

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

Children are ready for more complex pretend play – boxes of any size provide unlimited options. Boxes are fantastic for creativity. Your child can alter the box by drawing on it, painting it, cutting pieces out and/or decorating it. A box can be a house, a castle, a space ship, a bed, a stove or a monster! The best kind of play with boxes is unstructured play. Just give your child the boxes, and time to explore and create.

### Did you know?

Small boxes and a roll of sticky tape can provide hours of creative fun. Boxes as houses and garages can extend your child's doll or car play.

### Add language

Pause and wait rather than doing the problem solving for your child. Give them the opportunity to work things out for themselves. You give them a chance to initiate asking for help if they want it. Make comments and ask occasional questions. Use language that goes with the thinking, decision making and planning processes that go with construction projects e.g. "I wonder what we could do with this big box." "this looks interesting" "I see you're putting the bottom in first" "oops we have nearly finished the sticky tape" "what else could you use to put it together?"



### Other development

Manipulating small boxes, drawing or gluing items on, or sticking boxes together helps to develop fine motor skills. Exploring boxes of different sizes and shapes, what their properties are and how you can use them, is science in action. It helps develop your child's early science and maths skills.

### Variations

Boxes can also be broken down for a different construction activity. With some help from adults, boxes can be cut into pieces which can then be slotted together to make all sorts of creations.

### Safety

Supervising young children around scissors is necessary.

📌 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)

