

Make a Molecule

Got a young scientist at home? Try this project with him! Molecules are made up of atoms that are stuck together in a particular shape or form. Create your own molecule design with this home-made clay recipe and toothpicks!

What You Need:

- Cornstarch clay (baking soda, cornstarch, water)
- Toothpicks

What You Do:

1. Mix 1 cup baking soda, 1/2 cup cornstarch, and 2/3 cup of water in a saucepan. Have a grown-up help you cook the mixture on the stove over medium heat, stirring constantly, until it resembles mashed potatoes. Remove from the stove and let cool.
2. Once the mixture is cool enough to handle, help your child knead the clay on your work surface, adding more cornstarch if necessary to make the clay soft.
3. Have your child form the clay into small balls. They should be a bit bigger than the size of a pea. Make sure you make at least 10 small balls of clay that you will need to build your molecule design.
4. Using your toothpicks, begin building your molecule. Stick the toothpicks into your clay - about 1 cm in.
5. Continue adding toothpicks and clay balls as needed to build your molecule shape.
6. Once your molecule is shaped, carefully place the entire sculpture into a sunny, dry area so that the clay can dry.
7. Now your scientist is ready to show his molecule model at the next science fair!

Note: You can also add food coloring your clay to make different colors for your molecule model.

