

# Pinwheel Fun

Pinwheels are fun to play with, but they also reinforce your child's developmental skills. Like blowing- what a great way to strengthen muscles, the very same muscles children use when learning a language! And what a wonderful activity for practicing vocabulary—running with a pinwheel practices fine and gross motor coordination. Anticipation and discovery, cause and effect... your child is learning about her world and doing Science through play!

**Materials:** Heavyweight paper OR Lightweight cardstock  
Paper towel tube  
A craft brad (paper fastener) or pipe cleaner  
Decorations, such as: \* Dot markers \*Glue \*Stickers

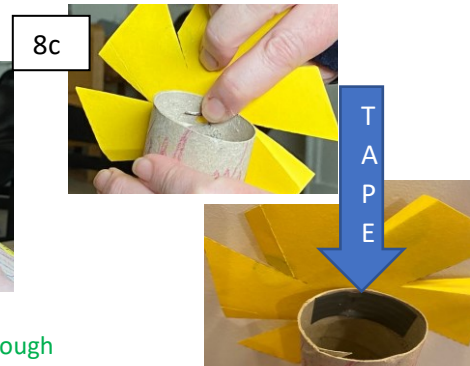
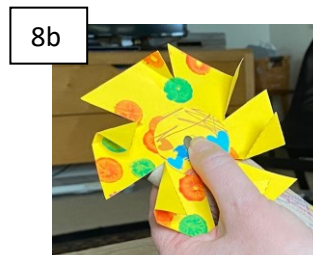
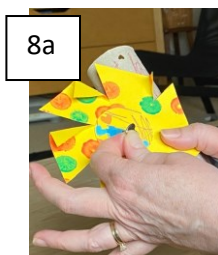
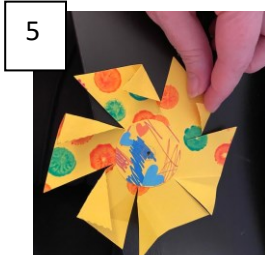
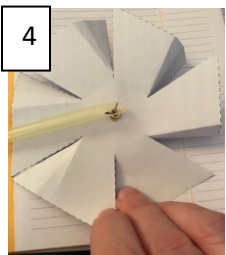
You can use a template for the pinwheel found here:

<http://thelongthread.com/2009/05/21/flower-pinwheels/pinwheel-flower-template>  
([alphamom.com](http://alphamom.com)) Check out other ideas at this site too!



## Directions:

1. Print the hexagon and the circle at the web address above. Or draw a hexagon, at least 4.5 inches (11.5 cm) across, and a circle with a 1 3/4 inch diameter. Cut around the edges of each shape.
2. Decorate the paper as desired. Decorating both sides in a contrasting way will add interest.
3. Glue the circle in the middle of one side, giving the paper double thickness reinforcement.
4. At every corner, cut down about 2/3 of the way.
5. Fold at one (the same) edge of each corner, about 1/2 inch folds. Experiment later – big folds or little folds are best?
6. Decorate the handle for the pinwheel. (the paper towel tube)
7. Use a sharp point (pushpin?) to poke a hole in the middle of the template. Also, poke a hole along the edge of the paper towel tube.
8. (a) Insert craft brad into the middle of the circle on the hexagon template, (b) then through the paper towel tube; (c) flatten down the ends of the fastener. Wiggle it around, so it is a loose fit toward the pinwheel. **Secure the brad ends with tape\*\***
9. Experiment blowing on the pinwheel to make it go round and round.



## Questions to prompt your child's learning:

What's another way we can make the pinwheel spin?  
What do you want to use to decorate your pinwheel?  
It's not working. How could we change it?  
Let's make another and see which one spins longer!  
What happens when daddy blows on the pinwheel?  
What else could we use to make the wheel? (plastic, magazine page...???) How are they different?  
What else could we use to make the handle? Which one do you like better? (See the straw handle in picture 4)  
If you blow on it and give it to me, will it keep spinning?

\*\* Make a game out of it - Point out pinwheels – I SPY game in the community, during a car ride

Consider bold contrasting designs for children with visual impairments; different size and texture grips to match child's motor needs.

\*\*the small brad is a choking hazard. Tape it down securely so it won't come out. Substitute a pipe cleaner twisted as a fastener and fashioned in a way that cannot be swallowed.

For a safer, alternative fastener, roll the end of a pipe cleaner into a ball, tucking the ends into the middle. Put the pipe cleaner through the paper of the pinwheel. Wrap the pipe cleaner around a pencil, this is the handle. Tape the pipe cleaner securely onto the pencil with a piece of duct tape.



This example shows the method with a traditional pinwheel shape.