Sensing, Moving and Growing

Fun Activities for Children at Home



Dear Parents/Caregivers,

Having children at home for prolonged periods can present many unique challenges, which can also be exceptional opportunities, especially for parents, to bond with their children. Here are ideas for simple activities using basic elements that can be a source of fun and entertainment while nurturing the child's development by you — the parent!

These activities are adaptable to different ages and functioning levels. They can be suited for a single child or for several children together. Many of the activities make great games and can have a fun competitive aspect.

Tap in to your creativity. Flow with your situation and circumstances. Just begin with your child and enjoy enriching and memorable times together.

Safety, adult supervision and adhering to health regulations should accompany all activities.

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Touch Activites







Sponges, towels, fabric, scouring pads, loofahs	Play-Doh	
A variety of small objects, (dolls, balls, stuffed animals)	Shaving cream	
Cookie dough	Corrugated plastic board	
Glue	Straws	
Raw rice, lentils, chickpeas, noodles, oats	Sandpaper	
Sand, grass, leaves, cotton balls	Matches	
Finger paints	Paper	
Paintbrushes	Crayons	
Modeling clay	Games: bingo, dominoes, memory	





Arrows [→] indicate activities with an increase in the level of difficulty.

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Working with textures: Have the child touch or brush his skin with items of various textures, both soft and hard. Try sponges, scouring pads, different fabrics, a loofah, cotton balls, towels, dolls, balls, and stuffed animals.

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Make dough: Let the child mix the ingredients, then knead, roll, and shape the dough.

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Prepare no-bake cookies: Make rum balls, date cookies, oatmeal cookies, or chocolate chip. Vary the flavors, aromas, textures, and ingredients each time. Have the child identify tastes with his eyes closed (sour, bitter, salty, sweet, tangy, sharp).

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Identify objects through touch: Identify an object hidden in soapsuds, Play-Doh, or a bowl of sand, lentils, or rice.

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Make a collage: Make a picture using glue and small items of different sizes and textures. Try raw rice, lentils, chickpeas, noodles, sand, leaves, grass, and cotton balls.

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Add texture to finger paints: Add raw rice, oats, or sand to finger paints, and paint with them.

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Work with modeling clay, Play-Doh, finger paints, or shaving cream: Let the child work, while sitting or standing, with modeling clay or Play-Doh, or paint with finger paints or shaving cream, on a corrugated plastic board, either hanging on the wall or laid flat on a table. It's important to provide plenty of materials and for the child to work with them directly with his hands and not with paintbrushes or other implements.

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Blow through a straw: Blow on the child's skin through a straw so he can feel your breath blowing on his skin, especially the hands and face. Children can do this in pairs: one child should blow through the straw, while the other closes his eyes and calls out the name of the body part on which the other child is blowing. Then they should switch.

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Make letters and numbers: Use sandpaper, sand and glue, or glue and matches to form letters and numbers. Have the child close his eyes and identify each letter and number by touch.

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Prepare a book of senses: Choose a topic, such as "Autumn," and create a scrapbook. Make clouds out of cotton, the ground from mud and leaves, etc.

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Create and play games with surfaces made from various materials: Play bingo, with its smooth and shiny boards, or dominoes, with its small, hard tiles, or create a sensory memory game — find matches of cards made with identical materials. Try playing with the eyes closed.

Movement and Balance





Movement & Balance Materials

Hoops	Salt	Fruits and vegetables
Bell or alarm	Sandpaper (of different grits)	Juicer
Beanbags	Strainers	Cookie dough
Balloons	Plastic bottles or cups	Hole punchers, staplers,
Benches	Colored powder, salt, or chalk dust	Paper, pencils,
Chairs	Glue	Scissors
Chalk	Corrugated plastic board	Hammer and nails
Electrical tape (various colors)	Finger paints	Wooden board
Short broomsticks	Shaving cream	Rubber bands
Tables	Garlic cloves and garlic press	Pantyhose
Desks and toy boxes	Knife and cutting board	Wooden rods



Movement & Balance Activities

Arrows [→] indicate activities with an increase in the level of difficulty.

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Hoop games: Have the child walk, run, and jump between the hoops. Tell him to try these activities with the eyes open or closed.

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Inanimate objects game: Have the child pretend to be an inanimate object that rests on four points (both hands and feet, for example). At the sound of a bell or alarm, he should switch to three points, then two, eventually resting on only one point.

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The wheelbarrow: Hold the child by his hips with his hands on the floor and "walk" together. His knees or ankles may also hold the child. (The further away from the hips you hold him, the harder the exercise is.)

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Jumping with a balloon: The child jumps while holding a balloon between the thighs, knees, or ankles

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Bench-walk: Have the child lie on a bench on his stomach and pull his body along with the hands. Have him try crawling on the bench, jumping like a frog, walking on hands and feet, or walking normally (heel to toe). Raise one end of the bench to create a slope and have him do it all again. Do the same with pairs.

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Chair-walk: Place chairs in a row or circle and have the child walk from one to the other. At first, place them close together. Gradually add distance between them. Vary the size of the chairs, too.

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Musical chairs: Arrange chairs in a line, with each chair facing the opposite direction from the one next to it. The number of chairs should always be one less than the number of players. With music playing, children run around the line of chairs. When the music stops, each child must sit on a chair. Whoever is left without a chair is out of the game.

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Walking games: Draw lines with chalk on the ground and have the child walk on it. Do the same with a line made from rope or lines made with different-colored electrical tape. Have the child cross a room holding both ends of a stick and stepping over the stick. Do the same thing again, this time passing the stick from hand to hand behind the back and over the head.

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Beanbags: The child should crawl, run, and walk in different directions and at different speeds with beanbags of various weights on different parts of the body (head, shoulder, back, stomach). Don't let them fall!



Movement & Balance Activities 2

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Lift, move, push, and pull heavy objects: Have the children move tables, benches, chairs, and desks by lifting, pushing, and pulling.

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Make chalk dust: The children rub chalk and salt onto sandpaper of various grits or on a strainer to create chalk dust.

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Powder art: Standing by a table, the child fills a plastic bottle or cup with layers of different-colored powders.

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More powder art: Standing by a table, the child dips a finger into a dish of glue and draws faces, shapes, or letters. Then have him sprinkle chalk dust or colored powder on top of the glue and the pictures appear.

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Drawing on the wall: Hang a sheet of corrugated plastic on the wall or lean it against the wall and have the child draw on it with finger paints and shaving cream.

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Food activities: Let the child crush garlic, cut fruit and vegetables, and make orange juice.

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Make cookies: Knead and roll out dough, and use cookie cutters to form cookies.

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Staple, cut, punch, and glue: Give the child office Materials, such as a hole puncher, stapler, scissors, pencils, glue, and paper, and let him staple, cut, glue, punch holes, and draw.

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Rubber band art: Hammer nails into a board horizontally and vertically, and stretch rubber bands and cut-up strips of pantyhose across them either freestyle or in patterns. Use a variety of colors.

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Carpentry: Make small toys out of wood using a kit or freestyle.

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Stork: While standing on one foot, the child moves the other foot in all directions without falling. Make it into a game with two players: holding each other's hands, each tries to make the other fall using his elbows.

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Hopscotch: Draw a grid on the ground with chalk. Have the child jump in the squares and stop between each jump without going out of the lines. Have him do the same thing backward.



Expanding Horizons



Expanding Horizons Materials

Chalk
Electrical tape (in various colors)
Whiteboard and markers or blackboard and chalk
Chairs
Jump ropes
Blocks
Hoops
Pencil and eraser
Maze puzzles





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Line games: Draw lines on the ground with different-colored chalk or affix electrical tape in various colors to the floor. Instruct the child to perform a motion as he moves from color to color.

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Obstacle course: Build a line of blocks or chairs and have the child walk on them. \rightarrow Push the chairs or blocks further apart and have the child walk on them again, \rightarrow then back, from the end of the course to the beginning without stopping. \rightarrow Have the child walk on them again, this time stacking one chair on top of another (or one block on another) in the middle of the course in several spots. \rightarrow Create courses from a variety of different objects. \rightarrow Ask the child to draw a course and then build it and walk its length.

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Take a "walk" around a hoop: The child places his hands face down in the center of the hoop and walks around and around the hoop without touching it. → Then the child stands with his feet in the center of the hoop and walks around the hoop with his hands. → Have the child do it all again with his eyes closed.

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Through the hoop: The child sticks various limbs through a hoop with a different limb leading each time. → Have him do the same thing with his eyes closed.

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Mazes: The child moves his finger over the correct path of a maze drawn on paper or on the blackboard or whiteboard. \rightarrow The child should then solve the maze with a crayon or pencil. \rightarrow The child should then solve the maze with his eyes closed, from memory.

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Follow the leader (encouraging the child to use his creativity): One child chooses a toy to play with in various ways and the other child follows. For example, one child takes a jump rope and jumps over it, crawls under it, jumps with it, slides it around his body — whatever occurs to him — and the other child follows his lead. Then they switch roles. \rightarrow Two children turn the rope at various heights, and the third passes below it without touching it.

Coordination







Crayons or colored pencils, chalk, Magic Markers

Finger paints

Shaving cream

Stencils

Scissors

Glue

Balls - soccer ball, sponge ball, beach ball, tennis ball, basketball

Beanbags

Lego, Duplo, blocks

Coordination Activity Ideas



Arrows [→] indicate activities with an increase in the level of difficulty.

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Draw with two hands: With each hand holding a crayon, finger paints, chalk, shaving cream, or a Magic Marker, the child draws circles and lines with both hands. → then have him draw a tree trunk and have the child fill in branches on both sides of the tree simultaneously.

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Arts and crafts: Give the child arts-and-crafts projects that require both hands, such as filling in stencils, cutting, and gluing.

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Follow the leader: Make large motions in the air with both hands simultaneously (circles, squares, zigzags) and have the child identify the motion and mimic it.

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Patty-cake: The parent and child, or two children, clap hands to the rhythm of a rhyming chant.

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Play ball: Have the child throw balls or beanbags into a basket or bucket from a short distance

- → then a long distance; with a large ball
- → then a smaller ball; with one ball
- \rightarrow then two balls.

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Building toys: Build with Lego or Duplo, first with large pieces

- → then smaller pieces; first with pieces that fit together without applying pressure
- → then pieces that require pressure to attach them to each other.

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Tug-of-war: Draw a line on the floor. Have a pair of children or two groups of children pull on opposite ends of a rope. The team that pulls the rope past the line wins.

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Jungle gym: The child hangs from a gym ladder attached to the wall in the school gym or from a pull-up bar attached to a door frame.

Games for Pairs



Games for Pairs Materials

Chalk or electrical tape

Balls - soccer ball, sponge ball, beach ball, tennis ball, basketball

Bowling pins, plastic bottles, blocks

Gogo game

Jump rope





Arrows $[\rightarrow]$ indicate activities with an increase in the level of difficulty.

Fitness accessories freestyle: The children jump forward, backward, and to the side with both feet together. Make it into a competition between a pair of children or teams - who can jump the farthest or the longest?

On the line: With chalk or electrical tape, draw a course on the ground and have the children jump along the course with both feet together. Make a course of straight lines

- → make a course of zigzags
- → Make a course of a figure eight.

Jumping jacks: Have the children do jumping jacks only with the feet, alternately spreading the legs and closing them.

→ Then have them add the hands: with the hands above the head, the children open and close them in time with the feet.

On one leg: The children hop on one leg without stopping for a specified distance. Make it into a competition: have a pair or team of children race each other while hopping on one leg.





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Bear walk: The children "walk" on hands and feet.

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Dog walk: The children "walk" on hands and knees.

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Crab walk: With their backs to the ground and stomach facing up, the children "walk" on their hands and feet.

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Make a train: Children walk in a line (a "train"), each child's hands on the shoulders of the child in front of him.

Ball Games for Pairs



Arrows [→] indicate activities with an increase in the level of difficulty.

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Goal: The children throw a ball with two hands to hit a target.

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Bowling: Have the children roll a ball with two hands to knock down objects — bowling pins, plastic bottles, towers made of blocks.

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Bouncing ball: The children bounce a ball with two hands and catch it after it bounces or after a specified number of bounces. \rightarrow The children dribble a ball continuously with one hand. \rightarrow The children bounce a ball with one hand and then switch hands after a specified number of bounces. \rightarrow The children do it all again with a smaller ball.

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Catch: Play ball games in pairs — the child with a parent or with another child - by throwing or rolling the ball to each other and catching it while sitting → then standing.

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Pass the ball around: A group of children stand in a line. With their hands over their heads, the children pass the ball along the line back and forth. Vary the game: first pass the ball to the right, then to the left, at waist height, above the shoulder, or between the legs.





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Play Gogo: This game comes with a plastic egg-shaped ball with two strings threaded through it. At the end of each string is a plastic handle. Each player holds two handles and spreads his hands apart to send the ball toward the other player, then closes his hands to allow the ball to return to him.

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Tug-of-war: Play tug-of-war in pairs or with a group.

 \sim

Tug-of-war: Draw a line on the floor. Have two groups of children pull on opposite ends of a rope. The team that pulls the rope past the line wins.

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Snake: The children jump over a rope that an adult or another child is shaking back and forth on the ground. Hold the rope at different heights and have various numbers of children playing simultaneously.

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Jump rope: Jump-rope alone, in a group, by turns, or in competition.

Group Games





Chair Games for Groups

Arrows [→] indicate activities with an increase in the level of difficulty.

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Arrange chairs in a row or semicircle. Have the children step from chair to chair until they reach the end of the row. Have them do it again walking backward, then sideways.

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Turn some of the chairs so that the children will have to step over the backs of the chairs as they walk from chair to chair.

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Turn each pair of chairs so they are facing a different direction from the next pair. At your signal (a clap, music playing, a whistle), all the children climb up onto the chairs at the same time. At another signal, they all climb down.

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Leave a space of 15 inches (40 cm.) between chairs. Each child must climb up and down the nearest chair according to your instructions: with the knees, without using the hands, backward, etc.

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Have the children stand in front of a line of chairs. They will sit, jump, or hop on the chairs according to your instructions. For example: "Sit with your feet under the chair"; "Jump next to the chair"; "Stand with one foot next to your neighbor's chair."

 \sim

Divide the children into groups and assign each group its own area. Have each group arrange the chairs according to your instructions: in a circle, in a line, in a square, in the shape of a letter.

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Arrange the chairs in a row so that every other chair faces the opposite direction. There should be one less chair than the number of players. The children walk in a circle around the chairs. At your signal (such as music stopping, a whistle blowing, or raising your hand), they must find a vacant chair and sit on it. The child who doesn't find a seat is out. After each round, remove a chair. The last child left in the game is the winner.

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Play the same musical chairs game with two groups standing in two corners of the room opposite two rows of chairs. At your signal, the children from one group sit on the chairs of the other group. After each round, one chair is removed from each row until one child is left in each group.

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Add more groups of children. Each group has its own row of chairs and must find a chair in another group's line of chairs.





Arrows $[\rightarrow]$ indicate activities with an increase in the level of difficulty.

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The children walk up each stair one at a time, the second foot joining the first before they go on to the next step.

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Have the children ascend and descend the stairs facing different directions according to your instructions. For example: "Walk up the stairs backward, then turn around and face forward to go back down."

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The children descend the stairs with one foot following after the other, placing each foot on alternate stairs.

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Have the children ascend the stairs two at a time.

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Have them ascend and descend in opposite directions — for example, forward then backward and vice versa, or sideways with the left shoulder leading, then the right.

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Add additional instructions. For example: "Go up two steps at a time, then go down one step at a time."

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Have the children go up and down the stairs sitting, on all fours, or on their knees.

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Have them jump up the steps and then down, with different jumps on each step: with feet together, hopping, doing jumping jacks.

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Have them ascend and descend on tiptoe or on their heels.

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With chalk or stickers, draw a straight or curvy line on the stairs. The children go up and down the stairs without stepping off the line. Have them do the same while crawling, walking, and jumping.

Stick Games for Groups



Arrows $[\rightarrow]$ indicate activities with an increase in the level of difficulty.

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Instruct the children to tap the floor with their sticks, then tap their shoes, then the bottoms of their shoes, their hands, their shoulders, etc.

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Tell them to raise the stick up as high as they can with straight arms. Then they must lower their arms so they are pointing forward, then backward, then to the sides, etc.

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Tell them to stand the stick upright in front of their bodies, then behind them, to the right, and to the left.

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Have each child balance his stick on both hands, palms open, and walk around the room without dropping it. Repeat with the stick resting on the upper arms, forearms, and wrists.

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The children must hold the stick with both hands outstretched in front of them and put one foot at a time through the space between their bodies and the stick.

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Have them place the stick on the floor and jump along its length from one side to the other with feet together.

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Have the children hold their sticks between their knees and skip around the room.

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Tell them to sit cross-legged and roll the stick on the floor in front of them with both hands as far they can reach.

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Divide the children up in pairs and have them sit or stand with their partner. One partner performs a motion with his stick and the other imitates him.

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Have the children sit cross-legged on the floor in pairs. One partner holds his stick with both hands outstretched in front of him. Give his partner a beach ball, sponge ball, or balloon. The partner slowly pushes the ball toward the other child, who uses his stick to push it away. Have the partners push the ball from other directions, too—from the side, above, or below.

Stick Games for Groups 2



Have the children repeat the ball activity while standing.

Create a path with the sticks and have the children jump or run through it.

Whoever steps on a stick is out. → Make the path narrower and have them walk its length without touching the sticks.

Create a long path with the sticks and have the children pass through it with their feet spread on either side of the path.

Have two children holding each end of the stick close to the ground. The rest of the children must walk over it without touching it. → Then have them walk over it with the stick raised higher → then even higher, until it becomes impossible to step over it.

An adult holds both ends of the stick, and each child gets a turn to hang from it. Vary the distance of the stick from the floor each time.

Have the children create a circle of sticks on the floor and dance inside the circle, outside it, with one foot, with two feet, etc.





Arrows [→] indicate activities with an increase in the level of difficulty.

Have the children roll their hoops across the floor with both hands. (The hoops are perpendicular to the floor.)

Divide the children into pairs. Have each child roll the hoop to his partner. → Increase the distance between partners. → Have them use one hand instead of both.

Have the children spin their hoops perpendicular to the floor (like a top) and grab them before they fall. → Have them each spin two hoops like tops simultaneously.

Arrange the hoops in a row and have the children jump from one to the next until they reach the end of the row. → Have them do it all again facing backward.

Arrange the hoops in a row so that one hoop is followed by two hoops side by side, then one hoop, then two, and so on. Have the children jump along the row of hoops, with their legs together in the single hoops and then spread apart into the two hoops. → Have them do it all again facing backward.

Hula hoop hopscotch: Arrange the hoops on the floor in a row or at random. Each child throws a beanbag or rubber ring into one of the hoops and then hops through the other hoops in a predetermined order until he can pick it up — without touching the hoops or stopping. Immediately he turns around and hops back to the starting point with the beanbag in his hand.

Have the children throw a beanbag or rubber ring through a hoop held horizontally a distance from the floor \rightarrow then perpendicular to the floor. Have them throw with one hand \rightarrow then two hands, with beanbags and rubber rings, and with balls or balloons. Hold the hoops close to the child \rightarrow then at a distance.

Have each child hold a hoop with both hands and step into it. While they are standing inside the hoop, have them lower the hoop to the floor, then raise it to head level. Then have them try stepping out of the hoop without any part of the body touching it.

Have the children stand in a circle and hold a hoop in the air with their fingertips. The group must raise and lower the hoop to the floor together without dropping it. Any child who loses contact with the hoop is out. → Have them do the same thing, but this time hold the hoop up with just one finger.

Have a number of children hold the hoops perpendicular to the floor to form a tunnel. The rest of the children must pass through without touching the hoops.

Spread a row of hoops on the floor. Have a child stand in a hoop with a friend (up to three children all together) and jump together from one hoop to the next, facing forward \rightarrow then backward. The hoops may also be scattered \rightarrow or you can increase the distance between the hoops.



Rope Games for Groups

Arrows [→] indicate activities with an increase in the level of difficulty.

Have the children walk, then jump, on a rope lying straight

→ then curved on the floor. Then they should do it again facing a different direction: backward or sideways.

Tell two children to hold the rope taut at knee height. The rest of the children must pass over or under the rope without touching it.

Two children hold the rope on both ends and shake the rope like a snake on the floor while the rest of the children try to jump over it without touching it. Have them first do it with the rope moving slowly → then quickly.

Have two children turn the rope slowly while the rest of the children pass through without touching it.

Tug-of-war: Divide the children into two groups and draw a line between them with chalk. Each group tries to pull the rope toward them so that the other group steps over the line.

Have the children stand in a circle hold a jump rope at head level. Together they move the rope to shoulder level, arm level, down to their ankles. Have them move the rope from one of these points to the other on your instructions.

Have the children sit in a circle and hold on to the rope with both hands. Everyone must raise the rope and lower it at the same time without letting go of it.

Have the children lie on their stomachs in a row or in a circle. Holding the rope with both hands, they must raise the rope and then lower it all at the same time.

Have the children hold on to the rope with their hands and, keeping the rope taut, pass their feet over it and then under it while trying not to move it.

Divide the children into pairs and have each pair stand side by side. Tie one player's ankle to the ankle of his partner with a short piece of rope or string and have them walk \rightarrow run \rightarrow and jump. The pairs can compete against each other in a race, or assign the pairs to teams and race each other (as in a three-legged relay race).





Arrows [→] indicate activities with an increase in the level of difficulty.

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(You can make your own beanbags: Fill colorful cloth bags or squares of cloth with sand, beans, or Styrofoam pieces and seal tightly with rubber bands. You can label the beanbags with shapes, numbers, or letters.)

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Have the children throw the beanbags at a target from different distances. Have them vary their positions as they throw the beanbag: above their heads, facing backward, to the sides, and between the legs.

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Have the children throw their beanbags from a distance and then move to spot where the beanbag landed by crawling, jumping, skipping, etc.

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Set a beanbag down on the floor and have the children hit it with their own beanbags. At first, place the beanbag up close → then at a distance.

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Divide the children into pairs and have them play catch with a beanbag. → Give each pair two beanbags and have each partner toss and catch a beanbag simultaneously.

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Have the children throw a beanbag up high above their heads, and then catch it at chest or waist height.

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Have the children pass \rightarrow throw a beanbag upward, from one hand to the other. They can perform this activity while standing \rightarrow or while moving around.

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Have the children walk on beanbags scattered around the floor. Have them walk on the beanbags according to instructions: they should walk only on the same colored beanbags, or on certain colors in order, or according to a specific shape or number that is attached to the beanbag.

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Have the children gather beanbags, which have been arranged in a row or scattered around the room, one at a time and bring them to a designated location.





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Have the children walk on a straight line, semicircle, or in circles with a beanbag (one or more) on various parts of their body (the head, shoulder, forearms) without dropping it. They can also perform this activity in various positions, such as crawling on hands and knees → or walking on all fours.

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Build a tower: Each child in turn runs and adds a beanbag to the stack in order to create the highest tower he can.

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Have the children push a beanbag along a set path with their hands

→ then do the same with the soles of their feet.

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Have them kick a beanbag into a goal set at different distances.

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Have the children jump forward or backward with a beanbag between the legs

→ then between their heels.

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Have the children sit on the floor and lean backward onto their hands. With their feet, they should each throw a beanbag in the air as high or as far as they can.

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Alternating his feet, the child kicks a beanbag across the floor along a straight line drawn on the ground with chalk or tape.

→ The child pushes the beanbag from one side of the line to the other and back with his feet.

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Have the child place a beanbag between his feet and jump forward \rightarrow or knees.

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Play the above "pass the ball around" game with a beanbag.





Arrows [→] indicate activities with an increase in the level of difficulty.

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Give the children balloons of various sizes to throw and catch

- → in pairs
- → in a group, seated or standing in a circle.

Have each child bounce a balloon into the air with various parts of the body without dropping it.

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Have the children walk and run while hitting or kicking their balloons.

 \sim

Divide the children into pairs. Give each pair two balloons and have the children throw balloons to their partners, so that they have to catch and throw a balloon at the same time.

 \sim

Have the children walk around the room in pairs with the balloon held between matching parts of the body (shoulder to shoulder, elbow to elbow, back to back) without using the hands.

 \sim

Have the children jump while holding their balloons between their feet. Have them do the same thing in teams racing each other.

 \sim

Arrange the children into two concentric circles. Have the inner circle try to blow the balloons out of the circle while the outer circle tries to blow them inward.

 \sim

Tie balloons to string hanging from the ceiling along the length of the room, so that the balloons hang down just above the heads of the players. Have the children jump up and touch each of the balloons. They can also try touching the balloons with other parts of the body - such as feet, elbows, and shoulders.