

DIY Underwater Magic Sand

Crafts



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WHAT MAKES IT MEANINGFUL

A mesmerizing science experiment that teaches about hydrophobic properties—how the treated sand repels water and stays dry underwater. It sparks curiosity, sensory exploration, and scientific thinking.

TIME

- Prep & coat sand: **10–15 minutes**
- Drying: **1–2 hours**
- Underwater play: **10–20 minutes**
- Clean-up: **10 minutes**

MATERIALS

- Coloured or plain **play sand**
- **Scotchgard fabric protector spray**
- Baking sheet + aluminum foil
- Glass vase or clear container
- Water
- Coffee filter or paper towel (for drying after play)



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- Optional: plastic cups for serving portions

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Prep the sand**
 - Line a baking sheet with foil and add dry sand
2. **Spray with Scotchgard**
 - In a well-ventilated area, spray sand generously, stir, and repeat 3–4 times until fully coated
3. **Dry the sand**
 - Let it air-dry completely (about 1–2 hours).
4. **Test the magic**
 - Pour sand into cups or directly into a clear container filled with water (leave space at top)
 - Watch the sand clump and sink underwater while staying completely dry!
5. **Observe and explore**
 - Use a spoon to lift clumps and see how the sand remains dry inside. Learn how hydrophobic coatings work.
6. **Reuse & clean up**
 - Drain water through a coffee filter, dry the sand, and repeat the experiment. If the effect fades, re-spray.

RESOURCES

- <https://onelittleproject.com/underwater-magic-sand/>

SUPPORTS NEEDED

- **Visual step-by-step guide** (photos or printed steps)

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- **One-on-one help** with spraying and stirring sand
- **Sensory aids:** gloves if spray scent is strong
- **Time reminders:** visual timer for drying time
- **Encouragement** and scientific prompts (“What happens when it touches water?”)
- **Safety notes:** adult supervision for spray and handling water
- **Clean-up support:** draining and reusing sand process

OTHER THINGS TO NOTE

- Example of coloured sand you could buy can be found here:
https://www.amazon.com/Activa-Scenic-Sand-1-2-Pound-4610A-x/dp/B001685FJG/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&qid=1550161803&sr=8-7&keywords=Activa+Scenic+Sand&linkCode=ll1&tag=onelitpro00-20&linkId=8ae52f9e39ee162eccd7ec0ba9e7ff02&language=en_US