

How To Play With Your Child

01

Create a safe and secure environment for play:

- Find a quiet room or outdoor space where your child can play without interruption.
- Make sure the space is free from hazards such as sharp objects, breakable items, or anything else that could cause harm to your child.
- Create a cozy atmosphere by adding cushions, blankets, or stuffed animals to the play area.

02

Follow Your Child's Lead:

- If your child wants to play with blocks, let them choose the type of blocks they want to play with and how they want to build with them.
- If your child wants to play a game, let them choose the game and the rules they want to play by.
- If your child wants to play with dolls, let them decide what story they want to act out with the dolls.

03

Use reflective listening:

Reflective listening is a technique used to show your child that you are listening to them and understand their feelings. This involves repeating back what your child has said and validating their emotions. For example, if your child says, "I'm angry because I lost the game," you could respond by saying, "It sounds like losing the game made you really frustrated and upset."

04

Use open-ended questions:

- Instead of asking, "Did you have fun at school today?" try asking, "What was your favorite part of the day?"
- Instead of asking, "Do you want to play with the ball?" try asking, "What would you like to play with?"

05

Encourage your child's creativity:

- Give your child a blank sheet of paper and some art supplies and let them create whatever they want.
- Let your child dress up in costumes and create their own characters and stories.
- Give your child a box of blocks or Legos and let them build whatever they want.

06

Avoid criticism or judgment:

- If your child builds a tower of blocks that falls over, don't criticize them for not building it correctly. Instead, encourage them to try again.
- If your child draws a picture that doesn't look like what they intended, don't criticize them for not drawing it correctly. Instead, ask them to tell you about their drawing.

07

Have fun!

- Play a game of catch with a ball or frisbee.
- Build a fort out of blankets and pillows.
- Pretend to be animals and make animal sounds together.

08

How Often?

According to a study published in the Journal of Marriage and Family, parents who spent at least 15 minutes of uninterrupted one-on-one time with their child each day had a stronger bond with their child and reported fewer behavioral problems in their child than parents who spent less time with their child.

