

The colourful chalk, talk and walk pack

for 1- to 3-year-olds



Illustrations by Julia Woolf from the book *Calm Down, Zebra*,
written by Lou Kuenzler, published by Faber, and gifted with this pack.



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The toddler-friendly activity ideas in this pack have been developed by researchers, early years experts, and parents.

They are all about exploring, talking and enjoying time with your child. We hope you will adapt them, build on them and have fun with them. To find out more about the Playful Packs project, and to get even more activity ideas, visit playfulpacks.uk

To find out whether there is a free Peep group in your area contact **01865 395145** or families@people.org.uk

If you think you might benefit from free, confidential support visit Home-Start Oxford: homestartoxford.org.uk

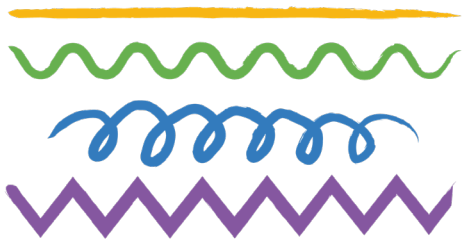
For 50 no-cost or low-cost local activities for under-fives download the free '50 things to do before you're five' app



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Learning Lines

Draw a straight line and challenge your child to copy it. Then try a wiggly line, a curly line, a zig-zag line.



Practising mark making helps your child to develop the finger muscles they will need for writing. Describing the lines will introduce new words into your child's vocabulary.

Adapt

If your child isn't ready to copy lines yet, encourage them to experiment with making their own marks and describe what they produce.

Extend

For an extra challenge ask your child to draw on top of your line.

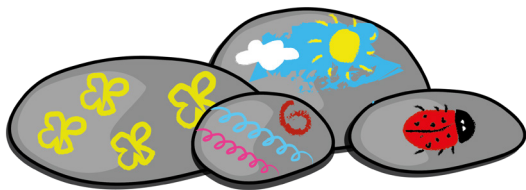
Point out different kinds of lines when you're out and about with your child.

Here are some we've spotted:



Chalk Stones

Collect some flat stones or large smooth pebbles and decorate them with chalk pictures.



Doing arts and crafts with your child provides an opportunity to introduce new words into your child's vocabulary by talking about colour and shape.

Adapt

Make your decorations more permanent by using paints, or coloured markers on pale stones.

Extend

Hide decorated stones around your garden or local park to turn your colourful collection into a treasure hunt.



Tightrope Challenge

On a path away from traffic, draw a 'tightrope' line and challenge your child to walk along the line.



NHS guidelines are that toddlers should be physically active for at least 3 hours every day. Aim for a mix of light activities such as standing up, moving around, rolling and playing, as well as more energetic activities like skipping, hopping, running and jumping.

Adapt

Use tape to make tightrope lines on your floor at home.

Extend

Make the line dashed and challenge your child to jump across the gaps.

These parks in Oxford have flat paths well away from traffic:

Barton Neighbourhood Centre Park



Bury Knowle Park

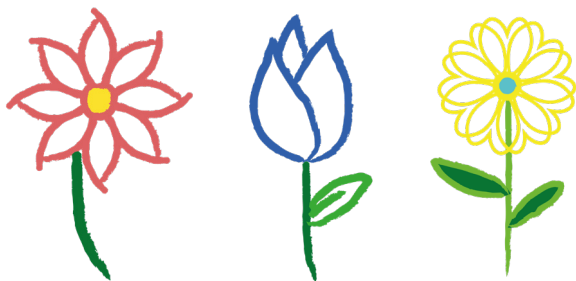


Fry's Hill Park



Colour Detective

Draw lots of different coloured flowers, and talk to your child about their favourites.



Toddlers often get their colours mixed up at this age, which is nothing to worry about. Naming the colours around them, and talking about the colours they like and dislike will help your child to work out which is which.

Adapt

Go on a colour hunt when you're out and about....
which colours can your child spot?



Extend

Encourage your child to experiment with
layering chalk colours on top of each other.
What different colours can they create?



Chalk Rubbing

Bring some chalk and paper out on your next walk and make rubbings of the different textures you find. Tree bark, bricks, and manhole covers all have interesting textures. What others can your child find?



Practising mark making helps your child to develop the finger muscles they will need for writing. Describing the textures will introduce new words into your child's vocabulary.

Adapt

You can also do rubbings of things in the home: shoe soles, coins and buttons have interesting textures – but stay close to make sure nothing dangerous or unhygienic goes in your child's mouth.

Extend

Experiment with pushing hard or soft when making the rubbings. Talk about what difference it makes to the patterns that emerge.

Here are some textures we found around Oxford:



Throwing Games

Draw a chalk circle on the ground (or on some paper if playing indoors) and practise throwing a small ball, or rolled up sock into the circle.



Practising throwing gets your child active and helps them to develop movement control.



Adapt and Extend

Children learn best when they feel a sense of accomplishment so make the circle very big at first. As they get better at controlling their throws you can make the circle smaller or ask them to stand further back.



Shape Detective

Draw some simple shapes (circle, square, triangle) and name them for your child – then point to a shape to see if they can tell you its name.



By talking about shapes with your child you are boosting their early maths skills!





Adapt and Extend

Experiment with making shapes with different materials...you could make them with sticky tape, or string, or draw shapes in sand or mud.

Point out different shapes when you're out and about with your child. Here are some we've spotted:



Chalk Portraits

Ask your child to lie on a big piece of paper so you can draw round them in chalk. Help them to draw a face, hands, hair and clothes onto their chalk body.

Talking to your child about their body allows you to build up their self-esteem.

Point out some of their great features – like how their smile makes you happy or how great their arms are for cuddling.



Adapt

Help your child to draw round a doll or teddy, then design a new outfit for them.



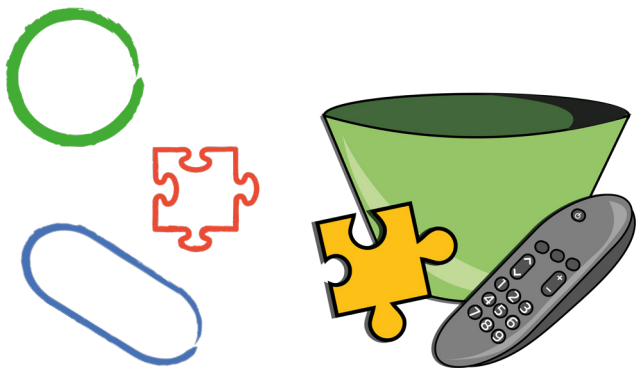
Extend

Instead of drawing on clothes onto their body's outline, you could help your child to mark where their heart and lungs are.

Outline Matching Game

Find some objects with distinctive shapes (e.g. bowl, puzzle piece, remote control) and draw round them. Put the objects in a pile next to the outlines.

Can your child match the object to the outline?



Playing matching games helps to build your child's thinking skills.

Adapt

If your child is showing an interest in the alphabet you could cut out some cardboard letter shapes and draw round them in chalk, then help your child to match the outlines to the letters.

Extend

Let your child practise drawing round objects too – it's a tricky skill to master so you'll need to help them hold the objects still.



Wash and Go

When you've finished playing with the chalks for the day, encourage your child to help you wipe up any chalk dust.



Letting your child help with simple chores builds their self-esteem.



Adapt

What other simple chores can your child help with?

Extend

If they have a safe place to play outside, your child might like to experiment with spraying or brushing water onto chalk patterns to create different effects.





Brains are built in stages; just as a house needs a sturdy foundation to support the walls and roof, a brain needs a good base to support all future development. Doing activities like the ones in this pack are the bricks that build your child's brain. You can find out more information about the science and how you can build your child's brain here: <https://www.albertafamilywellness.org/resources>

Help us find out even more about the ways that children learn and develop. The babylabs at University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University run studies across the year: Babies and toddlers have fun playing in a safe space, whilst parents gain new insights into their child's development. To find out more and register your interest in taking part in a study visit

www.psy.ox.ac.uk/research/oxford-babylab
and babylab.brookes.ac.uk



For a downloadable version of this pack,
and to hear the activity suggestions in
English, French, Polish, Punjabi, Spanish,
Ukrainian and Urdu visit:

www.playfulpacks.uk/activities



Had fun with these packs? Tell us! We are offering
a second, different activity pack to the first 100
families who share a photo or written description
of how they've used the activities with their child.
To find out more, and take part, visit

www.playfulpacks.uk/share