

Toys & Materials: Science & Discovery

Birth through 8 months	9 through 18 months	19 months through 2 years	3 through 5 years	6 through 8 years	9 through 12 years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mirrors - securely attached to a wall or crib (soft, handheld mirrors at about 6 months) • Mobiles with gentle music or movement • Teething toys • Rattles • Lightweight balls • Textured toys • Activity gyms • Cloth and plush toys • Toys that make sounds when kicked • Squeeze & squeak toys • Simple cars or animals on wheels/rollers (starting at 6 mo.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mirrors - hand held or securely attached to wall • Rattles • Lightweight balls • Textured toys • Activity gyms • Cloth and plush toys • Toys that make sounds • Simple cars or animals on wheels/rollers • Nesting, sorting and stacking toys • Pop-up toys • Large beads on rings • Plastic keys on rings • Pull toys with cords (may be used while standing) • Non-toxic sensory activities (e.g, cornstarch and water, play dough, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mirrors - hand held or securely attached to wall • Lightweight balls • Textured toys • Cloth and plush toys • Toys that make sounds • Cars and animal figures • Nesting, sorting and stacking toys • Pop-up toys • Large beads on rings • Plastic keys on rings • Pull toys with cords (may be used while standing) • Tunnels • Bubbles • Lacing and stringing toys • Push and pull toys that resemble real life objects (e.g., small vehicles, animals, etc.) • Sand and water toys • Non-toxic sensory activities (e.g, cornstarch and water, play dough, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cubes, blocks or shapes in various sizes, forms and colors (e.g., counting bears, foam pieces, etc.) • Magnets, flashlights, scales, magnifying glasses, prisms • Thermometers • Models of solar system, rock/shell collections or kits • Microscopes, telescopes, binoculars • See-through clocks • Simple calculators • Functioning toy typewriters • Simple measuring tools (rulers, tape measure) • Sand and water • Cooking kits and accessories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cubes, blocks or shapes in various sizes, forms and colors (e.g., counting bears, foam pieces, etc.) • Magnets, flashlights, scales, magnifying glasses, prisms • Thermometers • Speedometers • Models of solar system, rock/shell collections or kits • Microscopes, telescopes, binoculars • See-through clocks • Simple calculators • Functioning typewriters • Astronomy models • Science kits • Measuring tools (rulers, compasses) • Cooking kits and accessories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cubes, blocks or shapes in various sizes, forms and colors (e.g., counting bears, foam pieces, etc.) • Magnets, flashlights, scales, magnifying glasses, prisms • Thermometers • Speedometers • Models of solar system, rock/shell collections or kits • Microscopes, telescopes, binoculars • See-through clocks • Standard typewrites and calculators • Astronomy models • Science kits • Measuring tools (rulers, compasses) • Access to a working kitchen

Toys & Materials: Blocks and construction play

Birth through 8 months	9 through 18 months	19 months through 2 years	3 through 5 years	6 through 8 years	9 through 12 years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plastic coated soft cubes, foam cube blocks and pillow blocks • Containers to drop blocks into 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plastic coated soft cubes, foam cube blocks and pillow blocks • Containers to drop blocks into • Rattle/jingle blocks • Nesting blocks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plastic coated soft cubes, foam cube blocks and pillow blocks • Containers to drop blocks into • Rattle/jingle blocks • Nesting blocks • Stacking blocks • Table blocks • Snap-lock beads • Large, chunky interlocking bricks/blocks • Foam puzzle mats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nesting blocks • Stacking blocks • Table blocks • Snap-lock beads • Large and small interlocking bricks/blocks • Foam puzzle mats • Wooden blocks • Hollow blocks • Notched logs • Sets using rods/dowels and spool-like connector pieces • Work bench screws • Large nuts and bolts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snap-lock beads • Small interlocking bricks • Notched logs • Sets using rods/dowels and spool-like connector pieces • Sets using irregularly shaped or swiveling connector pieces • Sets that build realistic, detailed or transforming models • Sets that teach concepts of simple machines (e.g., wheels and axels, gears, levers and pulleys) • Snap together model car kits • Small nuts, bolts and screws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snap-lock beads • Small interlocking bricks • Notched logs • Sets using rods/dowels and spool-like connector pieces • Sets using irregularly shaped or swiveling connector pieces • Sets that build realistic, detailed or transforming models • Sets that teach concepts of more complex machines • Snap together model car kits • Small nuts, bolts and screws • Cement-based model car kits

Toys & Materials: Dramatic play

Birth through 8 months	9 through 18 months	19 months through 2 years	3 through 5 years	6 through 8 years	9 through 12 years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small dolls (baby, bean bag, rag dolls) • Small stuffed or plush animals • Music dolls and stuffed toys • Grab-on soft toys • Simple sock-like puppets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small dolls (baby, bean bag, rag dolls) • Small stuffed or plush animals • Music dolls and stuffed toys • Grab-on soft toys • Simple sock-like puppets • Washable rubber baby dolls • Small, simple play scenes like kitchens, farms, gas stations, airplanes, etc. • Simple costumes • Large beaded necklaces, bracelets with low tension elastic (no rings or earrings) • Scarves • Boats • Push cars, motorcycles and trucks • Simple trains without tracks • Rakes, shovels and buckets • Small vacuum like, lawnmower-like toys • House cleaning tools • Kitchen/cooking and tea sets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All examples from the previous age group • Combinations like mother and baby • Simple clothing to dress dolls • Simple sock, mitten and finger puppets • Shoes, hats, snap-on ties • Simple airplanes, boats and cars that are easy to handle • Large trucks • Trains with 2-6 cars that fasten and detach • Vehicles with simple wind-ups • Telephones and mobile communication devices (cell phones, pagers) • Cash registers and play money • Medical kits • Construction tools • Wheelbarrows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All examples from the previous age group • More complex clothing for dolls • Fantasy character/action figures • Life-sized dolls and accessories • Life-sized stuffed animals • Action and fashion dolls • More complex sock, mitten, hand, arm and finger puppets • Puppets with mouth and arm openings for simple thumb and finger manipulations • Play houses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All examples from the previous age group • Unusual, unique dolls and stuffed toys • Hand, arm, finger, jointed or simple string puppets and marionettes • Puppets with hard heads and painted faces • Thematic puppet theaters with curtains • Elaborate doll houses with miniature figures, animals and accessories • Unfinished materials for making costumes • Cars, motorcycles and trucks with moderately complex standard or electric tracks for racing • Electric trains with multiple cars that fasten and detach • Trains with small tracts that are moderately easy to connect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All examples from the previous age group • String puppets and marionettes • Authentic puppet theaters • Theater make-up • Manicure sets • Disguises • Masks • Cars, motorcycles, trucks with highly complex standard or electric tracks for racing • Authentic, adult-like tools and props

Toys & Materials: Games and Table Toys

Birth through 8 months	9 through 18 months	19 months through 2 years	3 through 5 years	6 through 8 years	9 through 12 years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nesting toys (i.e., shapes that fit inside each other such as measuring cups) • Shape sorters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puzzles with knobs and large pieces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wooden puzzles with 3 to 5 pieces • Simple matching or lotto-type games • Giant picture dominoes • Magnetic fishing game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puzzles with knobs, simple jigsaw puzzles, large piece floor puzzles • Matching games • Matching dominoes with pictures rather than dots (for 3 year olds); dots okay for 4 to 5 year olds • Games based on chance • Activity games that include movement, dance or drawing • Simple board games that use spinners or cards • Memory or matching games • Number and letter recognition games 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper and cardboard puzzles with up to 100 pieces • Traditional card games • Games that involve counting and sorting cards • Simple strategy games (e.g., checkers, connect four) • Simple word games • Dice games • Collector card games 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 dimensional puzzles (e.g., puzzle cube) • Jigsaw puzzles with 100-500 pieces for 9 year olds; 500 or more pieces for children over 10 years • Interactive games • Simulation games • Sports games • Trivia games • Strategy games

Toys & Materials: Gross motor toys (to promote riding, swinging, climbing, etc.)

Birth through 8 months	9 through 18 months	19 months through 2 years	3 through 5 years	6 through 8 years	9 through 12 years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanical swings that completely support the child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-pedal ride on toys • Simple, low rocking toys (e.g., wooden boat) • Soft play ramps and pads • Large soft balls • Ball pits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tricycles with pedals • Low rocking toys • Soft play climbers • Low slides with rails • Toddler swings • Large soft balls • Ball pits • Playground balls • Creative movement materials such as hoops, scarves and ribbons (for 2 year olds) • Variety of balls (shapes, sizes, etc.) • Targets, nets or goals for throwing balls into (for 2 year olds) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wagons • Tricycles • 3-wheeled scooters • Child sized bicycles with training wheels • Parachutes • Playground equipment like climbers, slides and unsupported swings • Creative movement materials like hoops, scarves, ribbons, etc. • Variety of balls • Replica sports balls (soft footballs, soft balls, etc.) • Soft bats or clubs • Targets, nets or goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bicycles with hand brakes • Gymnastics equipment (mats, trampoline, bars, etc.) • Jump ropes • Child size sports balls (footballs, basketballs, baseballs, soccer balls) • Child size racquets, bats and clubs • Child size nets and goals • Croquet equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bicycles with gears • Kites • Hiking equipment • Weightlifting equipment • Aerobic and dance activities • Adult size sports balls (footballs, baseballs, basketballs, soccer balls) • Adult size racquets, bats and clubs • Net or goal game equipment (e.g., volleyball net, basketball hoop, etc.) • Table tennis

Toys & Materials: Arts and Crafts

Birth through 8 months	9 through 18 months	19 months through 2 years	3 through 5 years	6 through 8 years	9 through 12 years
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large, easy to grip crayons and washable markers • Variety of paper • Finger paint 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large, easy to grip crayons and washable markers • Variety of paper • Finger paint • Blunt-end scissors • Soft modeling clay or dough • Large beads • Collage materials (large buttons, foam pieces, etc.) • Non-toxic glue or paste 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crayons, markers, paint brushes • Various sizes, colors, types and textures of paper • Finger paint, tempera paint and watercolors • Easels • Non-toxic glue and paste • Blunt-end scissors • Beads and string • Chalk • Glitter, yarn, pom poms and other collage materials • Tools for clay work (cookie cutters, plastic knives, etc.) • Non-toxic ink pads and stamps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crayons, markers, brushes and colored pencils • Finger paint, tempera paint, watercolors and pastels • Variety of scissors • Self-hardening and polymer clay • Beading/jewelry kits • Soap, candle, and basket kits • Chalk • Glitter, yarn, pom poms, and other collage materials • Sewing kits with large needle • Plaster of Paris, papier-mâché, pottery activities • Leatherwork and tools • Carving • Flower pressing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All those for 6-8 years • Calligraphy • Sketching • Crochet • Embroidery • Knitting • Needlepoint • Puppetry • Doll-making • Metal working • Mosaic • Ceramic • Sewing machines • Screwdrivers • Pliers • Hot glue gun

Toys & Materials: Music

Birth through 8 months	9 through 18 months	19 months through 2 years	3 through 5 years	6 through 8 years	9 through 12 years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lullabies, simple songs, rhythms, nursery rhymes • Gentle predictable sounds played at low volumes • Music boxes (wound by adults) • Simple bells, rattles and other rhythm instruments/toys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Danceable, lyrical music with a range of high and low frequencies • Hand-cranked music box • Musical rhythm instruments • Sing-a-long songs • Rattles and shakers • Bells, chimes and small tambourines • Drums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Danceable, lyrical music with a range of high and low frequencies • Hand-cranked music box • Musical rhythm instruments • Sing-a-long songs • Rattles and shakers • Bells, chimes and small tambourines • Drums • Blocks (scraping and tapping) • Triangles • Rhythm sticks • Horns and whistles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Folk and cultural music • Silly songs and finger plays • Simple tape/CD players and radios • Microphones and blank tapes • Performance costumes • Rattles and shakers • Bells, chimes and small tambourines • Drums • Blocks (scraping and tapping) • Triangles • Rhythm sticks • Horns and whistles • Cymbals • Xylophones • Keyboards, pianos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Folk and cultural music • Silly songs and finger plays • Simple tape/CD players and radios • Microphones and blank tapes • Performance costumes • Pop/rock, rhythm band and group singing music • Portable CD players and headphones • Interpretive dance costumes • Rattles and shakers • Bells, chimes and small tambourines • Drums • Blocks (scraping and tapping) • Triangles • Rhythm sticks • Horns and whistles • Cymbals, xylophones, keyboards, pianos, autoharp, ukulele, flute, violin, horns, harmonica 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Folk and cultural music • Silly songs and finger plays • Simple tape/CD players and radios • Microphones and blank tapes • Performance costumes • Pop/rock, rhythm band and group singing music • Portable CD players and headphones • Interpretive dance costumes • Rattles and shakers • Bells, chimes and small tambourines • Drums • Blocks (scraping and tapping) • Triangles • Rhythm sticks • Horns and whistles • Cymbals, xylophones, keyboards, pianos, autoharp, ukulele, flute, violin, horns, harmonica

Toys & Materials: Books and Literacy

Birth through 8 months	9 through 18 months	19 months through 2 years	3 through 5 years	6 through 8 years	9 through 12 years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plastic coated foam books • Cloth books • Simple picture books • Board books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plastic coated foam books • Cloth books • Simple picture books • Board books • Interactive books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plastic coated foam books • Cloth books • Simple picture books • Board books • Interactive books • Tactile or "touch me" books • Books with pictures hidden behind windows or doors • Pop-up books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Silly stories • Predictable books • Picture books • Self-created books • Information stories that teach new concepts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • books of poetry, comics, fantasy, legends, good magic, myths, funny stories and luck • Information books (science topics) • Books on geography and travel • Simple chapter books and novels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • books of poetry, comics, fantasy, legends, good magic, myths, funny stories and luck • Information books (science topics) • Books on geography and travel • Simple chapter books and novels • Enjoy books on sports, scientific discovery, "how to" books • Series books

References

Therrell, J.A., Brown, P., Sutterby, J.A., & Thornton, C.D. (2002). *Age determination guidelines: Relating children's ages to toy characteristics and play behavior*. Washington, DC: U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

NOTE: This is not meant to be an inclusive list. This list provides a sample of the kinds of materials and toys that are appropriate for children of different ages.