

Finding Suitable Toys for Your Children

Choose toys according to a child's age, interests and skill level.

0 to 1

Newborns to 1-year-olds explore with their hands, mouths and eyes, and enjoy toys they can touch or squeeze.

- Crib gyms
- Floor activity centers
- Activity quilts
- Squeaky toys
- Soft dolls or stuffed animals

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1 to 3

One to 3-year-olds climb, jump, walk and throw and play rough-and-tumble games.

- Soft blocks
- Large blocks
- Push and pull toys
- Pounding and shaping toys
- Books

3 to 5

Three to 5-year-olds like to experiment with imaginary situations and have toys that are close companions.

- Non-toxic art supplies
- Pretend toys (e.g., play money, telephone)
- Teddy bears or dolls
- Outdoor toys such as a tricycle with a helmet

5 to 9

Five to 9-year-olds like to be challenged with complex games that teach specific skills and concepts.

- Arts and crafts kits
- Puppets
- Jump ropes
- Non-toxic art supplies
- Miniature dolls and action figures

9 to 14

Nine to 14-year-olds develop lifelong skills, hobbies and enjoy team sports.

- Handheld electronic games
- Board games
- Sports equipment
- Model kits
- Musical instruments

Pocket Guide to Safe and Age Appropriate Toys



Parents and caregivers should pay attention to toy safety and durability. Toys should be constructed to withstand the uses and abuses of children in the age range for which the toy is appropriate.

It is important to understand that the Consumer Product Safety Commission has safety regulations for toys. Manufacturers must design and manufacture their product to meet these regulations so that hazardous products are not sold. If a product poses a safety risk to children, a recall can be issued. For more information on recalls, go to: www.cpsc.gov.

Tips for Parents and Caregivers

Reduce Choking Risk

- Read age and safety labels. Toys that are labeled for children 3 years and older should be kept away from children under age 3. These toys may have small parts and could cause choking if placed in the mouth.
- Keep un-inflated balloons and broken balloon pieces away from children.
- Small, rounded and oval objects (like balls and marbles) can easily fit into a child's mouth and throat. These pose a choking hazard.

Reduce Strangulation Risk

- Crib toys with strings, cords, ribbons, etc. present a strangulation hazard when babies are just starting to push on their hands and knees, usually by about 5 months of age.
- Remove all crib toys which are strung across a crib or playpen when babies begin to push up on their hands and knees or are 5 months of age, whichever occurs first.

General Toy Safety

- Regularly check toys for damage that may have created sharp edges or loose small parts. Damaged or dangerous toys should be repaired or thrown away immediately.
- Keep toys intended for older children away from younger children – such toys may injure younger children.
- Store toys safely. Teach children to put toys away so they are not tripping hazards.

