



Design & Technology Terminology

Foundation Stage

Term	Meaning	Example
Create	To make by putting together parts or materials.	
Join/ Attach	To connect things together.	
Material	Anything that is used for building or making	
Plan	To arrange how to do something.	
Shapes	The outline of an object.	
Slice	To cut something into thin, flat pieces.	
Snip	To cut off with scissors or a knife.	
Spread	To cover something with soft food.	
Thread	To pass thread through an object.	
Tools	Something that helps us do a job.	Needle, knife.
Weave	Lacing threads together to make cloth.	

Year 1

Term	Meaning	Example
Blend	To mix something together so there are no longer separate parts	
Bridge hold cut	Hold the food between the fingers and thumb creating a bridge. The knife should go through the bridge to cut the food.	



Criteria	Simple standards by which something can be judged or evaluated.	
Combine	Mixing two or more ingredients together.	
Design	To make, draw or write plans for something.	
Design criteria	A set of rules to help designer focus their ideas and test the success of them.	
Embellishments	Add decorative details or features to something. For example: sequins, buttons or beads	
Evaluate	When you look at the good and bad points about something, then think about how you could improve it.	
Fabric	Cloth which is made by weaving threads together.	
Labels	Something that provides information about the product it is attached to.	
Measure	To find the exact size, weight or amount of something	
Mechanism	Parts of an object that move together to make something work.	
Patterns	A shape that we attach to the fabric.	
Product	An item that has been made for a specific purpose	
Purpose	The reason why something is made or used.	
Recipe	A list of ingredients and instructions for making a food dish.	
Running stitch	Movement of a needle and thread in a straight line.	
Sewing	To join or fasten by stitches made using a needle and thread.	
Template	A stencil made used to make many copies of a shape or help cut material accurately.	
Temporary method	A join that is design to last for a short amount of time.	
Permanent method	A join that is designed to last for a long time.	
Textures	The way that something feels when you touch it.	



Year 2

Term	Meaning	Example
Assemble	To construct by joining parts together	
Axle	A long straight rod which connects to a rotating part (e.g. the wheels of a car).	
Axle holder	The part which holds the axel and allows it to rotate.	
Balanced diet	Eating a wide variety of foods in the right proportions to help us stay healthy.	
Chassis	A frame that holds the min parts of a car together.	
Diet	The types of food someone eats.	
Food preparation	Preparing food to make a dish.	
Function	What something is supposed to do or how it's meant to work.	How a pen writes.
Grate	To break food such as cheese into small, thin pieces	
Jig	A special tool that helps you measure repeatedly. For example, using a lolly stick as a guide to help measure and mark out a specific length.	
Model	A practise version that lets you test out your idea and see how it will look and work.	
Sketch	A rough drawing showing the main ideas	
Stable/stability	An object's ability to maintain balance and stay in one spot.	
Structure	Something that has been made and put together. For example, a building, bridge, chair, table	



Year 3/4

Term	Meaning	Example
Accurate measurements	Measure being accurate and precise.	
Annotated sketch	To add notes which explain a plan or design.	
Battery	A cell or connected group of cells which store electrical energy.	
Boiling	Heating a liquid, like water, until it gets very hot and starts to bubble and turn into steam.	
Bulb	A component which gives light when electricity passes through it.	
Cell	A single unit that provides electrical energy to power a circuit.	
Conductor	A material that allows electricity to flow through it.	
Cross-sectional diagrams	A picture that shows what the inside of something looks like by cutting it in half. It helps you see all the different parts inside.	
Design brief	A set of instructions of what you are going to design and make and how it will work.	
Diagrams	A simple drawing that shows how something works or what it looks like. It uses labels and pictures.	
Export	Food sold to another country.	
Force	An action that changes or maintains the motion of a body or object.	
Fray	When the edges of fabric or material start to come apart or look messy.	
Free-standing	Something that can stand up on its own without needing support from anything else.	
Import	Food bought from another country.	
Input	The energy that is used to start something working.	
Insulator	A material that does not allow electricity to flow through it.	
Kneading	Mixing and squishing dough with your hands to make it smooth and stretchy.	



Lever	A bar with a balance point called a fulcrum. For example, a seesaw, scissors, door handle, stapler.	
Linkage	Lengths of material (for example, metal or card) that are joined together by pivots, so that the links can move as part of a mechanism.	
Motion	The process, manner, or continuous action of movement.	
Output	Output is the motion that happens as a result of starting the input.	
Peeling	To remove the skin of fruit or vegetables.	
Pivot	The central point, pin or shaft on which a mechanism turns or swings.	
Pneumatic system	A mechanism that runs on air or compressed gas.	
Precision	Doing something very carefully and accurately. It's like colouring inside the lines or cutting out a shape exactly as you want it.	
Process	A series of actions.	
Quality	A degree of value of excellence e.g. high quality.	
Reinforce	To make a structure or material stronger, especially by adding another material or element to it.	
Seam	Where two edges of cloth are joined or sewn together.	
Series circuit	A collection of components that make an electrical system that has only one path for the electrical current to flow.	
Switch	A device for making and breaking the connection in an electrical circuit.	
Taut	When something is stretched tight, like a rubber band or a piece of string.	
Textiles	Cloth made by weaving or knitting.	
User	A particular person at whom the product is aimed.	
Whipstitch	Sewing with a special stitch that goes over and under the edge of fabric to join two pieces together.	



Wire	A piece of metal that is used to carry an electrical current.	
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Year 5/6

Term	Meaning	Example
Adapt	To change something so it fits a new use.	
Aesthetics	How an object or product looks.	
Applique	A form of textiles work, where small pieces of cloth are sewn or stuck onto a larger piece.	
Arched bridge	A bridge which is built with a curved arch.	
Battery	A collection of cells in a circuit.	
Beam bridge	A bridge which is built with horizontal beams and vertical pillars.	
Cantilever	A way of making something stick out or extend without needing support underneath.	A diving board.
Cell	The power supply in an electrical circuit.	
Chain reaction	A sequence of events where one thing sets off another.	
Components	A basic part in a circuit that uses electricity to make something happen.	
Computer-aided design (CAD)	Using a computer to help plan and design things like buildings, toys, or even video games.	
Conductor	An object or material that allows the flow of electricity.	Iron, copper, steel.
Consumer	Someone who buys or uses goods or services.	
Cross-contamination	When something harmful spreads from one food to another.	



Design specification	A list of things that something you're making must have or do.	
Efficient	Doing things in a smart and quick way to get the job done well.	
Electrical current	The flow of charged particles, such as electrons or ions, moving through an electrical circuit.	
Expertise	The skill of an expert.	
Exploded diagrams	A diagram which shows all of the parts of a product, including the internal and external parts.	
Gear	A toothed wheel that works with others to alter the relation between the speed of a driving mechanism (such as the engine of a vehicle) and the speed of the driven parts (the wheels).	
Inclined plane	A sloping surface that makes it easier to move things up or down.	
Insulator	An object or material that does not allow the flow of electricity.	Plastic, wood, glass, rubber.
Interactive	Involving the actions or input of a user.	
Method	A procedure for doing something.	Instructions for baking a cake.
MICRO:BIT	A programmable electronic device, that can be coded to carry out certain functions.	
Motor	A machine part that makes things move.	
Outcome	Finished project.	Finished bag.
Processed food	When foods are passed through multiple processes in a factory to change or preserve it so it keeps for longer.	
Prototypes	A simple model that lets you test out your idea – how it will look and work.	
Pulley	A simple machine with a wheel and a rope that helps you lift heavy things easily by pulling down on the rope.	
Reared	To breed and raise livestock.	



Rotational movement	The motion of an object around a circular path, in a fixed orbit.	
Series circuit	A circuit where all components are arranged in a single path with the current flowing through each component.	
Shelf-life	The period of time something may be stored and still be good enough to use.	
Substitute	To replace one thing for another.	Use pork mince instead of beef mince.
Suspension	A system that helps things stay up and bouncy, like on a bike or a car.	
Suspension bridge	A bridge which is supported by vertical cables and suspended by cables which run between pillars that are connected onto either end of a bridge.	
Survey	To gather information.	
Technology	A technical method of doing something.	
Truss bridge	A bridge which is built from a series of triangular beams.	
Voltage	The pressure that pushes electricity around a circuit.	
Welfare	The health and happiness of a person or animal.	