



# Pete the Cat Sensory Sorting Bags

## What are the benefits of sensory play?

Sensory play is an engaging way of stimulating a child's senses through touch, sight, taste, smell, or hearing to naturally facilitate learning. It is important to provide opportunities for sensory play because it fosters cognitive, language, and fine and gross motor development in children. It also empowers young learners to problem solve, think critically, and build skills for positive social and emotional health.

## What is a sensory bag?

A sensory bag is a simple, yet creative, tool for providing multisensory experiences to facilitate learning through play. Activities, such as Pete the Cat Sensory Sorting Bags, are essential in your early learning classroom because they provide high-quality learning experiences to support all learning styles as children naturally play, create, and explore.

In addition to sensory play, teachers can also use this activity to extend learning by introducing color matching, shape sorting, counting, and simple mathematics.

## Color Matching

Begin by asking children to identify the button colors. Next, have them match the button colors to the corresponding sorting space. This initial activity visually helps them see and process the different qualities of the buttons—starting with color.

## Shape Sorting

Encourage children to name the various button shapes. Build vocabulary by having children describe the features of the shape (e.g., big, small, round, three corners, etc.). Tell them to place the small circle buttons in one sorting space and the big triangle buttons in a separate sorting space. Repeat for all button shapes. This allows children to see the differences and feel them as well.

## Counting

Prompt the children to count the buttons out loud as they distinguish them by color and shape. This provides a visual, tactile, and auditory experience for children to practice counting skills.

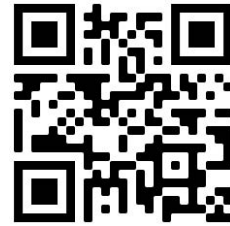
## Addition and Subtraction

Introduce early math skills, such as simple addition and subtraction, with this fun activity. As Pete the Cat loses his buttons, have the children remove (subtract) a button from the sorting space and place (add) it to the middle of the bag. Ask them to count out loud how many buttons are left in the sorting space. This provides another multisensory learning experience for children.

## Required Materials:

- Gallon Ziploc® Bag
- Hair Gel (Colored or Clear)
- Permanent Marker
- Really Big Buttons (Item #85868)
- Clear Large Buttons (Item #31159)
- Duct Tape
- Small Mixing Container

Scan this QR Code to view this activity on our [website](#) and to check out more of our [Insights and Inspirations](#) articles!



## Optional Materials:

- *Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons* (Hardback)
- Four Groovy Buttons Felt Set
- Pete the Cat® Backpack and Lunchbag
- Pete the Cat Vowel Sound Readers
- Pete the Cat Doll and 4 Paperback Book Set

### 1. Label

Using a permanent marker, label the bag with colors, numbers, or shapes that you would like to have the child sort out. Draw a circle around it to create a sorting space.

### 2. Fill the Bag

Fill the large Ziploc® bag  $\frac{3}{4}$  full of hair gel (we got our gel from a dollar store).

### 3. Add Buttons

Place a variety of buttons, making sure to use colors and shapes that match your sorting labels.

### 4. Seal and Secure

Using duct tape, seal the edges of the bag. Tape the bag to a table for easier sorting play (optional).

