

10 tips for play with a toddler



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Engaging a toddler in activities is a tricky business! They are really motivated by movement, get distracted really easily and have really short attention spans.

Play is amazing for their brain development and offer opportunities to play helps their sensory development, social skills and their motor skills too.

Here are our 10 top tips for engaging a toddler in play

- 1. Limit the amount of toys or resources that they have access to** - as parents when our little ones become distracted we tend to offer alternative toys, more toys or just remove the ones that they weren't interested in. Limiting the toys that they have access to is amazing for their concentration span.
- 2. Be prepared for lots of movement** - toddlers love to move around and this is really important for their balance, coordination and motor skills. Allow your little one opportunities for movement breaks during play or give them a chance to do lots of moving before sitting down to play
- 3. Allow them to play with whatever you give them** - giving them an opportunity to discover your resources is amazing for development of their skills

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- 14. Keep them in eye sight and arms reach at all times when playing** - they can get themselves into all sorts of mischief when playing, don't leave them unsupervised. safety first always
- 5. Be completely child led** - watch out for those signs of being hungry, tired or overstimulated and be prepared to cut things short. Remember that they'll need a break. Doing some activities together, giving them a little rest and doing some activities is an amazing strategy and can help manage the level of stimulation they receive too. Playing all of the time is too much for a little person.
- 6. repetition is amazing for brain and skills development** - we need to repeat things (a lot) to learn a new skill so giving little ones the opportunity to do things again is really important
- 7. Try not to do things with an intentional plan** - go with the flow is a great strategy for this age range
- 8. Be prepared to show them how to do something or support them in play but try and not take over** - this is a really fine balance, showing our little ones how to do something is amazing but then let them have a go, if we continue to do things for our little ones all they learn is that we are really good at doing something.

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9. Plan for things to go in mouths - edible resources are very often better than non edible ones!

10. play for your toddler to have interest for moments and come back to it later - it is very often that our toddlers will have passing interest in something and get distracted by something else. Leave out the resources if you can so they can come back to them.

Remember that toddlers are still very much building their brain and their capacity for new information is limited, their attention spans can be fleeting and they have a new freedom of movement that can be distracting too.

It can be really tempting not to play with little ones when they are distracted, especially when you've spent some time setting up an activity. But do know that play is incredible for their development, it is how we do most of our learning and that by playing with your little one you are helping this learning.

We'd love to help to support you to support your baby's development!