

# ACTIVE KID = AWESOME ADULT\*

It's as easy as  
rolling a ball



\* Just like reading and  
writing, kids need  
to learn how to move.

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# Animal Friends

## Requirements

No equipment required

## Instructions

**Step 1:** Either indoors or outdoors, pretend to be different animals with your child.

**Step 2:** Flap your arms like bird wings and “fly” around obstacles.

**Step 3:** Hop on all fours like a frog, and say “Ribbit-ribbit-ribbit”.

**Step 4:** Hop on two legs with feet together, and pretend to be kangaroos.

**Step 5:** Bend your knees, walk with your legs far apart, and swing your arms like chimpanzees.

**Step 6:** Walk on feet and hands and pretend to be a reptile.

**Step 7:** Walk on hands and knees and pretend to be kittens saying “meow”.

**Step 8:** Slide on the floor or ground and pretend to be snakes saying “hiss”.

**Step 9:** Invent other animal ideas and noises.

**TIP**

*This activity is a great way to stimulate your child's imagination as well!*

## Variations

• Ask your child to suggest an animal that you can both imitate

## Benefits

This activity develops coordination and balance as kids try to imitate the movements of different animals.

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# Balloon Batting

## Requirements

- Indoor space free of obstacles and valuable breakables such as lamps, pictures and plants
- Large round balloon
- Empty cardboard tube from wrapping paper



## Instructions

**Step 1:** Inflate the balloon until it is relatively hard.

**Step 2:** Show your toddler how to hit the balloon around the room with the cardboard tube.

**Step 3:** Allow your toddler to have fun hitting the balloon around the room in any manner they like.

**TIP**

*You don't need to "coach" any batting or hitting technique.*

## Variations

If you have two cardboard tubes, try to take turns hitting the balloon to each other while keeping the balloon in the air.

## Benefits

This activity develops hand-eye coordination and timing while using a simple bat (i.e., striking tool). These skills also transfer to striking with a racquet or stick.

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# Balloon Juggling

## Requirements

- Open space indoor or outdoor
- Balloons (round type)

## Instructions

**Step 1:** Blow up a few balloons of the “round” type.

**Step 2:** Inflate to medium pressure, so the balloon “floats” a bit but not too much.

**Step 3:** Toss one balloon into the air above your head.

**Step 4:** Show your child how to keep up the balloon using fingertips and palms.

**Step 5:** Challenge your child to take a turn keeping the balloon in the air.

**Step 6:** If the balloon touches the ground, switch turns.

**TIP** | *Keep up the balloon with different body parts (knees only, feet only, elbows only, head only)*

## Variations

- After a while practicing, try a competition where you count your touches out loud before the balloon hits the ground.
- Try with two balloons at the same time, one balloon each — see who keeps up their balloon longest.
- See if you can keep up two or three balloons at the same time.

## Benefits

This activity develops hand-eye coordination, gross motor control, and the ability to track moving objects in the air. These skills transfer to sports and activities that involve striking or catching an object in the air (e.g., balls, frisbees, ribbons, sticks, batons).

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## Balloon Soccer

### Requirements

- Large indoor or outdoor space free of obstacles
- Large round balloon inflated to low pressure (not hard)

### Instructions

**Step 1:** Inflate a round balloon to a low pressure so it is not too hard or likely to pop.

**Step 2:** Find a large indoor or outdoor space free of obstacles.

**Step 3:** Practice kicking the balloon with your toddler.

**Step 4:** If the balloon is kicked high into the air, try to catch it with your hands.



**TIP**

*If the balloon is kicked high into the air, try to catch it with your hands.*

### Variations

- Tie a long string to the balloon and hang it from a doorframe or a tree. The balloon should hang about 5cm above the ground.

### Benefits

This activity develops leg coordination, balance, and gross motor control in the lower body. These skills transfer to sports and activities that involve dynamic balance and rhythmical movement (e.g., soccer, basketball, volleyball, racquet sports, martial arts, dance).

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# Beach Ball Handball

## Requirements

- Unobstructed wall with hard floor or pavement in front
- Plastic beach ball 20–40 cm diameter that is very bouncy
- Paper masking tape and string 4–5 metres long
- Chalk

## Instructions

**Step 1:** If indoors (e.g. garage), create a 4–5 metre horizontal line on the wall using the piece of string. Hang it one metre above the floor and tape it every 1–2 metres.

**Step 2:** If outdoors (e.g. driveway), create a 4–5 metre horizontal line on the wall using long pieces of masking tape. Place it one metre above the pavement.

**Step 3:** Create a line on the floor 2–3 metres from the wall. If indoors, use masking tape. If outdoors, use masking tape or chalk.

**Step 4:** Hit the ball at the wall with the palm of the hand, using your hand like a tennis racquet.

**Step 5:** The ball must bounce off the wall on the line or above the line.

**Step 6:** One player “serves” from behind the line on the floor.

**Step 7:** The other player “returns” the serve from either side of the line.

**Step 8:** Play continues until one player misses a return.

**Step 9:** When a player misses, the other player restarts play with a new serve.

**Step 10:** Players can score a point only when they are the server.

**Step 11:** The ball can bounce once on the floor or pavement before a player hits a return.

**Step 12:** First player to 5 points wins.

**TIP** *Don't keep score at first - simply challenge your child to return the ball as long as possible in a continuous “rally”*

## Variations

- Make a game where you and your child are on the same team — count how many returns you can do in one rally — with each new rally, try to better your previous score
- If you have more than one child, or more than one adult, try playing a fun family tournament where family members take turns playing each other

## Benefits

This activity develops hand-eye coordination and timing for striking a moving object. These skills also transfer to striking with a bat, racquet, or stick.

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# Bear Crawl

## Requirements

- Open indoor space, or dry outdoor space with grass.
- Rope, ribbon, or any line on the ground.

## Instructions

**Step 1:** Talk with your preschool child about bears. How do bears move?

**Step 2:** Show your child how to crawl like a bear. Knees do not touch the ground.

**Step 3:** Stretch out a rope or ribbon on the grass, or find a line marked on the floor.

**Step 4:** Crawl along the rope, ribbon or line like a tightrope in the circus. Feet and hands must stay on the rope, ribbon or line.



**TIP** | *Show your child how to crawl like a bear.  
Knees do not touch the ground.*

## Variations

- If there are several children present, try having a bear crawl race. Mark a starting line and a finish line 10 metres away.

## Benefits

This activity develops coordination, balance, and strength as kids try to imitate the movements of a bear.

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# Ball Hockey for Children

## Requirements

- Small hockey sticks (wooden or plastic)
- Plastic ball 8-10 cm diameter (e.g. street hockey ball)



## Instructions

**Step 1:** Create two small goals in your driveway, patio, or hard surface at a local park.

**Step 2:** Play a simple hockey game with two or three children per team.

**Step 3:** Adult can play as a passing player who models good team play.

**TIP**

*Create a big goal and act as goalkeeper so your child can attempt to score on you*

## Variations

- Show children how to “stick handle” the ball with small touches that change the ball direction
- Create a big goal and act as goalkeeper for your children to take turns shooting at you

## Benefits

This activity develops hand-eye coordination and timing while using a hockey stick (i.e., striking tool). These skills also transfer to striking with a bat or racquet.

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## Mirror Mirror

### Requirements

• Open space • Two partners

### Instructions

**Step 1:** In Mirror Mirror, two partners face each other. One person is the “mirror master” and makes body movements. The other person must copy or “mirror” the movements.

**Step 2:** For the first try, stand facing your child with a small space between you.

**Step 3:** As you wave your arms, jump, step, wiggle, bend or otherwise move, your child must try to “mirror” your movement.

**Step 4:** After your child has imitated you for a few minutes, let your child be the mirror master.

**Step 5:** Try different fundamental movements such as hopping, jumping, spinning, skipping, and running on the spot.

**TIP**

*After your child has imitated you for a few minutes, let your child be the mirror master.*

### Variations

• Try different movement themes — the mirror master can imagine he or she is a hockey player, a firefighter, James Bond, or anyone else who does a lot of moving.

### Benefits

This activity develops coordination and balance as kids try to imitate the movements of their parent or play partner.

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# Twist and Shout

## Requirements

- Open space • Stereo equipment
- Music: "The Twist," "Twist and Shout," "Let's Twist Again," "Peppermint Twist"

## Instructions

**Step 1:** Show your child how to move with a twist (raised bent arms rotate with torso one direction, bent legs rotate with hips in other direction).

**Step 2:** Play music and start twisting with your child.

**Step 3:** Call out "shout!" every 15-20 seconds. Each time, your child must jump straight up.

**Step 4:** After landing, your child must resume twisting.

**Step 5:** Try to twist low to the floor from time to time.

**TIP**

*For a challenge, try to twist on one foot*

## Variations

- For a challenge, try to twist on one foot

## Benefits

This activity develops coordination and balance as kids shift their weight from one foot to the other while twisting their body through a dynamic range of motion.

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# Wheelbarrow Walking

## Requirements

- Soft, dry outdoor lawn area or large carpeted floor free of obstacles

## Instructions

**Step 1:** Have your child lie on their stomach in pushup position.

**Step 2:** Lift your child by holding their thighs.

**Step 3:** Get your child to “walk” using their hands.



**TIP**

*Do not hold your child by the feet.  
Your child's back will arch too much.*

## Variations

- If there are several children and adults present, have a wheelbarrow race over a short distance.

## Benefits

This activity develops coordination, balance, and strength as kids imitate the movement of a wheelbarrow.

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