

# Stay @ Home and Play Ideas



During this extended time of staying at home it can be tricky to keep everyone busy, happy and healthy. Be kind to yourself and don't expect your day to look like how it would for your child at Day Care, Kindy or school.



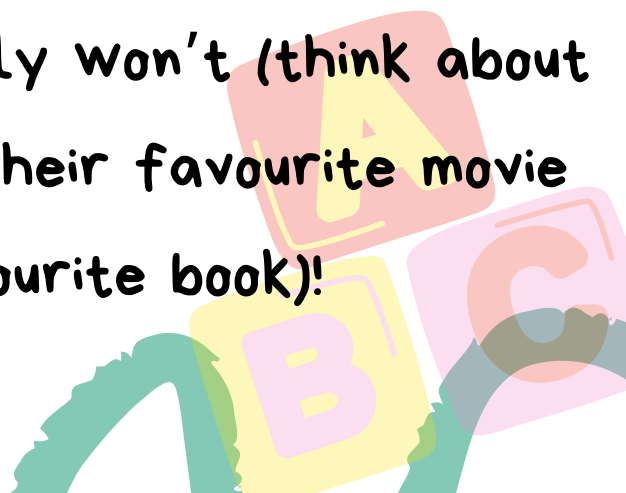
Giving your child opportunities to play is one of the best ways to help them grow into imaginative, curious and happy adults ready with the skills they need today. Share the bliss of discovery as you connect with each other and the world around you.



The ideas being shared are for you to try out with your little ones. Each idea will give suggestions for the approximate age range it is aimed at but you can change them to how you think they'll work best for you and your family.



Lots of the ideas can be done over and over again as your children will get something different out of the experience each time. Don't worry, even if you get sick of doing it, they probably won't (think about how many times they'll watch their favourite movie or listen to you share their favourite book)!



# Ages For Play Ideas

Blue 0-3 Month old children

0-3  
mths

Purple 3-6 Month old children

3-6  
mths

Yellow 6-12 Month old children

6-12  
mths

Orange 1-2 old children

1-2  
years

Green 2-3 year old children

2-3  
years

Pink all ages

All  
Ages



# Daily Routine



## Things you could do today:



- 9:00AM

  - ☀️ Have a yummy breakfast
  - ☀️ Have a look at the weather outside— what's happening today? Rain, cloudy, sunny windy etc.
- 10:00AM

  - ☀️ Check the mail box
  - ☀️ Play time— choose an outdoor activity
- 11:00AM

  - ☀️ Walk and feed the dog (or your teddy bear ) \*with an adult
  - ☀️ Play time— choose an indoor activity
- 12:00PM

  - ☀️ Lunch time! :)
  - ☀️ Walk the dog (or your teddy bear)
- 1:00PM

  - ☀️ Read a book and rest
  - ☀️ Do daily stretches
- 2:00PM

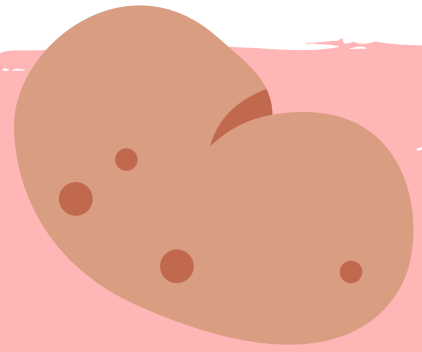
  - ☀️ Create a shopping list together
- 3:00PM

  - ☀️ Watch a favourite TV show— talk about what's happening together?



# Grow Sweet Potato People

2-3  
years



- Find an old glass jar and an old sweet potato.
- Get your child to draw a face and decorate the potato and then fill up the jar with water.
- Next put the potato in the jar, making sure the bottom touches the water.
- Remember to fill and replace water every couple of days. Watch your potato people grow!

## Things that will help you play:

- Glass Jar
- Water
- Sweet potato
- Permanent Marker or anything you can decorate your potato people



# Action Songs



1-2  
years

2-3  
years

- Sing together or find recordings of songs that have kids
- Moving their bodies in different ways.
- Hokey Pokey, Shake My Sillies Out, I'm A Little Teapot, and Zoom, Zoom, Zoom are all examples of fun ways to get kids moving and shaking to sing along songs.

Things that will help you  
play:

- Your best singing voice



# Hide and Seek



1-2  
years

2-3  
years

- Children can hide either themselves or objects such as their stuffed animals or house items for parents/carers to try and find.

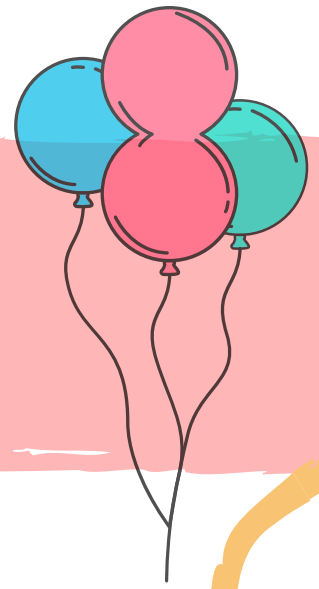
## Things that will help you play:

- Stuffed toy animals, house hold items or anything that you can hide to try and find.





# Dance With a Balloon



1-2  
years

2-3  
years

- Dance to music with a balloon or even a feather that you find outside but remember, don't let it touch the floor!

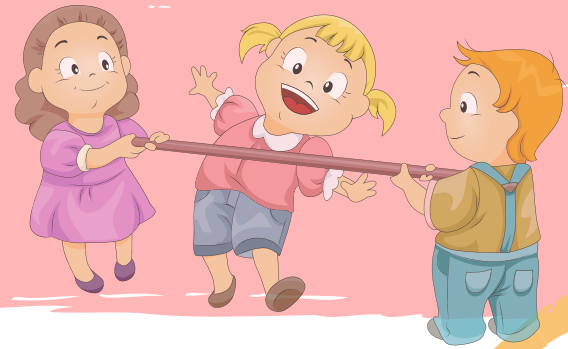


## Things that will help you play:

- Music
- Balloon or feather – something light that will float in the air

# Limbo

2-3  
years



● How low can you go?

A fun game indoors or out, use your imagination when it comes to using objects under which your child must go under without their hands touching the floor. Objects could include a pool noodle, broom, or a rope.

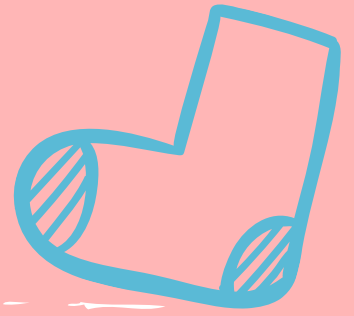


Things that will help you play:

- Pool noodle, a broom or a rope.
- Any item that a child can go under



# Make Sock Puppet



All  
Ages

- Get some old socks and be creative with making silly sock people.
- With younger aged children you can play games like peek a boo and hide the sock underneath a blanket.
- Use the puppet to read and tell stories to your child.

Things that will help you play:

- Old socks
- Bottle lids
- Sharpie or felt pen
- Wool
- Buttons
- Felt
- String
- Glue



# Host an Indoor Picnic



6-12  
mths

1-2  
years

2-3  
years

● Gather up your toys, make some snacks and have a picnic for your Morning or afternoon tea or lunch.



## Things that will help you play:

- Food for morning/afternoon tea or lunch
- Rug for sitting on
- Toys

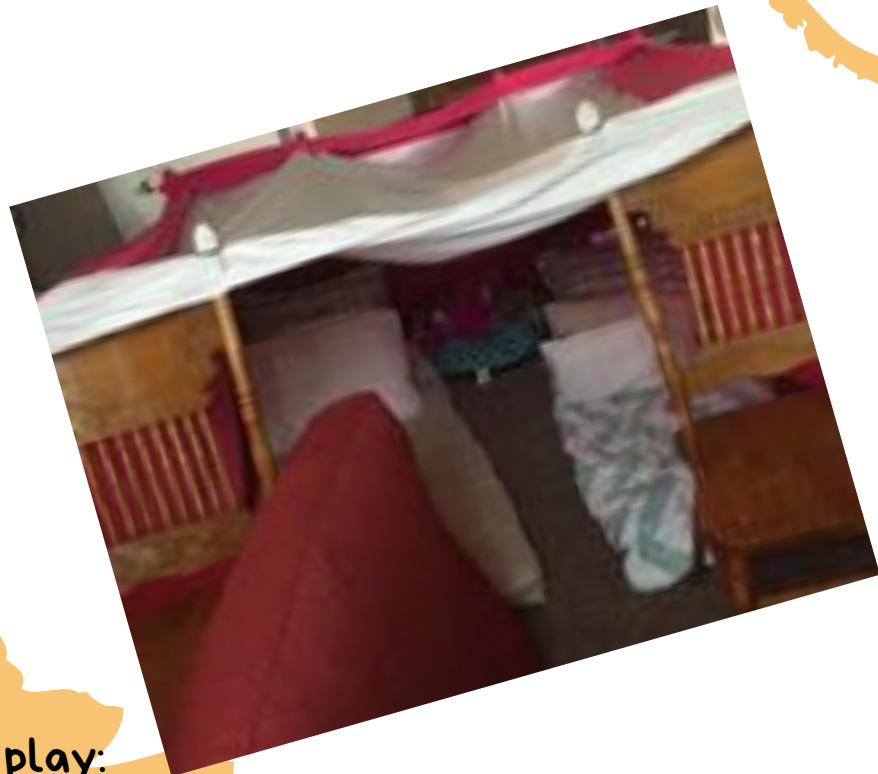
# Let's Go Camping



1-2  
years

2-3  
years

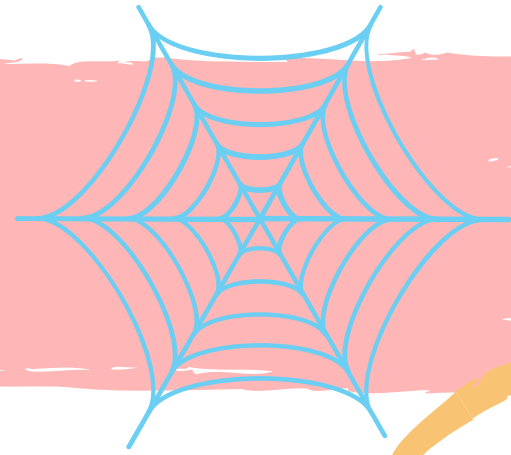
● Build an inside tent with sheets, chairs or even the kitchen table.



Things that will help you play:

- Table and chairs
- Sheets or blankets
- Pegs to join sheets together

# Inside Obstacle Course



1-2  
years

2-3  
years

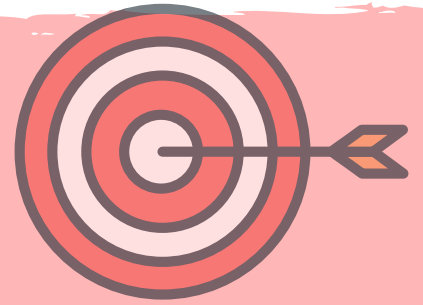
● Design and make an indoor obstacle course using different items from around the house and then encourage your child to balance, crawl, jump, weave, roll and hop their way through the course.

## Things that will help you play:

- Cardboard boxes
- Pillows
- Couch
- Hula hoop to jump and crawl through
- Sheets
- String/wool
- Place mats to jump on



# Target Practice



1-2  
years

2-3  
years

● Gather some balls, toys or house hold items and a washing basket. Then encourage your child to throw the item into the basket. Celebrating and praising your child when they get it into the basket.

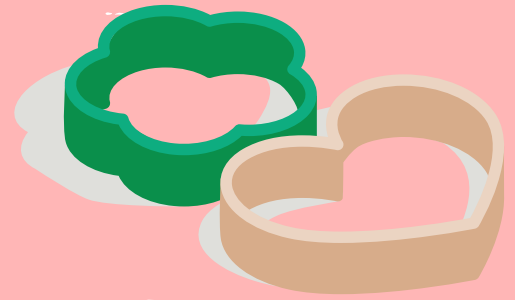
Things that will help you play:

- Balls, toys or house hold items
- Washing basket or box



LAUNDRY BASKET

# Play-dough



1-2  
years

2-3  
years

● Make playdough together and then find items around the house to add to your playdough creations.

## Ingredients:

- 1 cup flour
- 250ml (1 cup) water
- 1/2 cup cooking salt
- 60ml (1 tbsp) cooking oil
- food colouring

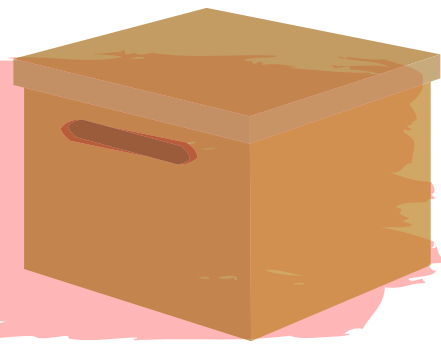
## How to make:

1. Mix the flour, water, salt in a saucepan over medium heat until thick.
2. Allow the mixture to cool and then add the oil and knead well over a floured cutting board or similar.
3. Divide this mixture evenly into as many colours as you'd like to make.
4. Add food colouring to each ball until it is just the colour your child is looking for.
5. Add the food colouring to the play dough and knead on a plastic board or dinner plate.

\*Wrap the play dough up well after your child has finished playing with it in a zip-lock bag (with all the air squeezed out) and then pop in an airtight plastic box and pop in the fridge. This way, it'll stay fresh.



# Box Play



6-12  
mths

1-2  
years

2-3  
years

Boxes (cereal boxes, food boxes, collect some boxes from your grocery store) are no cost and easy way to expand your child's creativity.

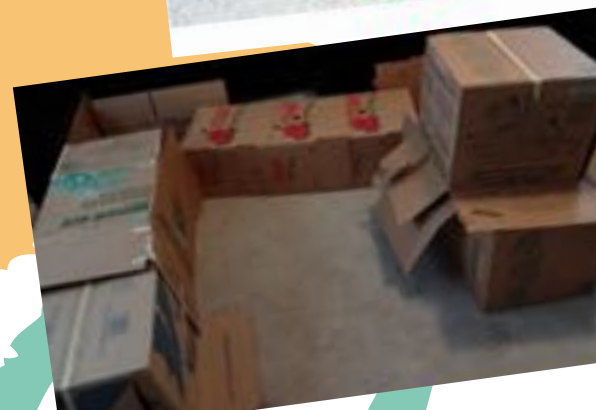
Children can paint boxes, build with boxes, play hide and seek with boxes, crawl through, the play activities are endless.

A pretend car is easy to make from a box and some paper plates. Add your own racing colours if you have paint handy.

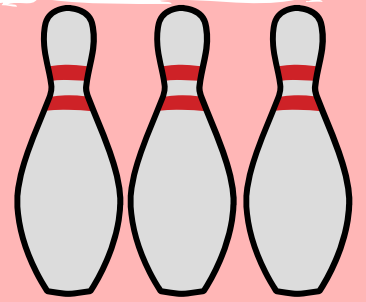
While your child is climbing in and out of boxes it is a great time to help them learn position words. Try just naming what they are doing "in, out, on, through".

## Things that will help you play:

- Cardboard boxes of any shape and size - cereal boxes,
- food boxes or boxes you have collected from the grocery store.
- Paint
- Sticky tape
- Cars/trains
- Coloured paper Newspaper/junk mail
- Glue
- Paper plates



# Make Your Own Ten Pin Bowling Alley!



1-2  
years

2-3  
years

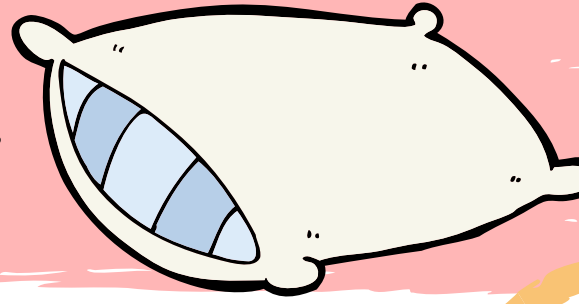
Start collecting plastic bottles or plastic cups to use as your pins. Then decorate the outside of your pins anyway you want. Remove the bottle caps and put them in the bin as they may be a choking hazard. Next line your pins up and grab a ball and encourage your child to knock the pins down.

## Things that will help you play:

- Ball, toy or small bean bag for throwing at the pins
- Plastic bottles
- Decorating items – paint, coloured paper, newspaper, glue and glitter.



# Pillow Walk



1-2  
years

2-3  
years

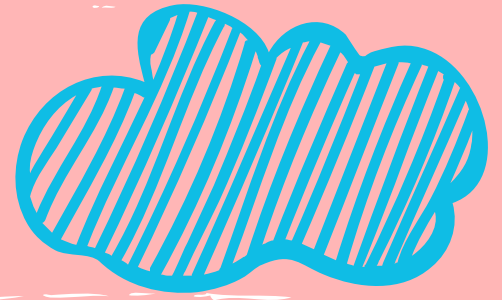
- Set up a line of pillows of any type that you can find around the house or even rolled up towels on your floor, and have your child walk from one end to the other.
- It may sound easy, but their balance will be challenged!

## Things that will help you play:

- Any type of pillow or rolled up towels



# Watch the Clouds



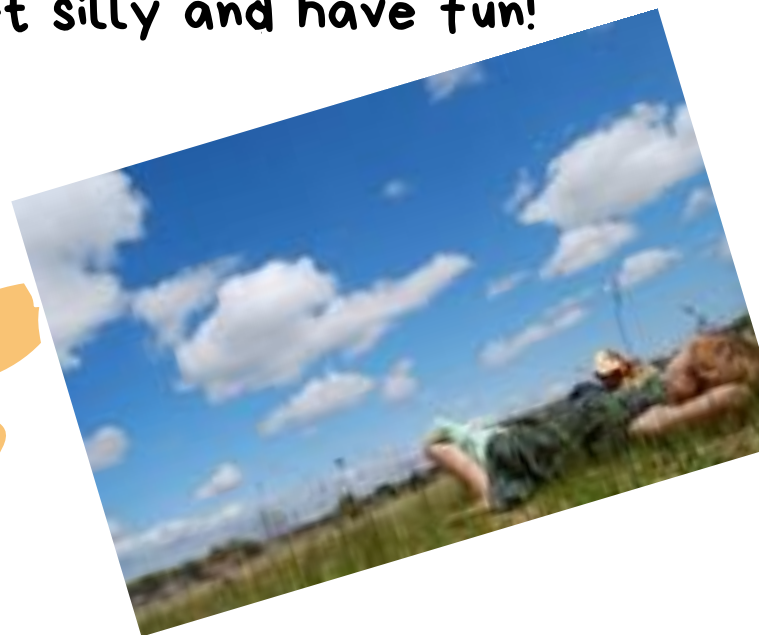
1-2  
years

2-3  
years

- Lie on your back in the backyard or in a park with your child, and watch the clouds float by.
- Talk to your child about what shapes he sees and compare notes.
- This is a great time to use lots of new words! Where your child sees a puppy, you may see a goldfish. Feel free to get silly and have fun!

Things that will help you  
play:

- Your imagination



# Play Archaeologist



1-2  
years

2-3  
years

Bury "fossils" (plastic dinosaurs or any toys you have available) in a sandbox and excavate using digging equipment from the kitchen.

## Things that will help you play:

- Toy dinosaurs or any toys you have available to use in play
- In the sandpit or a box of sand
- A patch of dirt
- Digging equipment - anything you can find to use to dig



# Bubbles

All  
Ages

- Mix 6 cups water + 2 cups dish washing soap = big bubbles. Mix ingredients together.
- Then cut in half an old plastic bottle. Using the bottom of the bottle dip into the bubble mixture. Using the mouth end blow into the bottle making bubbles.
- Encourage your child to have a go at blowing bubbles or for younger aged children let them watch you blow bubbles..

## Things that will help you play:

- Bowl or bucket for the bubble mixture
- Water
- Dishwashing liquid
- Plastic bottle
- Scissors for cutting bottle in half



# Leaf Finding

2-3  
years



Go exploring with your child and find interesting natural items to make your leaf insects.

Talk about where the natural items came from, for example: "which tree do you think this leaf has fallen from?"

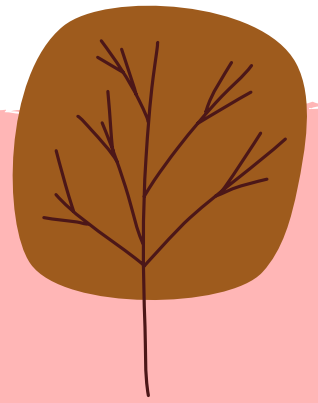
## Things that will help you play:

- Leaves/flowers
- Sticks
- Rocks
- Sticky tape or glue



# Nature Art

2-3  
years



- Explore the natural environment with your child and find items to make your artwork.
- Find 4 similar length sticks for the edges of the frame with your string or wool tie the 4 sticks together.
- Cut off a long piece of string or wool to make the weave, as shown in the picture.
- With the items you have collected help your child place them into your frame.

## Things that will help you play:

- 4 similar length sticks
- String or wool
- Scissors
- Leaves, flowers, long grass, small cuttings from bushes





# Finger Paint



6-12  
mths

1-2  
years

2-3  
years

If you have paint at home great, if not you can make some from ingredients you may find in your kitchen.  
\*Remember to wear old messy play clothes.

## Things that will help you play:

- 4 tablespoons cornflour (home brand is fine)
- A little water from the tap
- A full jug of boiling water (not just hot)
- A large heatproof bowl
- A whisk



## Here is what you do:

1. In a large bowl put 4 heaped tablespoons of cornflour
2. Use a little water from the tap to mix to a smooth paste
3. Take your kettle of boiled water (away from children) and slowly pour it into the bowl whisking briskly as you do. You need to move quickly as it will thicken as you pour in the water. Add more water if it is too thick
4. Add some food colouring for colour
5. Spoon the finger paint onto large paper, tin foil or even an old plastic table
6. Add some tools like paint brushes, glitter or even cooking utensils

# Nature Play



6-12  
mths

1-2  
years

2-3  
years

Go exploring outside and make muddy mud cakes, make a fairy garden, collect different leaves or search for bugs and different creatures.

The opportunities for play and exploring are endless.



## Things that will help you play:

- Old pots and pans for pretend cooking
- Walking feet to go searching for bugs and different creatures
- Imagination



# Painting with Objects



6-12  
mths

1-2  
years

2-3  
years

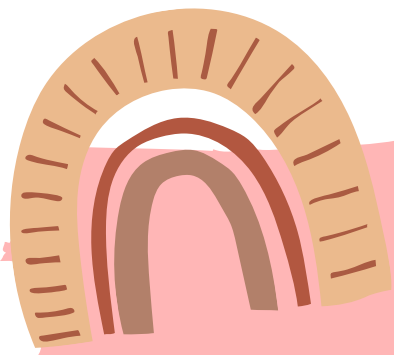
Go exploring inside and outside of the house and find different objects to paint with.



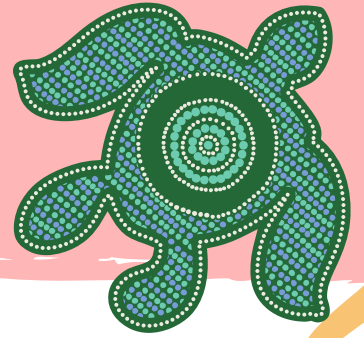
## Things that will help you play:

- Items found around the house – sticks, leaves, small tree branches
- Potato masher, sponges, rocks, toy car – the items are endless
- Paper
- Paint





# Connecting to Country



1-2  
years

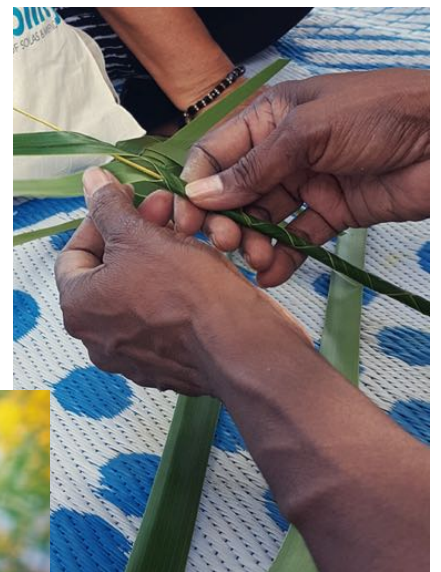
2-3  
years

Go for a walk around your backyard or your local park and collect talk about all the things you can see, hear and touch.

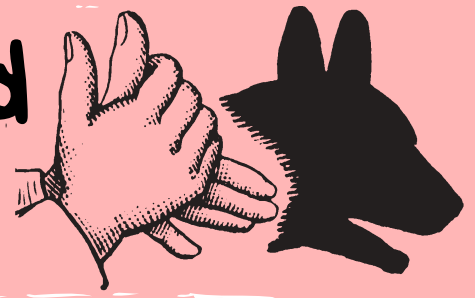
Share a story about time you enjoyed being in nature. Who were you with? What did you do together? When you get home draw or paint a picture of where you went and what you saw.

Things that will help you play:

- Paint
- Pens or pencils
- Paper



# Shadows and Shapes



1-2  
years

2-3  
years

Trace your shadow on the concrete with chalk and then decorate with whatever items you can find in the house.

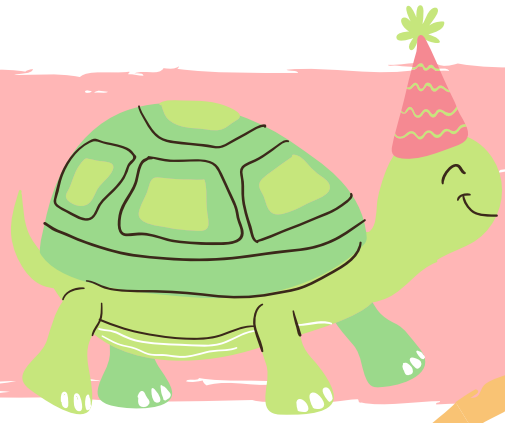
You can also trace the shadow of toys and other things around the house. Talk about all the different shapes the shadows make. What happens when the sun moves? Do the shadows get bigger or smaller?

## Things that will help you play:

- Concrete – big enough for you to draw your child's shadow
- Chalk
- Items to decorate with person outline– scarf, old necklaces, old clothes, shoes, newspaper, junk mail, toys or other household items



# Animal Walk



1-2  
years

2-3  
years

Inside or out, encourage your child to slither like a snake, hop like a frog, gallop like a horse, or walk like a bear on all fours.



Things that will help you  
play:

- Yourself



# Baby Fun



All  
Ages

- Sing, chat, tickle, count toes, blow raspberries – simple things are best for newborns. Babies also love nursery rhymes that involve touch like 'Round and round the garden'.
- Sharing nursery rhymes or traditional songs from your own culture and language is great too.

## Things that will help you play.

- Raising children website <https://raisingchildren.net.au/guides/baby-karaoke>
- YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLuZuMNFgxTsEoD5-S\\_Pz25TWo-VqJPHgF](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLuZuMNFgxTsEoD5-S_Pz25TWo-VqJPHgF)

### Teddy Bear Rhyme (do the actions as you say the rhyme)

Round and round the garden, like a Teddy Bear

(gently trace finger in a circle around child's palm)

One step, two step (walk your fingers up child's arm)

Tickle you under there! (tickle under chin, under arm or tummy)

# Baby Face Time



0-3  
mths

3-6  
mths

- Make faces, smile, laugh, roll your eyes or poke out your tongue. Your newborn loves watching your face. Each time you do or say something, pause and give them time to respond either with a gesture, grin, giggle or babble.
- Nappy-changing and bath time are also great times for face-to-face play.



Things that will help you play:

- You and baby





# Put on a Show With Toys



All  
Ages

- Have your child help you gather a cast of dolls, stuffed animals, and toy figures. Think about different props you could use to create a pretend play space.
- Then act out a play, using different voices for the different dolls and animals.

## Things that will help you play:

- Dolls, stuffed animals, toy figures
- Props – toy houses, toy horses, boxes, pots and pans, pillows, blankets, small tree branches from the garden, coloured paper
- BE CREATIVE!



# Shake, Rattle, and Roll

All  
Ages



Turn on the music and move!

You and your child can jam to different types of music and make up your own moves.

Make a shaker using an empty plastic bottle. Fill it with pom poms or scrunched up balls of paper for a quiet shaker or rice, pasta, seeds or small rock for a loud one!



## Things that will help you play:

- Music
- Your best dance moves
- Pasta
- Paper
- Water bottles



# Ball Kicks



1-2  
years

2-3  
years

Balls are a staple for so many games and activities. Using different types and sizes of balls, have your child see how far they can kick, or play goalie in front of a wall or fence and see if your child can kick the ball past you.

## Things that will help you play:

- Any type of ball.
- If you don't have a ball you can roll up some socks together – this is a great inside option!



# Simon Says

6-12  
mths

1-2  
years

2-3  
years

- While the rules are simple, the options for movement are endless.
- Simon can have kids jumping like a kangaroo, standing as tall as a house, making funny faces, standing on one foot, or waving their hands over their heads. Even though younger children may not be able to stick to the rules of not doing an action if "Simon Says" isn't said, they will still have fun copying the actions.

Things that will help  
you play:

- Yourself



# Peek-a-Boo with Baby/Toddler



0-3  
mths

3-6  
mths

6-12  
mths

One of the best baby games to play with infants is also one of the easiest.

Simply hide your face behind your hands and then move your hands away while you say, "Peek-A-Boo!" Pause and wait for you little one to respond. They might smile, giggle, babble or have a go at covering their face too. Repeat this over and over again – you'll get sick of it long before your baby will.

Things that will help you play:

- You and baby



FOREHEAD

# Name Game



3-6  
mths

6-12  
mths

1-2  
years

2-3  
years

Point to the different parts of your face and name them for baby. Point to your nose and say, "mummy's nose." Continue to do this with other facial features and see how baby reacts.

You are your child's first teacher and their most favourite "play thing". They love playing with you and don't need any fancy toys to do lots of learning with you.

Show them how to use toys in different ways, such as banging blocks together or knocking over a stacked tower.

Things that will help  
you play:

- You and baby



# Story Time



All  
Ages

Choose your favourite story book, magazine or information book and share it together. You don't have to read the words or get through the whole book – just enjoy spending time together talking about the pictures, asking questions and enjoying snuggling.



Things that will help  
you play:

- Favourite story book, magazine of something you're interested in, factual book



# Clap and Kiss



0-3  
mths

3-6  
mths

6-12  
mths

Baby is learning new gestures, like pointing and waving. Practice a new gesture, like blowing a kiss or clapping hands. Helps baby learn how to use movements to express themselves.

Things that will help  
you play:

- Your baby





# Pat-A-Cake



0-3  
mths

3-6  
mths

6-12  
mths

● Play "Pat-A-Cake" with baby. First hold their hands to show the movements, then let them do it on their own.

## Things that will help you play:

- Singing voices

### Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake baker's man

Bake me a cake as fast as you can  
Pat it and prick it and mark it with "B"  
Put it in the oven for baby and me  
For baby and me  
For baby and me  
And there will be plenty for baby and me  
Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake baker's man  
Bake me a cake as fast as you can  
Pat it and prick it and mark it with "B"  
Put it in the oven for baby and me  
For baby and me  
For baby and me  
And there will be plenty for baby and me



# Story Box Library



6-12  
mths

1-2  
years

2-3  
years

● <https://storyboxlibrary.com.au/>

● This is a lovely website for younger learners and has loads of lovely stories read by famous people your children will know. You may want to see which books they have, and you could buy, borrow or swap for the children to read along.

Things that will help  
you play:

- Ipad or phone with internet



# Gaze and Giggle



0-3  
mths

3-6  
mths

Tie 2 or 3 items to lengths of string/ribbon/wool to the coat hanger

Hang from ceiling fan, door frame, clothes rack just out of reach of your bub

Lay your baby under the mobile making sure they cannot reach any of the things hanging down with their hands, feet or mouth.

Gently swing the hanger and let your bub watch and giggle as the things move around

## Things that will help you play:

- Coat hanger
- Ribbon
- Wool
- String
- Leaves
- Feathers
- Bells
- Cut out pictures of family members

# "Small World" Play



1-2  
years

2-3  
years

Sometimes all your little one needs is a little bit of an invitation to play. By setting the scene for them and then leaving them to it often children will soon be in their own world of make believe. Set up a small world "invitation"  
\*Ask your child what they think the toys could be doing? Where they could be going? Who else would like to play?

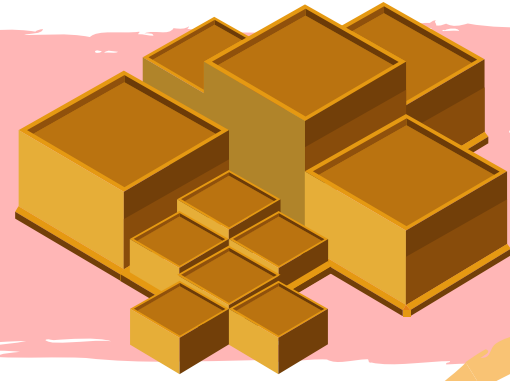


Things that will help  
you play:

- Plastic animals, dinosaurs, dolls
- Lego people or animals
- Sticks, leaves, seed pods
- Scrunched up paper, material scraps
- Cardboard boxes of different sizes
- Toy cars, trucks boats



# Build it Up



1-2  
years

2-3  
years

Children love to build "towers" and knock them down over and over again. This is a great opportunity for them to explore materials, how they balance and how they fall down with little input from a grown up.

The younger your child the softer the items you can use.

Show them how they might be able to stack the layers and then get them to knock them over. The next time is their turn to have ago.

## Things that will help you play:

- Blocks
- Duplo
- Plastic cups
- Plastic containers with lids on
- Nappy boxes, cereal boxes, formula tins etc.
- Cushions, folded towels, tea towels, face washers



# Fun websites



## Kidspot

<https://www.kidspot.com.au/things-to-do/activity-articles>

## Nature Play QLD

<https://www.natureplayqld.org.au/things-to-do/diy-nature-play>

## Raising Children

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/newborns/play-learning/play-ideas/playing-with-newborns>

## Support services:

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/grown-ups/services-support>

## Support services:

<https://www.oneplace.org.au/>

# VIDEOS



## Low Cost Play Ideas

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/babies/play-learning/low-cost-play-ideas/low-cost-play-ideas>

## Messy Play: Tips for Parents

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/babies/play-learning/low-cost-play-ideas/messy-play-tips>

## Nature walk: Play ideas for children

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/babies/play-learning/outdoor-play/nature-walk-play-ideas>

## Telling stories with children: How the years were named for the animals

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/babies/play-learning/literacy-reading-stories/how-the-years-were-named>

## Telling stories with children: The Crocodile

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/babies/play-learning/literacy-reading-stories/the-crocodile>

# VIDEOS



## How play helps children develop

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/babies/play-learning/play-baby-development/play-helps-development>

## Risk in play: how it helps child development

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/babies/play-learning/play-baby-development/risk-in-play>

## Different cultures: play and Learning

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/babies/play-learning/play-baby-development/different-cultures-play-learning>

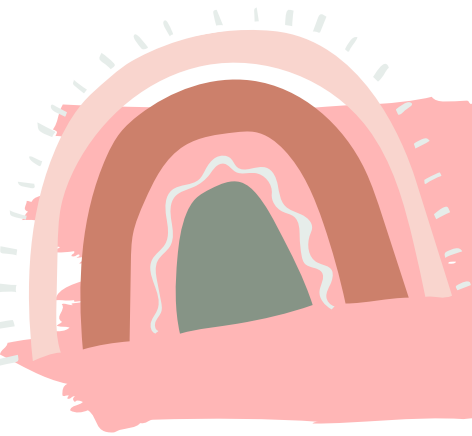
## Playgroups, childcare and preschool

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/videos/playgroups-child-care-preschool>

## Outdoor play: easy ideas

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/videos/outdoor-play-easy-ideas>





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