

When it comes to toys for babies... the simpler the better

Babies learn about the world and their language by playing with simple objects and interacting with other people. Their eyes are looking. Their hands are exploring. Their ears are listening. Their mouths are tasting. Their voices are practicing and imitating. Their feelings are getting organized. All this activity develops their brains and social and emotional skills in an efficiently complex and amazing way.



Babies have no need for special toys, videos or flashcards. What babies need is a safe place to explore with lots of talking and interacting, quiet playing and singing, and regular eating, sleeping, and cuddling with people who are crazy about them.

A great toy for babies is a safe common object that the baby can hold, chew, drop, bang and share!

Perfect toys for babies that teach great skills and don't cost much:

- ✓ Towel or scarf for peek-a-boo
- ✓ Big plastic shower curtain rings to chew
- ✓ Small metal bowl to fill and dump
- ✓ Balls of different sizes and textures
- ✓ A stuffed animal to cuddle and pretend
- ✓ Cardboard book with one object per page
- ✓ Bath water and a sponge
- ✓ Music for listening, dancing and singing
- ✓ And most important...an adult to talk, explain, help, smile, and know when it's time to eat, read a story, and go to sleep!

No Fail Play Dough To Poke and Squeeze

- 3 Tbsp oil
- Some drops of food coloring
- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup salt
- 1 Tbsp alum (look in spice aisle)
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups boiling water

Put the food coloring into the oil. Add the boiling water and stir in all the rest quickly. Stir well and let cool before using. Keep in a covered container. Add drops of oil later if it dries out.

More Reading:

Kathy Hirsch-Pasek, Diane Eyer, Roberta Michnick Golinkoff ,*Einstein Never Used Flash Cards: How Our Children Really Learn—And Why They Need to Play More and Memorize Less*. Rodale Press: 2003.