



Royal Society for Blind Children

What toys can I offer my baby?

When it comes to choosing toys for your baby it can be overwhelming. You may feel like you need to buy lots of specific or specialist toys for your baby to be able to play, but this isn't necessary! Toys from the toy shop can be enjoyed as they are or easily adapted.

Here are some top tips when buying toys for your baby:

- Where possible choose toys that appeal to different senses. Lots of your baby's learning will be through touch, so toys that motivate your baby to find them with colours and noises and then encourage them to play with a variety of textures are a great choice.
- Baby gyms will encourage your baby to explore their immediate space, when they kick their legs or move their arms, they will find the hanging toys.
- Noisy toys will provide your baby with motivation to play and move. These can range from rattles and shakers, musical instruments, and electronic baby toys!
- If your baby has some vision, then they may really enjoy light up toys. Toys that light up in response to your baby interacting with them will keep your baby playing.
- Try and choose high contrast toys, if your baby has some vision this will make it easier for them to find their toy and play with it.
- Tactile toys will encourage your baby to explore and give them sensory feedback.
- Moving toys can be easier for some babies to see and can encourage them to start moving too. Try toys that spin or can be pushed along.
- A small inflatable paddling pool for your baby to play in will allow them to have a smaller area to explore without their toys rolling too far away.
- When choosing toys that represent real life things, like animals consider what they will teach your baby. (eg. Is a toy sheep anything like a real sheep (in shape, size, feel). Play an audio of a sheep, feel some wool and maybe visit a petting zoo with your toy sheep so your baby begins to learn a little more about what a sheep really is).

Homemade toys provide hours of fun and the whole family can help make them, here are some ideas for homemade toys to get you started:

- You can make your own shakers by filling up bottles with various items such as rice, lentils, cut up straws, pasta, or beads – remember to glue down the lids!
- Exploring real items is a great way to learn about the world, set up a bag with different types of brushes and see how they feel, or use a wooden spoon and a pot to make a drum.
- Build (or buy) a dark den! Use a dark umbrella, or just some dark sheets over a chair and set up some lights to make your own sensory space.
- Set up a treasure basket for your baby to explore. Foil blankets, a curtain ring with ribbons tied to it, a shower loofah, a brush, a feather, and anything else you can think of!
- Make sensory story or song bags. Find props around the home that can be used when you are sharing a nursery rhyme or a story, pop them in a bag or a basket and explore them together as part of the story or song.

Our Families First team of family practitioners are here to support you through your child's early years and into the future.

RSBC can help you with:

- practical advice about your child's development
- support when you feel overwhelmed.
- understanding your child's vision impairment better
- living as a family and being supportive of each other

Call 020 3198 0225 or email connections@rsbc.org.uk

