



Outdoor Environment Quick-Win Checklist for Early Years Settings

Transform your outdoor space with simple, practical improvements you can start *this week*.

Outdoor Environment Quick-Win Checklist

Learning Opportunities

- Are there clear opportunities for all areas of learning outdoors (not just physical)?
 - Can children access mark-making, maths, and communication resources outside?
 - Is there a balance of adult-led and child-led experiences?
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Engagement & Curiosity

- Are there open-ended resources (e.g. crates, loose parts, natural materials)?
 - Does the space invite exploration, imagination, and problem-solving?
 - Are children able to revisit and extend their play over time?
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Environment & Layout

- Is the space well-zoned (quiet, active, messy, creative areas)?
 - Is there a natural flow, or do children tend to bunch in one area?
 - Are resources clearly accessible and independently usable?
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All-Weather Use

- Can the space be used in most weather conditions?
 - Are there sheltered or shaded areas?
 - Do staff feel confident using the outdoor space year-round?
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Adult Role & Interaction

- Do adults actively support learning outdoors (not just supervise)?
 - Are interactions meaningful and extending children's thinking?
 - Is outdoor learning valued as much as indoor?
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First Impressions (The Big One)

- If someone walked in today, would they see a *rich learning environment* or just "an outdoor area"?
 - Does the space reflect your ethos and quality of provision?
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Want a clear action plan?

 Find out more here:

<https://www.earlyinsights.co.uk/youroutdoorenvironmentreview>