



Havdalah Spices



Overview:

Children or families will prepare for the Saturday night ritual of Havdalah by creating a personalized, unique container for spices. The container can be used at camp during the ritual and serve as an invitation for families to try Havdalah at home.

This write-up offers a variety of ways to create a spice container, each with its own set of supplies and instructions – choose one or offer a choice.

Supplies:

Spice Boxes:

- Small cardboard boxes (such as [these](#)).
- Materials to decorate boxes, such as attractive stickers, markers, crayons, paint, etc. Choose based on age and amount of supervision being offered.
- Whole spices and herbs, not ground, such as cloves, cinnamon sticks, lavender, rosemary, and star anise.

Spice Dough:

- Basic playdough recipe such as [Tinkergarten Forest Putty](#) (regular and gf recipes) prepared in advance

- Various herbs and spices – keep powdered spices in their shaker bottles for ease of use (Dollar Tree is a great source for inexpensive spices) or place them in bowls with small spoons.
- Consider putting out whole spices and fresh herbs to explore as well. A mortar and pestle can be a fun tool to grind spices for children with supervision.

Spice Bags:

- Muslin bags such as [these](#).
- Markers - Fabric, Sharpie, or Crayola. Choose based on age and amount of supervision being offered.
- Cardboard or index card to place inside the bag (to make decorating easier).
- Whole spices and herbs (not ground) such as cloves, cinnamon sticks, lavender, rosemary, and star anise.

Directions:

Setup:

- Before creating any vessel, offer ample opportunity to explore the spices/herbs you are offering. Set up options include putting a sample plate at each workspace, have a “scent” buffet table to visit, or putting easy-to-access containers at each worktable. Children should be supervised by an adult to avoid choking hazards and spillage.
- Depending on which “vessel” you are creating, be prepared distribute the appropriate materials after children have had time to explore the smells.

Instructions:

- What are things that smell sweet/wonderful?
- How do you feel when you take a deep breath in of a wonderful, sweet smell? (Consider inviting families to close their eyes and pretend they are breathing in that smell. Make a face that shows how they are feeling!)
- It’s a tradition at the end of Shabbat to smell sweet, wonderful spices. We are going to gather our own spices and make a container to hold them.
- Depending on the educator, this can be a time to do additional teaching about the ritual of Havdalah or the blessings recited over smells.
- We are going to make a (bag, box, dough ball) to hold our spices for Havdalah. Model the steps prior to giving out/giving access to the materials. If families are “trickling in,” put the directions on a sign as well.
- Consider inviting families to make an additional vessel to give out at Havdalah if not all attendees are participating in the art experience.

Extension/Follow Up

- Spice painting on paper is a fun, open-ended follow up experience. <https://craftulate.com/sensory-spice-painting/>
- Invite families to show off their vessels at your family camp Havdalah ritual.
- Email families with information about how to do Havdalah at home and/or invite them to a Zoom Havdalah. <https://pjlibrary.org/havdalah>

Additional Jewish Content

- Article from Chabad: [Why do we smell aromatic spices at Havdalah?](#)
- Bim Bam video "[Learn the Havdalah blessings](#)"