

Toys

The best toys encourage your toddler to learn, explore and use his imagination. They don't have to be fancy or expensive.

Household items

- plastic bowls for filling and dumping
- pillows for climbing and making caves
- old clothes for dress-up
- the bath for supervised water play

Classics

- blocks
- dump trucks
- stuffed animals
- play food
- garages and farms
- books

Nature's toys

- dirt and sand
- water
- stones



TRY THIS

When you put a toy out, put another away. Your toddler may be overwhelmed if he has too many to choose from. And rotating toys can be just as exciting as getting something new.

Safer Toys

Reduce overall injuries by:

- ensuring toys are well-made and fit your child's age
- not using toys with broken, sharp or loose pieces
- ensuring your toy box lid can't trap your toddler inside or slam down on him
- making sure paint is non-toxic and not peeling
- reading the safety information on toy labels
- avoiding toys with small batteries and making sure your toddler doesn't take out any batteries



BE AWARE

Almost half of toy-related deaths are caused by choking.

Reduce choking hazards by:

- avoiding any toy that fits in your toddler's mouth
- making sure all toys are at least 3½ cm (1½ inches) wide and 6 cm (2½ inches) long
- not letting your child play with things that can break into pieces, like styrofoam and egg cartons
- not letting him suck or chew on balloons



TRY THIS

See if the toy fits through a toilet paper roll. If it does, it's too small.

Reduce strangling hazards by:

- not using toys with strings, cords or ribbons more than 15 cm (6 inches) long
- being careful with things like pull toys and skipping ropes

Reduce suffocation hazards by:

- making sure that any toy that your toddler can climb into has a way out and air holes
- taking away all packaging from new toys



DID YOU KNOW

If you have to shout to be heard above a toy, it's too noisy and can damage your child's hearing.



FAMILY STORY

We worried about how to keep our toddler away from her 7-year-old brother's small toys. He decided to play with them in his own room. We put a gate on the door so his sister wouldn't feel shut out.