

# Blocks

*Poro rākau*



Blocks are valuable manipulative and creative resources for children. They promote opportunities to develop maths, science, art, language and social skills, and they provide plenty of opportunities for developing persistence, problem solving and creating 3-dimensional structures.

# Blocks / Poro rākau

## Te Whāriki

**Block play supports learning across all strands of Te Whāriki.** In particular, it supports the **Exploration strand**, where children gain confidence in and control of their bodies. The **Contribution strand** recognises that children develop abilities and interests over a wide range of areas. Block play supports this as well as developing perseverance and commitment to a task. Block play, through the **Communication strand**, supports children to discover and develop different ways to be creative and expressive.



## Block play can help children to

- learn about gravity, stability, balance, weight, and trial and error
- understand shape, size, space, depth, width and height
- develop hand-eye coordination and muscles
- learn to plan and ask questions
- gain confidence in their own abilities
- learn to cooperate and share with others.



## Adults can support children by

- allowing them to explore at their own pace
- supporting them to put their own ideas into practice
- helping them sort out problems
- listening and talking to them about what they are doing
- encouraging them to help tidy up after the playgroup
- making sure they are safe.

## Providing for Blocks

Children need a lot of space when playing with blocks. Carpeting or low mats provide comfort but some children find it easier to build on an uncarpeted area. Using low shelving or boxes to store the blocks will allow children to reach the blocks they want.

## Ideas for equipment

- home-made blocks made out of different-sized boxes (stuffed with paper and taped down or covered with several layers of papier mâché for strength)
- multiple unit blocks in full, half or quarter sets
- sets of coloured blocks
- items to use alongside blocks – such as toy cars, plastic people and animals
- other equipment such as cones, cardboard and fabric.

