How-To Guide

Cable Spool Tables

Cable spool tables provide diverse opportunities for individual and small group activities throughout the outdoor learning environment. Whether supporting dramatic play, loose parts play, arts and crafts, sensory play, or gardening, to name a few, cable spool tables are an affordable and durable way to add color and opportunities for learning throughout the space.
### Materials

- Wooden cable spools
- Durable, non-toxic outdoor spray paint (3 cans per spool)
- Durable, non-toxic brush-on outdoor paint
- Non-toxic, water-based wood sealant
- Heavy grit sand paper (40 - 60 grit)
- Access to power
- (Optional) Stencils – shapes, animals, letters or numbers
- (Optional) Chalkboard paint
- (Optional) Artificial turf
- (Optional) Heavy duty stapler

### Tools

- Gloves
- Nail pulling pliers
- Hammers
- Orbital power sanders
- Extension cords
- Paint brushes
- Sponges
- Paint rollers
- Paint trays
- Drop cloths
- (Optional) Sockets/wrenches to tighten any loose hardware
- (Optional) Wheelbarrow
- (Optional) Heavy duty scissors
- (Optional) Heavy duty stapler
Implementation Steps

1. **Gather materials**
   - Check with electrical supply distributors, Craigslist, etc.

2. **Prep**
   - Remove any non-essential, or re-secure hardware (i.e. nails, screws, bolts, etc.).
   - Sand/bevel any sharp edges and splintery areas.

3. **Paint**
   - Use your imagination!
   - Look up ‘cable spool play tables’ (Google images, Pinterest, etc.) for inspiration.
   
   OR

4. **Weatherproof**
   - Use the water-based wood sealant to slow the affects of weather and use over time.

5. **Place in desired locations**
   - Once paint is fully dry, place spools where you want them and make sure they are stable and not wobbly.

Considerations

- Chalkboard paint on spool tops can be an added element of fun!
- Painting with brushes and sponges is a great opportunity to include preschoolers and/or older siblings.
- Really beat up or worn spool top surfaces can be wrapped with artificial turf. (See image to the right)
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