

# Age-Appropriate Toy Ideas for Child Care

From: eXtenion [http://www.extension.org/pages/25990/age-appropriate-toy-ideas-for-child-care#.VgK\\_Ot9VhBc](http://www.extension.org/pages/25990/age-appropriate-toy-ideas-for-child-care#.VgK_Ot9VhBc)

Choosing the best toys for children of different ages is one of the most important jobs of a child care provider. Matching toys to children's age, ability, interests, and developmental goals requires careful thought and planning.

Even though children have different abilities and preferences, there are some classic toys that most groups of young children enjoy at different ages. The following ideas may help you get started choosing toys for different age groups. Remember that these lists are just a starting point, not a definitive list of the only toys children should have.

## 0 - 12 Months

- rattles and squeaky toys
- teethingers
- discovery play mats
- musical and chime toys
- books with simple pictures of familiar things
- non-breakable mirrors
- washable dolls or animals with embroidered features



## 1 - 2 Years

- strings of big beads
- cause-and-effect toys such as pop-n-pals
- pounding and stacking toys
- floating water toys
- toys to push and pull (no strings)
- nesting boxes or cups
- stacking toys and rings
- cloth or board books with rhymes and bright pictures
- simple toys to pretend, such as cooking tools
- blocks – foam, plastic, cloth, or cardboard
- ride-on or walk-behind toys



## 2 - 3 Years

- balls of various sizes
- blocks of different sizes and shapes
- child-size play furniture
- play appliances and cooking tools
- simple dolls
- simple dress-up clothes
- stuffed animals
- simple puzzles
- clay and modeling dough
- large crayons and large sheets of paper
- simple musical instruments
- finger paints
- cars and trains with no small parts
- simple building materials like Duplos
- climbing equipment
- books with short, simple stories
- tricycles
- wagons
- sand and water toys



## 3 - 6 Years

- dress-up clothes for a variety of roles (doctor, firefighter, etc.)
- toys for bathing and feeding dolls
- puppets and theaters
- playhouses
- housekeeping toys
- farm, village, and other play sets
- small trucks, cars, planes, boats, trains – with accessories
- manipulatives
- construction sets, wooden blocks, bristle blocks
- musical instruments
- art materials (crayons, markers, paint, chalk, glue, scissors, etc.)
- sketch pads
- books with more complex story lines
- sports equipment
- larger tricycles
- sleds
- wagons

