

# Weekly Wonder Toy: AquaDoodle

Silence is seldom a good thing when young children are playing. It usually means they've gotten into something they shouldn't. So, when I stopped hearing Collin and Frank giggling, I went downstairs to investigate.

I found them surrounding a mat on the floor covered with colorful scribbles. Frank had given up since the mat was nearly full and began to draw on the floor. But, I did not fret, as they were merely playing with the AquaDoodle, and their skin and my floors were unscathed.

The AquaDoodle is a water-activated toy which includes a four-color mat and a marker-style pen. Santa brought it for Frank because he loves to track down crayons and color all over my walls. AquaDoodle allows Frank to go to town without being able to make a mess greater than the power of a rag or paper towel.

The set Frank got included a mini mat and one pen. The boys had trouble taking turns, so we ordered an additional accessory kit on Amazon.com, which included a sponge "brush," a well for the "brush," stencils, and an additional pen. Doubling this all important commodity has brought peace to AquaDoodle playtime.

The mess-free factor expands to include an easy cleanup. Simply roll up the mat and tuck the pen in the attached loop. It's art made easy.



AquaDoodle also could be a tool for teaching Collin to write, and soon, do math.

The only problem is that once the mat is saturated, it takes some time (up to 30 minutes) for it to return to a clean slate. That means finding another activity in the interim or rolling it up and calling it a day. At least it's time well spent.

AquaDoodle is available at Amazon.com and most big box or toy stores. It retails for about \$25, with the accessory kit costing an additional \$10.