



**Includes 50 Great
Activities!**

SIMPLY FUN

A collection of simply fun activities for your 2-3 year old

by Ashley Sanders

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for
HELLOKY.COM

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RAINY DAY FUN

Feed The Frog

Draw a picture of a frog (the face and mouth) on the side of a large box. Cut out the frog's mouth to make an opening. Set the box against a wall. Stand a few feet away from the box and take turns with your child trying to toss small beanbags or balls through the frog's mouth.

Felt Board Fun

Stretch a large piece of felt over a large framed cork-board (or, for a smaller felt board, use a picture frame without the glass). Staple the felt (or glue it) to the back. Cut out different felt shapes and pictures and let your toddler create scenes on the board. Fun shapes to try: people, clothing, sun and clouds, basic shapes, animals, vehicles.

Foil Paint Etching

Cover one side of a piece of cardboard with aluminum foil. In a small cup, mix two tablespoons of non-toxic liquid paint with two teaspoons of liquid dish-washing soap. Let your child paint the foil with this mixture. After about a day of drying, let your child use a popsicle stick or twig to etch a design on the painted foil.

Treasure Hunt

Hide a treasure (or several!) around the house. Use a long piece of string or yarn to tie to the treasure, and wind the other end throughout the house. Let your toddler find the treasure by holding onto the opposite end of the string and following its path. Then, do it again!

Breaking News

Using a two-page spread of a newspaper, make a two-inch tear at the fold on the top and bottom. Hold it up by the corners so that it becomes a “wall” that your child can run through. Encourage her to run toward the paper and burst through it. The small tears will help the paper split in two as she runs through it.

Spoon Puppet

Use a permanent marker to draw a different face on each side of a plastic spoon. Cut a slit in the middle of a paper towel or scrap of fabric, then stick the handle of the spoon through the slit. With the “head” of the puppet upside down, tape the paper towel or material around the handle of the spoon, forming the puppet's neck. Turn the puppet upright and glue on yarn hair, if desired.

Shaving Cream Finger Painting

Squirt a mound of shaving cream on your counter or bathtub (it'll clean up). Let him smear it around and explore the texture of foam creating fun art. Add a few drops of food coloring and let your child swirl in the color.

Dollhouse

Decorate a cardboard carton or box to make a simple dollhouse. Make dollhouse people by cutting cardboard tubes to various lengths. Use markers to draw faces and clothing on the tubes. Help your child use the dollhouse people to make a family. Talk about family and the roles of each member as your child plays.

Masking Tape Town

Roll out strips of masking tape straight onto the floor to create a “roadway” and buildings for your child's play cars and people. Include “parking lots,” “banks,” etc. Use empty shoe-boxes and toilet paper tubes for large buildings and tunnels.

Homemade Play-Dough

Mix together 1 cup flour, ½ cup salt, 1 tablespoon cooking oil, 1 tablespoon cream of tartar, 1 cup water, and 1 packet of your choice of koolaid. Then, add to medium heat on the stove. Continuously stir (don't leave the mixture) until it begins to clump. Keep stirring until you have a big clump. Remove the dough from heat and spoon it onto the counter. Carefully knead dough (this will be too hot for small fingers) until it is completely smooth throughout. IT WILL BE HOT AT FIRST. Store in an air-tight container. Experiment with different colors, scents, and even GLITTER!

Hammered In

Let your child practice hammering gold tins into a large chunk of floral foam or Styrofoam with a toy hammer. You may want to demonstrate the first stroke, and even help guide his hand at first, but this will be a fun activity for your toddler!

Ice Discoveries

Fill a bowl or bucket with water and drop in some water-safe toys. (If using the bucket, you may want to add the water a little at a time so the toys will be distributed throughout.) Put the bowl/bucket into the freezer and let the water freeze. Use a little warm water to help get the ice out of the container and then put in the bathtub or sit outside and let your child watch the ice melt away. Or, if you hide smaller toys throughout the ice (by freezing water with toys a bit at a time, adding in layers), you can give them small age-appropriate items to “chip” away at the ice. Like, spoons and cups of warm water.

Gone Fishing

Create a “fishing pole” by attaching a 6 inch piece of string to a ruler or wooden spoon. At the end of the string, use a glue gun to attach a small magnet. Next, cut out differently colored shapes from construction paper and affix each shape to a metal juice can lid (or any other type of metal jar lid with safe edges). Give the “fishing rod” to your child and say, “Let's fish for blue circles,” or, “Let's fish for squares.” Encourage her to maneuver the magnetic fishing rod to “catch” each of the circles or squares. This is also fun when you start learning ABCs!

Whisk Maracas

Gently insert several jingle bells between the wires of a balloon-shaped whisk. Add pompoms to change the sound. Now, shake it!

Fabric Swatch Collage

Gather different types of fabric swatches and fillers (cotton filling, cotton, silk, polyester, corduroy, velvet, etc.) in different styles (plaid, striped, polka dot, tiger striped, etc.). Help your child glue these scraps to a piece of cardboard to create a swatch collage. Encourage your toddler to touch the different swatches and talk about how they look and feel different and similar.

Sticker Magic

Cut out the characters from an inexpensive picture book (or, even use stickers or a coloring book's images). Carefully sandwich them between two sheets of clear laminate paper. Cut around the laminated images, leaving a 1/8 inch border (if you cut too close, the seal will be broken). Bring your new “stickers” to the bathtub and let your two year old place the pictures you made together on the wet bathtub wall and watch them stick! Magic!



Outdoor Fun

An Easy Kite

Use markers and crayons to help your child decorate a paper lunch bag. Punch four holes in the bag, one in each corner, leaving approximately an inch from edge. Use a three foot long piece of string to tie a “handle” from one hole to another. Then, use another three foot long piece of string to create another “handle” between the remaining two holes. Cut an even larger piece of string and tie both handles together with one end. Use the other end to “fly your kite” outside, letting the wind catch inside the paper bag.

Paint With Water

Give your child a clean paint brush and a bowl of water and let them “paint” the side of your house or wooden surfaces – picnic tables, decks, etc.

Water Play

Fill a bathtub, large bucket, or child's swimming pool with water and give your toddler an assortment of “toys” to experiment with – including, cups, squirt bottles, funnels, and bottles with holes in their caps.

Sand Play

Use a sandbox or child's wading pool to fill with sand. Let your toddler discover sand using:

- | | | | |
|----------|----------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| -Funnels | -Toy trucks and cars | -Measuring cups | -Spoons |
| -Pails | -Margarine tubs | -Small shovels | -Plastic tubing |
| -Scoops | -Spray can tops | -Gelatin molds | -Cardboard tubes |

Other sandbox alternatives are: a cardboard box, dishpan, infant bathtub, a tire on its side filled with sand.

Also, if the thought of sand makes you uncomfortable (or, it's getting old), try using dried beans, uncooked macaroni, rainbow rice, birdseed, cornmeal, crumbled cork, dry cereal, other pasta, salt, or aquarium gravel.

Fossil Creations

Use a rolling pin to help your child roll out a ½ inch thick layer of play-dough. Place an object – like a flower, rock, or leaf, onto the top of the dough and encourage your child to use the rolling pin to press the object firmly into the dough. Help him take the object out of the clay and have a look at the fossil-like impression he has made. Other fun impressions: keys, toy cars, plastic toy dinosaur, plastic dolls with individual feet.

Bubbles

Mix together 2 cups warm water, 1 cup liquid dish-washing soap, ¼ cup glycerin, and 1 teaspoon sugar. Use various unbreakable objects found around the house to blow bubbles: six-pack beverage holders, funnels, straws, etc. Dip the object in bubble solution and blow through them or wave them through the air like wands. Try to see what new and interesting items can make the best bubbles!

Treasure Hunt

Grab a basket and choose a color. Head out on a color treasure hunt, collecting things of that color in the basket. For example, if the color was “blue,” then you could hunt around the yard (or, inside if weather didn't allow) for all things blue for the basket.

Home-Made Face Paint

In a bowl, mix 1 tablespoon shortening and 2 tablespoons cornstarch together until smooth. Add food coloring, one drop at a time, until you get the desired color. Use a sponge or your fingers to apply paint over a large area, such as an entire face. To paint a design with a small brush, thin the paint with a little water first. Remove with soap and water.

Sun Prints

Set a dark piece of construction paper (preferably black or blue) on flat surface in full sun. Place objects on the paper and let it sit in direct sunlight for a couple of hours. Remove objects to see sun print and do it again with a fresh piece of construction paper, experimenting with different objects!

Balloon Bats

Use an empty cardboard tube from a roll of wrapping paper to “bat” around inflated balloons. If a cardboard tube is not available, try re-shaping a wire clothes hanger into a “bat” and reform the hook into an enclosed hanger. Cover it with a long sock or panty-hose. (Be careful when swinging, the wire bat could hurt.)

Car/Baby Wash

Using a small tub or bucket, let your toddler wash her toys. Fill the bucket with soapy water – and, perhaps a second one with clean water – and watch her have fun washing her cars or babies!

Bowling

Line up ten empty soda bottles outside and let your little one roll a tennis ball (or other small ball) to knock them over! You can make it more difficult by adding small water to some (or all of) the bottles.



Fun With Food

Fantastic Fizz

Pour $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of white vinegar into a small plastic bowl. Let your child spoon in baking soda to create a fantastic fizz. You can add a few drops of food coloring to the vinegar to create colored fizz. When additional baking soda no longer creates a fizz, add fresh vinegar.

Flour Drawing

Lightly sprinkle a cookie sheet with flour and show child how to trace shapes and letters into the flour.

Homemade Butter

Pour about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of whipping cream into a small plastic container and replace the lid. Take turns with your child shaking the cream vigorously. During the shaking process, remove the lid every minute or so to view the change in consistency of the cream. What starts as a creamy liquid becomes seemingly unmoving whipped cream. But, keep going! Shake it more, and it will convert into a ball of butter surrounded by thin watery milk. Depending on how much you shake your butter, you could have a chunk of butter in about five minutes. Pour off the extra watery milk and help your child spread their buttery creation on crackers and YUM!

Pasta Play

Give your child a variety of type of pastas (rotini, shells, macaroni, etc.), some bowls, measuring spoons, and measuring cups. Let him measure and sort through the pasta. If you'd like, give him some string and let him make a necklace, too.

Build-A-Bear

Prepare some dough and cut out teddy bear shapes and bake. Fill the different cups of a muffin pan with a variety of edible foods that could be used to “dress” up the teddies. Some examples – twizzler pull and peels, peanut butter, icing, raisins, m&ms, chocolate chips, etc. Then, let your child “build a bear”!

Chase The Pepper

Fill a pie pan or small sink with water. Sprinkle some pepper in one side. Dip a piece of soap into the water (by the pepper) and watch the pepper run away from the water. Next, sprinkle some sugar in the “clear” area and watch the pepper run back!

Sugar Cube Sculpture

Set out some sugar cubes and icing (stick pretzels and peanut butter works too!) and let your child “build” amazing edible sculptures!

Spin Art

Cut out circles of drawing paper that will fit into the bottom of a salad spinner. Pour a few drops of food coloring (as many colors as you wish) on the paper. Put the top on the spinner and SPIN! See what cool designs you can come up with!

Super Goop

Boil two cups of water in a saucepan. Add ½ cup of cornstarch and stir until smooth. Add food coloring and stir. Remove from heat and cool. Let your child squish away on the counter top – Or, for a mess free alternative, pour the goop into resealable bags and let your child trace shapes and letters on the outside of the bag.

Smashed Berry Prints

Place deep-colored berries on half of a white water color paper or white paper towel. Lay the other half lightly over the berries. Smash, lift, and examine your print.

Homemade Sidewalk Chalk

Wash and gently dry the shells from 6 eggs. Peel away the “skin” from the inside of the shells and discard. Grind the shells into a fine powder with a mortar and pestle. In a small bowl, mix 1 tsp hot water with 1 tsp flour until smooth. Add the eggshell powder and, 1/8 tsp powdered tempera paint. Combine and form into a stick. Wrap in a paper towel to dry for 3 days.

Invisible Ink

Squeeze the juice from several lemons and pour it into a shallow bowl. Using a small paintbrush, draw a picture or write a secret message on heavy white paper. To reveal the hidden words or pictures, hold the paper over a light bulb or use the hair dryer to blow on it until the words appear.



Holiday Fun

New Year's Glitter Balls

Pour glitter into a shallow dish or pie pan. Spread glue over styrofoam balls and let your child roll them into the glitter. Arrange in a basket or dish as a centerpiece or suspend them with strings from the ceiling.

Valentine Lotto Game

Using some boxed valentine's cards, pull out several pairs of cards and let your child match them together. Incorporate more cards for added difficulty.

Hide The Shamrock

Cut out and hide a shamrock, taking turns to find it.

Resurrection Cookies

Make some resurrection cookies, follow [this link](#) for the recipe!

Fireworks Painting

Drop some tempera paint onto paper and let your child disperse it, making it look like fireworks, by blowing through a straw.

Egg Carton Spider

Using markers, paint, or crayons, color the cups of an egg carton and cut apart each individual cup. Use pipe cleaners to stick through the cups and bend them to look like legs. Cut out red eyes from construction paper (or use faux plastic gems or googly eyes). Hang from the ceiling or doorway with string.

Thankful Turkey

Color a paper plate and attach or draw on a turkey head. Cut out “feathers” from various colors of construction paper and help your child write on each one what they are thankful for. Glue feathers to turkey. Leading up to thanksgiving, this could also be a great dinner topic or prayer starter.

Christmas Cloves

Cover an entire orange with cloves, pushing the cloves in as far as you can, while trying to keep a uniform depth. Enjoy the Christmas smell!

Build Your Own

Cut out a large, medium, and small triangle from green construction paper. Help your child glue the triangles together, creating a tree. Encourage him or her to paint or glue on “decorations” to spruce up her Christmas tree. You can also create a snowman, Halloween pumpkin, Valentine's Day heart, or Independence Day flag.

Christmas Spice Ornaments

Mix 1 cup applesauce with 1 cup cinnamon and stir until a doughy texture forms. Roll out and cut into shapes, creating a threading hole with a straw. Let dry for several days until hard and then hang with gold ribbon or thread.