



Fun To Play

for parents and their young children

Blocks and Boxes Things To Look Forward To

Here are some ideas for children newborn to three.

Heads Up (newborn-1 month) – Hang a mobile over crib with bright colored objects such as plastic blocks that can be securely fastened to the mobile with six inch strings. Change the blocks after a few days. Baby will tire of seeing the same objects.

The Looker (1-4 months) – Hold a small plastic block for your baby to see. Touch the inside of his hand with it so his fingers close around it. Hand it to him again when he drops it.

Creepers - Crawler (4-8 months) – At six months, your baby can transfer a block from one hand to the other and from hand to mouth. As his crawling improves he will love to empty a box if he can open it and reach in. Fill a small box with plastic spoons and let baby dump them out. Make your own set of nesting blocks from different sized plastic containers that fit inside each other.

The Cruiser (8-12 months) – Your baby will be so excited that he can pick up two blocks, one in each hand. Hide a small colorful block under the blanket and see if he will reach for it when you remove the blanket (object permanence). About the time he is ready to celebrate his first birthday, he can bang two small blocks together. He will also enjoy pushing a cardboard box around on the floor. Make a set of Milk Carton Blocks for your child.

The Walker (12-18 months) – Play the Building Up/Knocking Down game with your baby. Your toddler will enjoy hearing the crashing sound when the blocks tumble down.

The Doer (18-24 months) – Your older toddler will enjoy climbing on a set of Milk Carton Blocks. He also needs some small wooden blocks in shapes of triangles, squares, circles, etc., that he can experiment with. By now, he can stack two blocks and it won't be long before he can stack four small blocks to make a simple tower. He can also put the blocks in a row and make a "train." He will enjoy it much more if you are there to help and talk about the building project. Let him play with the "train" before it becomes another mode of transportation.

The Tester (24-36 months) – Your older toddler will be as content with several cardboard boxes – any size and shape – as he would be with as many brand new toys. He will want to sit in them, push them and stack them to the ceiling. He will think of things to do with a box that no one else has thought of. These boxes will be used as boats, wheelbarrows, Islands and towers. Encourage his imagination with stacking, pushing, pulling and nesting. Your three-year-old will easily build a tower with at least eight small blocks.

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