



Activity ideas to support Learning at Home 2-5 year olds

Early Years Service, Children's Services

Buckinghamshire Council

Make your own instruments

Using empty bottles, jars and boxes is an easy way to make your own music at home.

[How to make maracas with plastic bottles: Music play with toddler - BBC Tiny Happy People](#) this website offers tips on how to make instruments together and includes a video showing how to make shakers.



Making Music

Listen to different types of music with your child and talk about what you like and don't like. Why not try classical, opera, pop, jazz and choir?

Listen to the sounds of Winter

Wrap up warm and go for a wintry walk – what can you hear?

Crunching footprints on frosty or snowy ground, **dripping** water as it thaws, Strong winds blowing **whistling**, **muffled** quiet when snow falls.

Squelching as you walk through mud or splashes as you jump in puddles.



Body Sounds

Ask your child to make as many different sounds as they can with their hands – click, tap, rub, clap, slap etc. Choose two sounds and make a pattern e.g. clap, clap, click, click.

What other sounds can they discover using their tummies, tongues, cheeks, feet.

If there are a few of you make a sound and pass it on.

Sing: [If You're Happy and You Know It](#)

“If you're Happy and you know it **clap** your hands,
If you're happy and you know it **stamp** your feet,
If you're happy and you know it
and you really want to show it,
if you're happy and you know it **pat** your tummy.”



Opposite Sounds

Talk about sound opposites such as **quiet and loud** -this is called 'dynamics', **long and short** – 'rhythm', **fast and slow** – 'tempo', **high and low** – 'pitch'. Have fun experimenting using your voices, body percussion (clapping, patting, clicking fingers) and instruments. If you make a quiet sound, can they make a loud sound?

Top Tips

-When you hear your child singing to themselves in play, join in by copying and adding on another word or line to the song.

-When your child plays with an instrument, join them by copying and adding on with your own instrument this helps with their understanding of rhythm.

-Join in with their play and start singing a song to go with what they are doing e.g. *sing along to the 'In my ear I hear a drum'* if they are playing with the homemade instruments.

-When singing songs try leaving a gap at the end of a line and wait to see if the child fills in the missing word e.g. *'Twinkle, twinkle little*'

-Add silly words at the end of a line in a song and wait to see your child's reaction e.g. *'Humpty Dumpty sat on a jelly'*.

-Try to put actions with nursery rhymes and songs because it will help your child remember them.

-Don't worry if your child wants to sing the same song over and over again, it helps them remember.

Chatting Matters

Vocabulary and **increasing** the number of new words your child hears every day is very important for future learning.

Language: Rhythm, beat, high, low, tones, drum, piano, guitar, xylophone.

Find out more about your child's development

[What to expect in the Early Years: A guide for parents](#)

If you have any concerns about your child's development the first thing you can do is chat to your child's Key Person at their setting.

Did you know?

Supporting children to keep a steady beat through songs, music, rhymes, marching, clapping, drumming will help the understanding of rhythm. It also helps them to learn the tempo and rhythm of speaking which will in turn help with their communication skills, reading and writing.

Communication and Language 3 and 4 year olds

You might notice that your child:

- Tell you a long story and talk about my favourite books. Knows lots of nursery rhymes.
- Knows lots of songs and enjoy singing them.
- Can understand questions and instructions that are more complicated and have two parts, like: "Please get your coat and wait at the door."

Information for parents and carers

Find out more

[cbeebies music](#)

[CBeebies Parenting](#)

[Health for Under 5s](#)

[Small Talk | National Literacy Trust](#)

[Learning to talk - Start for Life - nhs.uk](#)

[Home - Starting Reception](#)

[Homepage | Best Start in Life](#)



Expressive Arts and Design 3 and 4 year olds

You might notice that your child can:

- Enjoy creating their own songs, can make up a song around one that they already know.
- Play instruments with increasing control to express my feelings and ideas.
- Can remember and sing entire songs.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

3 and 4 year olds

You might notice that your child:

- Is keen to be independent. Especially around dressing and feeding themselves.
- Like to be given responsibility and to help with jobs like setting the table or washing up my plate after snack.