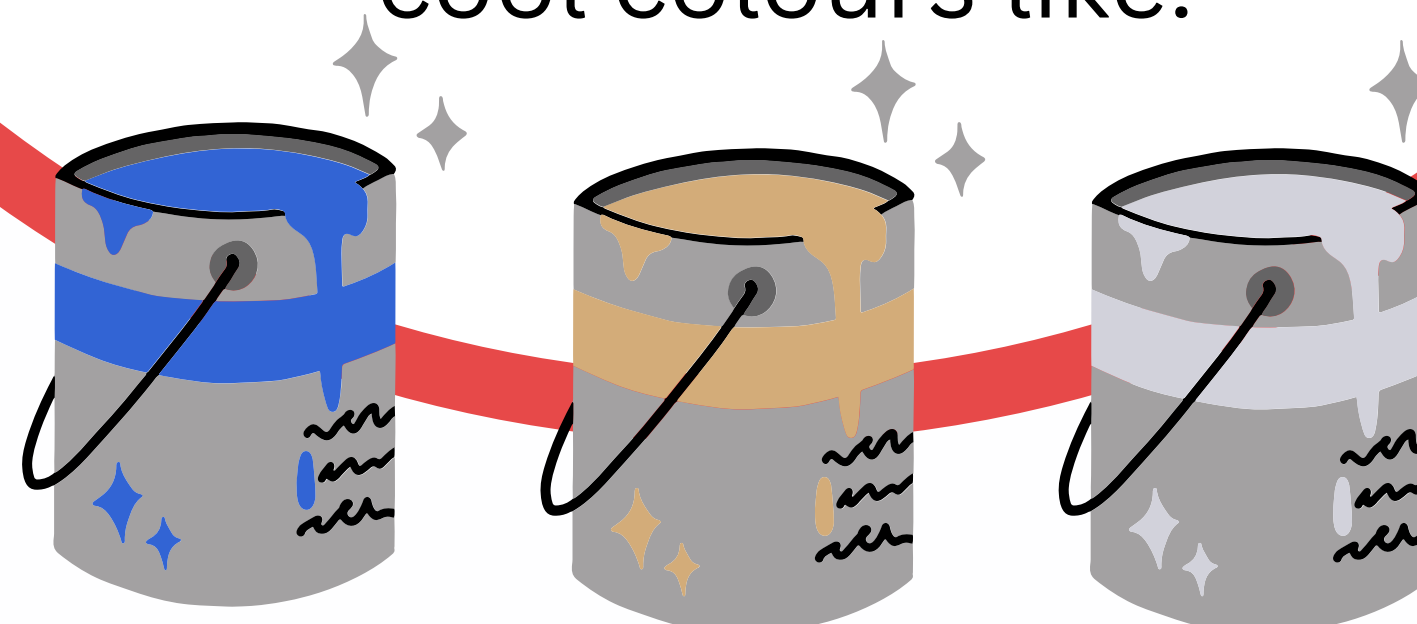
Visual



Visual stimuli in sensory rooms can have high contrast (i.e., glowing) and include movement and opportunities for tactile input. This includes:

- Light dimmers, glow lamps, fiber optic lights/fairy lights, bubble tubes
- Light up toys or panels that can be manipulated (on/off), sunglasses, mirrors
- Glow in the dark paint, stickers, projectors

Consider painting the walls neutral or cool colours like:





Auditory

Auditory stimuli in sensory rooms should promote a sense of calm by making the environment quieter or incorporating soft background noise. This includes access to:

- Headphones or earmuffs
- White noise machine
- Nature sounds



Tactile



Tactile stimuli in sensory rooms can include a variety of textures and materials. This could be:

- Bean bags, foam balls/blocks, putty (with supervision)
- Fuzzy rugs or pieces of carpeting
- Water, sand, or rice tables filled with toys

A sensory wall with opportunities to touch different textures like silicone, yarn, sponge, cork and more can also provide helpful tactile input.

Olfactory

Some people prefer no scents at all. If provided, olfactory stimuli in sensory rooms should be subtle and calming. This includes:

- Diffusing preferred essential oils
- Incorporating stimulating toys or materials for play (e.g., scented markers, putty, stickers, toys)



Proprioceptive

Proprioceptive stimuli in sensory rooms should promote gross motor movement in a safe space. This includes access to:

- Use of exercise balls with supervision
- Bean bag chairs
- Weighted plushes/buddies or weighted lap pads



Vestibular

Vestibular stimuli in sensory rooms should include opportunities for movement. This includes:

- Balance board
- Tunnels
- Swivel chairs
- Rocking chair



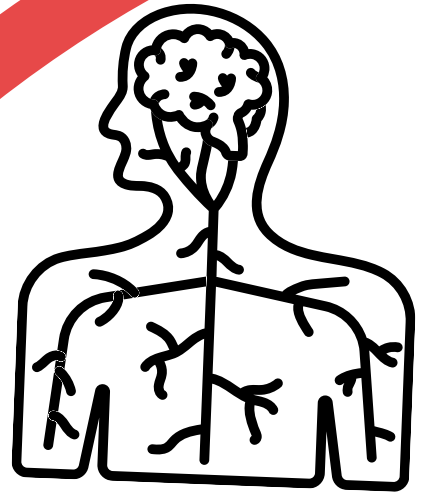
Gustatory



Gustatory stimuli in sensory rooms should be monitored at all times and can include:

- Chewing toys like chewelry
- Access to an array of different textured snacks, including crunchy snacks, like pretzels, apples, fruit leathers or raisins

NOTE - these items also provide tactile and proprioceptive input.



Interoceptive

Providing multisensory stimuli has been shown to support regulation and heighten interoceptive awareness. Other activities or tools that could be used to increase awareness can include:

- Body maps
- Expandable breathing ball
- Emotion chart
- Basic needs communication board



Additional Sensory Tools to Consider

Below are examples of sensory tools that coincide with various types of stimuli.

- Fidget toys, pop-its, stress balls, stretchy tools
- Putty and relevant equipment (i.e., rolling pin, shape cutters, plastic knives), slime
- Foam puzzles and musical instruments
- Sensory kits (small bags or boxes filled with sensory tools)



Furniture

Below are examples of furniture that promote input for multiple sensory systems and movement.

- Flexible seating (moveable seat cushions)
- Balance/wobble cushions and stools
- Exercise ball chair



References

For a resource list to purchase the sensory tools mentioned in this handout, [click here](#)

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