

Full and empty activity ideas for home

Filling and emptying containers through play	• Use water bottles or buckets and fill with water, sand, soil, rice, pebbles, ping pong balls, pasta etc • How do the containers look, feel, and sound? • Close your eyes and guess which container is heavier (more full) compared to another container
Drawing and colouring in	• Use drawings of containers or draw your own • Colour or draw in the container to make it 'full'
Explore changing volumes of water in the bathroom	• Watch how the bath fills and empties. • Feel the weights of balloons full, half full, quarter full – then 'empty' into the sink/toilet/bath. • After using the toilet - notice how the poo has filled the toilet bowl; after flushing notice how the toilet bowl is empty.
Use everyday items to practise noticing full and empty	• Carrying loads – what's heavier/lighter or bigger/smaller? • When tidying toys – floor space now "empty" of toys. • Compare an empty plate or lunchbox to one full of food. ◦ After eating, notice if it's now empty or less full. • Help to notice when the bin is full and needs to be emptied – why do we need to empty? ◦ This helps your child to understand that our homes are clean and free from germs. Same as our bodies, we need to let our poos and wees out so we can be healthy.
Progress to introducing concept of 'nearly full' and 'nearly empty'	• Use the car as a helpful example – we need to fill-up to power the car. If it gets too full, fuel spills out and makes a mess. If the car is empty, the car stops. ◦ When the car is nearly empty, we need to refill. • We need to fill up a car to keep the car driving, similar to how we need to regularly eat food to keep us healthy and active. • Use weighing scales and measuring jugs with measurements to give a clear visual – which one is fuller? • Introduce counting skills - e.g. this basket is heavier because it has 10 balls, more than the basket with 5 balls.
Use questioning about body feelings to explore full and empty	• At meal times notice feelings before and after eating. ◦ Where does your body feel full? How full does it feel? • Prompt toileting with questions like "is your bottom heavy/full?" or "is your bottom empty/light?" • Model yourself what these body feelings are like - e.g. "My bladder is feeling so full I have to hold on! My body is telling me I need to do a wee. Is your bladder full?"