

Shape Unit

The activities on this page can be used with any shape or for shape review. Specific shape activities are listed separately.

Games

Shape scavenger hunt:

Give children a paper cutout of the shape they are looking for and have them go around the room to find the shape. You could also send the shape home and have them bring something back that is that shape. They can cut out pictures of things in magazines and add them to a perpetual shape bulletin board display. As they search around the room, have them join you in this poem.

Shape hunt poem:

Going on a shape hunt, Going right away, if we can't find a circle, we'll be hunting all day.

Glow in the Dark shapes:

In preparation for the game, tape cutouts of basic shapes around your classroom. Put some on the walls, some on the doors, and some on the floor, and even some on the ceiling. Then darken the room somewhat and give a flashlight to a child. Have him shine the light on a shape and identify the shape. Have as many children as would like take turns or allow one child a day until everyone has had a turn. You can also purchase premade glow in the dark shapes or cut them from fluorescent paper.

Body Shapes:

Have the children work together to make the shapes. Use lots of discussion about how many children it takes for each shape (sticking the number of sides needed). You could talk about which shapes they can make themselves (circle) and which ones need more people. You could also make the shapes extra large by adding children.

Shape Bag Activities:

1. Put shape blocks (or attribute blocks) in a bag. Child puts hand in the bag and picks a shape. The child attempts to identify the shape without looking at it. Have them justify the guess before removing the shape from the bag.
2. Put shapes in bag. Instruct child to find a _____ without looking. Again have them tell why they think the shape they have is the correct one.
3. Give each child a shape -- shapes could be clothes pinned to the child or on a piece of yarn (or put a shape on each table). Give instructions related to the shape -- circles stand up, triangles hop, rectangles crawl under the table and the favorite -- squares get ON the table. etc.!
4. Hide a shape in your hand, give clues (one at a time) and have the children guess/tell what the shape is/could be. (ex. the shape has straight sides, there are 4 sides, 2 or short and 2 or long).

Shape Walking:

Cut out different shapes--circles, triangles, rectangles and squares--from foam about 3/4 inch thick. (This can be obtained from an upholstery shop.) Place them on the floor and have the kids "cross the river" only walking on triangles or squares or another specified shape. Cut from foam they can walk on them without ruining them--they should last for several years.

Shape Twister:

Use a white sheet to paint shapes in various colors. Make shape calling pieces that match and also cards that say the body parts. Pull out a body part card and a shape card for the children to follow.

Musical shapes (like musical chairs)

Four corners with shape dice:

This is a fun game that can be used for colors, numbers, letters, shapes, etc. In four corners of the room, place four different shapes. Begin counting to ten or play music until the children reach a corner. When you stop the children should all have chosen a corner to stand at. Draw a shape out of a bag. The children who are standing in that shape's corner are out. Keep playing until you have one child left. Instead of drawing the shapes out of a bag, you can cover a square box

with paper and draw shapes on each side to use as dice. As children get out they can still participate by being the dice roller and identifying the shape that is rolled. This is a really good way to observe each child's shape knowledge.

Play Ring around the Rosy

Shape Bingo

Who stole the shape (play like Who stole the cookie from the cookie jar)

Fill a bag with shapes:

Either have the children name the shape as they pull it out or have them say circle or not circle. You could also have them keep their hand in the bag and try to identify the shape before pulling it out. Have them give justification for their guess, for example "I think this is a circle because it has no sides."

Shape walk:

Similar to a cake walk but with shapes on the floor.

Music

Prior to teaching little ones this song, cut several shapes from different colors of construction paper. Laminate the shapes, if desired. Then, during circle time, hold up one shape at a time as the children join you in singing this song to the tune of "Skip to my Lou". Hold up a new shape each time our reach the last line of the song.

(Red, red circle), I see you.

(Red, red circle), I see you.

(Red, red circle), I see you.
(Green square), I see you, too!

Sing to the Hokey Pokey Song

Provide the each child with a set of felt or paper shapes. As you sing the song they find the correct shape. You may want to hold one up to for them to copy. As they learn the shapes, you can eliminate the modeling.

Put your circle in, put your circle out put your circle in and you shake it all about,
You do the Shape Pokey and you turn yourself around, that's what it's all about.

Put your rectangle in your rectangle out, put your rectangle in and you shake it all about,
You do the Shape Pokey and you turn yourself around, that's what's it's all about.

Put your triangle in put your triangle out put your triangle in and you shake it all about,
You do the Shape Pokey and you turn yourself around, that's what's it's all about.

Have you ever seen a circle (To the tune: Have you ever seen a lassie)

Have you ever seen a circle (square, rectangle) a circle, a circle
Have you ever seen a circle?
If you see one, tell me!

Sing this while you hunt for shapes, colors, letters, numbers, etc.

Math

Cereal sort

Fruit loop necklaces for patterning

Pattern crown: Use a sentence strip for each child to glue shapes in a pattern. Staple into a **circle** for them to wear.

Snacks

Circle Day:

sliced bananas, grapes, scoop of ice cream, Ritz crackers, muffins, cookies, sandwich made on round bread, pineapple rings, gumballs, donuts, m&m's,

Triangle Day:

triangular chips, cheese slices cut into triangles, triangular crackers, ice cream cones, sandwich cut into triangles, pizza, pop tarts. The children can make **apple sailboats** from an apple slice, a triangular piece of cheese, and a toothpick. Eat for snack.

Square Day:

cheese cubes, crackers, rice krispie squares, sandwiches cut into squares, saltines, cheese slices, square cereal

Rectangle Day:

celery sticks, carrot sticks, rectangular crackers, granola bars, sandwich cut into strips, graham crackers

House Shaped Snack:

Using a piece of bread for the base of the house, use a triangle of cheese for roof, include squares cut out of lunch meat for windows and doors, and pickle rounds just for fun.

Make the **shapes** with marshmallows and toothpicks

Books

Brown Rabbit's Shape Book by Alan Baker
The Button Box by Margarett Reid
Circles, Triangles and Squares by Tana Hoban
Circus Shapes by Stuart Murphy
Corduroy by Don Freeman
Grandma's Button Box by Linda Aber
The Greedy Triangle by Marilyn Burns
I Have Shapes by Rozanne Lanczak Williams
It Looked Like Spilt Milk by Charles Shaw
Mouse Shapes by Jim Arnosky
Round and Round and Round by Tana Hoban
Round and Square by Miriam Schlein
Sea Shapes by Suse MacDonald
The Secret Birthday Message by Eric Carle
The Shape of Me and Other Stuff by Dr. Seuss
The Shape of Things by Dayle Ann Dodds
Shape Space by Cathryn Falwell
Shape Spotters by Megan Bryant
Shapes by Jan Pienkowski
Shapes by John Reiss
Shapes and Things by Tana Hoban
Shapes, Shapes, Shapes by Tana Hoban
Shapes for Ten Tired Teddies by Prue Theobalds
The Shapes Game by Paul Rogers
So Many Circles, So Many Squares by Tana Hoban
Twizzlers: Shapes and Patterns by Jerry Pallotta
What Am I?: Looking Through Shapes at Apples and Grapes by N.N. Charles
What is Round? by Rebecca Dotlich
What is Square? by Rebecca Dotlich

What is a Triangle? by Rebecca Dotlich

Make Shape Monster Book

Art

Individual Shape Rubbings:

To prepare for this activity, cut sheets of sandpaper into basic shapes, peel the paper off a supply of crayons, and gather a few clipboards.. Working with two or three children at a time, have each child choose a sandpaper shape. Use a piece of rolled masking tape to secure each child's shape to a clipboard. Then clip a sheet of white copy paper over the shape. Demonstrate how to rub the length of the crayon across the paper to make the shape "magically" appear. Continue with different crayon colors and shapes on the same or different paper.

Shape Table Rubbings or Mystery Table:

Tape flat sandpaper shapes onto a table. Place a large piece of butcher paper on top and tape to the underside of table. Provide crayons without wrappers for children to rub and see the shapes magically appear. Can be used for letters and numbers.

Provide materials for stenciling and stamping shapes

Shape train:

Cut squares, circles, triangles and leave in a center where the children can come and create their own shape trains.

Shaving Cream Shapes:

Have children practice drawing shapes in shaving cream on a table top. The cream cleans the tables and you can color it with food color to emphasize any color you are studying.

Online Resources and Games

Shape Packs:

Perfect for teaching or reviewing shapes

<https://www.momshavequestionstoo.com/find-the-shape-teaching-shapes-activity/>

Sammy Snack Story:

Fun online book for children to review their shapes.

<http://www.primarygames.com/storybooks/sammy/start.htm>

Little People® Shapes & Colors Game:

A fun game that teaches both color and shapes.

http://www.fisher-price.com/en_US/GamesAndActivities/OnlineGames/littlepeopleshapesandcolorsgame.html

PBS Shapes Games:

Game that help kids learn shapes.

<https://pbskids.org/games/shapes/>

Roll and Race Shape Games:

<https://thisreadingmama.com/roll-race-shape-games/>

Circle

Introduce hula-hoops during this unit. You can design many games with them, let them practice hula hooping during music or outdoor play, or for circle time for the children to sit in. They are also great for defining workspaces when the children are doing floor work or movement activities

Circle Self Portraits

Give each child a paper plate to draw their face onto. Have mirrors available to let them look at themselves. Once they have drawn their faces, have yarn available in various hair colors for them to glue on.

Fruit loop necklaces

Let the children lace fruit loops onto thin pieces of licorice to make candy necklaces or bracelets. To make other connections, you could have them sort by color, lace with a pattern, count, and discuss how the circle is also the letter O.

Circle Tracings

Create a center with paper, crayons (in your color of the month or just the ones you have studied so far for review), and lots of different size circle lids for tracing. This is create for their writing skills and you can again remind them that they now know how to draw the letter O.

Circle Day - sliced bananas, grapes, scoop of ice cream, Ritz crackers, muffins, cookies, sandwich made on round bread, cheerio's, fruit loops

Circle hunt

This is a great transition activity. For example they can go to the snack table when they have found a circle in the room (button, doorknob, wheel on car)

You can use the following song while they hunt. (To the tune: Have you ever seen a lassie?)

Have you ever seen a circle (square, rectangle) a circle, a circle?

Have you ever seen a circle?

If you see one, tell me!

Circle Exercise

Play some fun music (there are many commercial preschool music CDs with circle songs) and tell the kids you are going to have them make circles in the air with their bodies. Start with their arms and show them how they can go forwards, backwards, fast or slow. They can make large circles or small circles. They can make the circles to the side, front or back. This is very fun and gets out lots of energy. Do the same activity again by having them sit and make circles with their legs.

Bubbles are circles

Blow bubbles with the children and have them really look at the shape. This is probably best done by having them sit and asking them not to get up but wait to see who the bubble lands on. You could even make a game and have the children be the next bubble blower if the bubble lands on them.

We are bubbles

After observing the bubbles, you could extend it with a movement activity. Play soft music and let them float and pop.

Blowing a huge bubble

Tell the children that when people chew gum, they sometimes blow bubbles. Since they aren't allowed to chew gum at school, you are going to teach them how to work together as a class to blow a giant bubble. Have the children join hands in a circle. First you will pretend to chew the gum (have them make chewing motions with their mouths, while bringing the circle into the middle as small as you can get it. Then have them make blowing motions and bring the circle as far out as possible until their arms are really stretching. Tell them to let go (so no one gets hurt) and fall to the floor to pop the bubble. This will be a game they want to play all the time.