



Have a Ball This Summer



Directions: Try to complete all 15 ball activities. Color in the circle when you have completed the activity.

1. Toss a balloon up in the air and catch it.

2. Tap a balloon up and down in the air using your hands. How many times can you keep it up in the air without it dropping to the floor?

3. Toss a scarf or small handkerchief in the air and catch it.

4. Try throwing up a playground size ball and catching it. Progress to a tennis ball.

5. Try tossing and catching a ball up in the air standing inside a hula hoop.

6. Walk forward and toss and catch a balloon, scarf or ball depending upon your abilities.

7. Toss a balloon or ball up in the air, clap your hands and then catch the ball.

8. Bounce a ball on the floor and catch it.

9. Bounce a ball on the floor, clap your hands and catch it.

10. Toss a ball at the wall, let the ball bounce and catch it.

11. Hold a beach ball overhead with two hands to stretch your shoulders and back. Hold for 10 seconds.

12. Put a laundry basket by your feet. Lay down on the floor on your back with your knees bent. Pick up a ball with your feet and try to put it inside the laundry basket. Repeat.

13. Hold a ball with two hands at your belly button. Can you pass the ball around your waist without dropping it on the ground?

14. Hold a beach ball with two hands, elbows straight at shoulder height. Perform 10 squats.

15. Create a small obstacle course using lawn chairs. Can you kick a beach ball around all the obstacles?

7 Developmental Steps To Teaching Your Child To Catch

Children learn at a very early age how to roll a ball. As they grow into toddlers, they can begin



to understand the basics of playing catch. As with any other skill, catching a ball is something that takes practice. Below is the developmental sequence for teaching your kiddo how to catch.

7 Developmental Steps To Teaching Your Child To Catch:

1. **Push a ball across the floor.** Encourage your child to receive the ball between their outstretched legs and then push it back to you. This teaches your child the concept of reciprocal play as well as turn-taking. It also teaches them about the concept of cause and effect (push ball and the ball will roll).
2. **Catch a ball with both hands.** Use an underhand toss to throw a large playground-sized ball to your child's chest. When first learning to catch, encourage your child to catch the ball by wrapping their arms around the ball and cradling it to their chest. When their accuracy to catch the ball against their chest improves, encourage them to use only the palms of their hands and fingers.
3. **Catching a ball with one hand.** Ask your child to put one hand behind their back or in their pocket. Again, toss a tennis ball to your child's chest. Encourage them to catch the ball using only the hand that is free. Another technique that you can use is to put a baseball mitt on your child's non-dominant hand. Encourage them to catch the ball in the mitt, transfer it to their other hand and toss it back to you.
4. **Dropping and catching a ball with two hands.** The next step is to drop a tennis ball and catch it using both hands. The biggest trick for catching the ball after bouncing it on the floor is to start the drop at waist height, as opposed to at the level of their chest or higher. This will provide a smaller and more manageable bounce.

5. **Dropping and catching a ball two hands.** Once your child can drop and catch a tennis ball with two hands, challenge them to do the same action with one hand.
6. **Bounce and catch with partner.** Once your child can drop and catch a tennis ball by themselves, try to stand about 10 feet away from them and play catch by bouncing the ball back and forth with your child. Start by throwing it to the mid-line of their body. Once they're able to consistently catch the ball, you should throw the ball to their sides.
7. **Over/Under:** The next step in the ball-catching process is the trickiest game of catch yet. It requires two balls. Designate one partner as the "over" and one as the "under." The person who throws over will throw their ball in the air to their partner. The one who throws under will bounce the ball on the floor to their partner. Count to three before each bounce and see how many times you can simultaneously pass between each other without dropping either ball!

Depending on your child's skill level, there are ways in which you can alter the game in order to make it easier or more challenging for your child. For example, you could use a larger or smaller ball. Smaller balls are more difficult to catch. In addition, you could increase or decrease the distance between you and your child. The closer you stand to them, the easier the task will be. You could also give your child a carpet remnant or draw a shape on the floor. Direct your child to stand on that designated spot while playing catch. This will help them define their space so that they only need to worry about catching and throwing, rather than their body positioning.

Practicing catch also works on a variety of skills that will transfer to other functional activities. These skills include bilateral coordination, convergence of eyes, projected action skills and visual motor skills.

You've got the steps. Now, get out there and play ball!

Maintain Balance This Summer

Directions: Challenge yourself to complete all of these balance challenges. Mark off each activity completed.

Sit on floor with arms behind back and lift both legs in the air.

Balance on your left leg for as long as you can.

Draw a straight line with sidewalk chalk and walk on it without stepping off.

Balance on your right leg for as long as you can.



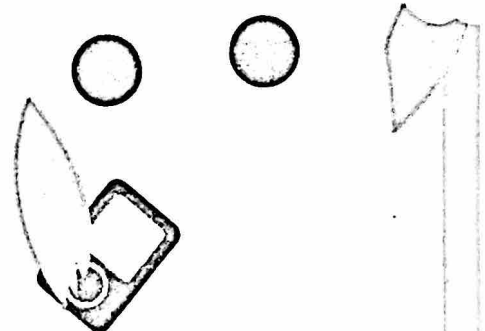
Balance on your tip toes for as long as you can.



Balance with two feet together and eyes closed for as long as you can.

Balance on one knee and two hands for 10 seconds.

Balance on two feet and one hand for 10 seconds.



Balance with feet in heel to toe position for 10 seconds. Try it with your eyes closed.





Single limb balance (standing on one leg) is an important element of many tasks, like walking up and down stairs. Practicing these activities at home can help to develop your child's ability to balance on one leg. These activities are listed from easiest to hardest. For any of the activities, your child might start off needing something to hold onto, like your hand, a sturdy chair, or a wall. As they progress, they should begin to let go.

Pillow Stand: Have your child stand with their feet shoulder-width apart. Have them keep one foot flat on the ground, the other foot in the center of a pillow. The pillow should be fluffy enough that they are not able to totally compress it. You might also use a rolled up towel. Hold for _____ seconds, then switch feet.

High Steps: Lay out objects 1-6" high around the room, possibly toys or stacks of books. Have your child step over these hurdles, exaggerating lifting the leg high into the air to clear the object.

Bridge: Instruct your child to lift one foot a few inches off the ground, enough for a toy car or stuffed animal to pass under their foot. Tell them they must make a bridge for the toy and not squish it, as you pass the toy under their foot. Gradually pass the toy slower, so they are encouraged to keep their foot off the ground longer. Perform on both feet.

Laundry Pickup: Place small towels, items of your children's clothing, etc. around a laundry basket. You can either place the items on top of your child's foot one-by-one, or they can try to "scoop" the items up with their feet. Have them lift their foot up and over to drop the item into the basket.

Ball Stand: Follow the same steps as "Pillow Stand," but replace the pillow with a soccer ball, or any other similar-sized, firm ball. Make sure your child does not attempt to stand on top of the ball. Hold for _____ seconds, then switch feet.

Advanced Pillow Stand: Now, the child places one foot on top of the pillow and lifts the opposite foot into the air. The pillow will create an unsteady surface. Hold for _____ seconds, then switch feet.

Ball Stop: Roll a soccer or similar-sized ball to your child, with the instruction to stop the ball with their foot when it gets to them. Your child should not reach their leg out for the ball, but have their foot in the air while the ball is rolling, and then lower their leg when the ball is under them to trap it.

Extreme Pillow Stand: Follow the same instructions as "Advanced Pillow Stand," but have your child attempt with their eyes closed! This one is tricky because the visual system is an important part of balance, and we are taking it away. Make sure the area around them is clear of any potential hazards.

40 Household Items to Develop Gross Motor Skills

1. Backpack
2. Balloon
3. Balls
4. Basket/Bucket/Box
5. Books
6. Bouncy balls
7. Broom/mop/yardstick
8. Bubbles
9. Chalk
10. Dice
11. File folder
12. Hula hoop
13. Laundry basket
14. Marbles
15. Painter's tape
16. Paper/newspaper
17. Paper plates
18. Paper towel rolls
19. Pillowcases
20. Ping pong ball
21. Pool noodle
22. Post-it notes
23. Puzzles
24. Rice/beans/pasta
25. Rolled rug
26. Rolling chair
27. Rope
28. Ruler/spatula
29. Sheets/tablecloth
30. Shoes
31. Small pillows
32. Socks
33. Stairs/steps
34. Sticks
35. Streamers or tape
36. Stuffed animals
37. Tablecloth
38. Toilet paper rolls
39. Towels/washcloths
40. Trash bags

Gross Motor Home Activities

1. Write letters on paper plates and spread out on the floor. Have child jump from plate to plate to spell words or simply call out letters for the child to jump on.
2. Draw a series of water lines in a vertical pattern using chalk on a sidewalk. Label each water line with a number. Have child perform standing jumps to lines.
3. Have child wad paper into balls or use rolled socks to toss into a laundry basket or even the bath tub or washing machine.
4. Write numbers on post-it notes and spread out on a wall. Have child reach to tap the numbers in numerical order.
5. Use two hand towels/wash clothes to have child create a path on the floor. Have child step on one at a time to create a path. Child reaches behind themselves to pick up one towel and spread it out in front of them for each step taken.
6. Have child use a spatula or ruler (with one hand) or a file folder with two hands to tap a balloon and keep it in the air. Can perform with a partner.
7. Have child tap a balloon to keep it in the air alternating left and right hands.
8. Have child push a sibling or parent in a rolling chair.
9. Have child build a fort using a bed sheet.
10. Have child use a bed sheet or tablecloth as a parachute to toss stuffed animals, foam balls, or balled up socks into the air trying to keep them on sheet or table cloth.
11. Have child pick up shoes with just their toes and lift them into a bucket, basket, or box.
12. Fill a pillowcase with towels or a trash bag with crumpled newspaper and hang from the ceiling or door frame to have child use as a punching bag.
13. Put books in a laundry basket or backpack, tie a rope onto the basket or backpack and then have child pull the rope hand-over-hand to bring the basket or backpack toward them.
14. Create a road or trail by placing painter's tape on the wall or floor and have child drive a car or walk a stuffed animal along the road or trail.
15. Place streamers or tape on the walls in the hall creating a maze pattern and have child navigate through it without pulling the streamers or tape off of the walls.
16. Roll a large floor rug up or use a pool noodle as a balance beam for the child to walk on.
17. Place a puzzle tray base at the bottom of the stairs and the pieces of the puzzle at the top of the stairs and have child navigate the stairs repetitively to retrieve and place pieces to complete the puzzle.
18. Place small pillows around on the floor and have child step on pillows pretending to walk on rocks in the water.
19. Have child thread toilet paper or paper towel rolls onto a broom or mop handle or a yardstick.
20. Create bean bags by placing rice, pasta, or beans into socks and tie them off to close and then have child play a bean bag tossing game into a basket, box, or bucket.
21. Place books or stuffed animals on the floor and have child jump over them like an obstacle course. Use various animal sizes and stack books at various heights.
22. Have child pick up marbles or small dice with their toes and place into a container.
23. Have child kick a pair of balled up socks or small ball from room to room.
24. Have child lie on floor and roll a ball around on the wall with their feet.
25. Roll a ping pong ball or small bouncy ball to child on the tabletop and have child

catch with a cup.

26. Have child lie on their back on the floor or bed and have them toss a small pillow or a stuffed animal in the air and catch it.

27. Blow bubbles and have child clap their hands or kick the bubbles to pop.

28. Hold a hula hoop for a child to step through repetitively or have child rotate a hula hoop over themselves to step through like jumping rope.

29. Place sticks around on the ground and have child jump over them like an obstacle course.