

1 Room tidying competition

We love this one! This involves you setting a challenge for each child to see who can tidy their room in the fastest time.

You can count loudly or simply set a timer until they have finished their tidying. The winner can choose what activity you do next. Genius.

2 Pizza party

Make some pizza bases, Then lay out lots of toppings and ask your kids to decorate their pizzas.

Once they've finished, pop them in the oven and lay a rug or picnic blanket down with some paper plates and cups. Children will love devouring their homemade creations.

3 Movie afternoon

Cosy up together and enjoy a film (or two!). Why not make a huge bowl of popcorn, then sit back and relax.

4 Board games

Dig out the old board games and have some good old traditional fun. Or find a deck of cards and teach the kids some family card games.

5 Building blocks

Grab a MegaBloks Classic 60-Piece bag of blocks and ask your little one to build different shapes. Draw a square, a rectangle or a triangle on some paper - and then ask them to copy the shape using their MegaBloks. Fun, and a way for them to learn their shapes, too.

6 Reading afternoon

Look in the bookshelves or head to the local library or charity shop and grab a heap of books. Then create a cosy corner with beanbags and cushions and curl up for a good read.

7 Theatre afternoon

Get the kids to put on a show. They can make up their own story, raid the dressing-up box for costumes, make tickets for the audience and then let the show begin ...

8 Rainy day walks

Who says you need sunshine to enjoy a good walk? Get the wellies and brollies out and have a fun splashy walk in the rain. Jump in the biggest puddles you can find!

9 Make a magazine

Dig out old magazines and help your child cut out their favourite pictures. They can stick them on a large sheet of card to make a collage or onto pieces of paper to make their own magazine.

If they are older, get them to write 'headlines' and short stories around the pictures.

Another idea is to use different eye/face/hair/body cut-outs and mix them up to make crazy faces.

10 Make a film

Let your children take charge of the video camera/your iPhone for an afternoon and set them the task of creating their own film.

Whether they star in it themselves or use their teddies or Lego men as characters, it's a great way to encourage creative role play and fill a few rainy hours at home.

11 Fashion design

Get out lots of paper, scraps of wool ribbon, material and tissue paper. Then get your kids to spend the afternoon designing clothes for their favourite toy.

Start with drawing a pattern on the paper and cutting out. Then use this as a template to cut out pieces of fabric and either stitch together or use glue.

When the outfits are all done, have a mini fashion show with music and a catwalk (i.e. the kitchen table).

12 Make friendship bracelets

If your kids were loopy about loom bands they will love making paracord friendship bracelets too. Follow our step by step instructions.

13 Open a beauty salon

Hand over your make-up bag (with all the really good things hidden away first!) and let the kids loose playing 'beauty salons'.

Get them to practice their skills on you - and each other. All you need is a bag full of make-up, some hair accessories and a mirror. Oh, and some make-up remover for afterwards ...

14 Making and decorating cress heads

Get some dried-out egg shells and let your child use pens to create funny faces on the surface. Fill the shells with damp cotton wool and cress seeds and pop them on a sunny windowsill.

Over the next few days watch their crazy cress hair start to grow.

15 Shoebox scenes

Make shoebox scenes. From miniature dolls' houses, train stations and bird boxes to airports, swimming pools and zoos, there are stacks of ideas that will make great projects.

All you need are some crafts materials, plasticine, paints and glue.

16 Spot the difference

All children love a game of spot the difference. Either sketch out your own or cut out printed 'spot the difference' pictures from old magazines or newspapers.

17 Make music

Dig out a variety of kitchen utensils, pots, pans and accessories and let them create their own little steel band.

Try putting pulses or dried pasta inside empty bottles, making sure the lids are on tightly, to see what different sounds can be made. Then get banging, shaking and boogying.

18 Marble runs

Use old cereal boxes, loo rolls and empty containers to make a home-made marble run.

Start by making a solid base and build up as high as you want to - glue and sellotape should be enough to hold the pieces in place and you can use sturdier cardboard on the base to ensure it holds the upper levels securely.

This is a great activity for school holidays as you can add to it each day, creating new sections, slides and tubes as you go.

19 Toy parachutes

Make a parachute for a small toy.

To make the parachute canopy, cut an octagon shape out of a plastic bag - make it about the size of a small side plate.

Put sellotape along each edge of your octagon to strengthen the edges. Then use a hole punch to make eight holes round the edge.

Cut some string into eight pieces of equal length and push a piece through each hole. Tie to the hole and then tie the bottom of all eight pieces together in a knot. Your parachute is ready.

Tape the knot of string to the small toy and then throw in the air to see how well it floats.

20 Margarine tub boats

Make margarine tub boats and see whose floats for the longest. You can do this in the sink or bath. Card and old lolly sticks make great sails.

21 Homemade snap cards

Use old catalogues and magazines to cut out pictures, glue them onto some hard-backed card and make snap cards.

The images don't have to be identical as you can help your child recognise the comparisons by writing on the bottom of each card - i.e. dog, man, lady, car, house.

It's a great activity for reception-aged children who are learning to read.

22 Moving hide and seek

If your little ones are bored of the traditional game, try 'moving' hide and seek, where the hider tries to move from one hiding place to another without being spotted.

23 Chase the drips down the window panes

Remember playing this one as a child? Line up at the window and everyone has to place their finger on a large drop of rain. Then you trace your finger down as the drop drips. The first one whose drop makes it to the bottom wins.

24 Photography days

Turn the kids into mini photographers for the afternoon. Try to get them thinking creatively by asking them to choose a theme or perhaps tell a story through their pictures.

Print out the photos and put in a scrapbook as a reminder of their day.

25 Paper aeroplanes

Lay out lots of old scraps of paper and set everyone the challenge of building paper aeroplanes.

If you can't remember how to fold them, there are some quick and easy online tutorials that will help you master a basic plane. Let them choose their own designs and paint or colour them in.

Then have a competition to see whose can fly the furthest.

26 Origami

Origami is great fun for older kids. If you already own an origami book, dig it out and teach your children how to start making basic figures and shapes.

You can also try a website like the Origami club, which splits each exercise into categories from easy to difficult, allowing you to pick and choose projects according to your child's level.

27 Make some puppets

You can make puppets out of loads of things - wooden spoons, odd socks or gloves - even washing-up gloves.

28 Old drawing games

The likes of 'hangman', 'battleships', 'noughts and crosses' and 'dot to dot' might be associated with boring car journeys but on rainy afternoons, they make perfect activities. All you need is a pad and a couple of pens and you're ready to start.

29 Keep a 'buddy diary'

Get your child to choose their favourite buddy (this could be anything from a special doll or transformer figure to a teddy or comfort blanket) and ask them to make a diary of their adventures together.

You can fill the diary with photographs of your child with their buddy, stories, tickets of places they've been together, plus any other holiday memorabilia.

It's a lovely activity for imaginative children and you can add something new to it each day.

30 Write some postcards

Who says you need to be on holiday to send a postcard? Your lounge or back garden is as good as anywhere and your child can make it even better by designing their own picture.

Ask them who they want to send it to and help them write a message. Then pop your waterproofs on and head out to the post box to send it on its way.

31 Patchwork pillowcases

Look around the house for old pieces of material or, if you have clothes you no longer want, cut them up into squares. Now teach your child to stitch them together and make your very own patchwork blanket or pillowcase.

32 Design a robot

Grab any old cereal boxes, loo rolls and tin foil and let your child make their own robot model.

If you have lots of spare craft materials, let them loose with the buttons, ribbon, sequins and string to create something truly unique.

33 What floats?

Fill the washing-up bowl or sink with water and ask your child to gather a series of objects to test if they float or sink. You can make the exercise fun by drawing a chart listing the objects with yes/no written at the top.

Your child has to guess in advance whether the object will float and if they guess correctly, they receive a tick or a sticker.

34 Wrapping paper

If your child has a birthday party coming up, get them to design some wrapping paper for their special friend. This can involve paints, crayons, pens or lots of craft materials to create something with a real wow factor.

35 Painting in the bath

No, we haven't lost our minds. This is, honestly, the best mummy sanity-saver as the day's drawing to a close.

Simply take the kids, strip them and put them in the bath without water. (Make sure the heating is on to stop them getting cold). Give them some water-based paint and paintbrushes ... and sit on the loo and drink tea while they paint each other, themselves and the bath.

Once the fun's over (good news: they'll do this for hours), simply turn on the shower and wash it all away.

36 Midnight feast (at 7pm!)

Midnight feasts can be huge fun - there's something inherently naughty about eating food late at night and children will love the change in routine. Let them stay up a little later than usual, then put a variety of treats out on a blanket on the floor so they can help themselves.

If you want to add to the midnight theme, you can use torches to light up the room and keep the television off so it feels like a genuine night-time treat.

A word of warning though - sugary treats may mean they'll want to stay up at night, so it's probably best to stick to sandwiches, savoury snacks, carrot sticks and fruit if you want to avoid an all-night party.

Enjoy!!!

Don't forget to send us some photos!!!