

FALL SENSORY PLAY PACK

A colorful, low-prep September printable for sensory play + calm moments

5 No-Stress Sensory Bins

Simple ideas using easy-to-find supplies.

Sensory Scavenger Hunt

Explore soft, crunchy, smooth, bumpy and more.

Fall Calm-Down Breathing Cards

Quick visual breathing prompts for home, school or therapy.

Low-Cost + Flexible

Swap materials to fit age, preference and sensory needs.

Designed for: parents, caregivers, educators and professionals supporting sensory needs.

Tip: Laminate the scavenger hunt and breathing cards for repeat use.

■ SEPTEMBER SENSORY FUN ■ ■

5 No-Stress Fall Sensory Bin Recipes

Keep it simple: choose a shallow bin, add one base material, a few themed objects and a scoop or tongs. Always select materials that are appropriate for the person's age, developmental level and mouthing risk.

1. Apple Pie Bin

Base: dry oats or cereal

Add: red/green pom-poms or felt apples, cinnamon sticks, measuring cups, spoon, small pie tin

Play ideas: scoop, pour, count apples, sort colors, pretend to bake an apple pie.

Easy swap: use torn brown paper or fabric scraps instead of food-based fillers.

2. Crunchy Leaf Bin

Base: clean dry leaves or crinkled paper

Add: pinecones, large acorns, twigs, silk leaves, child-safe tongs

Play ideas: crunch, sort by color, compare sizes, make leaf piles, listen for different sounds.

Easy swap: use tissue paper, kraft paper or reusable fabric leaves indoors.

3. Pumpkin Patch Bin

Base: dried beans, large pasta, shredded paper or orange pom-poms

Add: mini craft pumpkins, green yarn 'vines,' scoops, cups, small baskets

Play ideas: find pumpkins, line them up, count them, make a pumpkin stand, practice in/out and full/empty.

Easy swap: use orange balls or rolled-up orange socks as pumpkins.

4. Woodland Harvest Bin

Base: shredded kraft paper or fabric strips

Add: pinecones, faux berries, wooden rings, toy woodland animals, small bowls

Play ideas: hide and seek, match animals, make nests, sort natural textures, create a woodland scene.

Easy swap: use paper animal pictures if small toys are not available.

5. Warm Fall Color Bin

Base: large pom-poms, scarves or cut fleece in red, orange, yellow, brown and green

Add: cups, muffin tin, large tweezers/tongs, color cards

Play ideas: color sort, pattern making, transfer games, 'find me a...' prompts, quiet repetitive scooping.

Easy swap: this is a great non-food option and can be made entirely with reusable materials.

Fall Sensory Scavenger Hunt

Explore your home, yard, classroom or a fall nature walk. Check each box when you find something that matches the sensory clue.

☐ Something soft	☐ Something crunchy
☐ Something smooth	☐ Something bumpy
☐ Something that smells like fall	☐ Something warm
☐ Something cool	☐ Something that makes a quiet sound
☐ Something that makes a loud sound	☐ Something orange
☐ Something red or yellow	☐ Something you can squeeze
☐ Something light	☐ Something heavy
☐ Something that feels dry	☐ Something that makes you feel calm

My favorite sensory find: _____

One texture I want to try again: _____

One texture I would rather skip: _____

Sensory choice matters: it is okay to observe, use a tool, wear gloves, or skip a texture.

Fall Calm-Down Breathing Cards

Cut apart the cards. Practice when calm so the breathing pattern feels familiar when extra regulation is needed.

APPLE BREATH

Pretend you are holding a fresh apple.
Smell the apple slowly through your nose for 4.
Cool the apple with a slow breath out for 5.

LEAF BREATH

Hold your hand like a leaf.
Trace up one finger as you **breathe in**.
Trace down as you **breathe out**.
Continue around your hand.

PUMPKIN BREATH

Make your belly round like a pumpkin as you **breathe in**.
Let the pumpkin get smaller as you **breathe out**.
Repeat 3 times.

FALL CANDLE BREATH

Imagine a cozy fall candle.
Smell the candle gently through your nose.
Blow the flame softly without blowing it out.
Repeat slowly.

ACORN BREATH

Pretend a tiny acorn is resting in your palm.
Breathe in while you close your hand gently.
Breathe out while you open your hand.
Repeat 5 times.

COZY COCOA BREATH

Pretend you are holding warm cocoa.
Smell the cocoa for 3.
Cool it with a long, gentle breath for 5.
Relax your shoulders.

Reminder: Never force deep breathing. If breathing exercises feel uncomfortable, try a different calming strategy such as stretching, squeezing a pillow, rocking, listening to music or taking a quiet break.

Quick Fall Sensory Setup Guide

Use this page as a simple planning sheet for future sensory play.

1. Pick a base	paper strips • oats • pasta • pom-poms • fabric • leaves
2. Add 3-5 items	pumpkins • apples • pinecones • scoops • cups • tongs
3. Add a simple goal	scoop • sort • match • count • find • pour • pretend
4. Offer choice	hands • scoop • tongs • gloves • observe • skip
5. Keep cleanup easy	tray underneath • towel nearby • small portions • lidded storage

NOTES

Printable use note: Adult supervision is recommended. Avoid choking hazards, allergens, sharp natural materials, and any item that is unsafe for the individual's age or sensory profile.