



# SPROUT + THRIVE'S TOP 25 BABY PLAY IDEAS

## YOUNGER BABIES

Babies who aren't sitting on their own yet

1. Hang new items from the activity gym with links. Choose simple but novel household objects; bath loofa, handheld mirror, car keys, dog collar, wash rag, whisk, anything!
2. Hang familiar toys on links and stuff the end of the link chain into the couch cushions so the toys hang in a new place.
3. Stand board books up to make a circle around baby so they're more interesting and inviting to look at.
4. Make a ring around baby by rolling a blanket or towel on the floor. This keeps toys at a reasonable reaching distance and encourages movement to "chase" down the ball or pull toys.
5. Throw some fruit in the blanket/towel circle. It'll roll funny and has great sensory exploration opportunities!
6. Fill a few extra bottles with things from your kitchen: rice, dried beans, a little water, whatever you have on hand, to make fun rattles.
7. Give baby measuring cups and shiny bowls to explore while playing on the floor.
8. Put ice cubes on a baking tray with low edges and watch baby reach, grasp, and delight in the sensory experience.





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9. Fill a Ziplock bag with water, add in some foam bath letters, ice cubes, frozen fruit, craft poms... This should keep little hands busy for a while. Tape the bag to the floor with painters tape to keep baby from mouthing it too much or for motivation during tummy time.



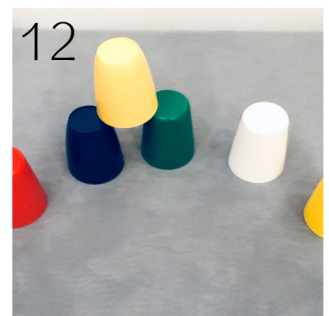
10. Fill a Ziplock bag with paintable puree. Use painters' tape to secure it to the highchair tray or floor for a mess free sensory experience. We used ketchup and mustard but you could also use any dressings, jelly, BBQ sauces... get creative!



11. Put toys in a large mixing bowl or small box for baby to practice taking out/putting in.



12. Stack plastic cups in different ways on the floor or arrange them in a circle around a baby who is pivoting in tummy time.



13. Tuck tissue paper into the couch cushions so it hangs down to the floor. Place baby on back or belly so they can kick it and hear it crinkle.

14. Limit toys offered to only a few at a time and rotate them often. Offering too many toys can overwhelm baby and decrease the amount of time spent exploring/manipulating them.



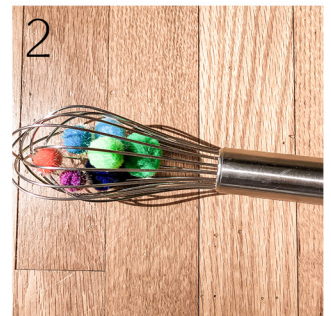


# SPROUT + THRIVE'S TOP 25 BABY PLAY IDEAS

## OLDER BABIES

Babies who are sitting, crawling or walking

1. Put a variety of balls in a metal baking dish or sheet pan to let baby practice grabbing things that move.
2. Grab your kitchen whisk, stuff a bunch of cotton balls or craft poms inside, hand it to baby and watch them work their fingers trying to get the balls out (supervision of course!)
3. Fill an ice cube tray with stick shaped snacks like Vegistraws or dried crunchy Harvest Snap Peas.
4. Put ice cubes on a cookie sheet or in a muffin tin. If baby is a little older, add in a big kitchen spoon for scooping too - this will keep little hands busy for a while!
5. Grab an array of toys - the shape sorter pieces, bath toys, balls, puzzle pieces - and throw them into a muffin tin. Let baby work on picking up, putting down, mouthing and banging. So much great fine motor and sensory work here!
6. Throw some seasoning containers into an old pair of tall socks and tie a knot at the top. Now it's a rattle, a sensory experience, and easy to grab and crawl with. You can also try tucking the tied end into the couch cushions if you have a new sitter.





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**7.** Give baby some old mixing bowls, a spatula, whisk or whatever is in the drawer, let them make some noise. Or, if you need it quiet, same set up but on a foam floor mat or carpet near the couch to let them bang quietly.

**8.** Rotate the books that are available in a certain basket or room. Literally just shuffle them between rooms in your house. Try them in a new basket, or arrange them in a stack or circle. A new configuration lets baby get curious about exploring them again.

**9.** For a little one who wants to be upright, try placing parts of their favorite toys on the couch cushions, some on the floor, some on the ottoman... Make it a scavenger hunt for favorite toys to keep baby busy and searching.

**10.** If you have horizontal drawer pulls on the drawer freezer drawer or lockable cabinets, knot dish towels, a loofa, or use links to hang new items on the handles. If you have a baby who is standing/cruising, add magnets to the freezer to encourage them to stand, move side to side, and reach.

**11.** Place couch cushions on the floor, some overlapping, and scatter favorite toys all over. Let baby practice crawling up, down, and over to get to the toys. Or build a fort with couch cushions and blankets for a new environment for baby to crawl through and explore.

\*All activities are intended to be completed under adult supervision. Have fun and don't forget to tag us on Instagram @\_sproutandthrive

