

Play is the key way children learn about themselves, others and the world they live in. It is essential to their learning, development, health, and physical, mental and social well-being – and it's FUN! Play provides the building blocks to be ready for school.



## Box Play

Boxes are a cheap and easy way to expand your child's creativity and imagination. Pretend play, when a child pretends an object is something it isn't, is an important type of play. This type of play is critical to many parts of your child's cognitive, thinking development. A box can be a thousand different things!

### Did you know?

Toddlers are beginning to explore the ideas of pretend play. A pretend car is easy to make from a box and some paper plates. Add your own racing colours if you have paint handy.

### Add language

While your toddler is climbing in and out of boxes it is a great time to help them learn position words e.g. in, out, on, through. Try naming what they are doing e.g. climbing, crawling, pushing, driving, flying. Keep your comments short e.g. "in the box," "through the tunnel," "driving the car".

### Other development

As your toddler climbs in and through they are learning about their body's position in space (spatial awareness). This is an important skill required for later more complex learning and development.



Exploring boxes of different sizes is great for early maths skills. It helps them learn concepts of big and little. It also helps them work out concepts of capacity e.g. what size or how many things fit in the small box or in a big box. The light weight construction of a box means your toddler can move and manipulate an object bigger than themselves. Climbing into a box can make a small child feel "big."

### Variations

Pushing a box car weighted with books and teddies can be a fun way of calming a busy toddler. Sitting in a box car can help an active toddler to settle for a more focused activity e.g. book reading or threading macaroni.

📌 Playgroup WA has a treasure trove of play activities for babies, toddlers and 3-5 year olds, for home and playgroup. These play activities cover a balanced diet of play across sensory, movement, language and thinking skill areas.

You can find them at [www.playgroupwa.com.au/playideas](http://www.playgroupwa.com.au/playideas) or visit [www.facebook.com/playgroupwa](https://www.facebook.com/playgroupwa)