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# How to make a sand jar

**Every memory**  
Making every  
day count

# How to make a sand jar



## What is a sand jar?

A jar is filled with layers of coloured sand with each one representing a particular time in someone's life, or their special person; someone who is poorly or who has died.

The sand jars can be used to:

- Create a keepsake for a child or adult who wants to hold onto memories of their special person.
- Help a child or adult to share their feelings about a special person, or a memory of them.

## Who is it suitable for?

Anyone can do this, but young children may need the help of an adult. This activity is an excellent tool for encouraging conversations which might be difficult to start, therefore it works best with input from another person, such as a parent or teacher. It can be done on a one to one basis, or in a group setting.

## You will need ...

- Clear glass jars with a screw top. Shops like Amazon and IKEA have suitable jars, or you can wash out an old jam jar with hot soapy water.
- An assortment of at least ten different coloured sands. You can try your local arts and craft shop or search online, but it's great to make your own as part of the activity.
- (If you're making your own sand) A tub of table salt and a selection of brightly coloured chalks, make sure you have at least ten colours to choose from.



## Let's get started ...

- The person making the sand jar should decide what they want to focus on – it could be about their special person or a memory of them, how they felt at a particular time in their life, or how they feel now.
- It can be helpful to start by making a list of feelings or memories, and the colour of the sand to represent them.



## Making coloured sand

- To make coloured sand, pour the amount of salt needed onto a piece of paper. Rub the chosen coloured chalk firmly over the salt. The colour from the chalk will be absorbed by the salt which can then be used to fill the jar.

## Choose your colours and start layering

- Each layer of sand can be a different size depending on how important that moment or emotion is to them.



## Finishing your jar

- When the jar is finished, place a screwed up tissue on top of the sand. Put the lid on and tap the jar gently on the table. The sand will settle.



## Example

This may help to get started. An eight year old child's baby sister died soon after being born, and these are the colours they chose for their sand jar:

Yellow - Everyone was happy because the baby was expected to arrive

Dark Blue - Their Mum went to hospital during the night

Light Blue - The colour of the nurses uniforms

Pink - Baby sister was born

Orange - A teddy was taken to the hospital for the baby

Green - They felt worries as their Grandma had been crying

Black - They found out the baby had died

Brown - The funeral

Red - Feelings of anger

Mixed Colours - Everyone was sad and everything was confusing

Pink - People were talking about the baby girl

Yellow - Things started to become happy again

## Some helpful advice

- This activity can be an emotional experience as it gives the person doing it the opportunity to have conversations about their feelings. Although it is simple, it can be very revealing and powerful.
- You may ask questions to help explore their choices and encourage conversation, however the person doing this activity should not be made to discuss their feelings further if they don't want to.
- If you are helping a young person with this activity, you should let them know that it is ok and very normal to feel sad or angry.
- They may need your support once it is finished.
- The activity can be repeated at a later date, when feelings have developed or situations have changed.

When an adult or child has been diagnosed with a complex or incurable condition, Havens Hospices can provide the care they need, 'Making every day count'.

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