Focus on: Cognitive Development

Bubbles.

Let your toddler try to blow bubbles or watch you blow bubbles through a straw. Bubbles are fun to pop and chase, too.



Kitchen Play.

Fill a plastic tub with cornmeal or oatmeal. Put in kitchen spoons, strainers, measuring cups, funnels, or plastic containers. Toddlers can fill, dump, pour, and learn about textures and use of objects as tools. Tasting won't be harmful.

Make Instant Pudding.

Let your toddler "help" by dumping pudding, pouring milk, and stirring. The results are good to eat or can be used for finger painting.



Play Hide and Seek.

Your toddler can hide with another person or by herself for you to find. Then take your turn to hide and let your toddler find you.

<u>Play in the Water</u>.

Put squeezable objects in the bathtub, such as sponges or squeeze bottles, along with dump-and-pour toys (cups, bowls).

Play "Where Did It Go?"

Get two containers (coffee cups or cereal bowls) that look the same and a small toy. Hide the toy under one container while your toddler watches.

Ask her to find it. Eventually you can play the old shell game (moving the containers after you hide the toy).

Pretend Play.

Encourage your toddler to have a doll or stuffed toy do what he does— walk, go to bed, dance, eat, and jump. Include the doll in daily activities or games.

Focus on: Cognitive Development (Continued)

Put Objects Together.

Simple puzzles (separate pieces) with knobs are great. Putting keys into locks and letters into mailbox slots is fun, too.





Sort Objects.

Your toddler can help you sort laundry (put socks in one pile and shirts in another). Play "clean up" games. Have your toddler put toys on specified shelves or boxes.

Focus on: Gross Motor Development



Improving Balance while Walking.

Pull toys can encourage your toddler to walk more and maintain balance while doing so. A favorite pull toy often is a small wagon or an old purse for collecting things and storing favorite items.

Park Time.

Toddlers love movement. Take your toddler to the park to ride on rocking toys, swings, and small slides. You may want to hold your toddler in your lap on the swing and on the slide at first.



Play Ball.



Many games appropriate for your toddler involve balls. Use a beach ball to roll, throw, and kick.

Use boxes or buckets for your toddler to throw beanbags or balls into. Practice overhand release of the ball or beanbag.

Focus on: Fine Motor Development

Art Activities.



Use large nontoxic crayons and a large pad of paper. Felt-tip markers are more exciting with their bright colors. Let your toddler scribble his own picture as you make one.

Building Blocks.

Save milk cartons or gelatin or pudding boxes. Your toddler can stack them to make towers. You can also stuff grocery bags with newspapers and tape them shut to make big blocks.



Kitchen Play.

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Make Instant Pudding.

Let your toddler "help" by dumping pudding, pouring milk, and stirring. The results are good to eat or can be used for finger painting.

Putting Objects Together.

Simple puzzles (separate pieces) with knobs are great. Putting keys into locks and letters into mailbox slots is fun, too.

Selecting and Storing Objects.

A favorite pull toy often is a small wagon or an old purse for collecting things. Your toddler can practice putting favorite items and other objects in and out of it.

Focus on: Language Development

Action Songs.



Sing action songs together such as "Ring Around the Rosy," "Itsy-Bitsy Spider," and "This Is the Way We Wash Our Hands." Do actions together. Move with the rhythm. Wait for your toddler to anticipate the action.

Identifying Named Items.

Lay out your toddler's clothes on the bed before dressing. Ask her to give you a shirt, pants, shoes, and socks. This is an easy way to learn the names of common items.

Make a Picture Book.

Put common, simple pictures cut from magazines into a photo album. Your toddler will enjoy photos of herself and family members. Pictures of pets are favorites, too.

Naming Desired Items.

Put favorite toys in a laundry basket slightly out of reach of your toddler or in a clear container with a tight lid. Wait for your toddler to request the objects, giving her a reason to communicate. Respond to her requests.





Play the "What's that?" Game.

Point to clothing, toys, body parts, objects, or pictures and asking your toddler to name them. If your toddler doesn't respond, name it for him and encourage imitation of the words.

Focus on: Social-Emotional Development

Play "clean up" games.

Help your toddler sort objects into piles.

She can help you sort laundry
(put socks in one pile and shirts in another).

Have your toddler put toys on specified shelves or boxes.

Play Hide and Seek.

Your toddler can hide with another person or by herself for you to find. Then take your turn to hide and let your toddler find you.



Pretend Play.

Encourage your toddler to have a doll or stuffed toy do what he does— walk, go to bed, dance, eat, and jump. Include the doll in daily activities or games.