

Table Of Contents

Introduction 2

Tips for Raising Terrific Toddlers 6

Communicating with Your Toddler 7

Safety at Home 9

Safety in Public Places 10

How to Use This Book 11



Outdoor Games

Contents 13

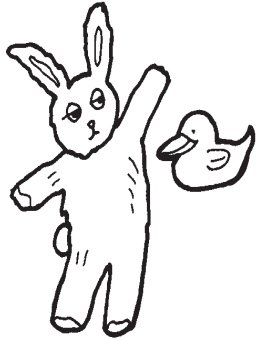
Indoor Games

Contents 55

Toddler Tips

Outing Survival Kit 98

Toddler Rewards 99



Introduction

Oh, You Must Have Been a Beautiful Baby!

Has there been a time recently when you looked at your beautiful baby and realised that he isn't a baby anymore? Your baby has grown to be that terrific but tiring small child known as a toddler. What exactly is a toddler? A toddler is a child who can move around independently.

And move they do! If you have a toddler, you know that newly independent toddlers are into everything. Toddlers are also known for being in love with the world. They generally have a sunny perspective and are rarely bored because they have so much to learn and do. With your guidance, toddlers have the opportunity to discover many new and exciting things.

So how does a parent channel a toddler's natural curiosity? *Quick and Fun Games for Toddlers* is one answer. The indoor and outdoor games in this book are easy to do, and they will help you bond with your special little one. They are designed to help you create an enriching environment for your toddler that can help him thrive and reach his highest potential. This is especially important during the toddler years. Developmentally, your toddler's brain is programmed to take in all kinds of stimulation from the environment; rich connections are being formed that can influence his later ability to learn.



Why Games?

First of all, games are a fun part of life. Secondly, the games in this book will set the stage for your toddler to . . .

- follow directions
- listen
- work and play with others
- take turns
- gain social skills
- enhance early oral language skills
- set the stage for reading readiness
- sequence items and events
- increase cognitive thinking skills
- improve large and small motor skills

Most of the games in this book require little or no preparation. Some games make use of things you already have in your home or your toddler's toy box. Others require some simple construction with a little gluing, cutting, and pasting. Occasionally, you will prepare something that you and your toddler will use outdoors later.



Footprint Followers

Materials

- Sandy beach or lake area to play
- Bare feet
- Patio area and water (optional)

Toddlers love games in which they imitate their favourite people: Mummy and Daddy! Children begin mimicking their parents' behaviour very early on. In fact, imitating behaviour is one of the most frequent forms of early learning. This is one reason that games in which your toddler follows your examples are especially good ones.

In this game, you will lead your child on a merry chase. You will need a beach or lakeshore with moist sand in which you can create footprints. If you don't have access to a beach or lake, you can use wet feet on a patio, but you will have to work quickly so your trail doesn't disappear.

Begin by making a footprint trail. Ask your toddler to follow you. Then, make a more complex trail. Walk in small circles or form the edges of a square or other shape in the sand. Ask your toddler to follow your footsteps. If he can go from beginning to end, he wins! Then, make a footprint race course. Make two footprint paths, side-by-side. Then walk back and give the signal to "Go!" See who can make it to the end first, making sure to step in every single footprint.

Create variations of this game. Try a hopping footprint game, or use shapes in the sand as 'stepping stones' to teach your toddler about simple shapes. Let your feet be your guide!



Rolling Hill Races

Materials

- Comfortable, old clothes
- Low, grassy hill

Feeling agile? This game is not for the faint-of-heart or exhausted parent, but your toddler will love it. For this game, you will need to watch for grassy, low hills that will be fun to roll on at parks and other recreation areas. When you find a hill covered with soft grass and free from rocks, you will be ready to play this impromptu game. Make sure you both wear old, comfortable clothes in case of grass and mud stains.

Teach your toddler how to roll from the bottom of the slope at first. Lie down flat on your back, arms at your sides or crossed over your chest, and roll. Then hold your toddler as he practises rolling down the small slope until he feels safe and gets the hang of it. After you have both tried it a few times, try rolling by each other for a race. You will be amazed at how exhilarating this is. This game can be played anywhere you and your toddler find a safe spot. It will increase his large motor and coordination skills as well as burn off any excess energy. You will find that you are refreshed and relaxed after a little hill rolling, too. How can anyone be stressed after this kind of fun?



Alphabet Game

Materials

- Cardboard
- Marking pens
- Supplies of food representing letters of the alphabet

The kitchen is a good place to introduce the alphabet. With a little effort, you can turn the whole alphabet into play while you go about your daily tasks.

To start, make large alphabet cards for your toddler using block letters, beginning with Aa and ending with Zz. Start by showing your toddler the Aa card, then have her find a food that begins with that letter in your kitchen. Canned or packaged foods will be easiest since they have the letters right on them. (You may wish to purchase some foods in order to cover all the letters.) Use stickers as rewards; educational supply stores may even have stickers with fruits and vegetables or other foods on them.

