

NATURE GAMES & ACTIVITIES FOR AT-HOME PLAY

We've assembled some of our favorite ideas to help inspire your playtime with young ones (ages 5 and under) at home! We hope this helps you enjoy your time together in nature and at home.

Mystery Box Matching

Take an old cardboard box or shoebox, about 10"x12"x8". Cut a round hole in the narrowest end of the box. Take turns: one person places an object inside the box and the other person guesses what it is using only their sense of touch! Younger learners enjoy the mystery box as well, in our experience they're especially interested in putting things in the box and pulling them out.



Spring flowers like this peony make great items for this because of their texture. Photo by Brenda Timmermans

I-Spy Out Your Window

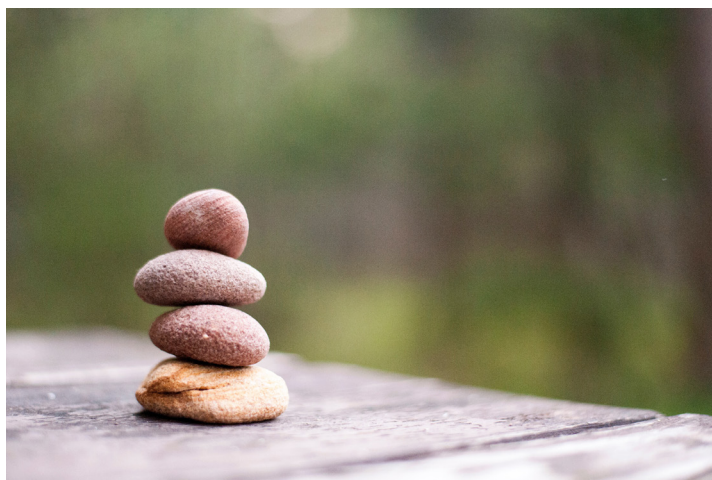
This works great if you have a pair of binoculars but works even if you don't. Look for signs of spring, animals, or anything else. You might be surprised what you see out your window! Another game that you can play by looking out your window is "What's Lovely Today?" Every day (even on bad weather days), challenge each person to find something that they find lovely out the window. The rest of the group guesses what that person found lovely by asking yes and no questions.



What can you see from your window? Photo by Juan Pablo Serrano Arenas

Rock Stacking Championship

On your next adventure outside, look for good rocks and pebbles. Bring home your collection and start a rock stacking championship! This is a great way to teach children to treat items carefully and with respect as well. Decide what the goal of your game is. Is it who can stack their rocks the tallest or use the most rocks?



Stacking rocks is a great activity to develop hand-eye coordination for younger learners. Photo by Nicolazzi Xiong

Scavenger Hunt

Lots of scavenger hunts are lists of objects or pictures. Why not try flipping the script and making a physical object scavenger hunt? Recycled egg cartons are perfect for this! You can paste pictures of sights, textures, sounds, or even colors normally found on a nature walk inside the different cups of the egg carton. Take the carton with you and as you find things that match your list, add them to the right spot in the egg carton. For older learners, make this more challenging by adding harder-to-find items to the list.



A color-based nature safari in an egg carton. Photo by Kris Antonius

Nature bowling

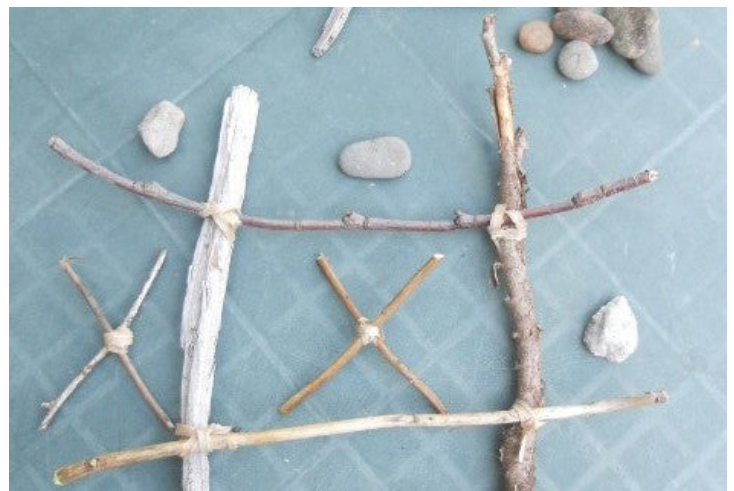
Find natural objects that can stand on their own, like pine cones. Find a ball or anything that is easy to roll to knock down the nature pins. This is a great game to develop hand-eye coordination and gross motor skills for younger learners.



Pine cones make great bowling pins for this game. Photo by Chris Gonzalez

Nature Tic-Tac-Toe

This game requires two people. Create a “#” on the ground. You can use chalk if you have it, or try using twigs! Use natural objects but each player must have a different collection from the other. Player 1 might use rocks and player 2 uses pine cones.



This set up uses sticks tied together to make “x”s for tic tac toe. Photo from education.com



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