



Gross Motor

Activities to Help Your Toddler Grow and Learn



Your child is improving skills using his leg and arm muscles. He is working on making these muscles stronger, more flexible, more coordinated, and quicker. He can catch an 8-inch ball, jump about 2 feet, make sharp turns around a corner while running, and avoid obstacles in his path.

Over the River When playing outside, place a small towel or piece of cloth about 24 inches wide on the grass. This is the "river." Have your child run and jump over the river without getting wet. At first, you can bunch the towel up in the middle or fold it so that the river is only about 12 inches wide. As your child is able, you can open the towel so that the river is wider.

Balloon Kick Let your child kick a balloon from one end of the room to another. Lay a box on its side for a goal. See if she can kick the balloon into the box.

Animal Walk Show your child how to walk like different animals (e.g., squat like a duck, walk on all fours like a dog). Encourage him to pretend to be these animals and make noises like them. Play along. Call the cat: "Here, kitty, kitty." Balance on one foot like a flamingo.

Heel-to-Toe Walk Show your child how to walk heel to toe using a line on the sidewalk or a short length of clothesline on the ground. Show your child how to outstretch her arms to keep her balance.

Basketball Place an empty laundry basket on the floor against an empty wall. Give your child a soft ball about 4 inches in size. Place a string or piece of tape on the floor for a throw-line, and show your child how to throw overhand to get the ball in the basket. Start about 4 feet back from the basket. Move back as your child gets better.

Chasing Bubbles On a nice day, while playing outside, blow bubbles and ask your child to clap his hands together and pop them. Blow some high so that your child can jump up. Blow some far away from you so that your child will need to dash out a little. Clap all of the big ones. Now, clap and pop all of the little ones. Play this game as long as you both enjoy it. When you're done, go wash those soapy hands together!



30–36 months