**Here are 50 ideas to try at home and get you started;**

**1.Dressing Up**

We have a box with costumes and clothes, scarves, hats, face paints, jewellery, wigs. You can pick great stuff in the charity shops. Always great fun!

**2.Read Together**

We all love books! We love being read to and it’s a great way of encouraging learning and bonding with your child. Books are not only for bedtime, why not pick a time every day where you sit down together and read a story?

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/have-some-fun/storybooks-and-games/>

<https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/help-child-learn-age-3-4/>

Make a cosy reading nook. Send us your pictures reading in strange places around your house!

**3. Play I Spy**

The colours version is ideal for children who haven’t learned their letter sounds yet e.g. I Spy With My Little Eye something which is red/green/yellow etc but if they do then the traditional game is great for listening and matching sounds

**4. Set up a racing track**

Using some masking tape, create a racing track for cars to race around the living room by using the tape twice to make a parallel track.

**5. Cooking/Baking**

There are loads of food you can make together and if they make it themselves perhaps they’ll even eat it! you can be guaranteed they will eat it.

[**https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/collection/kids-cooking**](https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/collection/kids-cooking)

**6. Have a Colour Day**

Choose a colour then ask your preschooler to find and wear clothes that colour, eat food that colour, find a toy that colour, etc. This is a great way for younger kids to learn their colours and also to get children to try and eat new foods!

**7. Make Gloop!**

Mix cornflour and water and some food colouring (optional) until it forms a thick paste. It will run through your fingers when you try to lift it but if you pat it it is hard. Lots of fun for mums and kids.

**8. Arts and Crafts**

An arts and crafts box is an essential for any pre-schooler parent! A pack of crayons, feltips, a tube of glitter, some pipe cleaners and child friendly glue can easily fill a couple of hours.

**9. Build a Den with Blankets and Pillows**

Build a den out of the sofa cushions, chairs, clothes rack with a blanket draped over or create a fort out of a big cardboard box with packing tape to hold the sides together.

**10. Dance round your kitchen**

Create a play list on Spotify or Amazon or if you have neither of these just pop on the radio that are great to put on and play.

**11. Play Races**

It’s always fun and it does burn off any excess energy! Try racing using different ways of moving; running, crawling, hopping, backwards etc.

**12. “Paint” the Wall or Fence**

Give your toddler or pre-schooler a big paint brush, a bucket of water and a wall or fence out in the back garden or yard and let them loose!

**13. Have a Tea-party/Indoor Picnic**

Spread out the picnic blanket/kids table and set out little plates with snacks and drinks and napkins and enjoy an indoor picnic! Cuddly toys also make useful guests!

**14. Watery Fun**

It’s huge fun either in the bath, sink or on a suitable floor. Just a jug of water, various plastic bowls, spoons and the freedom to pour and splash and mix. You could add bubbles or food colouring to add a new element.

**15. Create a Town in a Cardboard Box**

If you have a giant cardboard box, why not draw a town on the bottom of the box, with roads, tracks, bridges, parks, car-parks, etc. Add some wooden building blocks, cars, trains and some wooden/plastic animals. And let your kid’s imagination run wild. Older kids could help with decorating/creating the scene.

**16. Sensory Fun**

Sensory Boxes are good for toddlers because they offer hands on learning that is both visually and texturally attractive.

**17. Play Imaginary Games**

Play shop, bank, post office, pilots, bus driver, hairdressers (a good one to distract, particularly if you have a curly haired child and you need to remove tangles!) …. The kitchen chairs are lined up to make whatever scene we are playing.

**18. Try some Yoga**

In times of stress relaxing and meditating together is a great way to ease the stress.

<https://www.cosmickids.com/>

**19. Make Play Dough**

Mix together 1 cup of plain flour, half a cup of salt and 2 tablespoons of cream of tartar, 2 tablespoons of oil, then add a cup of boiling hot water and mix until smooth. stir constantly until the dough forms a ball.

Children adore making play dough and they will have fun exploring different food colourings to give the dough that lovely vibrant colour. Non-toxic, cheap and easy.

**20.Play Shop**

Set up a little grocery/mini supermarket with tins and packets. If you have a play till set up a checkout table and they can take it in turns to be the checkout person or the shopper. The ironing board makes a fun checkout counter and you can have some cloth shopping bags ready to put the purchases in.

**21. Blowing Bubbles**

Pick up small bubble packs or make your own;

In an appropriately sized container, mix 5 parts water to 1 parts washing-up liquid and 1/2 part golden syrup. Make sure to keep this mixture covered up when not in use. If you let it sit overnight it will be better than if you use it right away.

**22. Make shadows**

Make the room dark, using torches make shadows on the wall with

**23. Paint Faces**

Most kids love getting their faces painted, so worth having some good face-paint in the house, at all times. It’s also good practice for when you are hosting your birthday parties at home.

**24. Relax with a DVD or movie**

It’s important to have some quiet time too.

**25. Play in the Garden**

If you’re lucky enough to have a garden get out and enjoy the space outside.

**26. Get Them Involved in Chores**

Pick some simple things that they can “help” you with. Maybe they could empty the tumble drier or put away their plastic cups and plates.

**27. Make a Simple Obstacle Course**

Use hula hoop, blanket, maybe a big cardboard box, easy things that your preschooler can climb on or inside or do.

**28. Colouring**

Colouring with crayons or for older preschoolers chunky pens is a fun activity.

**29. Play Online**

There lots of interactive apps or visit toddler friendly websites like Cbeebies or Sesame Street.

**30. Chalk Fun**

Take out some big chalk sticks and have fun drawing pictures on the patio or driveway or walls (it will wash off).

**31. Make Jewellery**

Thread Cheerios, pasta or beads on yarn or string to make chunky fun and necklaces and bracelets.

**32. Create an Explore Drawer**

Empty one drawer and fill it with new things for your toddler to explore. E.g. ball, bowl, plastic toy, anything that won’t hurt them.

**33. Do Some Gardening**

Give your toddler a small watering can as they love to water plants & flowers. Have them help you plant some seeds too in little pots.

**34. Water Fun**

Turn on the sprinkler or hose and let your toddler jump through it or small buckets, pots and pans make perfect containers for playing with water.

**35. Have a Teddy Bear Picnic**

If the weather is good, have a teddy bear’s picnic out in the garden with little snacks and cups for all the guests.

**36. Sand Play**

Toddlers love to mess around in the sand, particularly if in your back garden. Even if you don’t have a sand table, it’s easy to make your own, with a large shallow plastic container, and some play sand. Just remember to cover when finished, to keep the cats away!

**38. Make Soap Muffins**

Set out a muffin tin on the floor on a big beach towel (so you can mop up later), then give them a plastic spoon, cup and a big bowl of bubbles made from washing up liquid and make soap muffins!

**39. Have a Puppet Show**

Make sock puppets or use cuddly toys to create a puppet show and act out some fun scenes from behind a blanket draped across 2 chairs.

**40. Do a jigsaw puzzle**

These are a fantastic way to practise problem solving skills

**41. Make a collage**

Practise your scissors by cutting up magazines, catalogues or different coloured paper or materials and make a picture.

**42. Make a band**

Get out your pots and pans and make a band. Play along to songs. Can you keep to the beat?

**43. Sing a Song or rhyme**

Why not learn some new ones? They are great for language and numeracy skills.

[**https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7Pq3Ko42YpkCB\_Q4E981jw**](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7Pq3Ko42YpkCB_Q4E981jw)

**44. Have a pyjama day.**

Embrace being at home and spending time together! Snuggle up!

**45. Talk and chat.**

Life can be so busy it’s sometimes hard to find time to just have a chat. Ask each other questions and see where the answers take you.

**46. Play cards**

Snap, pairs, matching games are all great fun.

**47. Play a board game**

Snakes and Ladders, Frustration and dominoes are all great for learning to take turns, share language and number skills. Don’t get to competitive!

48. **Have game of musical statues or bumps**

Listen to the music and when it stops freeze or sit down. Have a go at getting into different positions each time the music stops; stand on one leg, put a hand on the floor, lie down, lie on your tummy etc**.**

**49. Play Simon says**

Can you remember to only do what Simon says?

**50. Play hopscotch**

