

ACTIVE PLAY AT HOME

Try these active play ideas at home. These can be great for children on rainy days.

Movement games

Try inside games like musical statues, *Simon Says* and *Hokey Pokey* and outside games like handstands, cartwheels or playing a game of hopscotch.

Ball games

Use balls of different sizes and weights. Show your child how to roll, bounce, catch and bat using the balls.

Kicking

Teach a child to kick using a large, soft ball. Initially a child will walk into the ball to kick it and then develop the ability to stand on one leg and kick a stationary ball.

Imitation games

Young children love to imitate adults. Clap your hands, move around the room in different ways (jump, skip, and hop) and watch your child try to do the same. Also try playing games with them that involve a quick movement like squat to stand (e.g. being a *jack-in-the-box*).

Music

Young children love music so sing, play music and dance with them. Choose an action song *Head, shoulders, knees and toes* or *Hokey pokey*.

Pretend play

At this age, children love to pretend and imagine. A cardboard box can be a boat or racing car, they can run and leap around like a wild animal or superhero and dance, hop, skip and balance like a fairy.

Little helper

Young children love to help. Involve them in daily routines like unpacking and packing away the toys (if safe to do so), and setting up games.

Cardboard boxes

Cardboard boxes are great toys. They can be taped together, painted and decorated to become cars, towers or tunnels. Cut the ends off two cardboard boxes, line them up and tape them together. Ask your children to crawl through the tunnel to you. Cut windows and a door into a large box and you have a house.

Chase me

Toddlers will start to run and they will love to be chased and caught. They also like to *hop like a kangaroo* or *run fast like a cheetah*.

Inside ball games

Use scrunched-up newspaper or socks to make balls and use a laundry basket as a goal.



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Sand or water play

Toddlers love to play in sand and water. Give them some plastic containers like cups, buckets, spades, funnels and a watering can, with a tray or large bucket of water or sand. Children can be active digging, carrying buckets of sand and walking in the sand. Remember, never leave a child alone with water.

Going walkabout (exploring)

As toddlers get older, you can take them on longer walks. A local park or duck pond can be an exciting place. Show them interesting areas and tell stories about the place, people, animals, trees and plants.

Playgrounds

Visit your local park for a play on the swings, slides, see-saws, monkey bars or flying fox.

Obstacle course

Develop an obstacle course for your child to walk around. Include opportunities for them to squat down to pick up a toy, walk on a variety of surfaces such as slopes, uneven ground such as grass or soft mats and stepping up very low steps.

Bubble play

Play with bubbles and try to catch them or jump on them to make them pop.

Ideas for homemade active play equipment

You do not need expensive toys for children. Try some of these homemade ideas.

Object	Homemade ideas
Wedge	Rolled-up towel
Bean bags	Scrap material sewn in a square or rectangle and stuffed with dried beans or sand
Buckets	Ice-cream containers and boxes
Skittles	Empty plastic bottles and cartons
Markers	Empty ice-cream containers and towels
Box car	Empty boxes with the bottom cut out
Parachute	An old bed sheet or blanket
Building blocks	Empty food or milk cartons
Markers (e.g. for soccer goals)	Boxes, empty food or milk cartons
Goal rings or targets	Upright box with a hole cut out of one side or a washing basket
Totem tennis pole	Tennis ball in an old stocking suspended from a tree branch or washing line, away from any windows

