



## Two Dozen Ideas for Summer Fun

It's the lazy, hazy days of summer, but you're about to go crazy because the kids are complaining, "I'm bored. There's nothing to do." And since boredom can lead to trouble, you want them to find creative and constructive things to do. Here's a list of 24 easy-to-do play activities for summer fun.

1. Make sun prints. Place some objects on a piece of dark-colored construction paper and place in the bright sun. After an hour or two, the outline of the object will be imprinted on the paper.
2. Line up all the extra shoes (and shoe boxes, if available) in the house and play shoe store.
3. Collect smooth stones at the beach. Take them home and make rock critters by painting them with acrylic paint and adding wiggle eyes, yarn hair, felt paws and feet, etc.
4. Take a hike and collect sticks. You can make a friendship stick by painting the sticks with tempera paint or wrapping them with different yarns.
5. With your finger, trace a design on your child's back. Ask her to guess what it is. If she can read, try spelling out words. Then let her draw or write on your back.
6. Cut out some headlines from a newspaper or magazine. Use a mirror to reverse the words and see if your child can read backwards. Or write some messages backwards and "decode" them in the mirror.
7. Collect different sizes and kinds of paintbrushes. Paint the house or sidewalk with water.
8. Sing songs or tell stories and record these on a cassette tape. Tape-record a letter for grandma or older sibling at camp.
9. Cut a large rectangle from an old white sheet or pillowcase. Use markers and paint to make your own family flag.

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10. Play tabletop soccer. Pick teams and have teams sit at opposite ends of a table. Use a Ping-Pong ball for the soccer ball. All players must put their arms and hands under the table. Players move the ball by blowing it. To score a goal, a player must blow the ball off the opponent's edge of the table.
11. Have an indoor campout. Hang sheets or blankets over tables or chairs. Let children nap on sleeping bags in the "tent."
12. Make a pile of bubbles outside with a bicycle pump and a pan of soapy water.
13. Sell lemonade or ice tea to friends and neighbors.
14. Make an easy kite. Tape the short edges of a sheet of construction paper together to make a cylinder. Add some cellophane or crepe paper streamers to one end. Punch two small holes in the other end (reinforce these with tape or loose-leaf reinforced rings). Tie kite string through each hole and then together (leave about 15-18" between the kite and the point where string is tied together). Keep the remainder of the string on the ball so you can let some out to fly your kite.
15. Go hiking in a warm summer rain (when there's no thunder or lightening). Slickers and galoshes are optional, however, be prepared to splash in every puddle.
16. How tall is the table? How big around is the tree? How wide is the sidewalk? Give your child a tape measure and work together to find out.
17. Trade toys or games with a neighbor's child for a day or two.
18. Make a puppet theater by turning a card table on its side or by draping a sheet over a length of rope tied between two chairs. Make your own paper bag or sock puppets, or use dolls and stuffed animals.
19. Get a book from the library on paper airplanes. Fold some paper planes and hold a contest to see which flies the farthest or stays aloft the longest.
20. Go on a Safari. Hide stuffed and/or toy animals around the house or yard. Try to find or identify them.
21. Go on an alphabet scavenger hunt. Find ten things that begin with the letter A. Or find one item for each letter of the alphabet.
22. Do fence weaving. Take yarn, crepe paper streamers, string, ribbon, fabric strips and weave them in and out of your picket or chain link fence.
23. Have a hide-and-seek picnic breakfast. Hide small boxes of cereal, juice boxes and fruit in the backyard. Kids can find their own breakfast, then eat picnic-style on the grass.
24. Trace shadows on the sidewalk with sidewalk chalk. Trace your own shadows or shadows of trees, cars and other objects. Chalk drawings wash off in the rain or when hosed down.

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