

Let's Play!

Beach Ball Toss

Supplies needed: any kind of lightweight ball that is easy to toss & catch. Bigger balls are better for beginners. Balloons work, too.

Begin by standing close to the child and toss a ball into the child's extended arms. Use a balloon or deflated beach ball if the child is timid or not successful at first.

Step back with continued success of the child's catches.

Variation: Have the child toss the ball back; as the child becomes more successful decrease the size of the ball or the balloon.

Variation: Add another person to the tossing game.

Variation: Toss the ball higher or lower.

Roll the Dice

Supplies needed: two 4 inch square boxes & marking pens or crayons.

Tape all the seams on each box. On one box (die) write the numbers 1-6, placing one number in each panel. On the other write six different movement activities.

Have the child roll one die (box), you roll the other. The number indicates how many times you will both perform the activity showing on the other die.

Sample activities include: sky high fives, run in place, marching, jumping jacks, hopping, wiggle, etc. For additional fun have the child decorate the boxes first.

Hop and Pop

Supplies needed- bubble wrap & duct tape

Use duct tape to secure bubble wrap to the ground or the floor. Let child jump up and down to pop the bubbles. Have the child hop on one foot, two feet & run in place.

Variation: Lily Pads- have the child jump from pad to pad using small bubble wrap circles or squares placed around the play area.

Clean House

Divide playing area into two with chalk (outdoors) or duct tape (indoors). Toss an equal number of yarn balls on each side of line. The goal is to clean up your side by tossing balls on the other side. The other player will do the same. This activity is best when a time limit is set, two minutes for example. Call time and assess the number of balls on each side. Tell the participants that it's too close to call and repeat.

Pathway Play

Use sidewalk chalk (outdoors) or duct tape (indoors) to create pathways for children to follow using specific locomotor skills. Circular, zig-zag, straight lines, squares, figure 8, etc.

Mama Says (similar to Simon Says)

Tell the child you will ask him/her to do perform certain tasks, such as: "Touch your toes with your hands."

If you say, "Mama Says," the child should do it. If the child does the task, without the command, "Mama Says," the child becomes the task master.

Touch your right elbow to your left knee

Touch your left foot to your bottom

Touch both hands to your shoulders

Reach both arms overhead

Touch your toes with both hands and bend your knees

Touch your right hand to your left ankle; change sides

Jump forward (2 feet)

Hop in place (1 foot)

Balance on one foot; now the other foot

Stand on tip toes

Swing your arms

Pat your head

Balance on one foot, then the other

Reach for the sky

Noodle Play

Supplies needed: foam noodles or light weight wrapping paper rolls.

Foam noodles are \$1 each at most dollar type discount stores. Cut the noodles in half through the center diameter. (Cut in thirds for toddlers or children who may be less skilled with gross motor skills).

Noodle Catch-

Give each child one noodle. Have the child throw the noodle in the air & try to catch it.

Variation: Throw the noodle in the air, let it fall to ground, then jump over it.

Give each child 2 noodles and ask them to throw both noodles in the air and jump over two noodles.

Variation: Throw many noodles in the air, then instruct them to jump over all of the noodles.

Noodle Tag/Chase-

Give every child one noodle. The child/children designated "It" will carry two noodles, one in each hand. Play begins with the child carrying two noodles and chasing the others. "It" may tag a child anywhere on his/her body (except the head) using only a noodle to touch. When a child is tagged, he/she gets the extra noodle and becomes "It." Be sure to mark game boundaries and show them to the children before the game begins. Have more than one child be "It."

Bubble Batting-

Give each child one noodle. Have an adult blow bubbles and have the children chase the bubbles, batting them with their noodle. Challenge the children to try to catch a bubble on their noodle without popping it.

Noisy Noodles-

Give each child two noodles, one in each hand, have the children bang the noodles together to make noise. Instruct the children to try to bang their noodles quietly or softly. Have them bang their noodles overhead, on their knees, on the ground, behind their backs, on their thighs, etc. Ask them, "Can you think of more ways to bang your noodles?"

Row, Row, Row-

Give each child one noodle. Have them sit on the floor and hold the noodle horizontally in their hands. Teach them to use a rowing motion by dipping each end in the "Water." You can sing "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" as a group or another boating song. You can have the children row a single canoe by using the one oar on one side of the boat. Have them stand to be a Gondolier or Tom Sawyer on a raft. Talk about all the things you'll see on the ocean or paddling on a river.

To row an outrigger, have the children sit in a row (one behind the other) on the floor with knees bent. Teach them to row in unison.

Choo Choo-

Give each child one noodle. Pair the children and ask them to stand one in front of the other (front to back). The child in the front (the Engine) will hold one end of each noodle (behind) and the child in back (the Caboose) will hold each end of a noodle in front. Teach the children to make "Choo-Choo" or "Chug-A-Chug-A" or "Toot-Toot" sounds as they move around the room.

1. Have them walk with locomotor or choo choo arms.
2. Have them exaggerate the arm movements.
3. Have them try to go fast or slow or around corners by leaning.
4. Have the children change from Engine to Caboose and repeat the activities.

You can lay tracks by using foam noodles, duct tape, or sidewalk chalk.

Noodle Tug-

Pair children and have them sit on the floor facing each other. Use one long noodle per pair and have the children each hold one end. On your command, have the children tug on his/her end (as in Tug of War). The initial contest ends when one child lets go or loses grip on the noodle. Have the children try again with legs extended or knees bent.

Noodle Rodeo-

Give each child a long noodle and have them straddle the noodle and imitate riding a horse. Use the words, "Fast," "Slow," "Stop," and "Start."

Noodle Limbo-

Have 2 children hold the ends of a noodle while a 3rd child walks, crawls, or wiggles under the noodle. Switch holders and repeat.

Noodle Pathways-

Create roads or lanes by laying noodles end to end in two parallel lines. Make bowling lanes. Lay noodles on the floor horizontally to create a ladder with "Rungs," to be walked or jumped over.

Bats and Balls-

Supplies needed: foam noodles & light weight balls or balloons.

Gently toss balloons or lightweight balls to the child and have the child swing the noodle to strike the ball.

Variation: use duct tape balls, whiffle balls, yarn balls, balloons, bubbles, etc.

Chopstick Carry-

Give each child two noodles and one beach ball or other large, soft ball. Have them pick up the ball using the noodles as a pincer or chopsticks. (Place the ball for any child who is struggling to pick it up after several tries). When the child can successfully pick up the ball, have hem/her carry the ball a distance and place it in a box, bucket, hoop, etc. Return to the start and repeat if there are enough balls.

Noodles & beach balls-

Play a game of keep away using only noodles to push or bat beach balls on the ground.

Variation: Add goals using cones or boxes turned on their sides for a challenge.

Sports Galore!

Move **as if** you are playing this sport:

Bat baseball	Shoot puck	Dunk basketball
Dribble soccer ball	Bowl	Hit volleyball
Dribble basketball	Swim	Hit tennis ball
Jump shot	Surf	Ski
Shoot arrow	Golf swing	Punt football
Throw football	Skateboard	Toss Frisbee
Run	Long jump	Rope climb

This is a great way to practice some fundamental movement skills at home or in other small spaces.

Act It Out!

This is a creative movement activity that can be played in or outdoors. Give the child a silly scenario to act out, for example:

- Jog in place **as if** a big bear is chasing you.
- Walk forward **as if** you are walking through chocolate pudding.
- Jump in place **as if** you are popping popcorn.
- Reach up **as if** you are grabbing balloons out of the air.
- March in place **as if** you are playing drums in a marching band.
- Swim **as if** you are in a giant pool of Jell-O.
- Move your feet **as if** you are ice skating.
- Shake your body **as if** you are a wet dog.
- Use a shovel **as if** you are digging deep in the sand for buried treasure.
- Row your boat **as if** pirates are chasing you.
- Chop **as if** you are knocking down a really big tree to build a tree house.
- Saw **as if** you are cutting the tree trunk in half.
- Walk **as if** you are carrying buckets filled with rocks up a hill.
- Curl your body **as if** you are a roly poly bug.
- Tip toe **as if** you are on a tightrope over a river.
- Swing your arms **as if** you are a chimpanzee going from tree to tree.
- Use your arms and legs **as if** you are climbing a ladder to the top of the tallest building.
- Stretch your body **as if** you just woke up
- Bend **as if** you are picking/smelling flowers

Move **as if** you are this animal:

Cheetah- run

Elephant- lumbering walk with a swinging trunk (one arm)

Monkey- swing from tree to tree

Ape- lumbering walk, hunched shoulders, swinging arms

Duck- waddle while squatting low to the ground

Bird- flap your arms

Frog – in a low squat position, jump forward

Bear- arms outstretched overhead with hands like bear claws

Kangaroo- jump with elbows tucked tight to your side

Flamingo- stand on one leg, bend the opposite knee

Zebra or Horse- gallop

Penguin- arms by sides, feet together and turned out, walk in tiny steps

Think of ways you can create calming activities by holding some of the poses or by having them be very quiet and stealth animals.

