

# Toys and Play: 6- to 8-Year-Olds

Children play from the moment they are born. Play is how they learn about themselves and their world. It is how they develop and practice the physical, thinking and social skills needed in life. These tips will help you choose toys and play activities for your child based on their age or stage of development. Think about sharing them with your child's other caregivers, too.

## 6- to 8-year-olds:

- Enjoy large-muscle activities like jump rope, bike riding, roller blading, ball games and hopscotch
- Also enjoy fine motor activities like drawing, braiding, cutting, jigsaw puzzles, weaving, wood work and simple sewing
- Make use of reading, writing and simple math in games and toys
- Enjoy nature and simple science
- Have an increased interest in friendship and belonging
- Prefer to play with same-sex friends
- Like riddles, jokes and using secret codes
- Play well with others and want to play fair
- Do not like to lose and may cheat to win
- May collect things (cards, dolls, etc.)
- Like dramatic play and putting on shows

## Toys and activities

### Active

- Two-wheeled bike
- Skate board and scooter
- Jump rope



- Complex gym sets with rings, bars, swings, ropes and slides
- Sports gear and balls
- Ski, sled and hockey gear (with adult supervision)
- Roller blades and ice skates
- Horseshoes, croquet and badminton
- Ping-pong and foosball (from age 8)
- Sand and water play toys

### Construction

- Large sets of blocks or bricks
- Complex construction sets made of wood, plastic or metal
- Sets with motorized parts and complex gear systems

### Transportation

- Small cars and trucks and collectibles
- Large-scale realistic cars and trucks with working parts
- Train sets (electric sets at 8 years)
- Simple remote-control cars

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### Make believe

- Dolls with many accessories, house and equipment
- Collector dolls, paper dolls and action figures
- Stuffed animals
- Puppets and theater
- Dress-up clothes and make-up
- Magic and disguise kits
- Props for dramatic play (store, school, library, office, space)
- Cooking and sewing equipment that works

### Learning and games

- Simple strategy and rule games
- Word, match, and spelling games
- Puzzles
- Balance and scales
- Mechanical models with pulleys, levers and pendulums
- Models: human body, physical world, space and moon
- Science and weather kits
- Microscope, telescope and binoculars
- Protractor and calculator
- Computer or hand-held games for teaching math, drawing/graphics, story writing and music writing
- Video games (check for age level)
- Books

### Arts, crafts and music

- Crayons, paint, markers, pencils, stencils, pastels and chalk
- Sketch pads, art paper and coloring books
- Scissors
- Clay, plaster of Paris and papier-mache
- Looms and knitting spool
- Beading, mosaic tiles, leatherwork, sewing kits, weaving and jewelry making
- More complex woodworking tools (with adult supervision)
- Photography
- Model airplanes and cars
- Rhythm instruments
- Music, dance and gymnastic lessons (age 7 or 8)
- CD player

### Safety

Choose toys that meet these safety guidelines for this age:

- Non-toxic materials
- No sharp points or edges
- No electrical parts without adult supervision
- Always use the right safety gear with activities such as helmets, knee and elbow pads and life jackets

#### To Learn More

- [www.seattlechildrens.org](http://www.seattlechildrens.org)
- Your child's healthcare provider

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This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Seattle Children's. However, your child's needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child's healthcare provider.

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