

# CLASSROOM SUPPLIES

The materials we choose for our classrooms can affect our children’s health and development, so it’s important we make sure those materials are nontoxic. These guidelines are intended to help you make informed decisions about what products are healthier and what products should be avoided. Remember, when in doubt always play it safe and together we can help create healthier spaces for our children to learn and grow!



**PREFER:**

Prefer products made from 100% natural and solid materials



**AVOID:**

Avoid products with many layers or that are assembled from a mix of many materials, especially plastic.



**PREFER:**

Prefer natural untreated surface finishes, rather than coated, sealed, or painted surface treatments



**AVOID:**

Avoid products that have been treated for “stain resistant” or “antimicrobial” properties



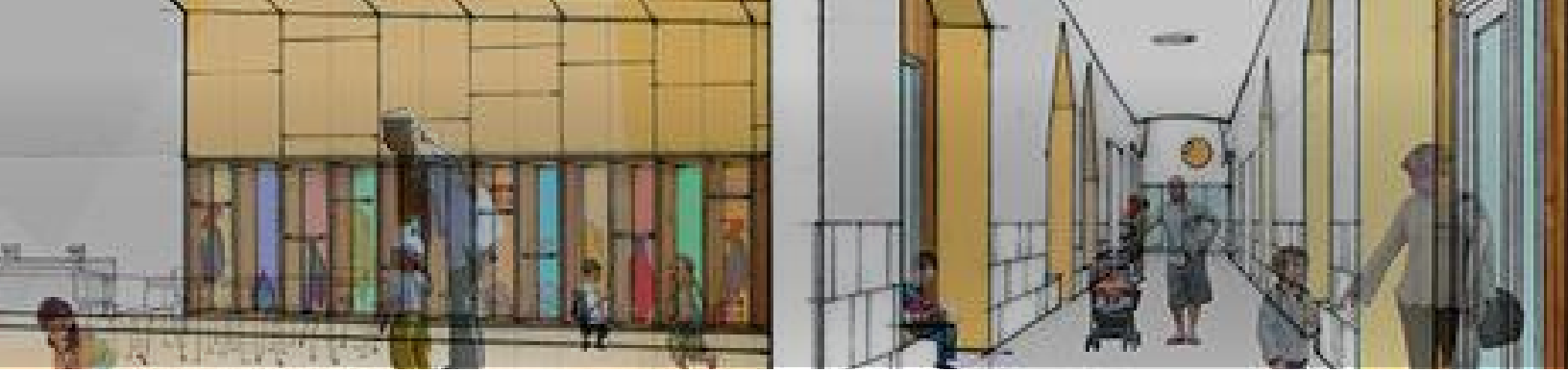
**PREFER:**

Prefer manufacturers that publicly disclose how their products are made and what they are made from



**AVOID:**

Avoid manufacturers that won’t tell you what ingredients are in their products or where they come from



## Resources for Additional Recommendations:



**Gimme the Good Stuff**  
A resource for conscious moms and healthy kids

[Safe Product Guides](#)  
*Gimme the Good Stuff*



**smart Mommy  
healthy Baby**

[Baby & Kids' Organic & Eco-Friendly Toys & Activity Kits](#)  
*Smart Mommy Healthy Baby*



**GETTING  
READY FOR  
BABY**

[Safe Baby Products Guide](#)  
*Getting Ready For Baby*



**Healthy Babies  
Bright Futures**

[Best Products for Pregnancy and Parenthood](#)  
*Healthy Babies Bright Futures*

**TROUBLE IN  
TOYLAND**

[Trouble in Toyland: The 32nd Annual Survey of Toy Safety](#)  
*U.S. PIRG Education Fund*



**The Gentle Nursery**

[Non-Toxic Baby Toys: How To Buy Safer Toys For Your Baby](#)  
*The Gentle Nursery*



**EPA**

[EPA's Teacher's Classroom Checklist](#)  
*US EPA*



**Eco-Healthy  
Child Care®**

[Eco-Healthy Child Care Fact Sheets](#)  
*Children's Environmental Health Network*



**TOXIC-FREE  
FUTURE**

SCIENCE • ADVOCACY • RESULTS

[Top 10 Tips: A Healthy Playroom](#)  
*Toxic-Free Future*

**CLEAN &  
HEALTHY  
NEW YORK**

[Safer Child Care Fact Sheets](#)  
*Clean & Healthy New York*

**THE TOT**

[Guide to Non-Toxic Art Supplies](#)  
*The Tot*



**CEH**  
center for environmental health

[Safer Nap Mats](#)  
*Center for Environmental Health*

# WOOD MATERIALS

## PURCHASING GUIDELINES:

Wood materials are generally a great alternative to plastics, but they can still have toxic chemicals added to their glues, surface coatings, or in the layers of plywood. When making your decisions look for solid wood products and make sure to ask where the wood is coming from and if it's been treated.

### 1. Is it solid wood, or some kind of plywood or particleboard?



#### **PREFER:**

- Solid Hardwood
- Sustainably Harvested Wood (FSC Certified)



#### **AVOID:**

- Plywood or Particleboard that contains toxic glues or formaldehyde

### 2. If it has plywood or particle board, is it formaldehyde-free?



#### **PREFER:**

- Certified No-Added-Formaldehyde (NAF) or Ultra-Low-Emitting-Formaldehyde (ULEF)



#### **AVOID:**

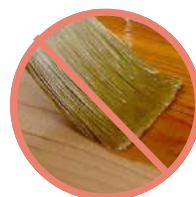
- Plywood without any certification regarding formaldehyde emissions

### 3. Is it finished with any kind of coating that could be toxic?



#### **PREFER:**

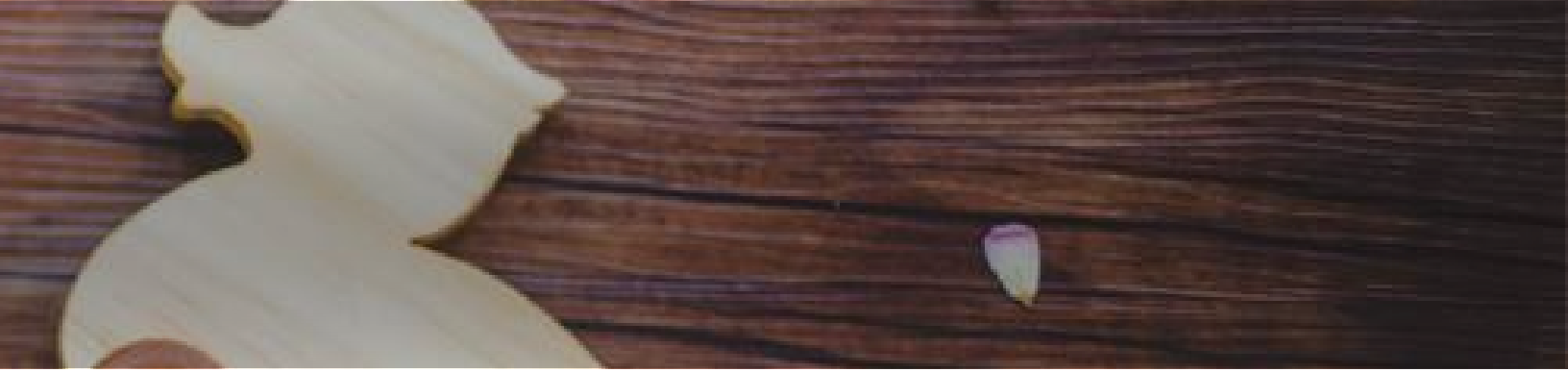
- Unfinished Wood Surfaces
- Natural Oil Finishes (linseed oil, beeswax, walnut oil)



#### **AVOID:**

- Polyurethane finishes can contain toxic chemicals such as isocyanates and BPA, which have been linked Asthma and developmental disorders<sup>2</sup>

1. Living Safe Australia Pty Ltd, *Cheap Wooden Toy Dangers, Your Guide To Eco-Friendly, Safe Wooden Toys*  
2. U.S. Green Building Council, *Better Building Materials*



## EXAMPLES OF SUGGESTED PRODUCTS:

The following educational products exemplify the kinds of properties we look for in natural and healthy wooden toys.



**Hardwood Circle Stackers**  
by Camden Rose

- solid hardwood
- finished with beeswax
- made in USA

[Product Link](#)



**Shape Sorter Bench**  
by Maple Landmark

- locally sourced Maple
- unfinished surfaces
- made in USA

[Product Link](#)



**Wooden State Rattles**  
by Bannor Toys

- solid hardwood
- finished with linseed oil
- made in USA

[Product Link](#)

## SUGGESTED MANUFACTURERS & RETAILERS:

These manufacturers have been identified for carrying some healthier product options, but please note: this does not guarantee that all product lines are necessarily healthier. It is still important to research products individually.

[Baby Wood Works \(USA\)](#)

[Uncle Goose \(USA\)](#)

[TAG Toys \(USA\)](#)

[Bannor Toys \(USA\)](#)

[Elves & Angels \(USA\)](#)

[Holgate Toys \(USA\)](#)

[HABA \(Germany\)](#)

[Grimm's Spiel and Holz \(Germany\)](#)

[Wonderworld Toys \(Thailand\)](#)

[PlanToys \(Thailand\)](#)

# RUBBER MATERIALS

## PURCHASING GUIDELINES:

Some rubber is made from chemicals in a lab, but rubber is also naturally occurring and even comes from trees! Make sure to look for natural or “virgin” rubber, and that no toxic additives have been mixed into the product, such as lead, PVC, BPA, or vinyl.

### 1. Is it made entirely of natural rubber?



#### PREFER:

- 100% Natural Rubber



#### AVOID:

- Synthetic Rubber, which is primarily made from styrene butadiene, a chemical linked to cancer and reproductive disorders<sup>1</sup>

### 2. Wait, so it's not healthier to be using recycled-rubber products?



#### PREFER:

- Natural “Virgin” Rubber



#### AVOID:

- Recycled Rubber, particularly when it comes from recycled tires. While it may sound *green*, these recycled materials may be contaminated with heavy metals, mercury, and arsenic.<sup>2</sup>

### 3. Have any other substances been added to the mix, such as plastic elements?



#### PREFER:

- Rubber products that specifically say “No lead”, “No PVC”, “No BPA”, and “No Vinyl”



#### AVOID:

- Avoid manufacturers or products that don't provide information about the ingredients in their materials

1. Chemical Hazard Data Commons, *Styrene Hazard Summary*

2. Horner, J.M., *Environmental Health Implications of Heavy Metal Pollution from Car Tires*



## EXAMPLES OF SUGGESTED PRODUCTS:

The following educational products exemplify the kinds of properties we look for in natural and healthy rubber materials.



**So'Pure Blocks Toys**  
by *Vulli*

- 100% natural rubber
- fully-disclosed ingredients
- certified by EU standards

[Product Link](#)



**Star & Moon Pacifier**  
by *HEVEA*

- 100% natural rubber
- No PVC, BPA, or Phthalates
- Awarded "Butterfly Mark" for Brands to Trust"

[Product Link](#)



**Fred the Frog, Green**  
by *HEVEA*

- 100% natural rubber
- Hermetically sealed against mold growth
- No PVC, BPA, or Phthalates

[Product Link](#)

## SUGGESTED MANUFACTURERS & RETAILERS:

These manufacturers have been identified for carrying some healthier product options, but please note: this does not guarantee that all product lines are necessarily healthier. It is still important to research products individually.

[Crocodile Creek](#) (USA)

[P'kolino](#) (USA)

[HEVEA Planet](#) (Malaysia,  
Morocco)

[Begin Again](#) (China)

[Vulli](#) (France)

[PlanToys](#) (Thailand)

# FABRIC MATERIALS

## PURCHASING GUIDELINES:

When it comes to fabrics, it's important to choose natural and organic materials, and to make sure the textiles aren't treated with any kind of toxic chemicals.

### 1. Is it made from natural and organic fibers?



#### **PREFER:**

- Natural fibers such as wool, cotton, linen, and hemp
- Certified Organic by the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS)



#### **AVOID:**

- Synthetic fabrics such as vinyl, acrylic, rayon, or spandex

### 2. Has it been treated with stain repellents, flame retardants, or antimicrobials?



#### **PREFER:**

- Untreated fabrics (such as wool) that have natural properties to avoid mold and mildew



#### **AVOID:**

- Fabrics labeled to be Flame-Resistant, Antimicrobial, Stain-Resistant, or Water-Resistant, as it's likely they have been treated with a toxic chemical such as PFAS<sup>1</sup>

### 3. Has it been dyed with toxic chemicals?



#### **PREFER:**

- Natural dyes made from plants, vegetables, berries, or minerals
- OEKO-TEX® Certified as nontoxic



#### **AVOID:**

- Chemically dyed fabrics or brightly colored textiles that don't say how they are dyed

### 4. Is it stuffed or filled with a foam that might be unhealthy?



#### **PREFER:**

- Organic fiber fills from kapok, buckwheat hulls, or wool fibers, or foam made from natural latex



#### **AVOID:**

- Synthetic foams are often treated with flame retardants, which are linked to cognitive and developmental disorders<sup>2</sup>

1. Green Science Policy Institute, *Six Classes: Highly Fluorinated Chemicals*

2. Green Science Policy Institute, *Six Classes: Flame Retardants*

## EXAMPLES OF SUGGESTED PRODUCTS:

The following educational products exemplify the kinds of properties we look for in natural and healthy fabric materials and upholstered products.



**Animal Pals Plush Toy**  
*by Bears For Humanity*

- 100% GOTS Certified Organic Cotton
- No harmful chemical treatments or dyes

[Product Link](#)



**Organic Sewing Kits**  
*by Fluffmonger*

- GOTS Certified cotton and hemp-fleece fabric
- Natural low-impact dyes
- Plush filling from organic wool and buckwheat hulls

[Product Link](#)



**Rest Mat (M65)**  
*by Community Playthings*

- No PVC or Phthalates
- No chemical Flame Retardants
- Certified ingredients

[Product Link](#)

## SUGGESTED MANUFACTURERS & RETAILERS:

These manufacturers have been identified for carrying some healthier product options, but please note: this does not guarantee that all product lines are necessarily healthier. It is still important to research products individually.

[Fluffmonger](#) (USA)

[Bears for Humanity](#) (USA)

[Cate & Levi](#) (Canada)

[Under the Nile](#) (Egypt)

[Finn + Emma](#) (Peru, Vietnam, India)

[Grimm's Spiel and Holz](#) (Germany)



# METAL MATERIALS

## PURCHASING GUIDELINES:

Materials used for food preparation and storage are particularly important to children's health. Toxic chemicals in these products can have a strong likelihood of getting absorbed into children's bodies. Many of these toxic chemicals are found in plastics and non-stick coatings<sup>1</sup>, so it is recommended to instead use stainless steel, cast iron, or glass for these kinds of products.

### 1. Does it have a non-stick coating?



#### PREFER:

- Stainless steel or cast iron pans without non-stick coatings



#### AVOID:

- Non-stick pans, which are often coated with perfluorinated chemicals that have been linked to hormone disruption, cancer, and diseases like obesity<sup>2</sup>

### 2. Does the food come in a can?



#### PREFER:

- Stainless steel or glass food storage containers
- Fresh fruit if possible, or frozen as a back up



#### AVOID:

- Canned goods often have BPA in their linings, which can migrate into the oils of the food, and has been linked to endocrine disruption and heart disease<sup>2</sup>

### 3. Is the foodware both reusable and non-toxic?



#### PREFER:

- Stainless steel dishware that avoids toxic treatments and coatings, and is both durable and surprisingly affordable



#### AVOID:

- Disposable foodware that must be thrown away and repurchased after a single use
- Plastic dishware and utensils

1. Green Science Policy Institute, *Six Classes: Highly Fluorinated Chemicals*

2. Avoiding Hidden Hazards: A Purchaser's Guide to Safer Foodware, *Center for Environmental Health*



## EXAMPLES OF SUGGESTED PRODUCTS:

The following products exemplify the kinds of properties we look for in healthier food preparation and storage containers.



**Stainless Steel Dinner Set**  
by IndiaMart

- food grade stainless steel
- durable and reusable
- highly affordable sets

[Product Link](#)



**Solo Rectangle**  
by ECOLunchbox

- 100% stainless steel
- no plastics, BPA, or Phthalates

[Product Link](#)



**Stainless Steel Infant Bottle**  
by Pura Kiki

- stainless steel bottle
- certified for no BPA, BPS, phthalates, lead, PVC, or nitrosamines

[Product Link](#)

## SUGGESTED MANUFACTURERS & RETAILERS:

These manufacturers have been identified for carrying some healthier product options, but please note: this does not guarantee that all product lines are necessarily healthier. It is still important to research products individually.

[ChillWarmer](#)  
[ECOLunchbox](#)  
[Steeltainer](#)  
[Thermos](#)

[U Konserve](#)  
[LifeFactory](#)  
[Pura](#)

# ART SUPPLIES

## PURCHASING GUIDELINES:

Toxic chemicals are used in certain types of paints, inks, adhesives, and clays. Even art supplies intended for children’s use can contain these toxic substances.<sup>1</sup> Make sure to read product labels, look for the nontoxic “AP” seal, and conduct art activities in clean and well-ventilated areas.

### 1. Is it made of natural materials, like plants or vegetables?



#### PREFER:

- Plant, vegetable, or food-based dyes and pigments
- Flour-based clays



#### AVOID:

- Solvent-based markers and paints that release strong fumes
- Instant paper-mâché from powder, or polymer (PVC) based modeling clays

### 2. Are the product’s ingredients labeled, or is the product certified to be nontoxic?



#### PREFER:

- Products with the ACMI seal for Non-Toxic Approved Products, designated as “AP”



#### AVOID:

- Products without the “AP” seal, or that instead have the “CL” (Cautionary Labeling) seal

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR USING ART SUPPLIES:

### *Are children supervised to prevent ingestion or inhalation?*



#### PREFER:

- A ventilated area where children are not eating or drinking
- Children wear protective smocks and wash their hands



#### AVOID:

- Products that can be inhaled, such as spray-paints or powders
- Products that might be confused as food

1. Children’s Environmental Health Network, *Eco-Healthy Child Care Fact Sheets: Art Supplies*

## EXAMPLES OF SUGGESTED PRODUCTS:

The following educational products exemplify the kinds of properties we look for in natural and healthy art supplies.



### **Eco-Dough** by Eco-Kids

- All natural ingredients including plant, fruit and vegetable extracts
- FDA approved soy-based organic pigments

[Product Link](#)



### **Veggie Crayons** by WeeCanToo

- Made from vegetables and food-grade soy wax
- Certified Vegan
- No Preservatives

[Product Link](#)



### **Dirt Grey Apron** by Franck & Fischer

- 100% organic cotton and printed without chemicals
- Embraces children's play and messy explorations
- Easily washable

[Product Link](#)

## SUGGESTED MANUFACTURERS & RETAILERS:

These manufacturers have been identified for carrying some healthier product options, but please note: this does not guarantee that all product lines are necessarily healthier. It is still important to research products individually.

[ACMI Certified "AP" Product List \(USA\)](#)  
[Eco-Kids \(USA\)](#)

[Wee Can Too \(USA\)](#)  
[Palumba \(USA\)](#)