

Toys for children under two

10 Things You Should Know Before Buying a Toy:

Check for sharp edges or rough surfaces as they can cause cuts and splinters.

Buy washable, non breakable toys for babies.

Anything small enough to fit into a 35mm film canister can choke a child under 3.

Toy chests and boxes should be designed not to close on top of children, or better still with a removable lid. Anything big enough to crawl inside must have ventilation holed.

Read and heed the age labelling on new toys. "Not suitable for children aged under 3" means that there are small parts which could be swallowed; it is not an indication of skill level or intelligence.

Check toys regularly for loose parts which may be choking dangers.

Check that there are no gaps or holes which could entrap a child's fingers.

Be wary of toys that make loud noises as they can be harmful to hearing, particularly toys which are held against the ear, such as walkie talkies and toy mobile phones.

Check for ventilation before buying tents, masks, helmets etc.

Ensure that ride-on toys are stable, appropriate to the age of the child and will not overbalance. Toy bikes should have effective brakes which can be applied by the rider.

How play help your under two year old develop

There are many simple thing you have at home to encourage your child's brain development and over all growth and learning. These things you may already have or they can be borrowed from the Toylinks library here at community links Wollondilly.

The rattle game birth to 3 months

- Hold a rattle in front of your baby and shake it gently
- As you shake the rattle, sing any song or the following to the tune of "old MacDonald":

Rattle, rattle, shake, shake, shake, E-I-E-I-O

Rattle, rattle, shake, shake, shake, E-I-E-I-O

- When you are sure that your baby is watching the rattle, slowly move it to one side and sing the song again.
- Continue moving the rattle to different places in the room and watch as your baby moves her head in the direction of the sound.
- Put the rattle in your baby's hand and sing the song again
- Babies love singing and later, when they are ready to talk, they will try to imitate sounds they've heard.

Roll Olympics 3-6 months

- Helping your baby roll over from his tummy to his back will develop his chest and arm muscles. This is a fun game to play while encouraging you baby to roll over.
- Put your baby on his tummy on a soft and flat surface. Carpeted floors and the middle of the bed are good for this game.
- Hold up a teddy or a toy of interest in front of his face and do antics with the toy. You might say the following poem as you make the teddy bear move around:

Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn around (turn teddy bear around)

Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch the ground (make teddy fall down)

- When you know that your baby is watching the teddy, move it to the side so that your baby's eyes and hopefully his body will follow it.
- Repeat the poem, moving the teddy bear each time. If your baby tires of this game, try it again on another day.

Baby Shakers 6-9 months

- Put some buttons in a metal container
- Shake the container and listen to the noise. Watch your baby's eyes grow big with excitement.
- Give the shaker to your baby and let her shake it as you sing your favourite songs.
- Try singing "old MacDonald", shaking and making animal sounds together. What could be more fun for baby!
- You can also turn a see-through plastic bottle into a shaker. Your little one will enjoy watching the rocks or buttons move when they are being shaken.
- A set of measuring spoons also makes a good shaker.

What can you do with a stacking toy? 9-12 months

- Stacking toys have lots of possibilities for developmental play
- Depending on your baby's developmental needs and skills, encourage him to try any of the following.

- ✓ Staking them large to small, small to large, and any old way
 - ✓ Throwing the rings
 - ✓ Putting the rings on his fingers
 - ✓ Putting the rings in his mouth
 - ✓ Spinning the rings
- All toys have great creative possibilities, help you baby see the different ways to play with toys.

Reading games 12-15 months

- There are many ways you can help your toddler develop a love of reading, including the following
 - Encourage your toddler to play with books such as *Pat the bunny*, Dorothy Kunhardt's classic touch-and-feel book, and cloth or sturdy cardboard books.
 - Point to pictures in books and name the various objects
 - Song the nursery rhymes in books
 - Vary the tone of your voice, make funny faces, or do other special effects when you read to stimulate your child's interest in books and stories.
 - Read to your toddler often, but for short periods of time.

Playing with textures 15-18 months

- This game develops tactile awareness and language skills.
- Put together several objects with interesting textures for your toddler to experience, such as something hard (a block) and something soft (a Squishy Toy)
- Put his hand on a hard item you have chosen and say the name of the item with the word "hard" before it. "Hard block" now put his hand on something else that is hard and say the name again "hard table".
- Do this several times before you introduce the soft items, such as a soft rug or a soft pillow.
- When you say the word "hard" use a hard sounding voice, and when you say the word "soft" use a soft voice.

Listen to sounds 18-21 months

- Take your toddler outside
- Help her become aware of the wonderful sounds of the outdoor
- Start listening for birds. When you hear a bird chatter, try to copy the sound and tell her that you are making the "birdie sound".
- If you continue this, she will become aware of the sound and may try to duplicate it.
- Add new sounds, such as the wind blowing or crickets chirping.
- Listen for other sounds in your environment, such as car sounds, motorcycles sounds and train sounds,
- You can extend this by using a sound lotto games with different animals.

Sink or float 21-24 months

- Gather together several objects that will either sink or float.
- Suggestions include a sponge, soap, empty containers, full containers, floating toys and small toy that won't be damaged by water
- Put water into a bucket and start putting each item into the water
- After each item use the words "sink" or "float" as appropriate.
- After you have tried each object individually, start again.
- This time, before you put an item into the water, ask you toddler, "Do you think it will float or sink?"
- Soon you toddler will be looking for other items to see if they will sink or float.

For more information or games to help your baby's development please see 125 Brain Games for Babies by Jackie Silberg and 125 Brain Games for Toddlers and Twos by Jackie Silberg or talk the Child and Family worker or Early Childhood Development Group Worker at Community Links Wollondilly on 46833661.

Information taken from <http://www.austoy.com.au/choosing.html>

With this information pack:

Safe toys for Kids (Australian competition & consumer commission)

Keeping Baby Safe: a Guide to Nursery Furniture (Australian competition & consumer commission)

Created by

Child and family worker

Phebe Boardman



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