

Being stuck at home can be a daunting thought – especially when you have small children to entertain. With this in mind we have created a list of different activities we recommend. Some are child led and some are adult led, they can all be adapted to suit your child abilities and interests and most importantly they don't require you to have a nursery full of resources.

Treasure hunt

There are lots of different ways to create a treasure hunt.



You can simply take all the pieces from a jigsaw puzzle and hide them around the room. Talking about the pieces when they find them will build language skills. You can use a number puzzle to work on number recognition or a letter puzzle to work on phonic sounds.

You can draw a simple map of your house/one room/garden which shows where you have hidden different objects. Once they have found them all you can encourage them to make a map for you to find all the hidden treasure

You can write a list of things for your children to find around the house. For younger children use pictures.

Creative ideas

Leaf printing



Making symmetry pictures – painting one side and folding the paper over

Making sock puppets.

Making instruments from household products – guitar with elastic bands, a drum from a container with dry rice in.

Making sensory bottles. Filling empty bottles with different household items such as rice or water and oil and seeing what happens.

Cardboard box play.

Children can have hours of fun with a cardboard box.

If you have a big box you could make a junk robot. Collect different things from around your house such as egg boxes, junk mail, small boxes, bottle tops, anything out of the recycling bin and using glue, Sellotape and masking tape let your children stick it all on and see what they create! You could even paint it.



Big boxes are also great forts or dens!

If you have a smaller box you could hide toys in it and get your children to guess what it is by feeling it or shaking the box.



Junk modelling can also be done without a box. Just let your children stick different item to each other.

You can also create tubes and tunnels from cardboard which you can use for cars or balls.

Ideas for outside.

Provide your children with sponges, clothes and warm water in buckets. Dress them in their wellies and waterproofs and let them wash their cars and bikes.

Use chalk or water on brushes to create marks on the floor.

Provide them with a tray/bucket of off cuts and leaves and let them explore them. The Pre-school children currently love to cut the flowers off cuts from the garden we have been providing them with.



Build dens and forts outside (or inside!) using old sheets, pegs and garden toys.

Tea set, old pots and pans, kitchen utensils and mud make for hours of fun.

Create a washing line at your child's height and let them peg different things to it – match socks, hang up the dolls clothes, write numbers or letters on pieces of paper and get the children to peg them on in the correct order.

Create an obstacle course



Phonics games.

Always start with simple listening games. Once they can hold their attention and listen for the required amount of time begin to introduce letter sounds.

For younger children begin looking at the sounds for S A T P I N

Once your child is confident with all of the sounds move on to look at digraphs – ck, sh, ch are a few examples and segmenting and blending simple words.



Search "jolly phonics" on you tube for different songs that help children to recognise the letter sounds.

All of the sound games listed can be changed to suit your child's ability.

Silly soup – putting all the ingredients for the "soup" in a large bowl. All of the ingredients you use must begin with the same sound. For example, introduce the idea by telling your child you are going to make silly soup. Show them a large bowl and several different ingredients (these don't need to be food – anything can go into silly soup) Talk about each of the

ingredients in turn. Then talk about the recipe and how only items that begin with a certain sound such as S can go into the soup. Let your child pick out the ingredients one by one.

Plying eye spy

Matching objects with the correct sound

Car park sounds. Draw a carpark on a large piece of paper or small pieces of paper stuck together. Write the different sounds or digraphs in each car parking space. Give your children lots of cars and say "can you please park the car on the space with the sound s on" You can also use this game for number recognition, colours, and shapes.

Use an old newspaper or junk mail and play "hunt the sound" Select a sound and encourage your child to find that sound written in the text. Let them circle or highlight the sound when they find it.

Sound bingo.

Sound pong – find three buckets/hoops/bins/ containers and a ball or two. Assign each container a different sound. Say a word and your child has to bounce the ball into the corresponding container.

Other ideas.

Measuring with a tape measure or ruler. Children can measure anything and everything. Older children can even write their measurements down.

Taking photos of things they like with your camera, phone or tablet.

Create a car track with masking tape along the floor and over the furniture.

Toy tombola – Write the numbers your child is learning on a piece of paper, 1 – 5, 1-10. 10 – 20 ect. Cut them out and fold each one up. Line up the corresponding amount of toys next to the box or basket with the folded up numbers in. Let your child pick the numbers out one at a time and count down the line until they find the correct toy. Remove the toy they have won and replace it with the number.

Musical letter or numbers. When the music stops stand on a letter or number. What letter/number is it?

Write a "shopping list" and support your child with finding the things on the list.

Exploring different coins.

If you have any old mobile phones, laptops or cameras, old handbags and purses, – get them out. Our children love imaginary play with real items.

Make a dark den (or close the curtains and turn off all the lights) and let you children explore different torches, glow sticks, light up toys.

Bubbles

Experimenting with different objects in water – will it float or sink?

Mixing different resources together can also breath new life into old toys. Try mixing animals and blocks and building a farm or Lego and figures and build a house or castle.



Adding real objects to play is also something our children love. Such as real nappies and wipes with dolls. Real bandages and plasters in the doctor's kit. Real money in the shop till.

Colour matching. You can sort anything into colours. You can put all the lego in colour piles, find objects of different colours or create a rainbow with different colourful objects from around the house.

Number thief. Place numbers on a tray – you can use playing cards, dominos, post its with numbers on, number puzzle pieces. Anything. Go through each number with your children. Cover the numbers with a blanket and take one away. Support your children with working out which number the number thief stole. This can also be done with letter or objects.

5 activities for under 1s

1. Homemade sensory bottles, using pasta and rice or anything spare in the cupboards
2. Zip lock messy play bags, using shaving foam, washing up liquid, any paint or glitter they may have.



3. Homemade treasure baskets, using everyday items such as brushes, sponges, pebbles, curtain rings, bangles and shells.
4. Pots and pans, we've been using whisks, pots and pans, measuring spoons and cups.
5. Peg posting, all you need is a cardboard box and some clothes pegs.

Useful websites and links that offer ideas and resources

<https://www.sparklebox.co.uk/> - Lots of printable resources – mostly free!

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resources/parents/parents-birth-to-five/0-1-years-early-years-parents> - this site is offering a free month. They offer lots of different printable resources that cover all areas.



<https://fiveminutemum.com/> - lots of ideas for fun games to try that don't require a lot of your time.

<https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/> - phonics and reading activities for all stages

<https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/> - maths, literacy, and free e-books

<https://www.topmarks.co.uk/> - resources for early years in all areas of learning

<https://explorify.wellcome.ac.uk/> - science experiments and ideas

<https://busytoddler.com/2016/11/40-super-easy-toddler-activities/> - a big range of activities for all ages.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people> - lots of great games you can play at home

Search "Cosmic kids yoga" on YouTube for child Yoga sessions.

Penguin kids are doing a live story time every day at 11am over on their Instagram.