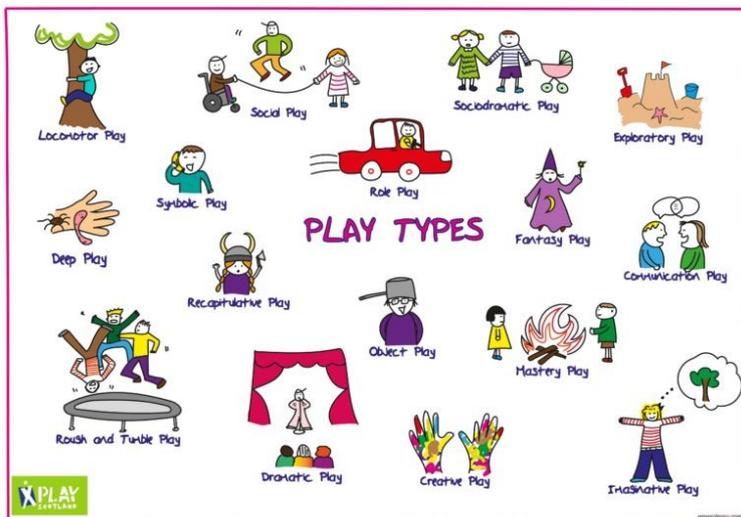




## Benefits of play

 <p>Play increases problem solving abilities</p>	 <p>Strengthens language skills by modelling other children &amp; adults</p>	 <p>Gain understanding of shape, size &amp; texture</p>
 <p>Be creative and develop their imagination</p>	 <p>Playing together teaches negotiation skills and sharing</p>	 <p>Outdoor play allows children to be more active</p>
 <p>Play strengthens the bond between parent and child</p>	 <p>Shapes views and understanding of the world around them</p>	 <p>Most importantly play should be to have fun and enjoy!</p>

## Types of play



For play-based activity ideas go to...

<https://abcdoes.com/home-learning/>

## How can you help your child learn through play?

### Use open-ended resources

How many times has a child been given a toy but found much more enjoyment from the box?

It's because the box has so many possibilities, the child gets to take ownership of their play; the box becomes a car, a spaceship, a house.

By giving children toys that are open ended: boxes, tubes, fabrics for example, you're giving children ownership of their play.

They decide what to play and where their play takes them, and in turn, their creativity soars.

Give a child a box and they will play for hours!

### Bring on the boredom!

It's ok for kids to be bored! Really!

Psychologists say children develop better when they experience periods of boredom. Researchers agree that the number one benefit of children who sometimes have 'nothing to do' is that they develop the innate ability to be creative.

Allowing your child to have these short periods will encourage them to turn to reading, to painting, to pretend play or an outdoor activity.

Being 'constructively bored' encourages children to think creatively, to problem solve and to use their imagination to fill their time.

### Avoid managing your child's play

Try not to jump in and steer your child's play, instead let them take the lead and take it in any direction they choose. You may just be surprised at where their imagination may go! And if they come up with narratives that don't necessarily make sense – go with it!

Ask open-ended questions (such as, 'tell me about...'), laugh, join in and marvel at the wonder that is a child's imagination.

### Try not to get caught up on what your child achieves

We all love a fridge full of our children's paintings but it's equally important not to get caught up in the 'product' or what your child achieves.

It's the process of engaging in this kind of activity that's important, particularly in the younger years.

The process of painting a picture, engaging in role play, exploring cause and effect, developing ideas, building relationships, problem solving, thinking creatively and using their imagination is where the real learning takes place.

### Keep it simple

Always keep it simple and remember that children have the capacity to bring ideas, exploration, creativity and imagination to almost any object – a toilet roll, an old egg box, a puddle, mud, sticks, the proverbial empty cardboard box!

You do not need to have endless toys, equipment and resources. Taking simple objects and interests and allowing your child to decide what they want to do with them is a great place to start.

Allow time and space to explore, wonder, investigate, try. Our role as adults should aim for creating an environment that supports children to choose freely what to do and how to do it. To help support and 'scaffold' play; tune into what and how your child is playing and then you could offer suggestions - this may be resources, materials, techniques or be posed as questions or wonderings that your child may, or may not, choose to take!