

## Top 10 Toys

We recommend natural, open-ended resources that ignite children's imaginations. Many 'toys' inspire creativity and inventiveness. Here are some suggestions:

### 1. Sticks

Sticks can become anything from swords to wands, pens and people. They can be used to build dens, draw in dirt and write numbers and letters. Sticks can be combined to make a boat or raft. They come in a variety of shapes, sizes and colours. They can be whittled with peelers, drawn on and decorated with craft materials, such as pipe cleaners and googly eyes. Sticks are cost effective and do actually grow on trees!



### 2. Cardboard boxes

Boxes are versatile and can be used both indoors and outdoors. They can be drawn on and cut into shape. Boxes transform into ships, cars or any mode of transport. They can also be used to create dens, caves and houses for teddies and dolls. You can get boxes free of charge from supermarkets and shops.



### 3. Water

Children adore playing with water. Water requires supervision, but there doesn't need to be a large amount to excite or inspire. It can be swirled, splashed and bubbled. Children often enjoy pouring water; filling and emptying containers. Objects can be added to water to explore floating and sinking. Water makes great sounds and movements and can be magically transformed into ice.



### 4. Mud

Mud offers endless play opportunities. It is fun and children love getting messy. Mud can be dug, spread, piled and mixed with water to change its consistency. Children can make recipes, such as mud pies or brownies!



### 5. Leaves

Leaves can be sorted by size and colour. Children can try leaf printing and leaf rubbing. Leaves can be collected, counted and threaded to make necklaces. Patterns can be made using leaves, such as big, small, big, small or green, brown, green, brown.



Bought toys and resources that are valuable include:

## 6. Books

Reading is crucial for development. It enhances areas such as vocabulary, memory and knowledge. A range of books by various authors is a good investment. Books can also be explored through a local library.



## 7. Coloured pencils

Coloured pencils are highly beneficial, enabling children to develop fine motor skills and express their ideas. Children can spend prolonged periods mark-making, drawing pictures, colouring, writing letters and forming numbers. Coloured pencils are long-lasting and allow precision, and control of detail.



## 8. Puzzles

There are many advantages to jigsaw puzzles, for example developing problem-solving skills, hand-eye coordination, teamwork and concentration. By 5 years of age most children are able to complete increasingly complex puzzles of 40+ pieces.



## 9. Wooden blocks

Open-ended wooden blocks can be used to build models. Blocks can be stacked vertically and horizontally to create enclosures and spaces. Children can balance blocks as they copy famous buildings from around the world or create their own original designs.



## 10. Balls

Balls are entertaining and help children to stay active. Children enjoy rolling, throwing, catching, kicking and dribbling them. Target and team games can be played. Lightweight balls are best for young children.

