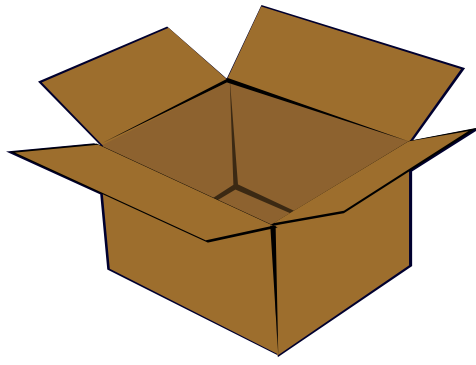




Box Play

Boxes are not just delivery containers...they're gateways to adventure for young children! With a little imagination, they transform into rocket ships, castles, or even cozy reading nooks. Here are some fun and engaging ways to use boxes with children that spark creativity and exploration:

1. Building Big Dreams

Large appliance boxes are perfect for construction play. Provide crayons, markers, and stickers, and watch as children create their own houses, vehicles, or secret forts. Add some fabric scraps for curtains or "doors" and let them role-play being homeowners, pilots, or explorers.

A box can also become a hibernating bear's den, an igloo or some other cozy spot for a quiet getaway. Coloring on the inside of a box is a kinesthetic activity as the corrugation makes wonderful sounds and feelings in little fingers.

2. Miniature Worlds

Smaller boxes can become dollhouses, garages, or habitats for toy animals. Encourage children to decorate them with paint or paper and create furniture using scraps. This type of play fosters fine motor skills and storytelling.

3. Movement and Gross Motor Fun

A big box on its side becomes a tunnel for crawling or a slide when propped up safely.

Children can practice spatial awareness and coordination by climbing in, out, or through different setups. Stack smaller boxes to make obstacle courses or target games with rolled-up socks to pitch or cut a hole in one side to develop aim and eye-hand coordination.

For younger children, just getting an animal or ball in the open top of the box is a success!

With rope (or twine for smaller ones), belts, neckties or fabric pieces, children can figure out how to move their box creation and use it as a carry all or a ride for dolls or

animals.

4. Art and Design Studio

Flattened boxes become oversized canvases for mural painting or giant doodles. Kids can use them for tracing their bodies, creating roadways for toy cars, or making life-sized treasure maps. This encourages collaboration and self-expression.

Smaller boxes and colored tape can create tabletop cities, buildings, rooms or perhaps a very special art exhibit.

5. Science and Engineering Explorations

Transform boxes into ramps for rolling balls, marble runs, or simple machines. Use cut-outs, tape, and string to build functional contraptions. This introduces problem-solving skills and hands-on STEM concepts.

And if you're in a rainy season, how long does it take for a box to disintegrate?

Bonus Idea: Box Challenges for Open-Ended Play

Give each child a box and a variety of loose parts—yarn, popsicle sticks, buttons, fabric scraps—and challenge them to invent something new. The goal isn't perfection but creativity. Celebrate their efforts with a "Box Museum" display!



© Curating Play, 2025

Check out our February 2025 newsletter for a list of books about boxes.