



TOY IDEAS & MATERIALS FOR PLAY

Play can be done with toys and without toys (people games), because play happens within the child, not within the object. Here's a few things to keep in mind when selecting toys/play objects:

OPEN-ENDED TOYS

With open-ended toys, children are the ones that are active, not the toys. This helps build problem solving skills, imagination, collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, and exploration. An added bonus is that open-ended toys can be used by the same child for a longer period of time because the toy's use will change based on the child's new skills and interests.



VARIETY

Having a variety of these toys available in the same space also encourages creative thinking as children are more likely to combine different types of toys together and come up with new ways to play with them.



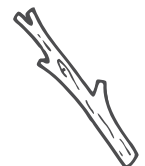
If your child has siblings or there are other children in the home, it is also a good idea to have multiples of the same toy to reduce toy-taking battles.

LESS IS MORE

When children have a space that is full of toys, they tend to spend less time with each item. This can lead to shorter attention spans and less complex play as they move between one thing and another very quickly. You can have a set of toys out for the child to play with and another set that is put away. When you notice your child becomes bored, you can rotate the toys. Children love this as the new discovery generates excitement and interest.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF WHAT YOU ALREADY HAVE!

Children will play with most things, even if it's not a toy. Safely playing with household objects is not only common, but also a crucial part of how children learn about the world around them. To a young child, the whole world is a place to play and learn.



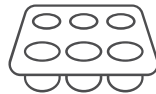


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Examples of materials that can be used:

DISHES

- Metal bowls
- Pots and pans
- Plastic containers
- Colanders
- Spoons
- Ladles
- Measuring cups
- Baking sheets
- Muffin tins
- Ice cube containers



RECYCLED MATERIALS

- Paper towel rolls
- Yogurt containers
- Small jars
- Boxes
- Lids
- Milk cartons
- Spray bottles



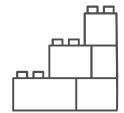
AROUND THE HOUSE

- Pillows
- Blankets
- Mattress/beds,
- Bean bag chairs
- Laundry basket
- Bins
- Backpacks, totes, reusable bags



TOY IDEAS

- Legos
- Balls
- Balance board
- Art materials
- Cars, trains, boats
- Stepping stones
- Ride on toys, wagon
- Climber/slide, tents, tunnels, hula hoops, etc.



MORE IMAGINATIVE PLAY ITEMS

- Dress-up clothes
- Dolls
- Play kitchen and food
- Puppets
- Favorite figures



Remember, YOU are the best toy and sometimes playing back and forth 'people games' with no toys is fun too!