

# Toys and Play: 9- to 12-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.

## 9- to 12-year-olds:

- Are ready for athletic and team sports
- May want to start lessons in music, dance, drawing or crafts
- Can do complex models and puzzles
- May enjoy hobbies, collections and scrapbooks
- May have an interest in gadgets and inventions
- Enjoy competitive games and sports
- Are interested in clubs and group activities
- Like science, chemistry and astronomy
- May enjoy stories, putting on plays or shows, acting and games like charades
- Play games that require speed, skill, strategy, competition and concentration
- Can stick to the rules of games and be OK with losing

## Toys and activities

### Active

- Mountain bike
- Complex gym sets with rings, bars, swings, ropes and slides
- Jump rope



- Outdoor activities like hiking, fishing and camping
- Sports gear, balls and Frisbee
- Skateboard, roller blades and ice skates
- Horseshoes, croquet and badminton
- Ping-pong, pool and foosball
- Ski, sled and hockey gear
- Tennis and golf

### Construction

- Large sets of blocks or bricks
- Construction sets with complex parts like tiny nuts and screws
- Sets with motorized parts and complex gear systems

### Transportation

- Remote control vehicles
- Electric trains and racing cars

### Make believe

- Dolls become decorative pieces or hobbies

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- Collections of toy soldiers, robots and animals
- Stuffed toys
- Puppets, marionettes and theater with scenery
- Make-up and disguise kits, props, adult clothes and costumes for plays

### Learning and games

- Real cooking and sewing equipment
- Complex math, detection, spelling and quiz games
- Math, mechanical and simple physics models
- Human body, physical world, space and moon models
- Science and weather kits
- Microscope, telescope and binoculars
- Protractor and calculator
- Computer games with creative programs like game generating, drawing and graphics, science, music and story writing and history, etc.
- Video games (check for age level)
- Books

### Puzzles

- 100 to 500 pieces (age 9 to 10)
- 500 to 2,000 (from 10 years) and 3D puzzles

### Arts, crafts and music

- Crayons, paints, markers, pencils, stencils, art chalk, pastels
- Variety of art paper and sketch pads

- Very complex coloring and design books
- Clay, pottery, plaster of Paris, papier-mache
- Real sewing, knitting, embroidery, crochet, weaving, jewelry making
- Leather work, braiding and basket weaving
- Photography as art with real equipment
- Wood working
- Kite and puppet making
- Design and pattern kits for wood, paper, cloth, beads and tiles
- Music, dance and art lessons
- Instruments
- Songbooks and group singing
- CD player or MP3 player, like an iPod

### Safety

Choose toys that meet these safety guidelines for this age:

- Children should not use electrical parts without adult supervision.
- Always use the right safety gear with activities such as helmets, knee and elbow pads and life jackets.
- 12-year-olds are not ready to handle motorized ride-ons that need judgement about speed and safety.

#### To Learn More

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

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Seattle Children's will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Call Marketing Communications at 206-987-5205 or 206-987-2280 (TTY).

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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