

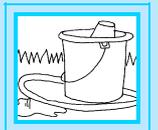
Water Play

PLAY
IDEAS 8

ABOUT
WATER
PLAY



Water can provide great play activities for your child - it can be part of your every day routine, can be played inside and out, and can be easily set up to suit all ages. Water play is a wonderful way to calm a tense or grumpy child, or to pick everyone up on a hot, tired afternoon. Playing in water is also great for developing strength, balance and coordination.



WATER PLAY AND DEVELOPMENT



Babies

Bath time for babies can become a time for playing with parents in a safe and secure way - having fun with gentle splashes, watching floating toys and hearing familiar words and songs that are can be made part of bath time.



Toddlers

Toddlers will have great fun using household objects to fill and pour. 'Helping' to water the garden or wash the windows will be fun too. Toddlers will become more aware of other children playing in the paddling pool or at the water's edge and will begin to play alongside others. They will talk about the water - 'all gone', 'splash' or 'more bubbles'.



Young Children

By the age of 3 - 4 years children will use water to wash their dolls and will have fun creating waterways and canals in the sandpit or at the beach. They will have great fun jumping in puddles, shallow pools and running through sprinklers. They may be beginning to learn to swim and will enjoy playing with others in and with water.



P.A.L. PLAY AND LEARNING PROGRAM
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WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Use bath-time (or the shower) as an opportunity to talk about different parts of the body, to play with flannels, sponges, cups and containers and to sing splashy songs and blow soap bubbles.
- Use buckets, shallow trays, plastic cups and containers to create wet play places indoors or outside. Sieves, colanders, funnels and sponges will add to the fun.
- Use housework as a chance for some watery fun - let your child help you wash the vegies, wash the windows, wash the car or wash some plastic toys.
- Use gardening time as a chance for a splash and a cool down - running through the sprinkler, spraying each other with the water sprayer or helping to water the plants.
- Teach your child about water conservation. Water is a 'precious resource'.
- Be sensitive to children who are timid or uncomfortable around water - gentle encouragement is recommended.

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

- Always supervise your children in and around water. Empty buckets and paddling pools after use each day.
- Make sure that outdoor water play is well shaded.
- Use low allergy detergents for bubble and soapy play.
- Teach your child about not splashing others if they don't like it, being careful of others' eyes and being careful on wet, slippery surfaces.

SOME ACTIVITIES TO TRY

- Create a 'water wall'** You can do this by attaching funnels, tubing, rubber gloves with holes in the fingers and containers with holes in the sides or on the bottom to a lattice or plastic mesh fence on an outside wall. Have a tray underneath to catch the water and use cups and jugs to tip water into different containers on the wall and watch what happens.
- Make 'boats'** for the bath or a wading pool by using corks, plastic lids, bits of wood or leaves etc. Watch what happens when there is something heavy in the boat. Talk about floating and sinking, heavy and light, full and empty.
- Add water to sand pit play** Let the hose run into the sand for a short time, so that the children can feel the difference between wet and dry sand, and create canals, dams and lakes as part of their play.
- Rainy day play** Use rainy days as a time to learn about water - use an umbrella, splash through the puddles, look at the rain drops running down the window and sing rainy day songs.
- Make bubble blowers** out of twisted coat hanger wire or a pipe cleaner with good bubble blowing mixture.
- Water painting** Use a bucket of water, some paint brushes and rollers - and 'paint' the fence, path or an outside wall.
- Use your toy library** to try out all the different commercial water toys that are available.

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