

Four weeks of small things to do together

Three play ideas a week, plus a weekend extra if you want one. Each takes five to fifteen minutes, uses something already in your home, and fits a moment your day already has. Read the card once, put it down, and play.

The ideas aren't random. Every week covers the three prime areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the framework your nursery works to:

Communication and Language, Physical Development, and Personal, Social and Emotional Development. Across the weeks the other four areas come round too. The map on the last page shows which card covers what, and each card says which everyday milestone it supports.

How to use the pack

1. Each week, do the three cards for that week, one at a time, when the moment comes up.
2. If they loved one, do it again. Repeats count. The weekend extra is there if you want more.
3. Once a week, tell your nursery which cards you tried. That's the whole check-in.
4. Missed a week? Just carry on. One card is still a win.



COOKING TEA · 5-10 MINUTES

Spoon to Me

Communication and Language

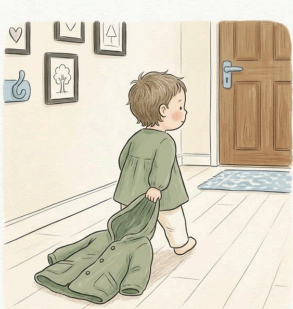
Physical Development

You need: a few kitchen things within their reach: a spoon, a cup, a bowl

1. While you're busy in the kitchen, keep a few safe things where they can reach them.
2. Say their name, then: 'get the spoon and give it to me'.
3. Wait with your hand out, without pointing at it.
4. Swap which thing you ask for so they're listening for the word each time.

Why it helps. With several things in reach, bringing the one you named is proof they heard the word, and being a real help in the kitchen is exactly what makes them want to.

Supports: Following a two-step ask, Fetching named things



GOING OUT · 5 MINUTES

Coat by the Door

Communication and Language

Personal, Social and Emotional

You need: their small coat

1. Before you go out, say their name and get their attention.
2. Say: 'get your coat and put it by the door'.
3. Wait. Let them work out both parts without being shown.
4. Try it on a day you're not going out too. That's how you know it's the words working.

Why it helps. A routine they do every day can look like understanding when it's really habit, so asking at an unexpected moment is how you find out which it is, and both are progress.

Supports: Following a two-step ask, Fetching named things



THE WALK IN · 5-10 MINUTES

Counting Step Walk

Mathematics

Physical Development

Communication and Language

You need: nothing, just a hallway or room to walk in

1. Hold hands and take slow steps together
2. Count each step out loud, one-two-three
3. Pause and ask them how many steps to the next thing
4. Try counting backwards for the last few steps

Why it helps. Saying numbers in order while they move ties the sound of counting to something real, which is how number sense actually sticks.



THE WASHING · 10-15 MINUTES

WEEKEND EXTRA

Whose Sock Is That?

Communication and Language

Mathematics

You need: a basket of clean washing

1. Sit down with the clean washing and make a small pile for each person.
2. Hold something up and say whose it is: 'Daddy's sock'.
3. Hand it to your toddler to put on the right pile.
4. When they say a name, add the thing: they say 'Daddy', you say 'Daddy's sock'.

Why it helps. Sorting washing is a job a toddler can genuinely do, and every single item has an owner, so the same kind of phrase comes round item after item.

Supports: Two words together



BEDTIME STORY · 10-15 MINUTES

Find It and Point

Communication and Language Literacy

You need: a picture book they know

1. Open a busy page in a book they already know well.
2. Say: 'find the dog and point to it'.
3. Wait while they look. This can take a while on a busy page.
4. When they find it, say what it's doing, then ask for something else on the page.

Why it helps. A picture book is a quiet, still place to practise listening to two parts at once, with nothing moving and nobody hurrying.

Supports: Following a two-step ask



THE STAIRS · 5 MINUTES

One Foot Down

Physical Development

You need: the bottom few steps of the stairs

1. Sit them on the third step up, then stand them up facing down with your hand in theirs.
2. Stand one step below them.
3. Let them step one foot down to meet you, then the other.
4. Say the same words each time, like "one foot down".

Why it helps. Going down is harder than going up, so a few steps with your hand and the same words each time helps them feel how far each step drops.

Supports: Climbing stairs with a hand



AFTER TEA · 10-15 MINUTES

Whose Turn?

Communication and Language Personal, Social and Emotional

You need: bricks for a tower, or bean bags and a basket

1. Start a game with clear turns: one brick each, or one bean bag each.
2. Say whose turn it is every single time: 'Mummy's turn', then their name.
3. Hand over and wait, without asking.
4. Add a word to whatever they say: they say their name, you say their name and 'turn'.

Why it helps. Turn-taking games give the same short phrase a reason to be said every few seconds, and a toddler waiting for their go is very motivated to say whose it is.

Supports: Two words together, Taking turns



TEATIME · 5-10 MINUTES WEEKEND EXTRA

Big One, Little One

Communication and Language Mathematics

You need: two of the same thing in different sizes: cups, balls, toy cars

1. Put a big one and a little one of the same thing in front of your toddler.
2. Ask for one of them: 'can I have the big cup?'
3. Take whichever they hand you and say what it is: 'big cup, thank you'.
4. Swap round and do it again with the little one.

Why it helps. Two things that are the same except for size give a toddler a reason to use a describing word, because without it there's no way to say which one they mean.

Supports: Two words together



THE SHOPPING · 10-15 MINUTES

Where Does It Go?

Communication and Language

Understanding the World

You need: the shopping, or a basket of things to put away

1. Unpack the shopping together on the floor where they can reach it.
2. Pick something up and say where it goes: 'milk fridge', 'beans cupboard'.
3. Hand it over and let them carry it there.
4. When they say a word, give it back with the place added.

Why it helps. Putting things away is a job with a right answer the child already knows, so they've got something to say and a reason to say it.

Supports: Two words together



BEFORE THE BATH · 5 MINUTES

Fetch the Towel

Communication and Language

Physical Development

You need: their towel, somewhere they can reach it

1. Before bath time, leave their towel hanging where they can get it.
2. Say their name, then: 'get your towel and bring it here'.
3. Wait while they go. Don't follow them.
4. Thank them for the towel by name when it arrives.

Why it helps. Getting something and bringing it back is the most natural two-part errand there is, and a towel is a thing they know exactly where to find.

Supports: Following a two-step ask, Fetching named things



ON THE SOFA · 5 MINUTES

Hand Sandwich

Personal, Social and Emotional

Mathematics

You need: your lap, or a chair next to theirs

1. Put one hand flat, ask them to put a hand on top, then add your other hand and theirs to make a sandwich.
2. Give the sandwich a slow, gentle squeeze and count to three.
3. Pull out the bottom hand and put it on top, and keep building.

Why it helps. A firm, gentle squeeze is calming for a toddler's body, and taking turns to build the stack keeps them focused and close.



TIDYING UP · 5 MINUTES

WEEKEND EXTRA

From the Next Room

Communication and Language

Personal, Social and Emotional

You need: a soft toy they know, left in the next room

1. Start easy: ask for a toy that's in the same room but not right beside them.
2. When that's easy, leave the toy in the next room where they'll see it as they go in.
3. Ask for it by name: "can you get teddy from the bedroom?"
4. Wait at the door and cheer when it comes back.

Why it helps. Once the toy is out of sight, the word is all they've got to go on, so fetching from another room is the next step up from fetching what they can see.

Supports: Fetching named things



ON THE BUS · 5-10 MINUTES

Spot the Red Thing

Communication and Language

Understanding the World

You need: your lap, or a chair with a view of the room

1. Pick a colour and say "I can see something red".
2. Let them look round and point to anything red they can find.
3. When they find one, let them choose the next colour for you.

Why it helps. Hunting for a colour turns a long wait into looking, and matching what they see to a colour word helps the words stick.



WAITING FOR TEA · 5 MINUTES

Copy My Clap

Expressive Arts and Design

Mathematics

Communication and Language

You need: a cushion each to sit on

1. Sit facing each other.
2. Clap twice and say 'your turn'. Wait for them to clap twice back.
3. Try a new pattern: clap, clap, pat your knees.
4. Let them make up a pattern for you to copy.

Why it helps. Copying a short pattern of sounds is listening, remembering and doing, all in a few seconds.

Supports: Taking turns



GETTING DRESSED · 5 MINUTES

The Last Bit

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional

You need: their small coat with big buttons

1. Do the button almost all the way through, so it's peeking out the other side.
2. Let them pull it the rest of the way.
3. Do the next one a little less far.
4. Let them finish each one.

Why it helps. Finishing the last bit means the job always ends with them doing it, so every go feels like a win while their fingers catch up.

Supports: Buttoning a coat



AFTER DINNER · 5 MINUTES

WEEKEND EXTRA

Drum Roll, Then Hush

Communication and Language

Expressive Arts and Design

Physical Development

You need: a table to drum on

1. Drum your hands on the table, slowly at first, then fast and loud.
2. Stop suddenly and say 'hush' with a finger to your lips.
3. Wait in the quiet for a moment together.
4. Let them start the next drum roll and decide when it stops.

Why it helps. The hush after the noise is the fun part, and waiting in it is a small bit of self-control.

Where the four weeks sit in the EYFS

Each week's three core cards cover all three prime areas, and the weekend extra adds a specific area. Across the 12-week programme every area is visited several times. Each card also names the everyday milestone it supports, from the Little Wins milestones set (34 milestones across eating, dressing, talking, moving and playing together).

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Communication and Language prime area	●	●	●	●
Physical Development prime area	●	●	●	●
Personal, Social and Emotional prime area	●	●	●	●
Literacy		●		
Mathematics	●	●	●	●
Understanding the World			●	●
Expressive Arts and Design				●

Cards are drawn from the Little Wins library of 824 activities. In the full programme, packs are matched to the child's age in months and translated into the family's language. Settings receive a monthly summary of how many families played and which cards were used most.